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ARCHEOLOGIE ET ENVIRONNEMENT 2

ASHKHARBEEK KALANTAR

ARMENIA

FROM THE STONE AGE TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Selected Papers

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Cover : bronze figure of a women found in Erebuni ; 1st millennium B.C.

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*Ce livre est d'abord un hommage à Ashkharbek Kalantar. Historien et archéologue du début de ce siècle qui s'achève, élève de Nikolay Marr notamment, il a eu le courage et le mérite de se consacrer à la recherche historique dans une des régions les plus complexes du Proche-Orient : le Caucase méridional.*

*Ses travaux sont peu connus en Occident et beaucoup d'entre eux ont paru dans des ouvrages aujourd'hui introuvables ; ce volume en regroupe des extraits qui, à notre avis, apportent des éléments pertinents et intéressants à plus d'un point de vue : précisions relatives à certaines découvertes — en particulier celles des inscriptions urartéennes — relevés et inventaire de monuments superbes dans la région de Shirak ou encore l'exploration de ces réseaux d'irrigation préhistoriques sur les pentes de l'Aragatz et des monts Geghama. Nous avons suggéré d'abréger quelques passages vieillis par le temps afin de mieux mettre en évidence la qualité de ces recherches d'une part, l'originalité et la justesse de certaines hypothèses d'autre part.*

*Comme tant d'autres savants de l'Union Soviétique, Ashkharbek Kalantar sera déporté au début de 1938 et mourra quatre ans plus tard dans un camp anonyme, victime d'un homme et d'un régime dont il n'y a pas lieu de prolonger ici la mémoire.*

*Pour en faciliter la lecture, nous avons renoncé au système de transcription scientifique des noms et toponymes arméniens. Nos collègues spécialistes de l'histoire arménienne voudront bien nous en excuser. Sauf pour quelques exceptions, les citations d'A. Kalantar et de G. Karakhanian ont été respectées.*

*Le lecteur intéressé par des informations complémentaires récentes sur certains sites paléo-chrétiens mentionnés consultera avec profit les articles de M. Thierry parus dans la "Revue des Etudes Arméniennes" et intitulés "A propos de quelques monuments chrétiens du vilayet de Kars (Turquie)", ainsi que l'ouvrage de P. Cuneo, "Architettura Armena" publié à Rome en 1988.*

*Il nous est agréable, enfin, de remercier les Prof. N. Garsoïan et M. Thierry qui ont bien voulu faire d'utiles suggestions pour le glossaire. Les erreurs qui pourraient subsister encore n'incombent cependant qu'à l'auteur de ce bref dictionnaire.*

ReP



*Ashkharbek Kalantar with his wife Tamara  
in Erevan, 1923.*

## CONTENTS

Kalantar's Studies of Ancient Armenian Civilizations (by G. Karakhanian)	.....	1
<b>SELECTED PAPERS OF A. KALANTAR</b>		
<b>The Prehistoric Periods :</b>		
Stone Age in Armenia	.....	15
An Ancient Irrigation System in Armenia	.....	29
<b>The Urartian Period :</b>		
A New Chaldean Cuneiform Inscription from the Village of Janfida	.....	37
The Nor-Bajaset Inscription of Russa I	.....	43
The Odzaberd Inscription of Russa I	.....	47
<b>Old Vagharshapat :</b>		
The Excavations of 1931	.....	53
<b>The Medieval Periods :</b>		
Preliminary Report on the Trip to Lori in Summer 1913	.....	69
The Ruins of a Basilica in Zor	.....	70
The Ruins of an Ancient Caravanserai Northwest of Zor	.....	74
<b>Unpublished Documents on Medieval Monuments of Shirak :</b>		
Mren	.....	75
Arjo-Aridj	.....	76
Alaman	.....	79
The Church of Tekor	.....	80
Khtskonk	.....	84
Agarak : The Ruined Basilica and the Cruciform Church	.....	90
Jalal	.....	95
Tspni	.....	96
Nakhijevan	.....	97
Bagaran	.....	99
From Bagaran to Mren	.....	103
Glossary (by G. Karakhanian)	.....	107

THE CHURCH OF TEKOR

(August 24, 1920)

The giant multicentury church of Tekor has collapsed and presents a pitiful picture. The image is so disturbing that at first one needs some time to recover from the shock. The fact that only a few years ago it was standing completely intact and that now due to our carelessness half of it is down, scattering numerous pieces inside and out, allowing them to be lost for ever, cannot have any justification and permits no consolation. Half of the southern wall has fallen down; the height is up to the arches of the covered windows. Most of the stones above the bases of the pillars have fallen. The columns of that side are also down, as well as the whole roof with the dome. The entire eastern wall with the apse and two chapels has remained intact, along with the northern side, the nave and the pillars. The west wall has lost its top, the upper part of the left corner and its facing stones, with only the clay layer being left. Fallen stones heap up chaotically inside the church and along the outer southern side, leaving a disorderly and desolate scene.

From the stricken southern side it can be seen that the frail beams erected horizontally along the walls in two rows have furthered the destruction process. The southern wall has tumbled down along that line. Those beams can be seen in the chapels, deep empty tracks being left in the walls. The part of the roof on the northern apse, which has survived up to now, and the upper semicircular part of the western wall are in a very unstable position and in danger of falling down. The same holds for the remaining southern wall, which has large cracks. The northern wall of the church above the doors is damaged by bullets. The signs are rather new. Probably Turkish soldiers were amusing themselves here!

August 24-27, 1920<sup>3</sup>

The church has four doors: one to the west, one to the south and two to the north. All were closed off long ago with rather large stones except for the western door on the northern side. The remaining open door is lower; a large stone has been fixed in below the lintel. Apart from the doors, all middle-size and large windows were also closed on three sides with good solid masonry of finished stones. This is old work, as is shown from the inscription on the inner face of the side of one of the northern windows: A.D. 1049. The window of the apse has been also made narrower and smaller. Only the small upper windows were left open. They are situated in pairs higher than the upper cornice on three sides, in the centers of the walls above the pediments. Narrow windows are left open as well. Traces of frescos and inscriptions can be seen.

The church of Tekor is built on a slope, in the crest of a hill stretching to the south. A narrow, elongated Urartian fortress stands right in front of the church, slightly to the east on the edge of the crest. The remnants of all four walls are visible, the entrance from the west, has had a path from the east. There are remnants of numerous buildings, especially on the south slope of the hill. The stones of the walls, up to 2-4 m in size, are unprocessed. It is a structure of an ancient Urartian type.

<sup>3</sup> 24th and 25th of August were very rainy, which disturbed us much.

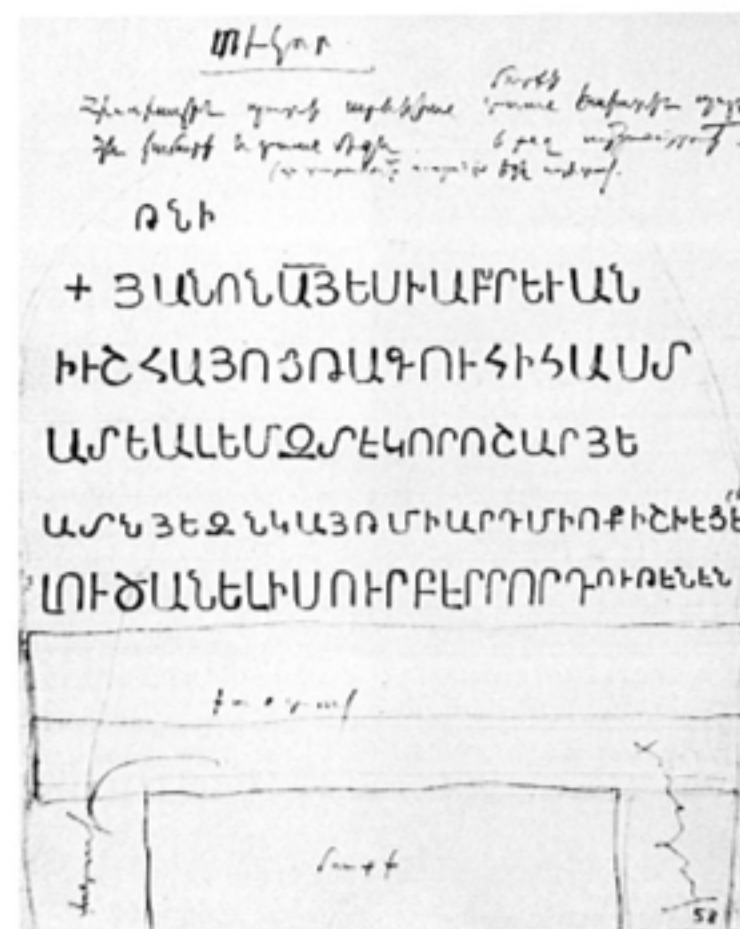
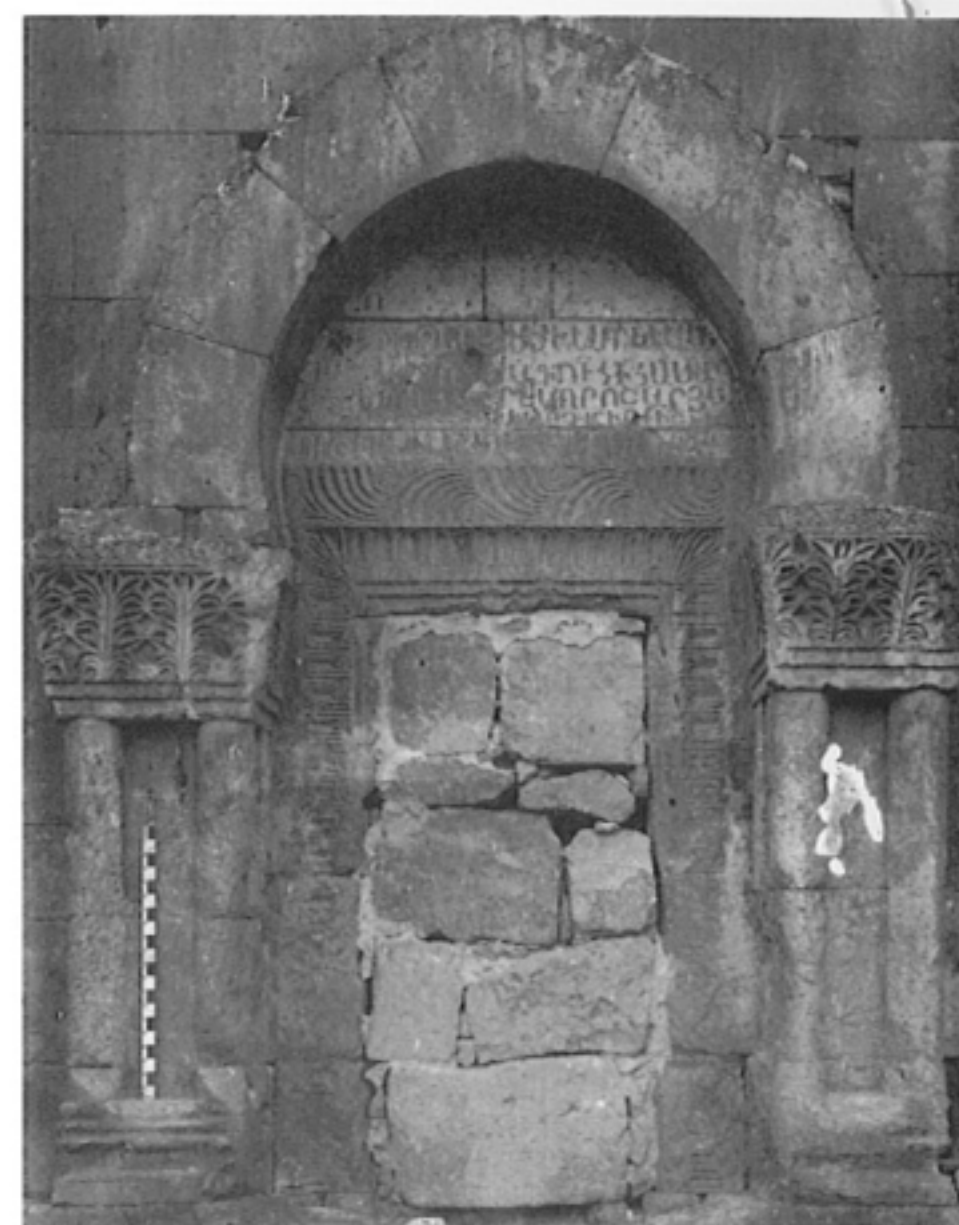


Fig. 8 and 9. Tekor. The inscription of Queen Khosrovamuysh.

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 ՅԱՒՈՐԴԱՍՍՏԱՆԵՆ ՏԵՄԵՈՅԻՔ

Fig. 10. Tekor. The inscription on the inner side of the northern wall.

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 ՈՒՄԻ  
 ԿԱՐԱԳԵՄ

Fig. 11. Tekor. Graffiti (upper left) and two other inscriptions on the northern wall.

ԻՆՏԴՐԿ ԵՍՍԱՍԵԼԷԿՈՒՅՄ

Fig. 12. Tekor. Inscriptions on the eastern wall.

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Fig. 13. Tekor. Other inscriptions on the eastern wall.

ՄԻՍՍՐ  
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Fig. 14. Tekor. Khatchkar (964 AD). G. Hovsepian (before 1910)