



Ani Multicultural Milieu and New Trends in Armenian Architecture during Queen Tamar's Period

Patrick Donabédian

► To cite this version:

Patrick Donabédian. Ani Multicultural Milieu and New Trends in Armenian Architecture during Queen Tamar's Period. Ani at the Crossroads. International Conference, Tbilissi, Université d'Etat I. Javakhishvili, 17-18 novembre 2017, Université d'Etat Ivane Javakhishvili, Nov 2017, Tbilisi, Georgia. pp.121-152. halshs-02904993

HAL Id: halshs-02904993

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-02904993>

Submitted on 27 Jul 2020

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Patrick DONABÉDIAN

Aix Marseille Université, CNRS, LA3M, Aix-en-Provence, France

Article

**“Ani Multicultural Milieu
and New Trends in Armenian Architecture
during Queen Tamar’s Period”**

in

Ani at the crossroads

International conference

17-18 November, 2017

Edited by Zaza Skhirtladze

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

Tbilisi

2019

p. 121-152

Contents

Ani – The Global and The Local

Anthony Eastmond, The Courtauld Institute of Art,
University of London 1

Ani in the Nineteenth-century Travel Literature and Scholarship

Erik Thunø, New Jersey State University 25

Markers of the Sacred City in Ani: Textual and Architectural Evidences

Irine Giviashvili, George Chubinashvili National Research
Centre for Georgian Art History and heritage Preservation 49

Ani as a Symbol of Statehood in Armenian Historical Imagination

S. Peter Cowe, University of California, Los Angeles 81

Ani's Multicultural Milieu, and New Trends in Armenian Architecture During Queen Tamar's Period

Patrick Donabédian, Aix Marseille University 121

Pictorial Narrative of the Conversion of Armenia and Georgia in the Murals of the Church of St. Gregory in Ani New Evidences

Neli Chakvetadze, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University 153

Life Cycle of St. Gregory the Illuminator in Ani: Cult of the Saint and the History of conversion in the Context of Ethno-confessional Relationship

Nana Sikharulidze, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University 187

Defence and Adornment: the System of Fortification of Ani

Teo Jalaghania, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University 209

Silk Road without Fabrics: Ani at the Crossroads of Trade and Textile Motives in Architecture

Patricia Blessing, Pomona College, Claremont 229

Materials from Ani in the Collections of Georgian National Museum

Jimsher Ckhvimiani, Georgian National Museum 255

Sona Hovsepyan, Armenia History Museum

Ani multicultural milieu and new trends in Armenian architecture during Queen Tamar's period

Patrick Donabédian

Aix Marseille University, CNRS, LA3M, Aix-en-Provence, France

The revival of Ani, a multicultural centre

The strengthening of the Georgian kingdom under Queen Tamar's reign (1184-1213), and the rallying of the Armenian forces around her crown created favorable conditions for the development of Armenian art in relation with that of Georgia. Northeastern Armenia, and the city of Ani, liberated from Seljuk domination, benefited from this situation. In 1199, Armenia's new ruler, prince Zakare Mkhargrdzeli settled in the previous capital town of the Bagratid kingdom. Zakare's father Sargis the Great (d. 1187), “*sparapet/amirspasalar* of Armenia and Georgia”, the third known representative of this dynasty of northern Armenia, probably of Kurdish origin, had already been made governor of Ani in 1161 during a brief occupation of the city by the Georgians. Then, after the crushing in 1178 of the rebellion fomented by the Orbeli princes, Tamar's father, King Giorgi III of Georgia gave their domains to Sargis. The city of Ani was in principle included in them, but it was still in the hands of the Sheddadids, a Kurdish Muslim dynasty that had received Ani from the Seljuk conquerors in 1072. It was only in 1199, after the reconquest of the region, that the sons of Sargis, Zakare and Ivane, respectively named in Armenian and Georgian sources of the time “*mandaturt-ukhutsesi, sparapet/amirspasalar* of Armenia and Georgia”, and “*sparapet, atabek* of Armenia and Georgia”, took possession of Ani¹.

Thanks to the newly re-established freedom and the prosperity generated by Ani's location at the crossroads of international trade routes, an

[p. 122, fig. 1]

intense architectural life developed in the city since the end of the 12th century until the Mongol occupation. Important works were undertaken, including the renovation of old buildings, and the construction of new ones, of both civil and religious spheres. Among these works, we must mention the large-scale reconstruction of the ramparts of the city, initially built by king Smbat Bagratuni in 989, and especially of its towers, with the participation, not only of prince Zakare, but also of many residents (men and women), as evidenced by a series of Armenian inscriptions².

Such a large city, open to the world, naturally sheltered a cosmopolitan population. Along with numerous Armenian churches, there were sanctuaries of other religions, at least two mosques, those of Manucher and of Abul-Maamran³, and some Orthodox churches: the “Georgian

¹ HAKOBYAN, Tadevos, *Անիի պատմություն. Գիրք երկրորդ (1045 թ. մինչև անկումն ու ամայացումը)* = *History of Ani. Second tome (from 1045 to the fall and abandonment [of the city])*, Yerevan, 1982, 65, 123; MUTAFIAN, Claude, *L'Arménie du Levant (XI^e-XIV^e s.)*, Tome I, Paris, 2012, 282-286.

² ORBELL, Hovsep, *Դիվանի հայ վիմագրության, Պրակ I, Անի քաղաք* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Armenicarum, Liber I, Town of Ani*, Yerevan, 1966, 1-8, n° 1-23.

³ MARR, Nikolai, *Ани, книжная история города и раскопки на месте городища* = *Ani, a book history of the city and the excavations on the town site*, Leningrad-Moscow, 1934, 87-88, 91-92, 118, pl. V/13, XI/32, XL/171, LV/259-262; HAKOBYAN, *History of Ani* 2, 94-98; KAMSARAKAN, Adèle, “Les principaux sites d’Ani et de sa

[p. 123]

church” was one of them (see below). But the fact that, in the inscription he had engraved on it in 1218, the Catholicos of Georgia states that he came to Ani to consecrate churches, in the plural, attests that there were more than one⁴.

The multicultural milieu of Ani, and the new fashions emerging in the city exerted an influence on the Armenian architecture of the time. Ani was probably one of the main centers of the “Armenian-Muslim syncretism” that began to flourish in Armenia at the time. The urban civil architecture that developed in the old capital (fig. 1) played a particularly active role, providing models to the whole country⁵. Façades, portals, vaults and ceilings of palaces, hotels, narthexes, and other buildings of Ani gave many examples of synthesis of Armenian and Muslim styles, which were followed throughout the country⁶ (fig. 2). Among the numerous elements

[p. 124, fig. 2]

which the Armenian architecture shared, since the end of the 12th century, with the arts of the Islamic world, one may mention: portals with double frame, rectangular outside and arched inside, sometimes doubled in height, different devices like stalactites (muqarnas), stone marquetry, and motifs such as rows of eight-pointed stars, sophisticated interlaces, refined arabesques... At the same time, outside Ani, intense contacts were taking place between Christian and Muslim cultures, and Christian artists, among them Armenians, offered their services to Muslim lords⁷. In return, the Armenian architectural repertoire incorporated some of the best achievements of neighboring cultures, while still bearing the strong mark of national heritage.

But this is less the case with Georgian models, at least inside Ani. Perhaps because Ani was a stronghold of the national church, inside the town, the impact of the integration of the Armenian regions into the Georgian kingdom did not leave as notable traces as it did outside, in the rest of

[p. 125]

the northeastern Armenian provinces, where both architecture and decoration bear imprints of Georgian predominance. In Ani, only two monuments of the Georgian period show a direct relationship with Georgian culture. Before examining them, let us briefly mention one of the most active citizens of the town, directly involved in the new trends of the epoch.

périphérie”, KEVORKIAN, Raymond (dir.), *Ani, capitale de l’Arménie en l’an mil*, Paris, 2001, 283-301, here: 286, n° 10; KARAPETYAN, Samvel, *Ani 1050*, Yerevan, 2011, 213-215.

⁴ MURADYAN, Paruyr, Հայաստանի վրացերեն արձանագրությունները = *The Georgian Inscriptions of Armenia*, Yerevan, 1977, 41-43.

⁵ N. Marr writes very aptly on this subject: “Развитое чувство красоты анийцев охотно воспринимало всё прекрасное, где бы оно его ни находило, хотя бы у мусульман. [...] во внешнем наряде так называемое мусульманское архитектурное течение, пробивавшее себе путь в светское зодчество, переходило и на орнаментацию самих церквей, особенно богато разливаясь причудливыми узорами по притворам и порталам = The developed sense of beauty of the inhabitants of Ani willingly perceived all that is beautiful, wherever it found it, at least among the Muslims. [...] in the external décor, the so-called Muslim architectural trend, piercing its way into secular architecture, passed on to the ornamentation of the churches themselves, especially richly spilling out bizarre patterns on the narthexes and portals”. See: MARR, *Ani*, 35-36.

⁶ For a synthesis on the “Armenian-Islamic syncretism” see: DONABEDIAN, Patrick, “Parallélisme, convergences et divergences entre Arménie et Géorgie en architecture et sculpture architecturale”, Isabelle AUGÉ et al. (dir.), *L’Arménie et la Géorgie en dialogue avec l’Europe du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, 2016, 19-130, here: 94-103.

⁷ MARR, *Ani*, 36-37. A recent round-up of the question: YEVIADIAN, Maxime, *Des serviteurs fidèles. Les enfants de l’Arménie au service de l’État turc*, Lyon, 2010, chapter “Noms des architectes seldjouques”, 30-34.

Tigran Honents

One of the most representative figures of 13th century Ani is the merchant Tigran Honents who, besides restorations in 1213 on the cathedral, and out of the town, at Khètzkonk monastery, undertakes a series of constructions. He is probably the sponsor, at the beginning of the 13th century, of the hermitage of the Virgins, which can be identified with Bekhents monastery. In 1215, he builds in the same area of the Akhuryan valley, at the eastern extremity of the city, the monastery of St. Gregory and its church. The dedicatory inscription, carefully engraved in the name of Honents, under three arches, on the south façade of the church, is one of the longest texts of Armenian epigraphy (it mentions the construction of Bekhents monastery)⁸. In addition, the large “Baron’s” palace, at the other end of the city, has been attributed to Honents, although some authors consider it as the residence of the Pahlavuni princes, notably of Vahram Pahlavuni, governor of Ani at the beginning of the 13th century⁹. Finally, Honents has a rock mausoleum dug for himself, adorned with paintings, in what

[p. 126]

appears to be a family cemetery, on the side of the Tzaghkotsadzor valley, opposite the city¹⁰.

The extent of the works undertaken by this man illustrates the prominent role played by the “bourgeoisie” in the Armenian society of the 13th century¹¹. At the same time, in Georgia proper, too, the great merchants, headed by their chief, played an important role in the court of Queen Tamar¹², as well as in Tbilisi life¹³.

The church of St. Gregory the Illuminator

The main monument of Ani which has a narrow link with Georgian culture is the church built in 1215 for Tigran Honents (fig. 3-10). Dedicated to Saint Gregory, the founder of the Armenian Church, this sanctuary is emblematic of the time, since its structure and carved decoration are part of the Armenian tradition, while its internal painted decoration is dependent on Georgian art¹⁴. The “kuppelhalle” (“salle à

⁸ ORBELI, *Corpus I*, 62-63, n° 23. Translation into French and study by: МАHE, J.P., “Le testament de Tigran Honenc': la fortune d'un marchand arménien d'Ani aux XII^e-XIII^e siècles”, *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Compte rendu des séances de l'année 2001. Juillet-octobre*, 1319-1341. Translation and study in Russian by: MURADYAN, Раруц, “Проблема конфессиональной ориентации церкви Оненца (критический анализ источников и литературы)” = “The Problem of the confessional orientation of the church of Honents (critical analysis of sources and literature)”, *Кавказ и Византия = Caucasus and Byzantium*, 5, Yerevan, 1987, 36-66, especially 41-44.

⁹ THIERRY, M. et N., *L'église Saint-Grégoire de Tigran Honenc' à Ani (1215)*, Louvain-Paris, 1993, 99-101 ; KARAPETYAN, Ani, 45-51. On Vahram Pahlawuni, lord-mayor (governor) of Ani: THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 3, 106, note 24.

¹⁰ THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 93-97; KARAPETYAN, Ani 1050, 236-238.

¹¹ The inscription of 1215 gives an impressive enumeration of his possessions. See: MARR, Ani, 33-34; and, for Ani, the synthesis by: МАHE, “Le testament”, 1320.

¹² AMIRANASHVILI, Shalva, *Бекა Онузари = Beka Opizari*, Tbilisi, 1956, 43.

¹³ SILOGAVA, Valery, SHENGELIA, Kakha, *History of Georgia*, Tbilisi, 2007, 103.

¹⁴ THIERRY, *St-Grégoire* is a monograph dedicated to this monument. The book of the “father” of the history of Armenian architecture, TORAMANYAN, Toros, *Saint Gregory the Illuminator (Tigran Honents) Church Complex of Ani*, Yerevan, 2011, is a collection of previously published texts, photographs, and drawings, accompanied with new notes. For a short synthesis on this monument, see: THIERRY, Jean-Michel, DONABEDIAN, Patrick, *Les arts arméniens*, Paris, 1987, 487-488; CUNEO, Paolo, *L'architettura armena, I*, Rome, 2008, 658-659.

coupole”) composition (fig. 3), with a dome on supports attached to the walls, is characteristic of the Armenian churches of the time¹⁵. It is quite different from the typology in use at the time in Georgia¹⁶ and borrowed in some Chalcedonian monasteries of Armenia (see below), where the cupola rests on two eastern supports attached to the apse, and on two western columns (or pillars)

[p. 127, fig. 3]

[p. 128, fig. 4]

which stand freely (fig. 17). However, inside the apse of St. Gregory, a doubt may concern the elevation of the altar (*bem*), a characteristic feature of Armenian architecture, which has evidently undergone here an alteration (fig. 4). Only a careful archaeological study could reveal whether there has been a destruction during the early transfer of the church under Chalcedonian confession (see below), then a late and clumsy reconstruction, explaining the present state of the *bem*.

As for the external sculpted decoration, it also refers to the Armenian background. It gives a large place to the blind arcade-colonnade, not only on the drum, as usually at the time, but also on the façades, which was less frequent, probably for the sake of stylistic harmony with the buildings of Bagratid Ani (fig. 5). This arcade even refers, for the principle of the birds and quadrupeds located in its spandrels, to the horizontal belt which surmounted the arcade of Zvartnots cathedral in the 7th century, as well as, to a certain extent, to the decoration of the Holy Cross of Aghtamar in the 10th century. Probably, again to preserve the stylistic harmony with the monuments of the royal period, similar arcades-colonnades adorned three other churches of Ani, of the early 13th century: the elegant hexaconch chapel of

[p. 129, fig. 5]

the Virgins convent¹⁷, probably ordered by the same Tigran Honents, the church of the Girls Fort¹⁸, built by prince Zakare, and that of Khachut or Bakhtaghek¹⁹ (fig. 6). Perhaps the same workshop had worked on these four monuments.

[p. 130, fig. 6]

On the drum of St. Gregory’s church, between the blind arcade and the cornice, the horizontal carved belt, adorned with a refined “Islamizing” geometric interlacing (fig. 7), belongs to a popular type which can be seen on several 13th century Armenian drums: St. Savior of Ani (renovated drum), Garni (chapel of the Virgin), Geghard, Goshavank, Makaravank...

As a monastic church, St. Gregory of Tigran Honents naturally had a narthex, added, as always, some time after the completion of its construction (fig. 3, 8, 12). However, the porch/portico added to its western façade differs by its structure from a traditional *zhamatun* or *gavit* (Armenian narthex): being a widthways elongated space, widely open, it evokes, to a certain extent, Georgian models. A similar open porch, but much smaller, could be seen against the neighbouring and almost contemporary chapel

¹⁵ The huge popularity of this typology in medieval Armenia is shown on the plates of: CUNEO, *L’architettura armena*, 2, 726-729.

¹⁶ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 29-30.

¹⁷ Several illustrations in: KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 197-207.

¹⁸ THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 118, pl. 10-f.

¹⁹ MARR, *Ani*, pl. XV and XVIII.

[p. 131, fig. 7]

of the Virgins. Another one, in northern Armenia, was present in front of the northern door of Kobayr church (fig. 8). Related porticos (but more elongated), more or less “opened” through arcades, stand before several Chalcedonian churches of northern Armenia, again referring to Georgian models (Akhtala, Khutjap, Kirants, Berdavank, Tezharuyk). I leave aside the original narthexes of Sanahin (1211) and Arates (1270), also opened through arcades, but with quite different structures²⁰. It should be noted that S. Mnatsakanyan identified a specific category of “narthex-galleries”,

[p. 132, fig. 8]

which he considered proper “mainly to Chalcedonian monasteries”²¹; before him, T. Toramanyan had already expressed such an opinion²².

At the same time, by other important traits, St. Gregory’s narthex was linked more to the Armenian tradition than to the Georgian one. First, it had an original system of covering, closer to a ceiling, which it shared again with the porch before the chapel of the Virgins Monastery and the northern porch of the Kobayr church. Judging from the portion of roof preserved on its northeast corner, it was a “segmented ceiling” with a rectangular and flat central compartment²³. Unknown in Georgia, this kind of roofing is related to the covering of lateral compartments in some

[p. 133]

zhamatuns/gavits, especially the one at Saghmossavank²⁴. Secondly, the richly carved ornamentation of its capitals and of the remains of western arcade clearly belongs to the “Islamizing” repertoire, typical for 13th century Armenian architecture, and are foreign to the Georgian one (fig. 8). For example, the broken torus on the arcade, with alternating triangular and rectangular points, is also carved in the monastery of Geghard, where it produces a spectacular effect on the four central arches of the great *gavit*²⁵. As for the angles of capitals, cut into stalactites, also present in the “Georgian church” of Ani (see below – fig. 15), they are widely used in Armenia at the time²⁶.

On the contrary, inside St. Gregory church, on the wall paintings, one can note a strong Georgian imprint (fig. 9-10). The iconographic and stylistic study of these paintings, and the texts mainly in Georgian, and sometimes in Greek, that accompany them seem to indicate, as Nicole Thierry observed, that they are the work of Georgian painters close to those who decorated the main churches of Georgia in the late 12th and early 13th century²⁷. However, a considerable place is reserved, in the painted program, to the sixteen scenes of the life cycle of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, which occupy the entire western arm, while a single panel, at the northeastern end of this ensemble, shows the vision of Saint Nino, evangelizer of Iberia. Furthermore, on the sides of the apse are the portraits of the two sons and successors of Saint Gregory, the first patriarchs of the Armenian church, Aristakes and Vrtanes. This leaves little

²⁰ MNATSAKANYAN, Stepan, *Архитектура армянских притворов* = *The architecture of Armenian narthexes*, Yerevan, 1952, Sanahin: 49, 51, 93-98, 106-108, Arates: 81, 103-104. See also the synoptic plates of Armenian narthexes: CUNEO, *Architettura armena*, 2, 734-741.

²¹ MNATSAKANYAN, *Armenian narthexes*, 17, 99-100.

²² TORAMANYAN, *St Gregory*, 22, 24, 25, note 70.

²³ CUNEO, *Architettura armena*, 2, 740, n° 424 (St. Gregory), n° 141 (Kobayr), n° 423 (Virgins chapel).

²⁴ MNATSAKANYAN, *Armenian narthexes*, 63/fig. 37, 112/fig. 94.

²⁵ SAHINIAN, Alexandr, et al., *G(h)eghard, Documenti di architettura armena*, 6, Milan, 1973, 31, fig. 13.

²⁶ CUNEO, *Architettura armena*, 2, 805.

²⁷ A study of the wall paintings can be found in: THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 21-70 and 104-106; see also: DRAMBIAN, Irina, KOTANJIAN Nikolai, “The Frescoes in the Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator Founded by Tigran Honents in Ani”, *Armenian Review*, Watertown, Ma., Winter 1990, 3, 41-65.

doubt that the sponsor of the painted decoration belonged to the Armenian Apostolic Church. It seems likely that this sponsor was the same Tigran Honents (although it is not excluded that the paintings were executed a certain time after the completion of the construction²⁸).

[p. 134, fig. 9]

It may be useful here to recall two arguments which confirm Tigran's belonging to the Armenian Church: a) in the final formula of his inscription of 1215, only the first three councils are quoted, while the fourth one, that of Chalcedon, is omitted²⁹; b) on the mural paintings of his mausoleum, of more modest quality than those of the church, the inscriptions are (were) in the Armenian language³⁰ (fig. 11). Thus, if we accept that he has commended the paintings inside his church, we must suppose that this rich merchant, a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church, had judged it necessary, perhaps by opportunism, to invite Georgian painters to decorate the interior of his prestigious monument, which allowed him to equal princes and kings.

The epigraphy testifies that, shortly after its construction, probably after Tigran's death (after 1222³¹), St. Gregory church passed under the

[p. 135, fig. 10]

authority of prince Zakare's son, Sargis-Shahnshah, converted to the Chalcedonian confession. An official in his service was buried inside the church, in front of the altar, in total contradiction with the Armenian canons, his tombstone bearing a Georgian inscription³². From B. Kudava, we recently learned that the cross-plate carved on the gable, on top of the west facade of St Gregory's church (fig. 12), was probably dedicated to the memory of a certain Tigran, to whom, as the inscription says, “the cross brings grace, support and protection”³³. If this reading of the inscription

[p. 136, fig. 11, 12]

[p. 137]

is confirmed³⁴, it is logical to assume, as B. Kudava does, that this Tigran is the same Tigran Honents, founder of the church. The epigraph however is in the Georgian language, which suggests that this dedication is the work of the Chalcedonian successors of Tigran Honents, who used Georgian as their worship language: in such a case, showing a remarkable width of view, they would have set a memorial plate in tribute to this great citizen of Ani, at the top of his church.

There can be little doubt that it is being a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church that Tigran Honents built this sanctuary. It appears to us as such today, especially in its external aspect, although it was soon transferred, probably after its sponsor's death, to the Georgian Orthodox Church. Considered with its internal decoration and the compositional peculiarities of its portico, perhaps also with the cross plate on its western gable, this monument gives a precious testimony of Ani's multiconfessional, multicultural life at the time of Queen Tamar.

²⁸ TORAMANYAN, *St Gregory*, 17, 21, 28; MURADYAN, “The problem”, 50-57: on the base of a questionable interpretation of a badly attested inscription, this author dates the addition of the narthex and the execution of the paintings of the church from 1251.

²⁹ MURADYAN, “The problem”, 42, 44, 45; MAHE, “Le testament”, 1329.

³⁰ ORBELI, *Corpus I*, 68-69; THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 93-94.

³¹ MURADYAN, “The problem”, 54.

³² MURADYAN, “The problem”, 57.

³³ KUDAVA, Buba, “ტიგრან ჰონენტის ქართული წარწერა ანისში” = Tigran Honents' Georgian Inscription in Ani, *ძველი ძეგლოვნება დღეს* = *Ancient Art Today*, Tbilisi, 07/2016, 118-131.

³⁴ The previous reading, by D. Bakradze, published by V. Silogava (1980), is briefly and skeptically commented in: MURADYAN, “The problem”, 60-61.

The “Georgian church”

The second monument of the 13th century in Ani which has an indisputable link with Georgia is a single-nave chapel, now in ruins, called “Georgian church” because, as mentioned above, it bore a Georgian inscription³⁵ (fig. 13-16). This inscription (fig. 14) contained a series of practical and moral recommendations to the “Georgians living in this city”; it exhorted them to be more generous, and the priests to be more moderate. It was engraved in 1218 by the catholicos Epiphan [Etiphan in the text] of Georgia, who states: “I wrote it with my hand while I was consecrating churches in Ani”³⁶. This shows that the church, which was built a little earlier than

[p. 138, fig. 13]

this date (it doesn’t seem to have been also consecrated on this occasion), served a Georgian Orthodox parish, probably including Georgians and Chalcedonian Armenians, and, as we said above, that it was not the only Georgian sanctuary in Ani. It is interesting to note that the text had to be authenticated by a formula occupying the entire last line, in Armenian, from the Armenian authorities of the city: the bishop Grigor and the governor [the *amira* in the text] Vahram, who declare: “we attest that this is the order of the catholicos”³⁷.

[p. 139, fig. 14]

But, apart from this inscription, and two short painted captions, in its architecture and decoration, this sanctuary did not present manifest Georgian features. It is related, it is true, to the group of relatively large and high single naves, common in Georgia since the previous period³⁸, and used in some Chalcedonian monasteries of Armenia in the 13th century (see below – fig. 17), but it is far from being a typical representative of this type. Those churches have a barrel vault reinforced by two or three transverse arches resting on engaged pillars, which delimitate, along the lateral walls, flat niches surmounted by a bow; and their apse, very wide, usually

[p. 140]

without side sacristies (or flanked by tiny rooms), is in direct (or almost direct) continuation of these lateral walls.

Compared to them, the “Georgian church” of Ani (fig. 13) was relatively narrow, especially in the apse. The supports of the vault, still preserved on the north wall, have a strongly protruding half-column instead of a parallelepiped pillar. The single apse window conformed to the Armenian tradition. Secondly, the Ani church raised its nave on an underground vaulted space, probably revealing a funerary function, traditional in Armenia. In this country, indeed, the examples of such structures, with a vaulted mausoleum, often (partly or entirely) underground, surmounted by an oratory, are numerous since the beginning of the Christian times until the end of the Middle Ages³⁹.

Another reference to this two-storey structure could perhaps be envisaged, considering the two sculptures on the north wall (see below). No other figuration being

³⁵ MURADYAN, *The Georgian Inscriptions*, 35-47. For short notes on this monument see: THIERRY and DONABEDIAN, *Les arts arméniens*, 489; CUNEO, *L’architettura armena*, I, 667; KAMSARAKAN, “Principaux sites”, 285-286; KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 208-211.

³⁶ MURADYAN, *The Georgian Inscriptions*, 41-43. The author examines, p. 40, dating difficulties that allow some hesitation between 1215, 1216 and 1218.

³⁷ MURADYAN, *The Georgian Inscriptions*, 42-44.

³⁸ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 27.

³⁹ MNATSAKANYAN, Suren, *Հայկական վաղ միջնադարյան մեմորիալ հուշարձանները* = *The Armenian Memorial Monuments of the Early Middle Ages*, Yerevan, 1982; idem, “The Memorial Art of Armenia of the 9th-14th Centuries”, *Terzo simposio internazionale di arte armena, Atti (1981)*, Venice, 1984, 419-431; DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 114-117.

reported inside the church when the south wall was still preserved, these two figures, semantically related to each other, could be linked to a dedication to the Visitation, although such a dedication seems unknown, both in Armenia and in Georgia. In such a case, the two-storey chapel of Ani could be inspired by one of the churches of Jerusalem, very familiar to the Armenians. There was indeed, on the site of the Monastery of St. John in the Woods, south of the Holy City, a church of the Visitation, perhaps of early Christian or Byzantine origin, rebuilt by the Crusaders in the 12th century, then fully redone in 1861 and again in 1946. The church was built on the presumed place where Saint Elizabeth had taken refuge after the birth of Saint John, the future Baptist. As reported in a description of the 12th century, this sanctuary had, under a single nave, a crypt linked to the memory of the visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth. Despite the reconstructions, it preserves its structure until now. It should be added that this church belonged to a monastery attested as Armenian from the 13th to the 15th century⁴⁰.

[p. 141, fig. 15]

Thirdly, inside the “Georgian church”, on the internal surface of its well-cut stone walls, there are no traces of paintings; instead two figured scenes depicting the Annunciation and the Visitation are sculpted under

[p. 142, fig. 16]

the arches of the northern wall (fig. 15-16). As indicated above, these two scenes, in the absence of evidence on the existence of other themes carved in the church, seem to constitute a compact set, semantically homogeneous, which could perhaps justify the hypothesis of a dedication to the Visitation. Despite the wear, the sculptures appear executed in a relatively protruding relief and in a plastic which, without being rough, is simplified, with a weakly detailed treatment of the folds. The standing pair of the Visitation has slender proportions, while in the Annunciation, the figures are heavier. Let us recall that figured sculpture is widespread in the 13th century Armenia, while it had become rare in Georgia at the time. B. Kudava has recently deciphered two painted legends in the Georgian language, which identify these scenes⁴¹. Due perhaps to the erosion, the writings do not seem very assured (fig. 16) and may have been added (a little) after the execution of the sculptures.

Apart from these two reliefs, what remains of the interior of the church shows a great sobriety, more in the Armenian spirit. Forms and profiles of the moulded ornaments, inside as well as outside, do not betray any reference to the Georgian repertoire, and instead refer to the Armenian architectural vocabulary. This is the case, for example, of the small trefoil “stalactites” dug on the lower angles of the abacuses, on the semi-capitals

[p. 143]

surmounting the half-columns inside the northern wall (fig. 15 – see above the comments on the capitals of St. Gregory’s narthex). In general, leaving aside the two figurative sculptures, the extreme modesty of the ornamental treatment of the “Georgian church” contrasts sharply with the richness of the blind arcades-colonnades that adorn(-ed) the four churches of the “Tigran Honents group” (see above – fig. 5-6), though also of the beginning of the 13th century.

⁴⁰ On this monument: PRINGLE, Denys, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. A Corpus. Volume I, A-K*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 38-47. On the Armenian ownership of the monastery: PRINGLE, *The Churches*, 39-40; AGHAVNUNI, Mkrtich, *Հայկական հին վանքեր եւ եկեղեցիներ Սուրբ Երկրին մէջ* = *Ancient Armenian Monasteries and Churches in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1931, 43-45; HINTLIAN, Kevork, *History of the Armenians in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1976, reed. 1989, 29-30.

⁴¹ KUDAVA, “Honents’ Georgian Inscription”, 126.

In sum, the “Georgian chapel” of Ani shows, in its specific way, another example of “unbalanced synthesis”, as at St. Gregory of Tigran Honents, that is to say: Georgian elements (here almost exclusively inscriptions) grafted on a mainly Armenian body. In fact, except for its inscriptions, it is the less “Georgian” among the group of Chalcedonian monuments of northeastern Armenia.

Brief comparison with the “Georgianizing” monuments in the rest of northeast Armenia

A) Single-naved churches

In the rest of the northeastern provinces of Armenia, several Chalcedonian communities settled in newly built hermitages and monasteries. These churches often adopt two architectural compositions, probably borrowed from Georgia, each time associated, in a specific combination, with Armenian features⁴². They also present two other affinities with Georgia: three windows in the apse, and a kind of canopy-like porch with a low cupola adorned by radiating mouldings, in front of the south door of the church.

The first typology is the large and high single nave already mentioned above (fig. 17). Armenia had largely practiced single-nave compositions since the first Christian centuries, but until the period of Queen Tamar, it had not known this kind of enlarged and enhanced nave⁴³. It only appears in the period we are interested in, and concerns buildings that have Chalcedonian marks or a link with Georgia⁴⁴.

[p. 144, fig. 17]

On the Tezharuyk church, near Meghradzor village, a Georgian inscription states that it was built by order of Ivane Mkhargrdzeli probably at the end of the 12th century. It is a large three bays nave, whose height is emphasized by the steep slope of the roof. Inside, the stones, well cut, do not bear any trace of painting. Against the Armenian tradition, there is no altar elevation, but according to Armenian norms, there is only one window in the apse. The carved decoration presents variants of Georgian formulas, treated in a sober and simplified way, except on the west facade where the window arch is of Armenian type. Before the south door, the

[p. 145]

porch, covered with a north-south oriented two-slopes roof, has the shape of a small nave with an apse to the east, like a Georgian porch, in its chapel variant.

The most characteristic single nave of this group is at Kobayr, a monastery which passed in the 13th century to the Chalcedonian branch of the Mkhargrdzeli dynasty. As the historian Kirakos of Gandzak reports, in 1261, when Shahنشah, son of Zakare, died, “he was buried in Kobayr, which his wife had taken from the Armenians”⁴⁵. It is probably at this moment that the main church was built and painted. This broad and high single-nave church had a very sloping saddleback roof. Its apse is incised internally by two lateral niches and illuminated by five windows, three at the middle level and two higher. Foreign to Armenian architecture, the two high lateral

⁴² This material is presented in: DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 59-86.

⁴³ CUNEO, *L'architettura armena*, 2, 710-713.

⁴⁴ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 60-70.

⁴⁵ KIRAKOS of GANDZAK, *Պատմութիւն Հայոց* = *History of Armenia*, K. MELIK-OHANJANYAN (ed.), Yerevan, 1961, LXIV, 393. See also MUTAFIAN, *L'Arménie du Levant*, 288.

niches carved inside the apse are found in Georgian single naves with similar plan: Chaisi, Savane, Gudarekhi. The three windows in the apse, rare in Armenia, can be seen as a mark of Chalcedonian obedience. The main inscriptions are in Georgian, the paintings still preserved in the apse are accompanied by texts in Georgian, and sculpted decoration is based on the Georgian repertoire, with however a restraint adapted to the Armenian environment.

The single-nave church of St. Sign of Sedvi is not dated and has no inscriptions. It also presents three windows in the apse. It does not have, inside, the Armenian elevation of altar, or *bem*. Very carefully cut outside, the walls, left coarse inside, perhaps carried a plaster and paintings, of which there is however no trace. But its carved decor, of great sobriety, resorts to Armenian formulas. Surrounded by an enclosure, the church was probably the center of a monastery and yet, it is deprived of narthex. Its southern door is preceded by a small tetrapode porch surmounted by a star-shaped cupola, of Georgian type. As in Tezharuyk, we have here again a mixed monument, combining the features of the two schools, whereas in Kobayr the Georgian traits predominate.

[p. 146]

B) Inscribed cross with two isolated western supports

The second type of the 13th-14th century probably linked to Georgia is the inscribed cross with a dome on two free western supports (fig. 17). Well known in Georgia, as in Byzantium, this type is very rare in Armenia until the early 13th century, when it appears in the north of the country, in a small group of chronologically and geographically homogeneous monuments, many of which have a relationship with Georgia⁴⁶.

The most famous is the main church of the monastery called Pəghəndzahank (copper mine) or Akhtala, which was the Chalcedonian episcopal center of the region. No inscription is engraved on its façades, only the paintings that cover its interior are accompanied by Greek and Georgian texts. The 13th century historian Kirakos of Gandzak reports that when "the brother of Zakare, Ivane died⁴⁷, he was buried in Pəghəndzahank, at the door of the church he had built himself, having taken it from the Armenians, and where he had established a Georgian monastery"⁴⁸. In the same time, the testimony of the monk Simeon attests that Pəghəndzahank was also an Armenophone centre⁴⁹.

Built with an extreme care, this church is the largest sanctuary of the period, both in Armenia and Georgia⁵⁰. By its typology, its architectural features such as the octagonal shape of the two massive west columns, the three windows in the apse, and by its sculpted and painted decor, the church of Akhtala is faithful to Georgian architectural and artistic

⁴⁶ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 70-86.

⁴⁷ Ivane's death can be placed in 1234, according to: MUTAFIAN, *L'Arménie du Levant*, 286.

⁴⁸ KIRAKOS of GANDZAK, *History of Armenia*, XVII, 222, 238. See also MURADYAN, *The Georgian Inscriptions*, 199.

⁴⁹ MURADYAN, *The Georgian Inscriptions*, 202-211. See in particular, p. 209, the colophon of his translation of 1248, where this monk specifies: "This book [...] was translated from Georgian language into Armenian language, by the unworthy priest and monk Simeon, in the country of Armenia, in the Georgian monastery called Pəghəndzahank [...], because this was not translated into our language [...] and I translated it so that it does not fail our nation".

⁵⁰ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 72-76.

[p. 147, fig. 18]

standards. The eastern façade repeats, for its sculpted decoration, the formula of Samtavisi-Ikorta, however without arcade, according to the 13th century variant (Gudarekhi, Kvatakhevi, Tbilisi/Metekhi). The other three façades adopt, on their upper half, the most widespread device in Georgia at the time: the high cross standing between two windows (fig. 19). The cornices have the characteristic profile of a high curve between a fine upper tablet and a thin lower roll. The portals deserve a special attention (fig. 18). The southern one reproduces the usual type in Georgia, with a first frame of rectangular shape, surmounted by a second, wide, arched frame, marked at the ends of its “piers” by square pseudo-bases and square pseudo-imposts. But the other two, west and north portals are quite different. Surmounting a first arched frame, the large rectangular outer doorframe adorned with a refined interlacing with Islamic affinities, is in line with the current practice on Armenian monuments of the time. More generally, a certain restraint in carved decoration seems to correspond to the Armenian milieu.

The church of the monastery of Khutjap⁵¹, located in the north of Armenia, close to the Georgian border, in all respects, conforms to the Georgian standards of the time: typology, proportions, twelve windows of the drum, three windows in the apse, absence of altar elevation, octagonal form of the two western supports, traces of plaster on interior walls (in brick and not in

[p. 148, fig. 19]

stone), forms and motifs of the exterior decoration (in particular, the high cross between two windows), portico (gallery) to the west and the south.

Another representative of this typology, the monastic church of Kirants is, with those of Berdavank and Srvegh, located in the same region, one of the rare brick monuments of northeastern Armenia⁵². It is related to Kintsvisi and Timotesubani in Georgia by its material and planimetric composition, by its slender proportions, very marked here because of the unusual height of the drum, by the paintings that adorned its internal walls, and by its Iranian-Turkish affinities. These are particularly sensitive in the material and the brace form of most arches, as well as in the use of glazed ceramic tiles on the drum, a trait common to Kirants and Timotesubani.

The west and south doors of Kirants are preceded, respectively, by a low, transverse gallery, and a small saddleback-roofed porch extended to the east by a single-nave chapel, forms proper to Georgia. The “agglomeration”

[p. 149]

of small elements adjoined to Kirants church is close to that of Kintsvisi. On the other hand, the portals of Kirants are of the Armenian type, with rectangular outside frame and with bands of floral and geometric interlacing, and of eight-pointed stars, a decoration which adds one more Islamizing element. This group of five brick-built monastic churches, present in both countries, with both common and specific features (drums and portals), deserves a special attention: it constitutes an enigmatic transnational phenomenon, including an Islamizing component.

Although it belongs to another typology, the Bgavor church⁵³ near Akori deserves a brief mention here. Deprived of inscriptions, it was a three-nave basilica, probably without dome. The apse had three windows and no altar elevation. The interior walls, in relatively coarse apparatus, were perhaps covered with plaster and with paintings. On

⁵¹ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 76-77.

⁵² DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 78-81.

⁵³ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 82-83.

the preserved façades, made of well-cut gray basalt, the sculpted decoration, sober but careful, belongs to the Georgian repertoire, and allows to rank Bgavor among the 13th century churches of northern Armenia which have a close connection with Georgia.

All these monuments, and among them the emblematic Akhtala and Kobayr, show how much deeper is the penetration of Georgian models into Chalcedonian settlements of northeastern Armenia than into Ani. In contrast, the two churches of Ani with Georgian affinities highlight the relative limit of Georgian contributions to the architecture of the ancient capital. In fact, the only Georgian feature which was *visible* at Ani was the *internal* decor of St. Gregory. On the contrary, the exchanges with Muslim neighbours had a much more tangible weight in the architecture of the city.

C. Sculpted decoration

In the field of sculpted decoration, several compositions and separate ornamental motifs of Armenia in the 13th century are inspired by Georgian models⁵⁴. We saw some of them on Chalcedonian monuments of northern Armenia, often with various combinations of the two traditions, with more Georgian traits in one case, more Armenian ones in the other. On the portals of Pəghəndzahank/Akhtala, we noted an original example of this

[p. 150]

bipolarity, two of them belonging to the Armenian type, and the third one, on the south façade, to the Georgian one (fig. 18). Most emblematic is the large composition of the eastern façade of Samtavisi (1030), reproduced in 1172 in Ikorta, and then on several Georgian sanctuaries of the 13th century⁵⁵. It enters Armenia to adorn two monuments of the early 13th century. On the eastern façade of the main church of Akhtala, it is executed, quite naturally, in total accordance with Georgian standards. But on the church of Hovhannavank, built in 1216-1221, in an area of non-Chalcedonian confession, it is treated much more soberly.

This last example reminds that, beside the Orthodox monasteries, in the non-Chalcedonian Armenian space too, borrowings from the Georgian decorative repertoire took place on the façades of the 13th century churches. For example, on the various, sometimes polylobed or angular, forms which it takes at that period, blind arcade is often combined with a large cross sculpted on the centre of the façade, on its upper part⁵⁶ (fig. 19). It is probably an echo of the compositions spread on the Georgian façades since the 12th century, with a large cross sculpted between the two central windows. Hanging scallops (festoon) on top of the dihedral niches of 13th c. Armenian façades are another motif of probable Georgian origin⁵⁷. These borrowings reveal an attitude of openness, of permeability to foreign forms, characteristic for Armenian art of this period, both in Cilicia and in the north-east. This trend is reflected here in the use, not only of “Georgianizing” and “Islamizing” forms, but also of occidental or Byzantine-western iconographies⁵⁸ (to which must be added, in Cilician Armenia, the use of Chinese motifs).

⁵⁴ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 87-94.

⁵⁵ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 32-35.

⁵⁶ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 90-93.

⁵⁷ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 89, 91.

⁵⁸ DONABEDIAN, “Parallélisme, convergences”, 103-104.

In this diversity of sources, recast in the mould of Armenian architectural aesthetics, it is interesting to observe a certain difference of orientation between the urban society of Ani, and the monastic and princely circles, Chalcedonian on one side, and Apostolic on the other. The first one, in Ani, favors, to a fairly large extent, the images reflecting relations with Muslim neighbours. The second one, in Chalcedonian establishments, gives a large place to forms promoting the Georgian “Commonwealth”. The third one,

[p. 151]

in the convents belonging to the Armenian Church, freely inserts, according to its needs and tastes, elements from both sources, in a subtle and sometimes audacious association with the Armenian tradition.

Through this diversity, although differently reflected in northeastern Armenia and in Ani, Queen Tamar’s period shines as one of the richest pages in the long history of exchanges and reciprocal enrichments between Armenian and Georgian arts.

Résumé en français / Summary in French

Le milieu pluriculturel d’Ani et les nouvelles tendances
dans l’architecture arménienne durant la période de la reine Tamar

Le renforcement du royaume de Géorgie sous la reine Tamar à la fin du XII^e siècle et le ralliement des forces arméniennes autour de sa couronne créèrent des conditions favorables au développement de l’art arménien en lien notamment avec celui de la Géorgie. L’Arménie du nord-est et en particulier la ville d’Ani, libérées de la domination seldjoukide par les frères Mkhargrdzéli, bénéficièrent de cette situation. Le nouveau dirigeant de l’Arménie à cette période, le prince Zakaré Mkhargrdzéli, s’installa dans l’ancienne capitale du royaume bagratide. Durant les trente-sept années que dura la période géorgienne de l’histoire d’Ani (1199-1236), avant l’occupation mongole, d’importants travaux furent entrepris dans la cité, y compris la rénovation d’édifices anciens et la construction de nouveaux bâtiments, tant dans la sphère civile que religieuse.

Aussi paradoxal que cela puisse paraître, à l’intérieur de la ville, l’impact de l’intégration des régions arméniennes dans le royaume géorgien n’a pas laissé des traces aussi notables qu’à l’extérieur d’Ani, dans le reste des provinces arméniennes du nord-est. Dans Ani elle-même, seuls deux monuments de la période géorgienne montrent une certaine relation avec la culture géorgienne. La première est une chapelle, maintenant en ruines, traditionnellement appelée « église géorgienne » parce qu’elle portait une inscription géorgienne de 1218, et qui a probablement servi la communauté orthodoxe de la ville. Mais en fait, ce sanctuaire ne présente pas des caractéristiques géorgiennes si évidentes, ni dans sa structure à nef unique et à deux étages, ni dans sa décoration sculptée plutôt modeste. Le deuxième monument d’Ani qui a un lien avec l’art géorgien est la belle église construite en 1215 par le marchand Tigran Honents. Ce lien n’apparaît pas, une fois de plus, dans l’architecture ni dans la décoration sculptée, qui font clairement partie de la tradition arménienne et visent à préserver l’harmonie stylistique créée dans la ville par les principaux monuments de la période royale précédente. Seul le portique ajouté à la façade occidentale diffère d’un *gavit/jamatoun* traditionnel (narthex arménien), et évoque dans une certaine mesure des modèles géorgiens. C’est en fait à l’intérieur de l’église, sur les peintures murales, que l’on peut noter une empreinte géorgienne.

Beaucoup plus forts sont, à Ani, les éléments que l'architecture arménienne partage, depuis la fin du XII^e siècle, avec les arts du monde islamique. Il s'agit de certaines formes (portail rectangulaire, parfois doublé en hauteur), de dispositifs (stalactites, marqueterie de pierre) et de motifs (étoiles à huit pointes, entrelacs sophistiqués, arabesques raffinées...).

Plus diversifiée est l'image dans le reste des provinces du nord-est de l'Arménie où plusieurs communautés chalcédoniennes (arméno-chalcédoniennes ou/et géorgiennes ?) se sont installées dans des ermitages et des monastères nouvellement construits. Dans ce cadre on peut trouver des exemples de compositions architecturales probablement empruntées à la Géorgie : un type de grande église à nef unique, la composition en croix inscrite à coupole sur deux supports isolés du côté ouest, et une sorte de porche en forme de baldaquin avec une coupole basse, devant la porte sud de l'église, ainsi que la triple fenestration dans l'abside. Dans le domaine de la décoration sculptée (compositions décoratives et motifs ornementaux séparés), plusieurs éléments de la tradition géorgienne peuvent être observés. Particulièrement intéressant est le fait que, dans presque tous les cas, on trouve des combinaisons des deux traditions, avec chaque fois des relations renouvelées entre elles : avec plus de traits géorgiens dans un cas, plus d'arméniens dans l'autre. À Pəghəndzahanq/Akhthala, les trois portails donnent un exemple original de cette bipolarité, deux d'entre eux étant de type arménien, et le troisième, sur la façade sud, appartenant au type géorgien.

A côté des monastères orthodoxes, dans l'espace arménien non chalcédonien aussi, des emprunts au répertoire décoratif géorgien se trouvent sur les façades des églises du XIII^e siècle. Il s'agit principalement de nouvelles compositions avec une haute croix sur la partie centrale-supérieure des façades, et de l'utilisation de festons pendants en haut des niches dièdres. Ces emprunts révèlent une attitude d'ouverture, de perméabilité aux formes étrangères, caractéristique de l'art arménien de cette période, tant en Cilicie qu'au nord-est. Cette tendance se reflète également ici dans l'utilisation, non seulement des formes islamisantes susmentionnées, mais aussi d'iconographies occidentales (ou byzantines-occidentales).

Pendant la période de la reine Tamar et de ses successeurs, un groupe de monastères en briques, présents dans les deux pays, mérite une attention particulière, car il semble constituer un phénomène transnational énigmatique, avec une composante islamisante.

Ainsi, la période de la reine Tamar, diversement reflétée à Ani et dans le nord-est de l'Arménie, est l'une des pages les plus riches dans la longue relation d'échanges et d'enrichissements réciproques entre les arts arméniens et géorgiens.

Résumé en anglais / Summary in English

Ani Multicultural Milieu, and New Trends in Armenian Architecture during Queen Tamar's Period

The strengthening of the Georgian kingdom under Queen Tamar's reign at the end of the 12th century, and the rallying of the Armenian forces around her crown created favorable conditions for the development of Armenian art in relation, notably, with that of Georgia. North-Eastern Armenia, and in particular the city of Ani, liberated from Seljuk domination by the Mkhargrdzeli brothers, benefited from this situation. Armenia's new ruler at that period, prince Zakare Mkhargrdzeli settled in the previous

capital town of the Bagratid kingdom. During the thirty-seven years that lasted the Georgian period of Ani's history (1199-1236), before the Mongol occupation, important works were undertaken in the city, including the renovation of old buildings, and the construction of new ones, of both civil and religious spheres.

As paradoxical as it may seem, inside the town, the impact of the integration of the Armenian regions into the Georgian kingdom did not leave as notable traces as it did outside Ani, in the rest of the north-eastern Armenian provinces. In Ani itself, only two monuments of the Georgian period show a certain relation with Georgian culture. The first one is a chapel, now in ruins, conventionally called “Georgian church” because it bore a Georgian inscription of 1218, and which probably served the Orthodox community of the town. But in fact, this sanctuary does not present so evident Georgian features, neither in its single-nave two-storied structure, nor in its rather modest sculpted decoration. The second monument of Ani which has a link with Georgian art is the beautiful church built in 1215 by the merchant Tigran Honents. This link does not appear, once again, in architecture neither in sculpted decoration, which are clearly part of the Armenian tradition, and aimed at preserving the stylistic harmony created in the town by the main monuments of the previous, royal period. Only the portico added to the western façade differs from a traditional *gavit/zhamatun* (Armenian narthex), and evokes to a certain extent Georgian models. It is in fact inside the church, on the mural paintings, that one can note a Georgian imprint.

Much stronger are, in Ani, the elements which the Armenian architecture shares, since the end of the 12th century, with the arts of the Islamic world. It concerns certain forms (rectangular portal, sometimes doubled in height), devices (stalactites, stone marquetry) and motifs (eight-pointed stars, sophisticated interlaces, refined arabesques...).

More diverse is the picture in the rest of the north-eastern provinces of Armenia, where several Chalcedonian (Armeno-Chalcedonian or/and Georgian?) communities settled in newly built hermitages and monasteries. Within this framework, one can find examples of architectural compositions, probably borrowed from Georgia: a type of large single-nave church, the domed “inscribed-cross” composition with two isolated supports on the west side, and a kind of canopy-like porch with a low cupola, in front of the south door of the church, as well as the triple fenestration in the apse. In the field of sculpted decoration (decorative compositions and separate ornamental motifs), several elements of Georgian tradition can be observed. Particularly interesting is the fact that, in almost all the cases, one finds combinations of both traditions, with every time renewed relations between them: with more Georgian traits in one case, more Armenian ones in the other. In Pəghəndzahanq/Akhthala, the three portals give an original example of this bipolarity, two of them being of the Armenian type, and the third one, on the south façade, belonging to the Georgian type.

Beside the Orthodox monasteries, in the non-Chalcedonian Armenian space also, borrowings from the Georgian decorative repertoire can be found on the façades of the 13th century churches. This concerns mainly the new compositions with a tall cross on the central-upper part of the façades, and the use of hanging scallops (festoon) on top of the diedral niches. These borrowings reveal an attitude of openness, of permeability to foreign forms, characteristic for Armenian art of this period, both in Cilicia and in the North-East. This trend is also reflected here in the use, not only of the above-mentioned Islamizing forms, but also of Occidental (or Byzantine-Western) iconographies.

During the period of Queen Tamar and her successors, a group of brick-built monasteries, present in both countries, deserves a special attention, as it seems to constitute an enigmatic transnational phenomenon, with an Islamizing component.

Thus, Queen Tamar's period, diversely reflected in Ani and in north-eastern Armenia, is one of the richest pages in the long relationship of exchanges and reciprocal enrichments between the Armenian and Georgian arts.

Résumé en géorgien / Summary in Georgian

[p. 151]

ანისის მულტიკულტურული გარემო: ახალი ტენდენციები თამარის მეფობის პერიოდის სომხურ არქიტექტურაში

პატრიკ დონაბედიანი

ექს მარსელის უნივერსიტეტი

ქართული სახელმწიფოს გაძლიერებამ თამარის მეფობის ხანაში (1184-1213) და სომხეთის ნაწილის გაერთიანებამ მისი ძალაუფლების ქვეშ ხელსაყრელი პირობები შექმნა სომხური ხელოვნების და ქართულ-სომხური კულტურული კავშირების განვითარებისთვის. სომხეთის სამეფოს ჩრდილო-აღმოსავლეთი ნაწილი და ქალაქი ანისი სელჯუკებისაგან გათავისუფლდა, 1199 წელს კი სომხეთის ახალი მმართველი, ზაქარია მხარგრძელი, ანისში დამკვიდრდა.

XII საუკუნეში ქალაქში ინტენსიური აღმშენებლობა მიმდინარეობს; ეს პროცესი მონღოლთა შემოსევებამდე გაგრძელდა. იმ პერიოდში აღდგა და განახლდა ძველი ძეგლები, აიგო მრავალი ახალი, სხვადასხვა დანიშნულების – სამოქალაქო თუ საკულტო – ნაგებობა. მათ შორის აღსანიშნავია მეფე სმბატ ბაგრატიუნის დროინდელი სათავდაცვო სისტემის მასშტაბური რეკონსტრუქცია. ქალაქის გალავნისა განახლება და კოშკების მშენებლობა როგორც ზაქარია მხარგრძელის, ისე ანელ მოქალაქეთა ძალისხმევით შედეგი იყო, რაც მრავალრიცხოვანი სომხური წარწერებითაა დადასტურებული.

ანისის მრავალკულტურული გარემო მრავალმხრივად საინტერესო: პირველ რიგში უნდა აღინიშნოს, რომ ქალაქი იმ ეპოქის სომხურ-ისლამ-

ური სინკრეტიზმის ერთ-ერთი უმნიშვნელოვანეს ცენტრს წარმოადგენდა. ამასთანავე, რადენიმე არქიტექტურული ძეგლი ქართულ გავლენაზეც მიუთითებს. წარმოდგენილი სტატია სწორედ მათ განხილვას ეძღვნება.

ქართულ-სომხური კულტურული კავშირების მკაფიო ნიმუშს წმ. გრიგოლ განმანათლების ეკლესია (1215) წარმოადგენს; მისი აგება ანისის ერთ-ერთ გამორჩეული მოქალაქისა და მეცენატის, ვაჭარ ტიგრან ჰონენ-ცის სახელს უკავშირდება. ეკლესიის ინტერიერი კედლის მხატვრობითაა შემკული. მეორე ასეთი ძეგლია ე.წ. ქართული ეკლესია (XIII ს.) – დარბაზული ტიპის ნაგებობა, რომელმაც შემოგვინახა კათოლიკოს ეპიფანეს ვრცელი ქართული წარწერა. სტატიაში მოცემულია ორივე ნაგებობის ხუროთმოძღვრული ფორმების ანალიზი; ასევე დეტალურადაა განხილული არქიტექტურული დეკორის, რელიეფისა და ფერწერის თავისებურებები. გარდა ამისა, პარალელურ მასალად მოხმობილია ჩრდილო-დასავლეთი სომხეთის ხუროთმოძღვრების ძეგლები, რომლებშიც ასევე აღიბეჭდა ქართული არქიტექტურისა და სახვითი ხელოვნების გავლენები: უმეტესად ესაა დარბაზული ნაგებობები, ქართული ტიპის ცენტრალურ-გუმბათოვანი ეკლესიები და სხვ.

Bibliographie / Bibliography

AGHAVNUNI, Mkrtich, *Հայկական հին վանքեր եւ եկեղեցիներ Սուրբ Երկրիս մէջ* = *Ancient Armenian Monasteries and Churches in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1931.

AMIRANASHVILI, Shalva, *Бeka Опузари* = *Beka Opizari*, Tbilisi, 1956.

CUNEO, Paolo, *L'architettura armena*, 2 volumes, Rome, 2008.

DONABEDIAN, Patrick, “Parallélisme, convergences et divergences entre Arménie et Géorgie en architecture et sculpture architecturale”, Isabelle AUGÉ et al. (dir.), *L'Arménie et la Géorgie en dialogue avec l'Europe du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, 2016, 19-130.

DRAMBIAN, Irina, KOTANJIAN Nikolai, “The Frescoes in the Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator Founded by Tigran Honents in Ani”, *Armenian Review*, Watertown, Ma., Winter 1990, 3, 41-65.

HAKOBYAN, Tadevos, *Անիի պատմություն. Գիրք երկրորդ (1045 թ. մինչև անկումը ու ամայացումը)* = *History of Ani. Second tome (from 1045 to the fall and abandonment [of the city])*, Yerevan, 1982.

HINTLIAN, Kevork, *History of the Armenians in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1976, reed. 1989.

JAKOBSON, Anatoly, *Очерк истории зодчества Армении* = *Outline of history of the Armenian architecture*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1950.

KAMSARAKAN, Adèle, “Les principaux sites d’Ani et de sa périphérie”, KEVORKIAN, Raymond (dir.), *Ani, capitale de l’Arménie en l’an mil*, Paris, 2001, 283-301.

KARAPETYAN, Samvel, *Ani 1050*, Yerevan, 2011.

KIRAKOS of GANDZAK, *Պատմութիւն Հայոց* = *History of Armenia*, K. MELIK-OHANJANYAN (ed.), Yerevan, 1961.

KUDAVA, Buba, “ტიგრან ჰონენცის ქართული წარწერა ანისში” = Tigran Honents’ Georgian Inscription in Ani, *ძველი ძეგლები დღეს* = *Ancient Art Today*, Tbilisi, 07/2016, 118-131.

MAHE, J.P., “Le testament de Tigran Honenc’ : la fortune d’un marchand arménien d’Ani aux XII^e-XIII^e siècles”, *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Compte rendu des séances de l’année 2001. Juillet-octobre*, 1319-1341.

MARR, Nikolaï, *Ани, книжная история города и раскопки на месте городища* = *Ani, a book history of the city and the excavations on the town site*, Leningrad-Moscow, 1934.

MNATSAKANYAN, Stepan, *Архитектура армянских притворов* = *The architecture of Armenian narthexes*, Yerevan, 1952.

MNATSAKANYAN, Suren, *Հայկական վաղ միջնադարյան մեմորիալ հուշարձանները* = *The Armenian Memorial Monuments of the Early Middle Ages*, Yerevan, 1982.

MNATSAKANYAN, Suren, “The Memorial Art of Armenia of the 9th-14th Centuries”, *Terzo simposio internazionale di arte armena, Atti (1981)*, Venice, 1984, 419-431.

MURADYAN, Paruyr, *Հայաստանի վրացերեն արձանագրությունները* = *The Georgian Inscriptions of Armenia*, Yerevan, 1977.

MURADYAN, Paruyr, “Проблема конфессиональной ориентации церкви Оненца (критический анализ источников и литературы)” = “The Problem of the confessional orientation of the church of Honents (critical analysis of sources and literature)”, *Кавказ и Византия* = *Caucasus and Byzantium*, 5, Yerevan, 1987, 36-66.

MUTAFIAN, Claude, *L’Arménie du Levant (XI^e-XIV^e s.)*, 2 tomes, Paris, 2012.

ORBELI, Hovsep, *Դիվան հայ վիմագրության, Պրակ I, Անի քաղաք* = *Corpus Inscriptionum Armenicarum, Liber I, Town of Ani*, Yerevan, 1966.

PRINGLE, Denys, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. A Corpus. Volume I, A-K*, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

SAHINIAN, Alexandr, et al., *G(h)eghard, Documenti di architettura armena*, 6, Milan, 1973.

SHAKHKYAN, Garnik, *Լորի. Պատմության քարակերտ էջերը* = *Lori. Stone pages of history*, Yerevan, 1986.

SILOGAVA, Valery, SHENGELIA, Kakha, *History of Georgia*, Tbilisi, 2007.

THIERRY, Jean-Michel, DONABEDIAN, Patrick, *Les arts arméniens*, Paris, 1987.

THIERRY, Michel et Nicole, *L'église Saint-Grégoire de Tigran Honenc' à Ani (1215)*, Louvain-Paris, 1993.

TORAMANYAN, Toros, *Նյութեր հայ ճարտարապետության պատմության* = *Materials of history of the Armenian architecture*, Yerevan, 1942.

TORAMANYAN, Toros, *Saint Gregory the Illuminator (Tigran Honents) Church Complex of Ani*, Yerevan, 2011.

YEVADIAN, Maxime (ed.), *Des serviteurs fidèles. Les enfants de l'Arménie au service de l'État turc*, Lyon, 2010.

Illustrations

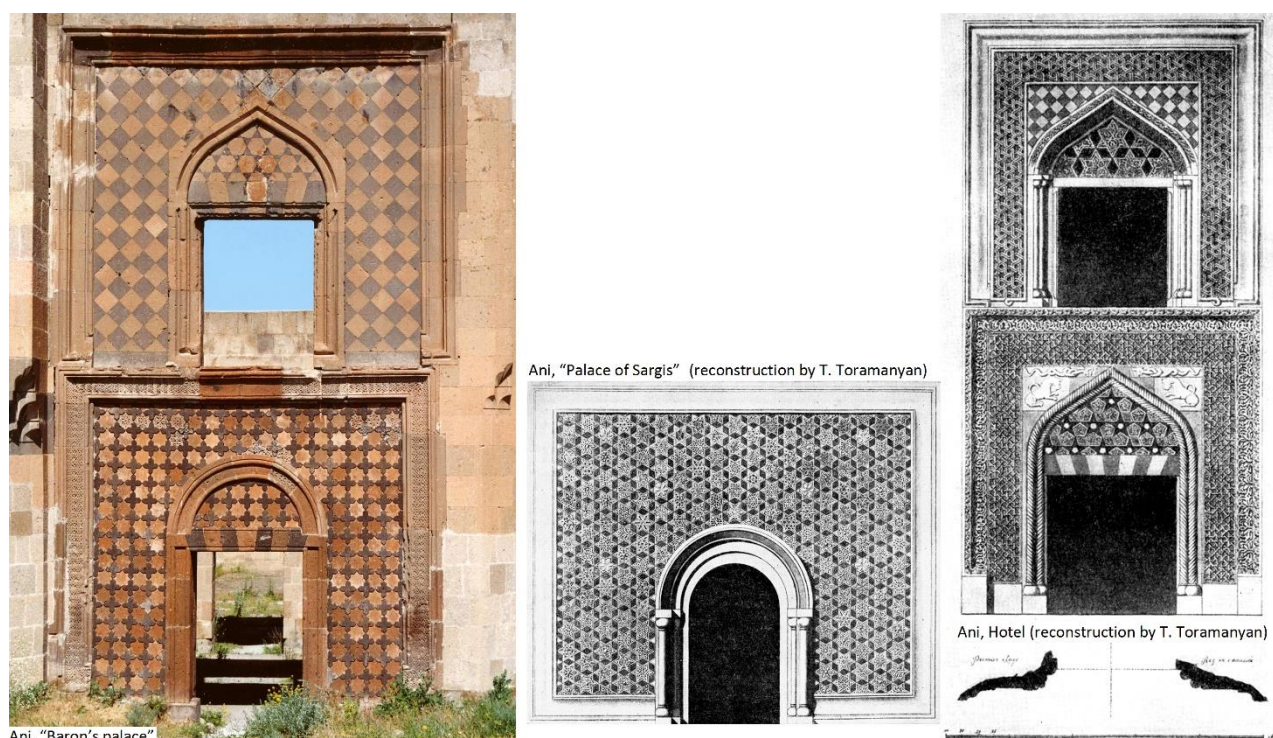


Fig. 1. Ani. Portals of civil and private buildings of the 13th c. A) The “Baron’s Palace” (Photo: P. Donabédian). B) The “Palace of Sargis”. C) A hotel. B) and C): Reconstructions by T. Toramanyan. B) After T. TORAMANYAN, *Materials*, 1942, 100, fig. 43. C) After A. JAKOBSON, *Outline*, 1950, 103, fig. 80



Fig. 2. “Armenian-Islamic syncretism” in architectural decoration of Armenian monuments of the 13th c. (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

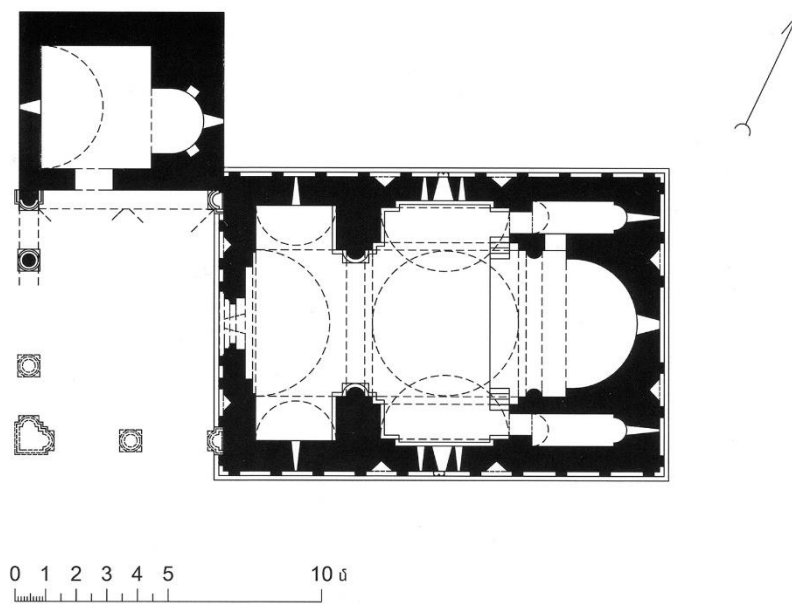


Fig. 3. Ani. Church of St. Gregory the Illuminator, built by order of Tigran Honents in 1215. Plan after KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 182, fig. 470. View from the northwest (Photo: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 4. Ani. Church of St. Gregory of Tigran Honents. Interior. Present state of the altar elevation (*bem*). View towards the apse (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

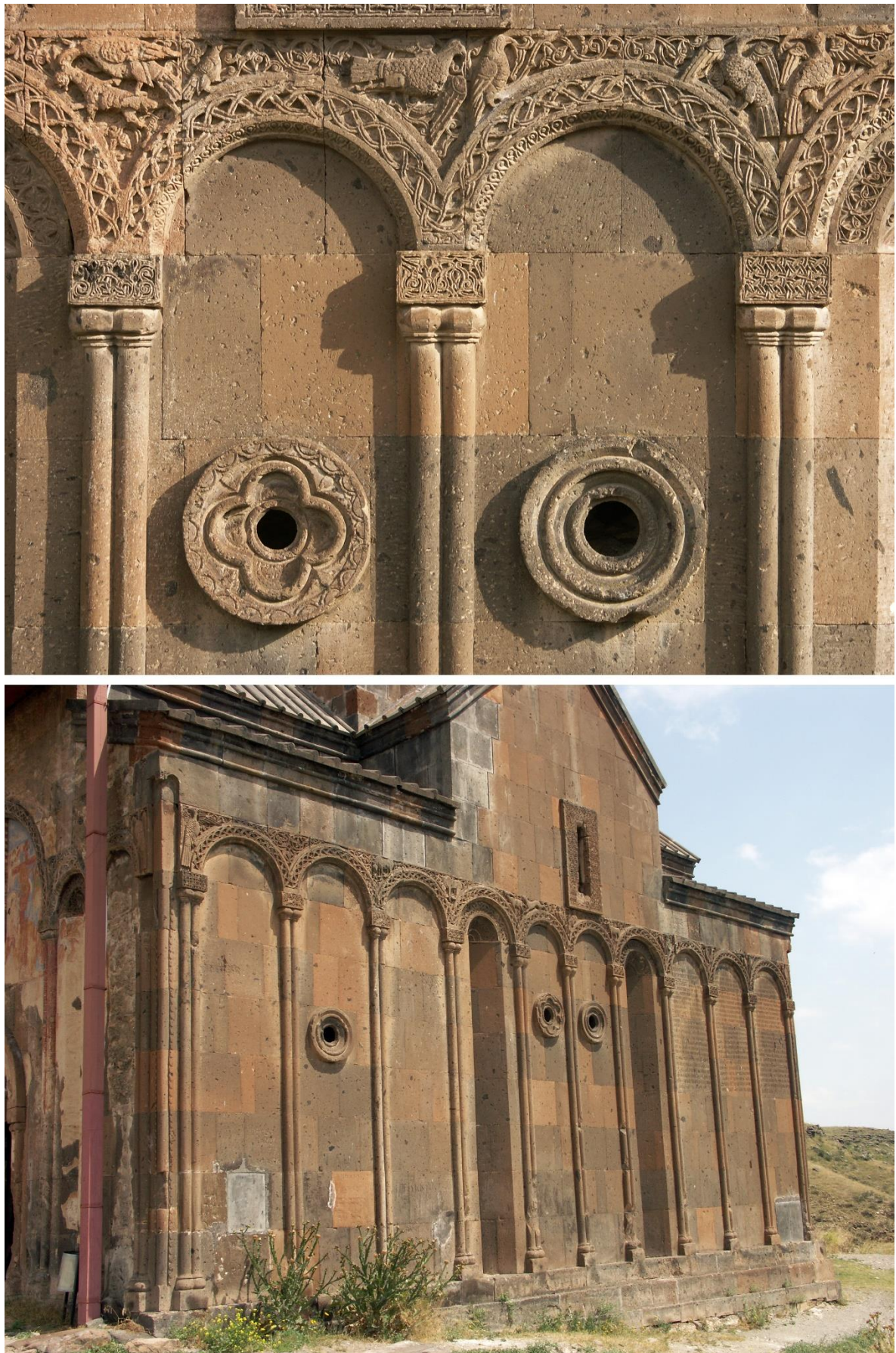


Fig. 5. Ani. St. Gregory of Tigran Honents.
Blind arcade-colonnade on the south façade (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

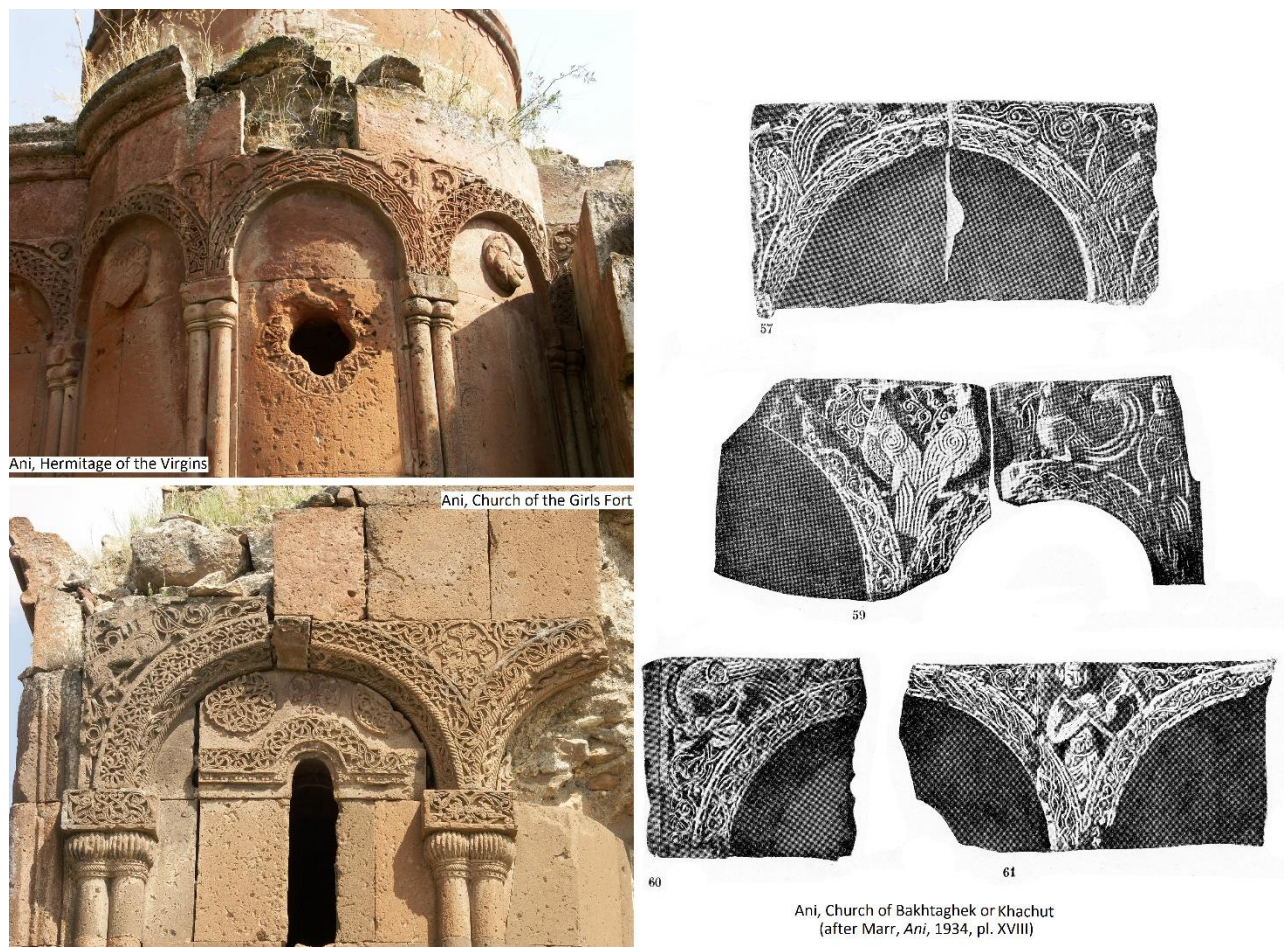


Fig. 6. Ani. Three contemporary examples (early 13th c.) of the same type of blind arcade as on the church of St. Gregory:

A) chapel of the Hermitage of the Virgins (Bekhents monastery);

B) church built by order of prince Zakare in the Girls Fort

(Photos: Patrick Donabédian);

C) church of Bakhtaghek or Khachut (Photos: after MARR, *Ani*, 1934, pl. XVIII)



Fig. 7. Ani. St. Gregory of Tigran Honents.
Sculpted ornamentation of the drum (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

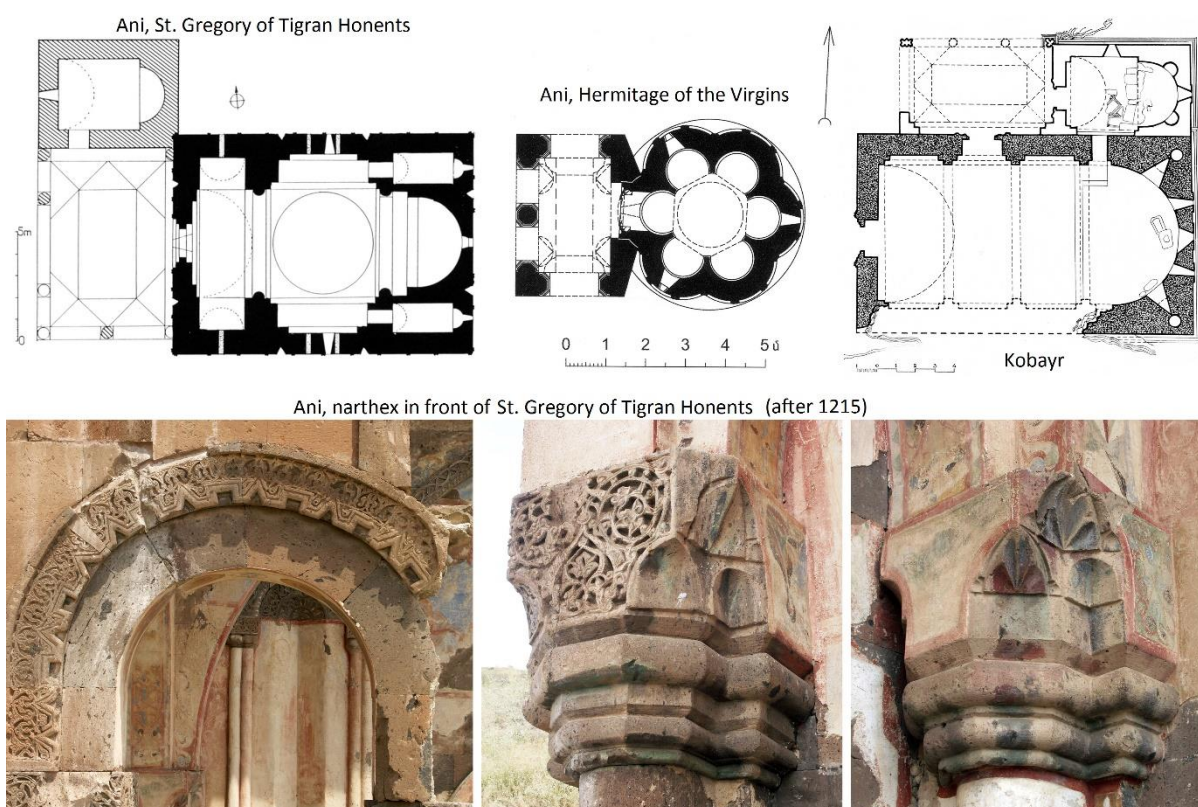


Fig. 8. Three galleries/porches of the same elongated, open type in Ani, St. Gregory, and the Hermitage of the Virgins, and at Kobayr monastery.

Plans after THIERRY, *St-Grégoire*, 9, fig. 5; KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 199, fig. 523; G. SHAKHKYAN, *Lori*, 1986, 43, fig. 12.

Ani, narthex before the church of St. Gregory. Details of sculpted ornamentation (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 9. Ani. St. Gregory of Tigran Honents. Interior of the western arm, south side. Scenes from the cycle of St Gregory's life (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 10. Ani. St. Gregory of Tigran Honents. Interior of the western arm, north side.
Scenes from the cycle of St Gregory's life.
At the northern extremity: Vision of Saint Nino
(Photos: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 11. Ani. Caves on the flank of the Tsaghkotsadzor river.
Mausoleum of Tigran Honents. *Deisis* on the back wall and archangels on the vault
(Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

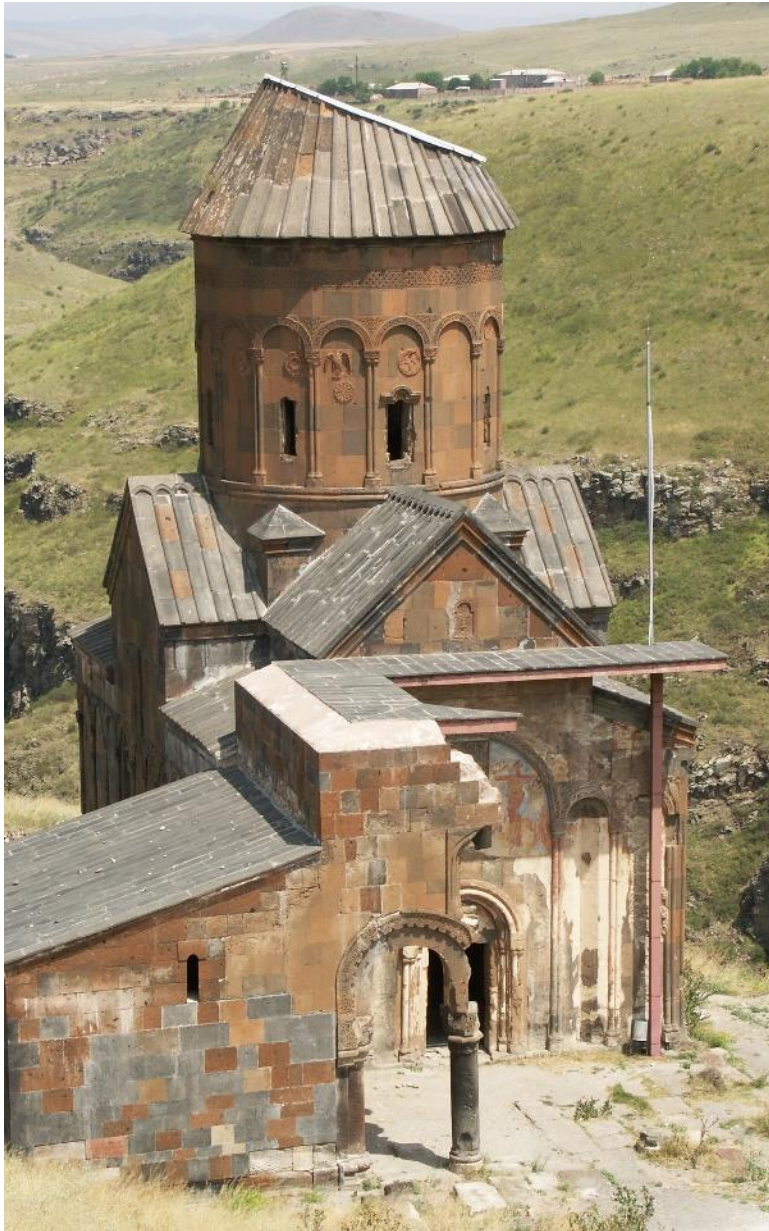


Fig. 12. Ani. St. Gregory of Tigran Honents. General view from the northwest.
Plate with cross on the western gable (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

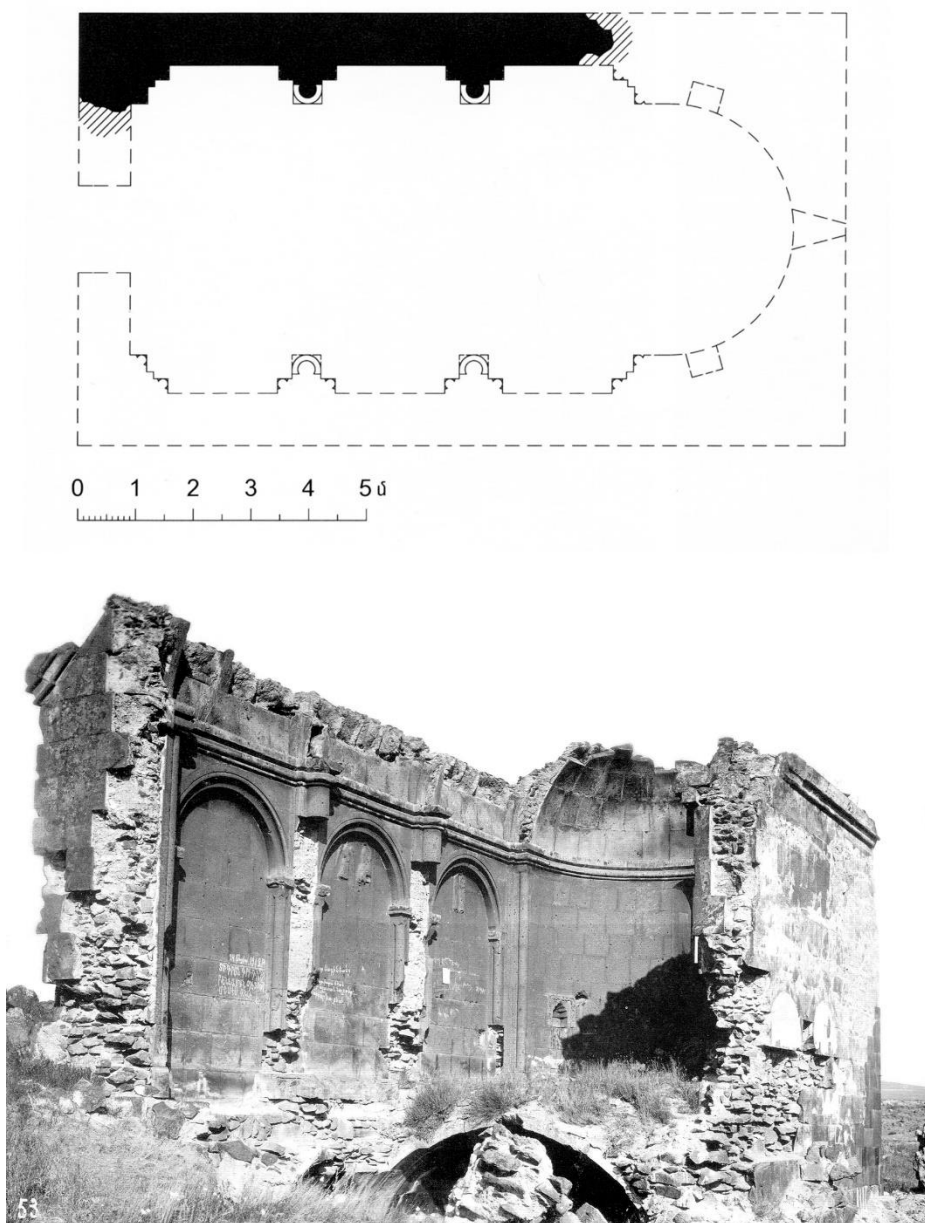


Fig. 13. Ani. “Georgian church”. Plan after KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 211, fig. 554 (measurement by T. Toramanyan, early 20th c.). Southwest view. Photo T. Toramanyan (early 20th c.). Archives of the History Museum of Armenia, Yerevan.

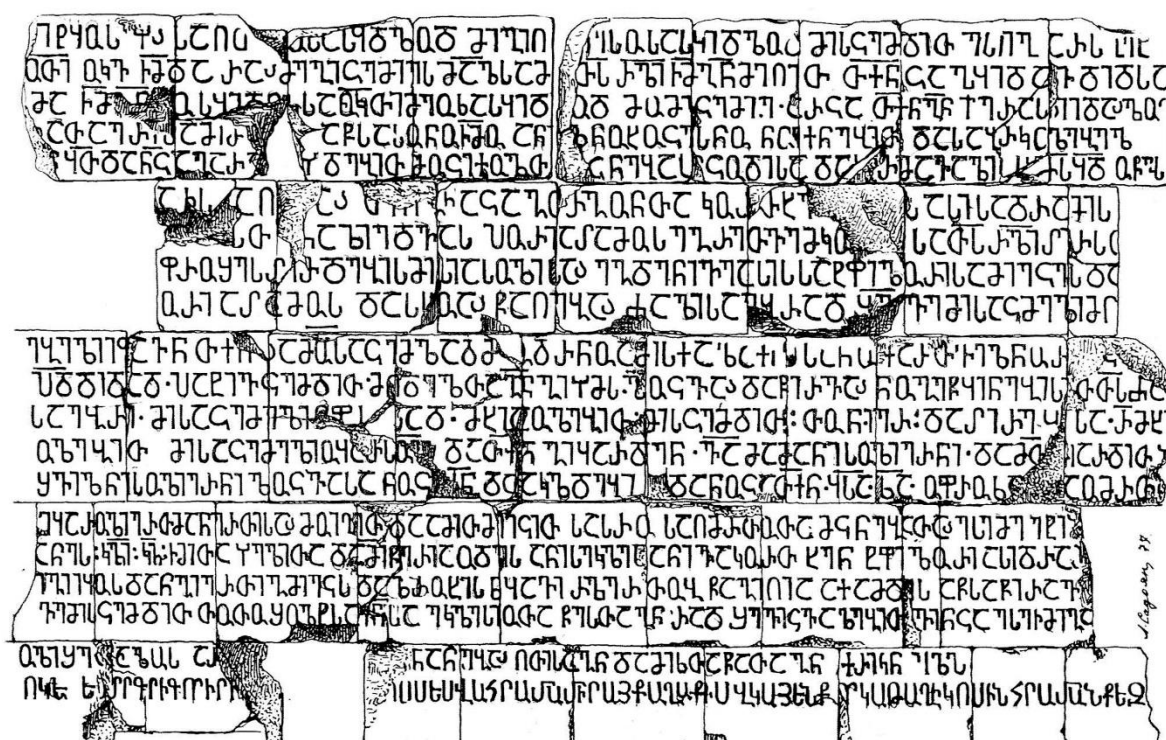


Fig. 14. Ani. “Georgian church”. Southeast view. Photo: Archives of the History Museum of Armenia. Inscription of the catholicos of Georgia Epiphane.
Copy by L. Sadoyan, after KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 210, fig. 551.



Fig. 15. Ani. “Georgian church”. Present state of the monument. The northern wall seen from the northeast and from the southwest. Detail of the capital surmounting the eastern half-column of the northern wall (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 16. Ani. “Georgian church”. Internal face of the northern wall. Two sculpted groups: the Annunciation and the Visitation (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)

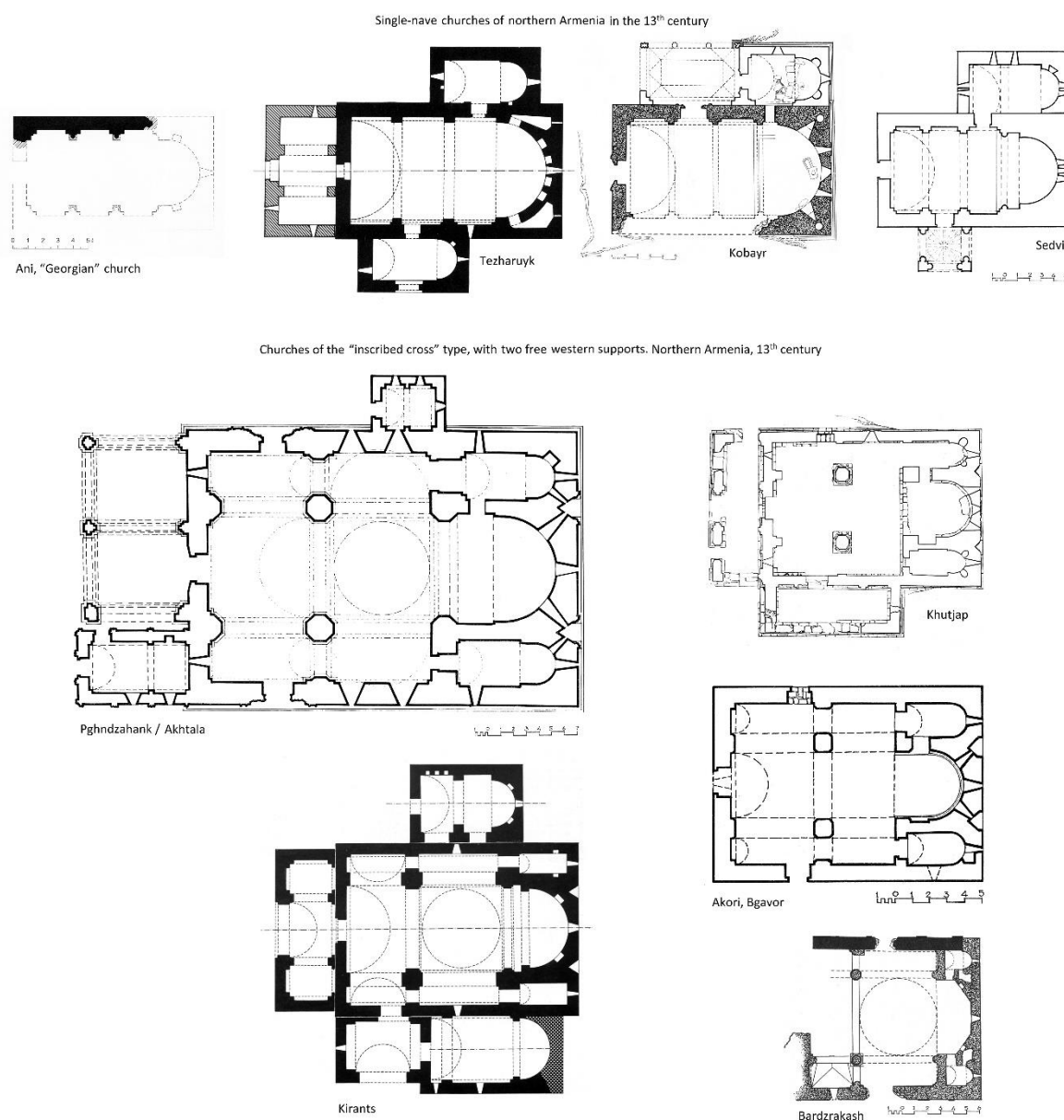


Fig. 17. Plans of 13th c. churches of northeastern Armenia,
 A) with a single nave, B) with two free western supports inside an “inscribed cross”.
 Reproduced from: KARAPETYAN, *Ani 1050*, 211, fig. 554 (Ani, “Georgian church”);
 CUNEO, *Architettura armena 1*, 144 (Tezharuyk), 337 (Kirants); SHAKHKYAN, *Lori*, 37,
 fig. 8 (Bardzrakash), 43, fig. 12 (Kobayr), 56, fig. 21 (Sedvi), 58, fig. 22 (Bgavor), 131,
 fig. 30 (Akhtala), 135, fig. 32 (Khutjap)



Fig. 18. Pəghəndzahank/Akhtala. South, north and west portals of the main church (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)



Fig. 19. Compositions with a high cross on top of the façade, on 13th c. churches of Armenia, inspired by Georgian models (Photos: Patrick Donabédian)