

signed the oath were: "Abraham, abbot of the holy catholic monastery", that is of Etchmiadzin. "Samuel of St. Hripsimè, Babylas (Babelas), abbot of the monastery of St. John, Khosrov of Oshagan, Havidian of Aghivart, David of Yerevan, Ismael of Carrni, Hoonanes of Avan, Israel of Budghavank, Tchotchig of Aramouynk (Keerk Tughtotz: "of Yerevan"), Hohanig of the Mansion of Artavazdes, Abas and Vortiag and Abraham of Parbi, Michael of Aghtz,^{7a} Gorgis, Oukdanes, Krikoris of Arouj, Cosmas of Oort, Mayen of the other Arouj, Hohanig of Ardzap, Simeon of Tadavan, Oukhdanes of Daroon, Samod of Bagaran, together with other abbots."⁸

This list puts before us a remarkable fact to which we would like to call the attention of scholars of Armenian architectural art. First, most of the churches mentioned here are basilicas, the ruins of which still exist. The present monastery church of St. John is a work of the XIIIth Century, but to its north there is a one-aisled church, certain features of which make it clear that it was founded before the VIIth century. Although subjected to much renovation it possesses very ancient remains, for example the engaged columns of the entrance (fig. 11)⁹ and, inside, the remains of a horse-shoe arch, which is characteristic of our ancient basilicas. The monastery church of St. John is mentioned in authentic documents of the years 603-606.¹⁰ The tradition that this church was built by St. Gregory the Illuminator, that is in the beginning of the IVth century, is, then, of very ancient origin. The church of Oshagan was likewise a basilica, judging from the remains of the foundations and also from the painting of the artist Gousigian which is now in the Etchmiadzin library. That church is mentioned in the first half of the

7a. From here to the end of the quotation the text in the Keerk Tughtotz reads: "Michael of Aghtz, Giorgis of Arouj, Cosmas of Oort, Mayen of the other Arouj, Hohanig of Ardzap, Simeon of Tadavan, Samod of Bagaran, together with other abbots".—Translator's note.

8. Keerk Tughtotz, p. 151.

9. Compare fig. 11 with the sideposts of the

Vth century on the occasion of the funeral of St. Mesrob.¹¹

The two basilicas of Aghivart, also known as Yeghvard, were revealed to us by the excavations of Khachig Vartabed. One of them is three-aisled, no later than the middle of the VI century. The other is one-aisled and more ancient. In the old cemetery on the hill there is a third church, a one-aisled chapel; the sculptures on the pilaster capitals resemble those of Kassakh and the Digor. The church of Carrni is also a basilica; the northern wall with its buttresses and also other parts have remained. Three abbots from Parbi are mentioned. The ruins of the two basilicas are still in like those of Digor and Kassakh. The other, which is one-aisled, was converted into a fort in the XIIIth century and strengthened with thick walls on the outside; because of this its windows have remained in better condition; its arches are very archaic; the arms of its crosses are of equal length; etc.

The remains of the church of Aghtz show that it is one of our oldest basilicas. Near it there is a subterranean structure, belonging to the IV-Vth century, consisting of two opposite tombs dug in walls like the catacombs, with the flagstone of the sides covered with sculptures. The southern tomb has two slabs: one is a cross with equal arms within a circle (fig. 12). On the horizontal arms of the cross there are two doves facing each other. The surface of the circle is covered with bunches of grapes, buds and leaves.¹² The other sculpture shows a nude human figure who has shot with an arrow the wild boar facing him.

The sculpture on the flagstone of the northern tomb is floral and is quite unique in ancient Armenian sculpture. Unfortunately our attempts to photograph it clearly

south-eastern entrance of Yererook: in Strzygowski 413, or better in Irink, p. 133.

10. Keerk Tughtotz, p. 111.

11. Goriun, p. 45, Venice

12. See our "Havoutz Tarri Amenapurguichiu" ("The Saviour-of-All of Havoutz Tarr"), Jerusalem, 1937, p. 47.