

NEWLY DISCOVERED COLLOSUS FROM SANCTUARY CALLED «LUSAVORCHI SAR» NEAR SOS VILLAGE OF ARTSAKH

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Abstract

Architectural-archaeological diggings were carried out in the sanctuary called «Lusavorchi Sar» located in the vicinity of Sos village of Artsakh in 2019 as a result of which fragments of early medieval memorial monuments as well as traces of other buildings were discovered (archaeolog V.Saafaryan). The sanctuary is rich in many fragments that speak of other, yet undiscovered structures. For the purpose of the study, metrical, documentary, analytical and comparative works of the newly discovered material were carried out, the historical memorials were observed related to the shrine, the period and the similar historical-architectural material in the surrounding areas. As a result of the study and combination of the fragments, the reconstruction drawings of the monumental colossus were given. The territory of the sanctuary has not been fully explored and may new materials and explorations may be revealed. It is necessary to study the found materials, to classify them according to time and typology and to present them to the scientific community in order to complete the existing database of studies on the cult and historical monuments of Artsakh.

Key words: early medieval colossuses, sanctuary, winged cross, stone colossus, cross bearer, pillar.

Introduction

The Christian cultural heritage of Artsakh originates from the roots of the history of the Christian period of Armenians. Early Christian architectural monuments are located in various regions of the historical territory of Artsakh. Traces of the aforementioned heritage were found in the vicinity of Sos, Chartar, Berdashen and Machkalashen villages of the historical Haband province now called Martuni region[1], in Tigranakert [2] and, of course, in Amaras. The Tomb of Grigoris is the best-preserved evidence of the latter. The newly opened group of monuments is closely related to Grigoris in terms of historical, chronological and architectural composition. The place was a shrine-pilgrimage place with a stone anchor placed in the center as an object of worship (Fig.1). Candles were lit on the anchor for years, as a result of which

the stone anchor was cracked and divided into two unequal parts. The latter became the reason for the cleaning works.

Materials and methods

The monument is situated to the north of Sos village of Martuni region on the forest fill at the altitude of 993 m above sea level. Chartar and Machkalashen villages are located nearby.

“Aghjkaberd” is located in Berdashen where an early medieval stone crucifix, pillar head of a monument and other fragments have been preserved [3]. Historically, the region has been the center of preaching and spreading Christianity. The latter circumstance is confirmed by the fact that the first Mashtots school in Artsakh was founded in this region. Bishop Makar Barkhudaryan writes: «Mountain of Lusavorich is raised above the head of my village, towards the east. Above it there are many fallen stones, house yards and a church ruin. Traditionally it is told that St. Gregory Lusavorich climbed up to the mountain pray till dawn while he was preaching and establishing churches. When the disciples brought the body of the Catholicos St. Grigoris Aghvan from Dorbant to the mountain, the soldiers of the martyred king, following the officers and soldiers who captured his body came here. However, the disciples, relying on God and turning to the place where Saint Grigoris prayed, were freed from the persecutors and then took the body to the Amaras monastery for burial and after fled to Armenia» [4].



Fig. 1 Stone anchor in the middle of sanctuary as the object of worship and the floor raised in the east

During the cleaning of the sanctuary, many pottery materials and fragments of lamps, candlesticks and tiles were found. The discovered stone fragments and their belonging to the monuments are of great interest to us. It should be first noted that after cleaning the sanctuary, it was found that the area around the anchor was enclosed irregularly in a quadrangle with

plan dimensions of 9.7x6.0m (Fig. 2). The three corners of the enclosed area are 97, 86, 103 degrees and the northeast is 65 degrees.

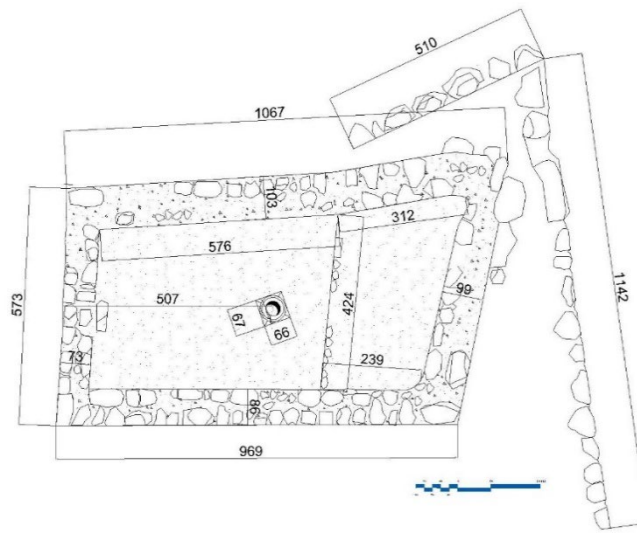


Fig. 2 Floor plan of the sanctuary. Topography

The enclosed area has approximately east-western orientation on its length. Archeologist Vardges Safaryan finds that the structure is a Christian church or chapel. But the opinion remains doubtful [5]. The structure has no basement, the walls are simply built with stones put on each other and even the walls are built with approximate angles. To the south-east the floor is arisen by small amount of soil. Entrance edge stones in the western part of enclosed area were put probably using old angle stones (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Entrance in the western part

A section of wall with rough stones passes through the eastern part of the described area. It has a correct north-south orientation. Details of stone colossus were found in the area, which suggest that the place was sanctified with cross colossuses and established as a Christian environment [6]. Among the first finds outside the enclosure is a stone square anchor. It has a cube-shaped surface where the opposite sides are not equal. The dimensions of the anchor platform are equal to 49 and 52.5 cm in the floor plan, 42 and 46 cm in the upper platform, respectively, with a cube height of 44 cm. Three of the facades are sculpted with simple isosceles crosses (Fig. 4, 5, 6).



Fig. 4 I facade of the first tetrahedral anchor



Fig. 5 II facade of the first tetrahedral anchor



Fig. 6 III facade of the first tetrahedral anchor



Fig. 7 IV facade of the first tetrahedral anchor



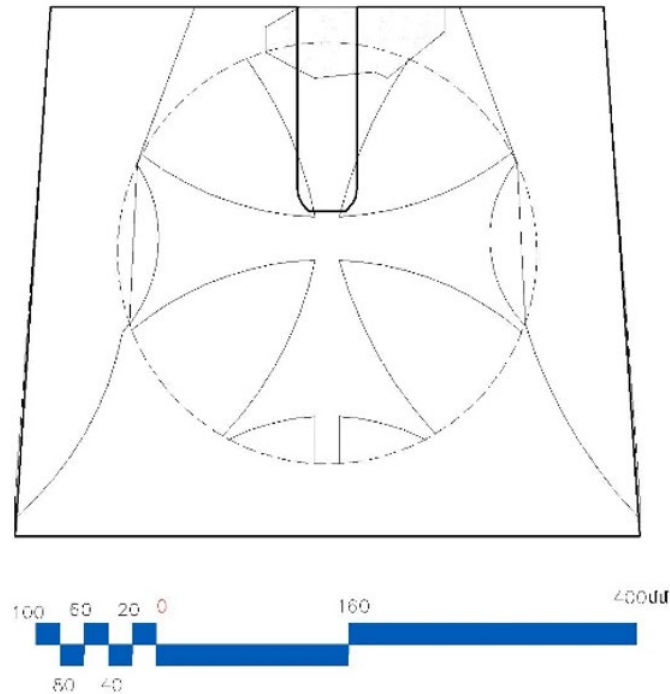
Fig. 8 Lower platform of the first anchor



Fig. 9 Upper platform of the first tetrahedral anchor

The fourth facade is simple (Fig. 7) and probably, it was the unobserved part of the colossus. The upper surface of the stone becomes octagonal polygon in the floorplan with uneven sides.

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**Fig. 10 Anchor topography**

There is a hole with a diameter of 90 mm and a depth of 170 mm (Fig. 8), on the platform where the pillar stone was placed the purpose of which will be described below.

The anchor-table sides are inclined to the vertical plane (Fig. 10), as in the case of Avan colossus [7, 8]. From the treatment of the surface of the lower platform of the anchor, it can be seen that the latter sat on the limestone platform of the main anchor (Fig. 8), which served as a pedestal for the anchor table [9].

**Fig. 11 Tetrahedral pillar, general view**

Another detail of the described monument is the tetrahedral pillar (Fig. 11). It was found in a broken state, but all the parts are there and give an idea of what the monument was like. The pillar has 30 cm sides at the base of the table and 17 cm sides at the top. The lower part is tetrahedral. In the middle part, the part becomes octahedral, and in the main part it becomes tetrahedral again (Fig. 12).

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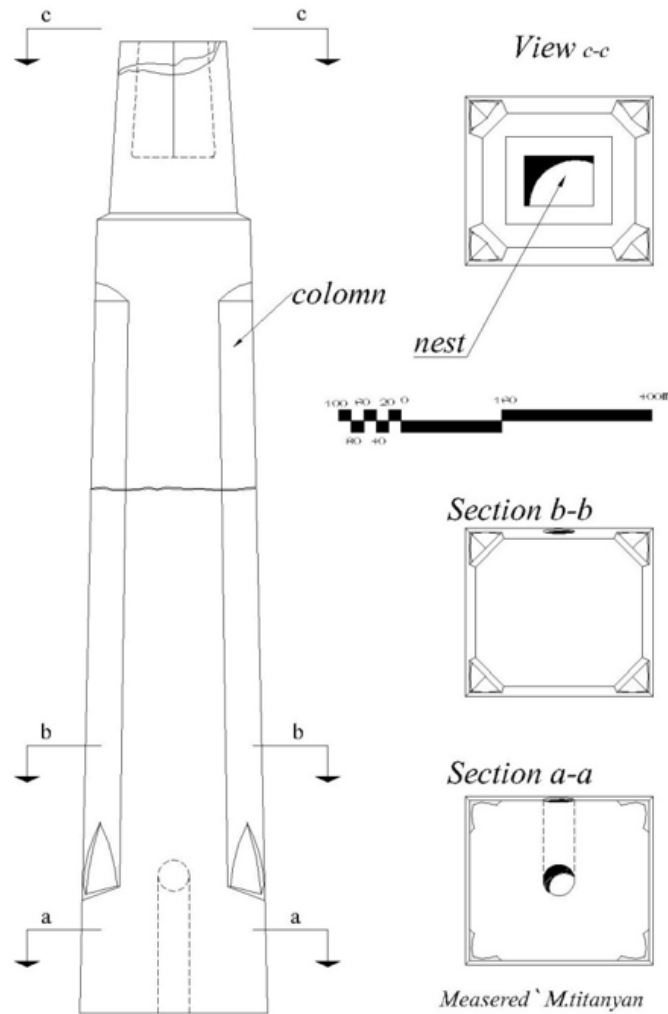


Fig. 12 Tetrahedral pillar, topography



Fig. 13 Chapter of tetrahedral pillar

The chapter is decorated with plant motives / bear grapes leaves/ which originate from Greek-Roman influence [10]. A cavity with a depth of 180 mm and a plan size of 11 cm on the sides is made inside, where probably the foot of the cross raised on it was placed (Fig. 13, 14). In the lower part of the pillar, at a height of 24.5 cm from the floor, there is a horizontal

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cavity with a diameter of 10.5 cm which descends at an angle of 90° in the longitudinal axis of the pillar to the surface of the lower platform of the pillar (Fig. 15).



Fig. 14 Nest of chapter of tetrahedral pillar

Research results

Collecting the details and pieces we can imagine how the pillar of tetrahedral colossus was (Fig. 15).

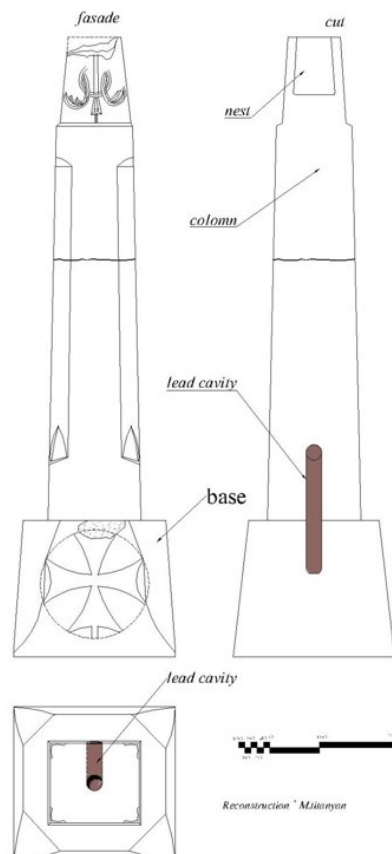


Fig. 15 General view of anchored tetrahedral pillar, reformation

As a result of excavations another stone detail was found which is very alike the chapter of stone colossus described above (Fig. 16, 17).



Fig. 16 View of chapter cavity



Fig. 17 External view of chapter

It repeats the composition of found chapter of tetrahedral colossus with its sizes, slopes and solutions (Fig.18).

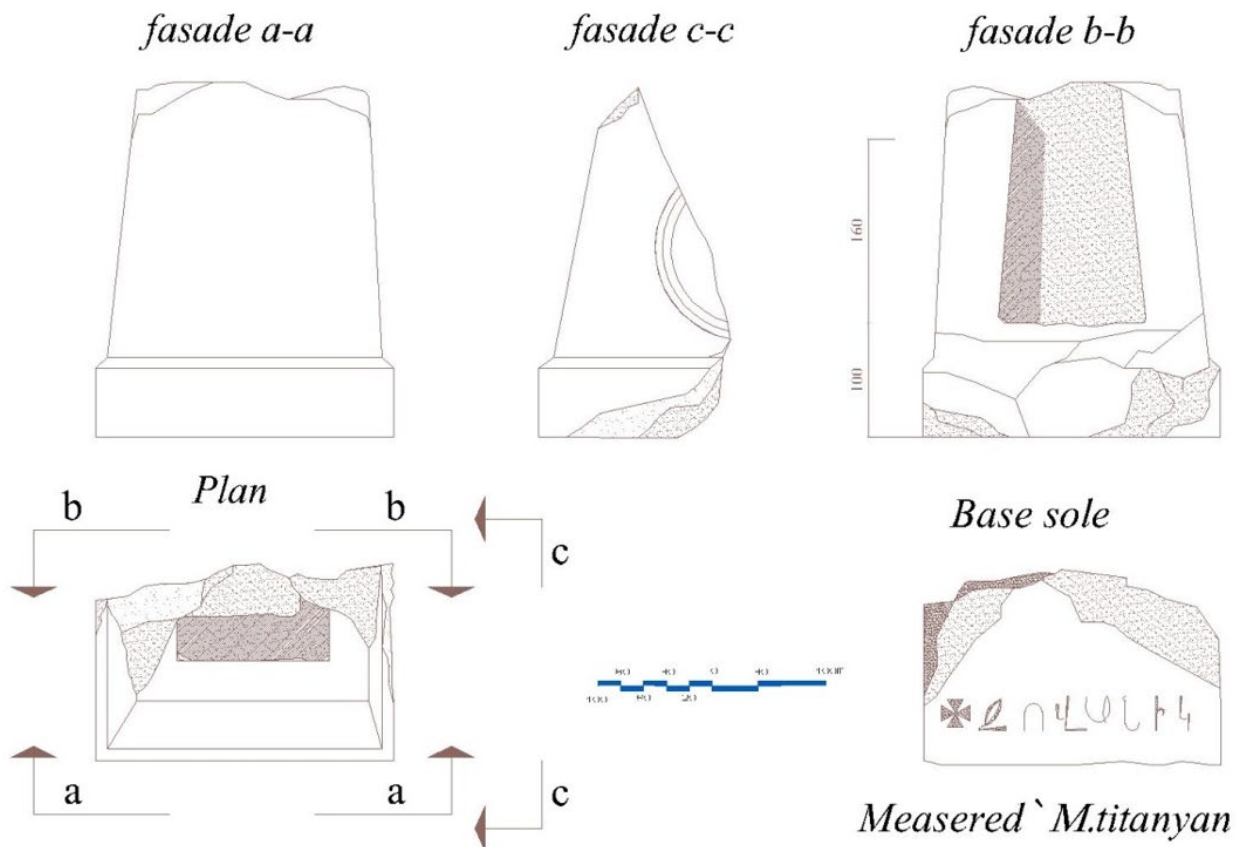


Fig. 18 Chapter, topography (floor plans, facades, sections)

The fragment is broken by its central axis but the lower platform has mainly preserved its primary view (Fig.19). Probably it was sloved with the pillar not by joint piece but by a node[8].



Fig. 19 External views of chapter

It is noticeable that on the sole of chapter a cross of equal wings and name of Jovanik are engraved (probably Hovanik) (Fig. 20).



Fig. 20 Name engraved in the edge of the chapter

As result of diggings in the ancient site other stone fragments were also found which should be considered as early medieval according to their composition, scale, art of stone recycling and engravings /crucifix (Fig. 21-22), wing cross stone fragments (Fig. 23-27), engraved chapters (Fig. 28-29), wall stones and other fragments/.



Fig. 21, 22 Pieces of crucifixes



Fig. 23-27 Pieces of winged cross stones



Fig. 28, 29 Engraved chapters

Conclusion

Cleaning works were carried out by the permission of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Artsakh in the sanctuary of Lusavorchi Sar in the vicinity of the village of Sos, Martuni region in 2019. In the area surrounded by walls of irregular stones, a stone anchor was found which was an object of worship, had an early medieval composition and belonged to the mentioned period according to historical traditions taking into consideration the crosses and stone carvings [11]. The studies of the material show that there were early medieval colossus in the sanctuary, which confirmed the Christian belonging of the place. According to the found material, the reconstructed monument probably had a four-part composition: the ground anchor, the anchor-table, the pillar and the winged cross (fragments of the latter were found on the spot).

The results of the further archeological and architectural studies planned in the sanctuary will provide an opportunity to give scientifically and accurate answers about the history of the region, the development of the early Christian school of architecture and cultural affiliation.

Gratitude

This research became possible by the sponsorship of ex-resident of Sos village, now living in Russia beneficent Yasha Dadayan. The interest arisen by the found material made possible the diggings in Lusavorchi Sar sanctuary which illuminated the unknown pages of early medieval history.

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ՆՈՐԱՀԱՅՏ ԿՈԹՈՂՆԵՐ ԱՐՑԱՆԻ ՍՈՍ ԳՅՈՒՂԻ «ԼՈՒՍԱՎՈՐՉԻ ՍԱՐ» ԿՈՉՎՈՂ ՍՐՔԱՏԵՂԻԻՑ

Տիտանյան Մ.Կ.

Շուշիի տեխնոլոգիական համալսարան

2019թ. Արցախի Սոս գյուղի շջակայքում գտնվող «Լուսավորչի սար» կոչվող սրբատեղիում իրականացվել են ճարտարապետա-հնագիտական հետազոտություններ, որի արդյունքում ի հայտ են եկել վաղ միջնադարյան մեմորիալ հուշարձանների բեկորներ, ինչպես նաև այլ շինությունների հետքեր: Սրբավայրը հարուստ է բազմաթիվ բեկորներով, որոնք խոսում են այլ, դեռևս չհայտնաբերված կառույցների մասին: Ուսումնասիրության համար իրականացվել են նորահայտ նյութի չափագրական, փաստագրական, վերլուծական և համեմատական աշխատանքներ, դիտարկվել է սրբավայրի հետ կապված պատմական հիշատակությունները, ժամանակաշրջանը և շրջակա տարածքներում առկա նույնանման պատմա-ճարտարապետական նյութը: Բեկորների ուսումնասիրության և համադրության արդյունքում տրվել են կոթողային հուշարձանի վերակազմության գծագրեր: Սրբավայրի տարածքը դեռևս ամբողջությամբ ուսումնասիրված չէ և կարող է ի հայտ բերել նորանոր նյութեր և անակնկալներ: Անհրաժեշտ է ուսումնասիրել գտածո նյութերը, դասակարգել ըստ ժամանակի և տիպաբանության, ներկայացնել գիտական հանրությանը՝ լրացնելու համար Արցախի պաշտամունքային և կոթողային հուշարձանների վերաբերյալ առկա ուսումնասիրությունների շտեմարանը:

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НЕДАВНО ОБНАРУЖЕННЫЕ СТЕЛЫ ИЗ СВЯТИЛИЩА «ЛУСАВОРЧИ САР» АРЦАХСКОГО СЕЛА СОС

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В 2019 г. в святилище «Лусаворичи сар» /«Гора Просветителя»/, расположенном в окрестностях арцахского села Сос, были проведены архитектурно-археологические исследования, в результате которых были обнаружены фрагменты раннесредневековых мемориальных памятников, а также следы других построек. Святыня богата многочисленными фрагментами, которые свидетельствуют о других, еще не обнаруженных сооружениях. С целью изучения недавно обнаруженного материала были проведены метрологические, документальные, аналитические и сопоставительные работы, рассмотрены исторические упоминания, связанные со святыней, период и аналогичный историко-архитектурный материал, имеющийся на прилегающих территориях. В результате изучения и совмещения фрагментов были даны чертежи реконструкции монументального памятника. Территория святилища еще

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полностью не исследована и там могут быть обнаружены новые материалы и сюрпризы. Необходимо изучить найденные материалы, классифицировать их по времени и типологии, представить научному сообществу, чтобы пополнить сокровищницу исследований культовых и монументальных памятников Арцаха.

Ключевые слова: раннесредневековые памятники, святилище, крылатый крест, стела, подножие креста, капитель стелы.

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