

## **CROSS STONE ART AS INSEPARABLE PART OF DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIIEVAL ARCHITECTURE OF ARTSAKH**

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*Nagorno Karabakh is the homeland of Artsakh school of Armenian architecture where many significant values of the Armenian architectural heritage have been created: churches, monastery complexes, fortifications, engineering structures, outstanding works of cross stone art, obelisks, palaces, notable folk houses many of which have their honorable place not only in the treasury of the Armenian people but also in the treasury of universal architecture and culture.*

*The architectural school established in Nagorno Karabakh has gone through the same main stages of development as the other schools of pan-Armenian architecture. It began to develop in the pre-Christian period in the fourth century with the adoption of Christianity passing through the flourishing period of the Middle Ages. Having peculiarities coming from local conditions and traditions, the generality of Artsakhi architecture with pan-Armenian architecture is clearly reflected in the layout and spatial composition of the buildings, in design solutions, construction techniques, traditional building materials, proportions, ornaments, cross art etc.*

*During the medieval period the church architecture was mainly developed in Artsakh: churches, temples, chapels and monasteries were mainly built. At that time, literature and cross stone art were also developing rapidly.*

*The cross stones are very typical of medieval Armenian monuments in Artsakh. The cross stones are the symbol of the originality of the Armenian medieval culture.*

**Key words:** architectural heritage, Middle Ages, structure, church, obelisk, monastery, Artsakh school, culture, monument, cross stone art.

### **Introduction**

Cross stone art is an inseparable part of Artsakhi architecture. These cross stones with numerous and varied illustrations are scattered everywhere in the territory of Artsakh, in the yards of monasteries and churches, in the free environment of nature, in cemeteries, they are built in the walls of religious structures, in enclosures and elsewhere. As a rule, they are works of high mastery, enriching, aesthetically evaluating and making colorful the historical - cultural environment. Especially cross stones of Khatravank, Koshik Anapat, Gandzasar, Davivank and others are bearers of decoration and high sculptural art.

### **Conflict settings**

The aim of this article is to observe the process of formation and development of the medieval Artsakh School of Architecture with the pan-Armenian architecture. The topic of the article is the discovery of the process of formation and development of architecture in the Middle Ages in Artsakh School of Architecture using cross stone art.

### **Research results**

The path of formation, development and improvement which the Armenian cross stone art had passed is clearly visible in the example of Artsakh cross stones. Here the earliest cross stones (VIII-IX centuries) often have irregular, prolonged, rectangular and circular forms sometimes directly attached to the ground or on a pedestal that almost does not rise above the ground. They still do not have the composition typical of further cross stones, they are far from stable and regulated forms, moreover, it is difficult to differ the concepts of cross stone and cross sculptures and they are out of date and inscriptions. The most important thing in the early cross stones is their specific practical significance,

the artistic decoration is modest and assimilated with the composition, the stone retains its materiality. The texture is still rough and the monumentality is accentuated. Some scholars consider the issue of relating the origins of cross stones to the earliest ninth century very suspectable. And also B. Ulubabyan stated: «And we think that the researchers who think that the well-known cross stone originated and developed only in the 9th century are wrong» [47, p. 38].

The earliest Armenian cross stones date back to the 9th century, there are 8 cross stones 2 of which are located in Artsakh, one in the Metsarants Monastery in Kolatak village (only the cross stone pedestal built by monastery's bishop Solomon in 853 still stay) and the other is granite cross stone-memorial preserved in Vaghuhas village dated in 866. The literature includes a significant number of ancient undated cross stones from Ghushchi, Nakhijevan, Syunik and also from Artsakh (Noragyugh, Khutavank) which are dated to the VIII century or the first half of the IX century. Early examples of cross stones attempted to preserve and strengthen the Christian faith (which were very necessary in the threat of assimilation). The main element of artistic decoration and the bearer of the idea of goodwill or wish is the cross with a variety of simple drawings, often schematic, with edge curves or in or out of the background with total size with equal wings or small differences in the lengths of wings length. Early cross stones are found mainly in places having rich cultural traditions of the early Middle Ages and outside the plains in Syunik, Artsakh, Lori, Tavush and elsewhere.

In the second half of the 19th century there were cross stones having rising leaf wings from lower wings («Flower Cross»), cross stones with simple plant and animal sculptures. A number of sculptural ornaments were adopted on ancient monuments, basilica churches and other structures (almond leaves, pomegranate, olive, palm leaves sculptures etc.) in connection with pagan and early Christian beliefs. As a rule, the cross wings have hemispheres at the two-branched ends extending outwards and in the center, some of which are covered with longitudinal linear excavations. The stepped pedestals have not been formed yet, the geometric drawing is lacking both in cross stones and in individual elements in general. The elegant decoration and the iconography typical of the early medieval art are simplified and generalized. The sculptures are significantly softer and smaller. In the 10th century inscriptions on cross stones were often engraved. The inscriptions cover not only the backs of the cross stones but also the faces, the gaps between the cross sculptures and even the ribs. The goals and motives for standing cross stones are incomparably expanding and cross stones become more and more popular monuments in the coming centuries.

A. Yacobson wrote about the development of Armenian cross stones: «The twelfth century is noted as a new stage in the artistic carving of cross stones which is a flourishing stage of Armenian stone plastics, which at that time, especially in the 13th century, reached exceptional perfection. The cross stones serve as a shining addition to the architectural works of the time in which they are often placed» [48, p. 217].

XII-XIII centuries are the period of flourishing of cross stone art in Artsakh and in Armenia in general. Folk and household sculptural art in which the themes of war, agriculture, hunting, the abundant depiction of weapons, household items and costumes occupy a large place become especially popular. Their value is further enhanced by the fact that they are usually accompanied by protocols. Presenting the secular motives of cross stones in Khachen, H. Orbely concludes that «cross stones with human images were first found in this part of Armenia, in Khachen, where it is generally a favorite occupation to decorate and carve high sculptures, where you can see wide scenes of high sculpture in addition to the usual titular sculptures you may meet in other places of Armenia» [8, p. 196]. (From what H. Orbely said, it may seem probable from the abundance of cross stones in Khachen that the origin of the place name Khachen is connected with the name of cross). Sculptures related to everyday life and activity and high-tech sculptures depict episodes in the history of Artsakhi life, for example, on more than one and a half dozen cross stones the scenes of war, soldiers and horse riders are depicted in Koshiki Anapat.

The cross stones of Dadivank are highly valued. «The two cross stones of Dadivank are one of the unique monuments of ancient Armenian art. And even if they are not considered the most beautiful in their appearance, it is impossible to show any other more perfect than they are» [49, p. 19].

The foreigner said: «I was lucky to see hundreds of cross stones» - writes G. Anokhin visiting Dadivank, - «but these two are incomparable with their unimaginable tiny and various laces» [50, p. 14]. Many cross stones connected with the names of Prince Hassan Jalali and his wife, Arzukhatuni, cross stones in Khaghbakyan family cemetery in Havaptuk Monastery, in Khatravank built by Sophia and in Koshik Anapat are very highly appreciated. Within certain limits of likeliness, each of the thousands of Armenian cross stones including those from Artsakh, has its own peculiarity of composition and its own scale of ornaments. They show the infinity of imagination, high taste and dedication of building masters.

The image of the cross forming core is explained as the «cross of light» (Agatangeghos), «the sun» (Kaghankatvatsi), the tree of life, the idea of God's crucifixion and resurrection. Artsakhi people always being in the conditions of attacks and oppression of foreign dictatorship felt the need of God's support the most and most often addressed the cross stone, as N. Mar said, «that closest recorder» which was the best intercessor between God and Armenian». It seems that Ed. Mezelaytis said especially about Artsakhi cross stone: «Cross stone is an Armenian phenomenon, a unique symbol of Armenia. The stone carved on the stone symbolizes the suffering, the blood and the sacrifices which cruel history forced on this small number of ancient people. And the vegetation that covers the entire background of the slab symbolizes the vital force of those people whom disasters, death and genocide were powerless to» (Pravda, July 2, 1983).

The spirit of national unity and commonality, the essence of cultural heritage and the sequence of events are also evidently manifested in Artsakh cross stone art. Many expressions and manifestations of artistic perceptions, inventive tricks and elements are visible in the cross stone art of Mother Armenia and its Artsakh part which is the birth of the same roots and prehistory, base of development, the result of national commonality and unity.

### Conclusion

Monuments of memorial architecture of Artsakh (cross stones, monuments) are closely related to the stylistic features of other regions of Armenia, especially to the memorial structures of Syunik, the wall-cross monuments the best examples of which are those located in the complex of Bri Yeghysi Monastery.

Medieval Armenian cross stone art of Artsakh has influenced the formation and development of Artsakh School of Architecture.

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## ԽԱՉՔԱՐԱՅԻՆ ԱՐՎԵՍԸ ՄԻՋՆԱԴԱՐՅԱՆ ԱՐՑԱԽՅԱՆ ՃԱՐՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԶԱՐԳԱՑՄԱՆ ԱՆԲԱԺԱՆ ՄԱՍ

**Ն.Ա. Միքայելյան**

*Շուշիի տեխնոլոգիական համալսարան*

Լեռնային Ղարաբաղը հայկական ճարտարապետության արցախյան դպրոցի հայրենիքն է, որտեղ ստեղծվել են հայ ճարտարապետական ժառանգության նշանակալից շատ արժեքներ՝ եկեղեցիներ, վանական համալիրներ, ամրաշինական, ինժեներական կառույցներ, խաչքարային արվեստի աչքի ընկնող գործեր, կողոթներ, մելիքական ապարանքներ, ժողովրդական տների ու շահագրավ օրինակներ, որոնցից շատերը տեղ են գրավում ոչ միայն հայ ժողովրդի, այլև համընդհանուր ճարտարապետության և մշակույթի գանձարանում:

Լեռնային Ղարաբաղում ստեղծված ճարտարապետական դպրոցը անցել է զարգացման այն նույն հիմնական փուլերով, ինչպես համահայկական ճարտարապետության մնացած դպրոցները: Այն սկսել է զարգանալ նախաքրիստոնեական շրջանում, այնուհետև անցնելով չորրորդ դարում քրիստոնեության ընդունմամբ և միջնադարյան ծաղկուն շրջանի միջով: Ունենալով տեղական պայմաններից և ավանդույթներից բխող յուրահատկություններ, համահայկական ճարտարապետության հետ Արցախի ճարտարապետության ընդհանրությունը ակնհայտորեն արտահայտում է շինությունների հատակագծային և ծավալատարածական հորինվածքներում, կոնստրուկտիվ լուծումներում, շինարարական տեխնիկայում, ավանդական շինանյութերի կիրառման ձևերում, համաչափություններում, զարդամոտիվներում, խաչքարային արվեստում և այլն:

Միջնադարյան շրջանում Արցախում հիմնականում զարգացած է եղել եկեղեցական ճարտարապետությունը՝ եկեղեցիներ, տաճարներ, մատուռներ և վանքեր: Այդ ժամանակաշրջանում բուռն զարգացում էր ապրում նաև գրագրությունը և խաչքարային արվեստը:

Արցախում միջնադարյան հայկական հուշարձաններից շատ տիպական և տարածված են խաչքարերը: Խաչքարերը հանդիսանում են հայ միջնադարյան մշակույթի ինքնատիպության խորհրդանիշ:

**Բանալի բառեր.** ճարտարապետական ժառանգություն, միջնադար, կառույց, եկեղեցի, կոթող, վանք, Արցախյան դպրոց, մշակույթ, հուշարձան, խաչքարային արվեստ:

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## ХАЧКАРНОЕ ИСКУССТВО КАК НЕОТЪЕМЛЕМАЯ ЧАСТЬ РАЗВИТИЯ АРЦАХСКОЙ АРХИТЕКТУРЫ СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЬЯ

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Нагорный Карабах является родиной арцахской школы армянской архитектуры, где создавались многие значимые ценности армянского архитектурного наследия: церкви, монастыри, комплексы, оборонительные и инженерные строения, выдающиеся произведения

хачкарного мастерства, монументы, меликские особняки, интересные примеры народных жилых домов, многие из которых занимают достойное место не только в архитектурной и культурной сокровищнице армянского народа, но и в мировой.

Созданная в Карабахе архитектурная школа прошла те же основные этапы развития, что и другие общармянские архитектурные школы. Она зародилась в дохристианскую эпоху, пройдя затем сквозь принятие христианства в четвертом веке и расцвет средневекового периода. Обладая особенностями, обусловленными местностью и традициями, всеобщность Арцахской и общармянской архитектуры проявляется в объемно-пространственных строениях, в планировке, в конструктивных решениях, в технике строения, в использовании традиционных строительных материалов, в пропорциях, в форме, в хачкарном искусстве и т.д.

В средневековье в Арцахе в основном развивалась церковная архитектура – церкви, храмы, часовни, монастыри. В тот же время также активно развивалась письменность и хачкарное искусство. Хачкары в Арцахе являются самыми типичными и распространенными средневековыми армянскими памятниками. Хачкары являются символами самобытности армянской средневековой культуры.

**Ключевые слова:** Нагорный Карабах, архитектурное наследие, средневековье, сооружения, церкви, монумент, монастыри, Арцахская школа, культура, памятники, хачкарное искусство.

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