

the native Armenian art predominated over the basilica, retaining only the length of the latter, in Budghavank the Mesopotamian tradition with its embellishments is still strong.

The ancient church in the village of Dzarrayishen of Abaran, now called Molla Ghasum, built by the Kuntounik provides us with another example of a building in the style and type of Budghavank, and probably earlier in date. The Kuntounik, like the Amadounik, were an ancient noble family. The lands of the Kuntounik extended over the eastern flank of Mt. Aracadz in the region of the modern Abaran bordering on the estates of the Amadounik whose centers were Oshagan and Budghavank, as we have already seen. The centre of the Kuntounik must have been Kassakh (now called Bash Abaran) with its two very ancient basilicas, one large and the other small. Here we found an inscription in Greek of King Tiridates containing a reference to the Kuntounik. The inscription was taken to the Etchmiadzin Museum. Within the boundaries of the domain of the Kuntounik was the ancient Yeghibadroush, now called Damtchuloun, a few of whose houses have been built over a very ancient castle or fort, where there are also important remains of monuments of the Xth century and of later times. A little to the south of Yeghibadroush, about three miles away is the ancient Dzarrayishen (now called Molla Ghasum) with the remains of a basilica and of an ancient sepulchral stele (fig. 19). The capitals of the church are like those of the churches of Kassakh and Digor, but the church itself is of the type of Budghavank and was built about the same time, perhaps a little before. It is smaller than Budghavank, but judging from the northern wall it had exactly the same construction inside as Budghavank. The other parts of this interesting edifice have unfortunately been destroyed during renovations. On the face of the pier of the right chancel in large and beautiful uncial letters is written «ԳՐԻԳՈՐ ԳՆԹՈՒՆԵԱՅ ՏԷՐ» (Krikor, Lord of the Kuntounik). A Kuntouni prince of this name

is mentioned in the Xth century; he was the brother of Hassan who was the adversary of King Ashod Yergat.²⁶ But this Krikor cannot be the founder of the church. The external buttress—piers of the north wall, similar to the piers of the north walls of the churches of Yererouyk and Karni, prove that the church is a work of the Vth or VIth centuries and not of the Xth century. According to the testimony of aged dwellers of the village the church was domed.

We should also mention two small basilicas, that of Asdvadzungal and particularly the one in the village of Apna. The lintels of the southern entrances of these two churches (fig 20) have the same sculptures as that of the church of Kassakh. Their capitals are also of the same type and are similar to the capital of the Tagi Bostan cave of Chosroes Abrouez,²⁷ omitting of course the figure sculpture of the goddess Anahid, and replacing it by a cross (fig. 21). There is also a sepulchral stele at Apna, badly defaced, but similar to those connected with basilicas, which will be discussed in the second part of this work. There was another church in the village of Gharakilise on the road to Leninagan; it has been demolished and a new church built in its place. Here there was also the cradle-shaped gravestone of Hassan Kuntouni, characteristic of the Arabian period of the Xth and XIth centuries. It had been laid upon the grave of a deceased villager, but we transferred it to the Etchmiadzin museum. As for the church we are unable to say to what century and type it belonged.

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But by means of Budghavank another matter is made clear: that the same process of development has taken place in the case of the rectangular church, with a dome resting on free-standing supports. In his

26. History of Catholicos John, pp. 179, 180.

27. Sarre, Die Kunst des alten Persien, 1922; or F. Sarre u. Herzfeld, Iranische Felsreliefs, p. 211, Fig. 110.