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# Manuscript Heritage of Artsakh and Utik





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2022

MATENADARAN  
MESROP MASHTOTS INSTITUTE OF  
ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS

MANUSCRIPT  
HERITAGE OF  
ARTS‘AKH  
AND UTIK‘

HRAVARD HAKOBYAN  
TAMARA MINASYAN  
VAHE TOROSYAN



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The book presents the manuscripts produced in the historical provinces of Armenia, Arts‘akh and Utik‘, in the medieval period. The majority of these manuscripts are now housed in the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran. First, the history of the region is briefly presented, afterwards the places (monasteries, settlements) where the manuscripts were created are discussed. Reference is made to the content of the manuscripts, their scribes, painters, and bookbinders. In a separate chapter, the miniature painting of manuscripts is presented in more detail. The book is intended for specialists in the field of Armenian history, culture, and art, as well as for the general public.

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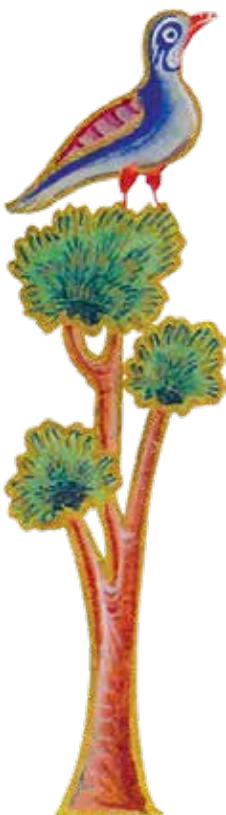
## FOREWORD

Ancient manuscripts, prepared for centuries across nearly every region of Armenia, and within Armenian settlements all over the world, occupy a significant place within Armenia's rich cultural heritage. The provinces of Arts'akh and Utik' were important centers of manuscript production. This book is dedicated to the codices copied and illuminated there. During the medieval period, renowned scriptoria functioned adjacent to large monasteries, however, manuscripts were also produced in various Armenian settlements.

Due to historical circumstances, after being part of Armenia's earliest kingdoms—Urartu, Yervanduni (Orontids), Artashesians (Artaxiads), and Arshakids (founded and existed in the Armenian Highlands)—for more than a millennium, in the second half of the fifth century, Arts'akh and Utik' were included in an administrative unit formed by the Sasanian Empire called Arran (Aḥuank') (see chapter one for more details). After the adoption of Christianity, the church of Aḥuank' proper merged with the Armenian Apostolic Church and accepted its supremacy. The bishops, and later, the catholicoi of Aḥuank', were ordained by the Catholicos of All Armenians.

*The History of the Land of Aḥuank'*, written by the seventh-century Armenian author Movses Kalankatvats'i, is the primary source for the early history of Aḥuank' proper, Arts'akh, and Utik'. Thanks to this work, remarkable pieces of Armenian literature have survived—*The Constitutional Canon of King Vach'agan III the Pious*, *The Story of Vach'agan*, *Prince Jevanshir's Prayer*, and *Elegy on the Death of the Great Prince Jevanshir* (in alphabetical acrostic verse) by secular writer Davt'ak K'ertol (Davit'ak the Poet).

Many theological, historical, educational, and ritual manuscripts, as well as translated works and commentaries, were produced in Arts'akh and Utik'. The works of Armenia's most prominent authors, such as Movses Kalankatvats'i,



Movses Daskhurants'i, Hovhan Mayragomets'i, Hamam Arevelts'i, Davit' Alavkaordi, Mkhit'ar Gosh, Vanakan Vardapet, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, and their students, were recorded and copied in this region. Although their autograph manuscripts have not survived, numerous copies of these works have come down to us.

Fortunately, a significant number of extant manuscripts, largely copied between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, testify to the unique development of the Armenian literary and artistic culture in these regions.

Exceptionally valuable manuscripts, written across Armenia, were brought and stored in the monasteries, churches, and villages of Arts'akh and Utik'. They have survived to this day thanks being safeguarded within that impregnable land.

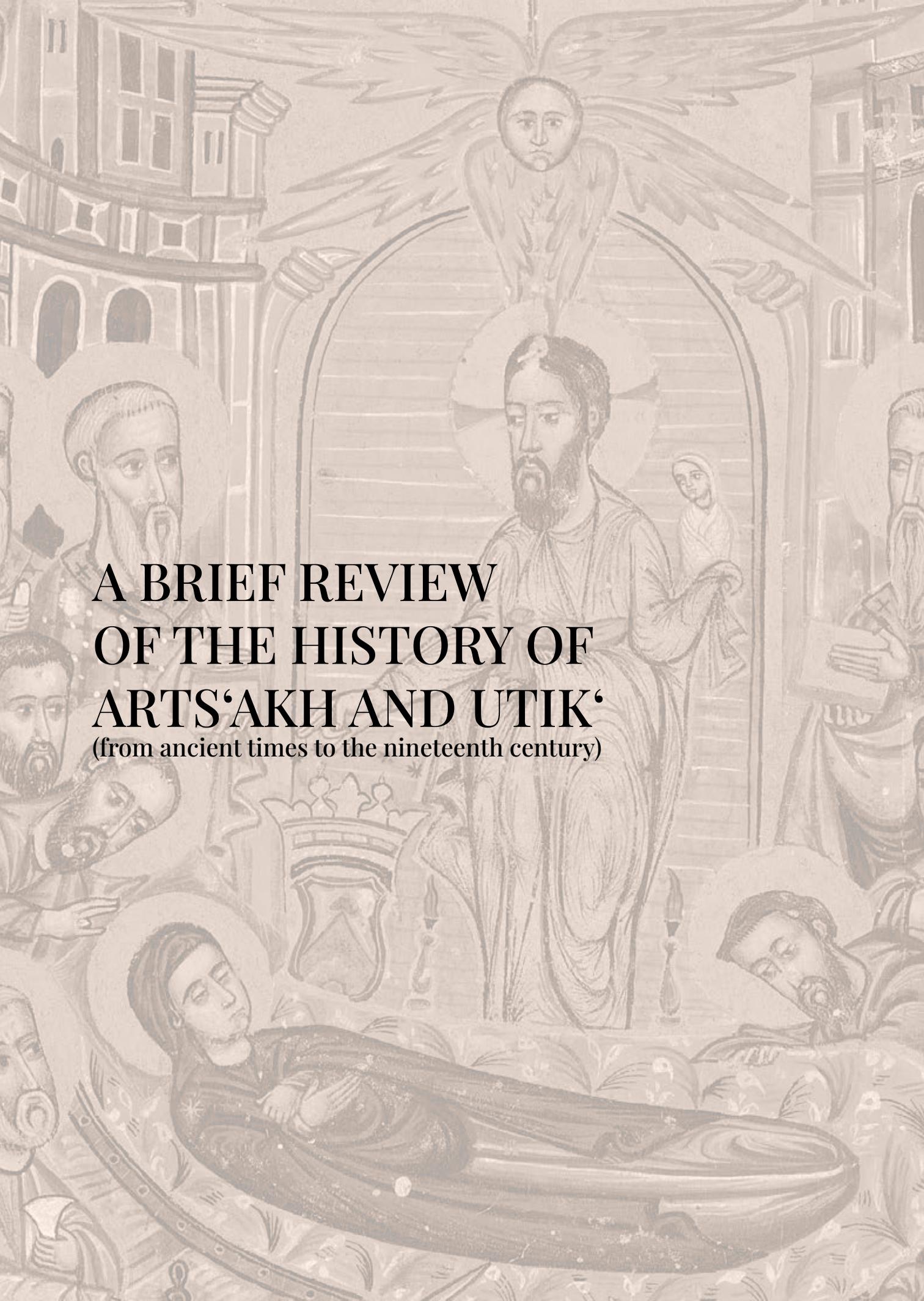
Today, most of the manuscripts produced in the scriptoria of Arts'akh and Utik' are housed in the "Matenadaran" Mesrop Mashtots' Institute of Ancient Manuscripts in Yerevan. A smaller percentage of these manuscripts are stored in various depositories, museums, and private collections throughout the world. However, the fate of many of these manuscripts remains unknown.

The present volume consists of three parts. The first part covers the history of the provinces and the Catholicosate of Aluank' (Gandzasar), authored by Vahe Torosyan, Ph.D. in History. The second part is dedicated to the scriptoria and educational centers of Arts'akh and Utik', the written cultural heritage, detailing the surviving manuscripts, their scribes, and painters, and the locations where these manuscripts were produced, written by Tamara Minasyan, Ph.D. in Philology. The third part, authored by Hravard Hakobyan, Doctor of Arts, presents the miniature painting of Arts'akh and Utik', revealing the iconographic and artistic peculiarities of illuminated manuscripts created between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries. The vivid differences between the luxurious illustrations of manuscripts commissioned by nobles, and the simpler decoration of those created in a monastic environment, are noteworthy.

The manuscript heritage of Arts'akh and Utik' is a harmonious part of the history and cultural heritage of these provinces, rich in numerous Christian architectural and sculptural monuments, khach'k'ars (cross-stones), medieval secular buildings, the preservation and transmission of which remains an important task today.

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**A BRIEF REVIEW  
OF THE HISTORY OF  
ARTS‘AKH AND UTIK‘  
(from ancient times to the nineteenth century)**

VAHE TOROSYAN

## A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'

(from ancient times to the nineteenth century)

According to the *Ashkharhats'uyts' (Geography)*, an early medieval Armenian geographical work of great importance, Arts'akh and Utik' were the tenth and twelfth *ashkharhs* (provinces) of Greater Armenia, respectively.

The earliest evidence of Arts'akh dates back to the eighth century BCE. This province was called Urtekhe in a cuneiform inscription issued by King Sarduri II (764–735 BCE) of Van (Biaynili, Urartu, Araratian Kingdom). The inscription was found in Tsovak Village in the Vardenis region, in Gelark'unik' Province and reads: “The God Khaldi marched and subdued the land of Arkuki with his weapon. Sarduri says, I invaded, conquered the land of Arkuki and reached the land of Urtekhi. By the greatness of the God Khaldi, Sarduri, son of Argishti, the mighty king, the great king, king of the universe, king of kings, ruler of the city of Tushpa.”<sup>1</sup> The existence of a cuneiform inscription in Vardenis suggests that the land of Arkuki, bordering Urtekhe–Arts'akh, was located in that area.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> KARAGEOZIAN, Cuneiform toponyms, v. 1, pp. 184–185.

<sup>2</sup> Given the flatness of this area, which made the borders of Arkakuni vulnerable, Sardur II should have reached the mountains of Syunik' and Zangezur bordering Lake Sevan to the east. This suggests that Urtekhe was located east of Vardenis and Syunik', i.e. in the area of Arts'akh (HARUTYUNYAN, Issues of History and Historical Geography..., pp. 30–31). Sarduri II, apparently, was not satisfied only with the conquest of Arkuki located in the south-eastern part of Sevan and reached the central regions of Arts'akh, present-day Martakert along the Tartat River (PETROSYAN, On the Itinerary of the Trans-Sevan..., № 2, p. 181).

Among the khach'k'ars erected near T'anahat Monastery, located west of the town of Sisian in the Syunik' region of the Republic of Armenia, an exceptional basalt monument inscribed with an Urartian-language inscription on both sides was discovered in 1975.<sup>3</sup> Later, it was turned into a khach'k'ar, likely in the twelfth or thirteenth century. This cuneiform inscription was engraved by King Argishti II, ruler of the Kingdom of Van (ca. 713–685 BCE). The original text mentions the land of Tsuluk, the earliest evidence of Tshuk (in Syunik' Province of Greater Armenia). The inscription also mentions the place named Amusha, which Italian scholar Mirjo Salvini locates within the territory of Arts'akh, and believes it to be the old name of the capital of the Republic of Arts'akh, present-day Step'anakert.<sup>4</sup>

The next testimony about Arts'akh is found in the works of the famous Greek geographer Strabo (1st century BCE – 1st century CE), who refers to this province of Greater Armenia, calling it "Orchistene." He writes, "Indeed, the whole of this country (Armenia – V.T.) abounds in fruits and cultivated trees and evergreens, and even bears the olive. There is also Phauene, a province of Armenia, and Comisene, and Orchistene, which last furnishes the most cavalry."<sup>5</sup> According to scholars' latest positioning, Phauene is compared to Parnes, or Parisos Province, in Greater Armenia, Comisene to the area around the Mrav mountain range, i.e. the central provinces of Arts'akh, and Orchistene to Mets Arank' (Metsarank') of the Arts'akh province (according to *Ashkharhats'uyts'*) and the regions south of it.<sup>6</sup>

Like Arts'akh, Utik', the twelfth province of Greater Armenia, is also attested in Greek and Roman sources, where it is called Otene or Otena. Utik' is mentioned by Pliny the Elder (1st century CE), by Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century CE), and by Quadratus (4th century CE), whose several testimonies have been preserved in the work of the fifth-century author Stephanus of Byzantium.<sup>7</sup> Pliny the Elder notes that Armenia borders Atropatene with the province of Otene and the Araxes river writing: "Adjoining the other front of Greater Armenia, which stretches to the Caspian Sea, is Atrapatene, separated from the district of Otene in Armenia by the Araxes."<sup>8</sup> Claudius Ptolemy mentions Otene–Utik' as the territory of Armenia: "In the region of Armenia which is included between the Euphrates river, the Cyrus and the Araxes, is Catarzena which is near the Moschici mountains above that which is called Bochaë near the Cyrus river, and Tobarena and Totene [=Otene] near the Araxes

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3 This is the only Urartian cuneiform inscription found from the Syunik' region of the Republic of Armenia. It is now displayed in the "Erebuni" Historical–Archeological Museum–Reserve.

4 SALVINI, *The Eastern Provinces of Urartu*, p. 505. On other positioning see GAYSERYAN, *The Cuneiform Inscription of Argishti II*, pp. 78–79; KARAGEOZIAN, *Cuneiform Toponyms*, pp. 92–93.

5 STRABO, *The Geography*, XI. 14. 4.

6 HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 57–59.

7 STEPHANI BYZANTII *ETHNICA*, Indices, p. 151.

8 PLINY, *Natural History*, v. II, p. 369.

river and Colthene, and Sodicene which are below this; then along the Paryadres mountains is Siracene and Sacapene [=Sacasene].”<sup>9</sup> In ancient Armenian texts, Utik' is written with the initials “Օ/Ա” [O/Aw] – Աւտէտաց [Awtets'wots'], Աւտիաց [Awtiats'wots'], or Աւտիական [Awtiakan].<sup>10</sup> According to the *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, Utik' was located west of the Araxes River, between Arts'akh Province and the Kura River.<sup>11</sup>

After the fall of the Kingdom of Van, during the reigns of the Yervanduni or Orontid, Artaxiad, and the Arsacid dynasties in Armenia, the north-eastern border of the country reached the Kura River.<sup>12</sup> Arts'akh and Utik' became inseparable parts of Greater Armenia. The fact that the border between Armenia and Ałuank' proper (on the left bank of the Kura)<sup>13</sup> was the Kura River has been repeatedly confirmed by a number of Greek and Roman, as well as early medieval Armenian sources. According to Strabo, Ałuank' and the Kura River were bordered by Sacasene, which as he several times mentions were part of Armenia: “In Armenia itself there are many mountains and many plateaus, in which not even the vine can easily grow; and also many valleys, some only moderately fertile, others very fertile, for instance, the Araxene Plain, through which the Araxes River flows to the extremities of Albania and then empties into the Caspian Sea. After these comes Sacasene, this too bordering on Albania and the Cyrus River and then comes Gogarene”<sup>14</sup>, “...and this is also true of Matiana, a province of Media, and of Sacasene and of Araxene, districts of Armenia.”<sup>15</sup> The following testimony of Strabo about Sacasene is also extremely interesting: “For instance, they [sacae - V.T.] occupied Bactriana, and acquired possession of the best land in Armenia, which they left named after themselves, Sacasene.”<sup>16</sup> This testimony refers to the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth century BCE, that is, the transition period between the Kingdom of Van and Orontid Armenia. This shows that the regions on the right bank of the Kura River, before mixing with the Araxes, were part of the Kingdom

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9 PTOLEMY, *The Geography*, p. 124. For the Armenian translation of this excerpt of Ptolemy's work see HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, p. 60.

10 *Idem*, pp. 59-61.

11 YEREMIAN, *Armenia according to the "Ashkharats'uyts'"*, p. 110; ANONYMOUS (7th century), *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, Critical edition by Hakobyan A. col. 140.

12 HARUTYUNYAN, *Armenian Historical Atlas* (part 1), pp. 19-47.

13 The name “Bun Ałuank'” [Ałuank' proper] comes from the *Ashkharhats'uyts'*: the section dedicated to Ałuank' reads: “Although the whole area from here to the Kura River has been taken from Armenia, we will only talk about Ałuank' proper, which is located between the Kura River and the Caucasus Mountains” (YEREMIAN, *Armenia according to the Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 105). Ałuank' proper is also called Caucasian Albania by scholars.

14 STRABO, *The Geography*.

15 *The Geography* of Strabo, II. 1. 14. Strabo repeats this in book 11 of the *Ashkharhats'uyts'* (XI. 7. 2). Also in the next chapter he mentions Sacasene as part of Armenia (XI. 8. 4).

16 *The Geography* of Strabo, XI. 8. 4.

of Armenia, as they were earlier during the Kingdom of Van.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it is not by chance that Arts'akh and Utik' were not included in the list of regions reunited with the Kingdom of Greater Armenia during the reign of Artashes or Artaxias I (189 -160 BCE), mentioned in the work of Strabo.<sup>18</sup> This means that those regions were part of the Kingdom of Armenia in the previous period as well.

Claudius Ptolemy also mentions very clearly that the frontier between Greater Armenia and Aĥank' was the Kura River: "Between Iberia and the Albanus river, which, flowing from the Caucasus, empties into the Cyrus running along entire Iberia and Albania and separating Armenia from both..."<sup>19</sup> The famous geographer further again confirms this fact: "Armenia is terminated on the north by a part of Colchis, by Iberia, and Albania on the line which we have indicated as running along the Cyrus river."<sup>20</sup>

A fifth-century Armenian historian P'avstos Buzand twice mentions that the border of Greater Armenia and the Kingdom of Aĥank' (Mazkuts) was the Kura River. The historian wrote about the invasion of Armenia by Sanesan, the king of Mazkut, reporting that: "He crossed his own border at the great Kur River and came flooding over the land of the Armenian realm."<sup>21</sup> The following testimony of the historian is even more interesting: describing the Armenian-Persian wars of the 370s, he reports that the Armenian commander Mushel Mamikonian recaptured several regions earlier conquered from Armenia by Aĥank' and restored the former border on the Kura River between the two countries. "He made war on the land of the Aĥank' and struck frightful blows at them. He took away from them many districts that they had seized: Uti, Šakašĕn, the Valley of Gardman, Kolt', and other surrounding districts bordering on them. They set the border between the land of Aĥank' and their own land on the Kur River, as it had been before"<sup>22</sup>.

The *Ashkharhats'uyts'* also states several times that the Kura River was the frontier between Greater Armenia and Aĥank': "Albania, that is the land of Aĥank', starts east of Georgia and the Caucasus Mountains bordering Sarmatia, to the Caspian Sea and the border of Armenia with the Kura River,"<sup>23</sup> "The twelfth is the Utiats'vots' ashkharh [the twelfth province

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17 HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 18-19.

18 The Geography of Strabo, XI. 14. 5; cf. HAKOBYAN, *Albania-Aĥank' in Greek-Latin...*, pp. 14-15; Idem. *The Royal and Princely Houses...* p. 19.

19 PTOLEMY, *The Geography*, Book five, chapter XI, p. 123.

20 Idem. chapter XII, p. 123. For the examination of Claudius Ptolemy's provided information on the external borders, cities, rivers, and administrative divisions of Original Aĥank' of the left bank of the Kura river see HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...* pp. 40-57.

21 BUZAND, *The Epic Histories Attributed...*, p. 73.

22 Idem, b. V, ch. XIII, p. 200.

23 YEREMIAN, *Armenia according to the "Ashkharats'uyts'"*, p. 105.

of Greater Armenia, Utik' - V. T.], which borders Ałuank' by the Kura River."<sup>24</sup>

The abovementioned historical sources clearly show that the frontier between Armenia and Caucasian Albania was the Kura River. Therefore, the view that the border with the north-eastern part of Armenia, that is, Caucasian Albania, is disputable is totally unfounded.<sup>25</sup>

In 387, Kingdom of Armenia ruled by the Arsacid Dynasty was divided between Sasanian Iran and the Roman Empire. Although the eastern part of Armenia, which included the provinces of Utik' and Arts'akh, came under control of Sasanian Iran, the Arsacid Dynasty continued to rule there until 428. In that year, the Sasanian King Bahram V, also known as Bahram Gor (420/421-438/439), deprived the last Arsacid king, Artashes IV (422-428), of power and handed over the management of that section of Armenia to a Persian governor. Thus, the Sasanian Iran established new administrative units in the lands of Armenia, Iberia', and Ałuank' under its control, forming the Iranian marzpanates of Armenia (official name: Armn), Iberia' (official name: Varjan), and Ałuank' (official name: Arran).<sup>26</sup> Since the part of Armenia that passed to Iran was territorially larger than the other two, the Sasanians decided to annex several of its border regions to the marzpanates of Iberia' and Ałuank'. Accordingly, the Gugark' province of Greater Armenia was annexed to the marzpanate of Iberia',<sup>27</sup> while Utik' and Arts'akh were included in the marzpanate of Ałuank' (Arran). Thus, the Kura River Basin - the Kingdom of Ałuank', together with small coastal political formations on the left bank, and Utik' and Arts'akh provinces in Greater Armenia on the right bank, were included in one large administrative unit, the marzpanate of Ałuank'. The *Ashkharhats'uyts'* testifies about this, referring to Ałuank', without mentioning the year: "The whole area from here to the Kura River was taken from Armenia, but we will talk about Ałuank' Proper, located between the great Kura River and the Caucasus Mountains."<sup>28</sup> In the following, the *Ashkharhats'uyts'* reports that the provinces of Utik' and Arts'akh were annexed to Ałuank'. Thus, listing the districts of the tenth province of Greater Armenia, Arts'akh, the author writes: "Ałuank' has all of this [the districts of Arts'akh - V.T.] as they

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24 Idem, p. 106.

25 GIPPERT, SCHULZE, ALEKSIDZE, MAHÉ, *The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests*, v. I, p. VIII. Hranush Kharatyan has substantially contradicted a number of views on the borders of Ałuank', the ethnic image of the population and the spread of Christianity there found in the preface of this paper (see KHARATYAN, *Touching upon issues of Yelische the Apostle, Grigoris...*, pp. 19-74).

26 HARUTYUNYAN, *Great Armenia's North-Eastern regions in 387-451*, pp. 77-95; Ulubabian, *Essays (5th-7th centuries)*, pp. 108-128; HAKOBYAN, *Albania-Ałuank' in Greek-Latin...*, pp. 109-114. Other dates of the formation of marzpanates of Armenia and Ałuank' are also found in the academic literature (see SVAZIAN, *History of Ałuank'*, pp. 199-207; GEVORGYAN, *The Generation of Marzpanutyun of Aran...*, pp. 210-226; VARDANYAN, *Historico-Geographical Research of Aghvank*, pp. 136-155).

27 After the division of Armenia in 387, Gugark' was expelled from Greater Armenia and until 428 remained a *bdeskhkhut'yun* (princely state) (HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, p. 171).

28 YEREMIAN, *Armenia according to the Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 105.

were taken from Armenia.”<sup>29</sup> The same is recorded about Utik': "It has seven districts, which are now part of Aġuank'.”<sup>30</sup>

With the annexation of Utik' and Arts'akh to the marzpanate of Aġuank', their dioceses also came under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Church of Aġuank' (the Catholicosate was situated in the capital of Kapalak until 461, then for several decades in Chol-Derbent). Therefore, it is not an accident that the clergymen who participated in the Council of Aġven, convened by King Vach'agan II the Pious (485–523) of Aġuank', were both from Aġuank' proper—the left bank of the Kura River, and Utik' and Arts'akh.<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that after the abolition of the marzpanate of Aġuank', the dioceses of Utik' and Arts'akh continued to be under the control of the Catholicosate of Aġuank', whose seat, as we will see below, was moved to the right bank of the Kura River, the city of Partav in Utik', in the early sixth century.

Sasanian authorities attempted to solve these problems by instituting the following administrative changes: a) the formation of relatively proportioned administrative-territorial units; b) weakening of the economic and military-political potential of the Armenian Marzpanate; c) creating a counterbalance to the local, still semi-independent royal authorities with the annexation of densely populated Armenian regions to the marzpanates of Iberia' and Aġuank'. In Iberia' and Aġuank', the local kingdoms within the marzpanates temporarily existed until 523.<sup>32</sup>

About half a century later in the end of the fifth century, the name of Aġuank', which previously referred only to the left bank of the Kura, was used to refer to the territory of the marzpanate with the Armenian regions (Arts'akh and Utik'). The policy pursued by King Vach'agan II the Pious of Aġuank' greatly contributed to the rapid attribution of that name to the right bank of the Kura River. During his reign, according to the latest views of scholars, the political center of the marzpanate (or perhaps the kingdom), as well as the seat of the Catholicosate of Aġuank', was moved from the left bank of the Kura to the right, to the newly built city of Partav.<sup>33</sup> With this change, the role of the population of Arts'akh and Utik', that is, the Armenians, significantly increased in the marzpanate and kingdom of Aġuank'. The expanse of the role and influence of the Armenians in the marzpanate of Aġuank' was especially facilitated by the ecclesiastical reforms carried out by Vach'agan II, which

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<sup>29</sup> *Idem*, p. 110.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> KALANKATVATS'I, *History*, pp. 89–90; HAKOBYAN, *Armenian Book of Canons*, vol. 2, pp. 91–93.

<sup>32</sup> HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 108–109. On the last period of the kingdom of Aġuank' see SVAZIAN, *History of Aġuank'*, pp. 177–215.

<sup>33</sup> HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 102–107.

strengthened the worship of Thaddeus the Apostle, the founder of the Armenian Church, St. Gregory the Illuminator, his grandson St. Grigoris, and the Hripsimiantz Virgins.<sup>34</sup>

At the end of the first quarter of the sixth century, the Sasanian king Kavad abolished the royal authorities that had survived in Aġuank' and Iberia' after the formation of marzpanates. In the first half of the same century, the left bank of the Kura of the marzpanate of Aġuank' was subjected to destructive invasions by the Huns and then the Turkyuts. In order to strengthen their position in the border areas, the Sasanians built defensive fortifications there, populating that part of the marzpanate with ethnic groups from different regions, each of which was designated with special living areas.<sup>35</sup> Although these changes significantly strengthened the Sasanian position on the left bank of the Kura River, especially in the northeastern regions, they also deepened its ethno-political fragmentation. The tenth-century Arab author al-Istakhri reports, "there were more than seventy tribes living in those regions, who had their own languages and did not understand each other."<sup>36</sup> It is noteworthy that Strabo, while writing about the existence of twenty-six tribes, who had their own languages, in Albania (on the left bank of the Kura), also mentions that they communicated badly with each other due to linguistic differences.<sup>37</sup>

As a result of military and administrative reforms undertaken by the Sasanians in the sixth century, semi-independent political units were formed in the east of the left bank of the marzpanate of Aġuank'. Ninth-century Arab historian al-Balathuri reports that the Sasanian king Khosrov Anushirvan (531-579) granted the princes of the border regions a royal status: "Anushirvan appointed kings and gave each of them a royal right (shahiya) over a province."<sup>38</sup> Thus, the ruler of Filan was called Filanshah, the king of Sharuan (Shirvan) - Sharuanshah (Shirvanshah), etc.<sup>39</sup> Describing the conquest of Aġuank' (Arran), al-Balathuri writes that the commander Salman ibn Rabiah concluded a treaty with the kings of Shaki, Kambechan, Khaizan, Shirvan, and other regions: in the historian's words "with all the kings of the mountains."<sup>40</sup>

Due to the ethno-political fragmentation of the left bank of the Kura River, as well as the transfer of the administrative center and the Catholicosate of Aġuank' to Partav, the name

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34 Idem, pp. 107-108. On the reforms carried out by Vachagan the Pious see also GARIBIAN, The "Story of Vach'agan"..., pp. 239-272.

35 A collection of materials for describing the localities and tribes of the Caucasus Сборник, XXIX, p. 15; SVAZIAN, History of Aġuank', p. 220.

36 A collection of materials for describing... XXIX, p. 13; SVAZIAN, History of Aġuank', p. 220.

37 The Geography of Strabo, XI. 4. 6.

38 TER-GHEVONDIAN, Arab Historians, 9th-10th centuries, p. 267.

39 Idem, pp. 267, 576.

40 Idem, pp. 274-275.

“Ahuank’” gradually began to refer mainly to the right bank of the Kura, the provinces of Utik’ and Arts’akh.<sup>41</sup> Influenced by this fact, several Arab Historians of the ninth–tenth centuries also located the territory of Arran (Ahuank’) only in the right bank of the Kura (Arts’akh and Utik’). Yaqut al-Hamawi writes that Arran is the Persian name for the area where the cities of Gandzak, Partav, Shamk’or, and Baylakan were situated.<sup>42</sup> As we can see, the Arab historian mentions only the cities in the territory of the Armenian province of Utik’. Al-Balathuri writes that Salman ibn Rabiha conquered Arran by the order of Caliph Uthman (644–656) and lists only the cities on the right bank of the Kura, that is those of Arts’akh and Utik’.<sup>43</sup>

Since after the administrative and political reforms of the sixth century, the name Ahuank’, or Arran, began to be mostly attributed to the Armenian part of the marzpanate of Ahuank’ (the provinces of Arts’akh and Utik’), the local rulers also began to be called Arranshahiks.<sup>44</sup> It is noteworthy though that among the abovementioned kingdoms of Ahuank’ proper (which received a royal status) that the Arab Historians reported about, none of them were named Arran. The title Aranshahik, originally meaning prince or lord of Arran, later became a dynasty name.<sup>45</sup> After the mentioned changes, next to the name “Ahuank’” referring to the provinces of Arts’akh and Utik’ of Greater Armenia, this part of the land was also referred to as Armenia’s eastern regions, northeastern regions, lower parts.

The marzpanates of Armenia, Iberia’, and Ahuank’ existed until the mid-seventh century, when the Sassanid Empire came under attack from the Arabian Caliphate and Iran passed under Arab rule. In 700/701, after entirely conquering Armenia, Iberia’, and Ahuank’, together with the adjacent Caspian regions up to Derbend, the Arabian Caliphate united these countries and created the Arminia administrative region, called *vostikanutyun* in armenian historical sources, Dvin became its center.<sup>46</sup> This new administrative unit was divided into four areas: First Arminia, Second Arminia, Third Arminia, and Fourth Arminia. Utik’ and Arts’akh were part of the First Arminia administrative subunit, the territory of which

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41 SVAZIAN, *History of Ahuank’*, p. 220–221.

42 NALPANTIAN, *Arab Sources*, p. 12.

43 TER-GHEVONDIAN, *Arab Historians, 9th–10th centuries*, pp. 273–274.

44 On the origin of “Aranshahik” family name see HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 159–161; KHACHATRYAN, *The Administrative Structure, Legal Status...*, pp. 34–37.

45 *Idem*, p. 37. According to another point of view, these titles were awarded to the rulers of the regions adjacent to the Caucasus Mountains of the marzpanate of Ahuank’ by Khosrov I Anushirvan’s father, Kavad (488–496, 498–531). According to this, this title was awarded to King Vach’agan the Pious as the king of Arran (Ahuank’) (HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, p. 160).

46 TER-GHEVONDIAN, *Armenia in the 6th–8th centuries*, p. 116; EGHIAZARYAN, *Arminia Administrative Region*, pp. 29–30. The Ostikanate of Arminiya (*vostikanutyun*) included most of the Kust-i Kapkoh administrative unit (except Atropatene with adjacent regions) formed by Khosrov Anushirvan, which included Armenia, Iberia’, and Ahuank’ (TER-GHEVONDIAN, *Remnants of the Kust-i Kapkoh...*, pp. 26–31).

corresponded to the former marzpanate of Ałuank' and was again called Aran, or Arran.<sup>47</sup>

In the twentieth century, based on the fact that Greater Armenia's Utik' and Arts'akh were part of the marzpanate of Ałuank' for two centuries, Azerbaijani historiography put forward a theory stating that those Armenian regions are so-called Albanian,<sup>48</sup> which was substantially refuted in Armenological works with numerous counter-arguments.<sup>49</sup> Among the arguments, the origin of the name Ałuank', which has occupied the attention of scholars for a long time, is essential. In scientific literature, we come across several etymologies of this name.<sup>50</sup> According to one of them, Ałuank' originated from the name Albania, given to the left bank of the Kura by the Greek and Roman authors, which is etymologically referred to as "land of mountains".<sup>51</sup> According to another view, the name Ałuank' derives from the word աղւն [ału], meaning favorable, mild, pleasant, or fruitful in Armenian. Thus, Ałuank' was formed by the connection of the root աղւն [ału], the suffix աւն [an], and the plural form ք [k'] to mean a favorable, fertile land with a mild climate.<sup>52</sup> It was a common occurrence to give a land such a name that would describe its geographical features and climatic conditions. According to this principle, the name of the Shirvan region on the left bank of the Kura, which means sweet, originated due to the fertility of its territory and mild climatic conditions.<sup>53</sup> Most likely, according to the same principle, the Argashovit (Argastovit) district in the Moks' province of Greater Armenia (according to the *Ashkharhats'uyts'*), whose name means a fertile valley, was renamed Shirvan in modern times.<sup>54</sup> There are other similar

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47 TER-GHEVONDIAN, Arab Historians, 9th-10th centuries, p. 448.

48 In order to substantiate such a point of view, the name of Albania had to be derived from a family name, and with this in mind Yusifov relates the root of "Albania" to the people of "Haloyen" or "Halbi" (YUSIFOV, On the names "Albania" and "Arran", № 10, pp. 23-31). However, as Armenologists have rightly noted that he was confused, as he considered the toponyms Albania, Ałuank', and Arran to be identical, besides he added that the latter means flat and warm terrain, which in no way can be equated with the etymology of "land of the Halbis" (Ulubabian, Essays (5th-7th centuries), pp. 41-42; HARUTYUNYAN, On Several Issues Concerning the Ethnic and Political..., p. 128).

49 On the counter-substantiations of Armenologists on the theses put forward by Azerbaijani historiography see NOVOSELTSEV On the Issue of the Political Border between Armenia and Caucasian Albania..., pp. 10-18; HAKOBYAN, MURADYAN, YUZBASHYAN, On the Research of the History of Caucasian Albania, pp. 321-352; SVAZIAN, History of Ałuank'; VARDANYAN, Historico-Geographical Research of Ałuank'; HARUTYUNYAN, Issues of History and Historical Geography of Arts'akh, Eastern Armenian Regions, and Ałuank'.

50 Below we will mention two of the views circulating in the scientific literature, and for the examination of the others see Ulubabian, Essays (5th-7th centuries), pp. 39-53; SVAZIAN, History of Ałuank', pp. 49-54; HARUTYUNYAN, A Few Questions about the Ethnic and Political... pp. 123-135.

51 Ulubabian, Essays (5th-7th centuries), pp. 39-53. The left bank of the Kura is called Albania, as we have seen above, by a number of Greek and Roman authors. For these testimonies see HAKOBYAN, Albania-Aluank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, pp. 9-37; Idem, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 14-40.

52 HARUTYUNYAN, On Several Issues Concerning the Ethnic and Political..., p. 134.

53 DALALIAN, On the Etymology of the Geographic Name "Shirvan", pp. 24-25.

54 Ibid.

cases. According to this, it was thought that taking into account the geographical and climatic conditions of the left bank of the Kura, the Armenians called the area Ałuank', which was originally called Alobank', later, the Greek and Roman chroniclers, likening it to their familiar Albania in the Balkans, called it by that very name. In other words, Albania originated from the Armenian Ałuank'.<sup>55</sup> Historian Movses Khorenats'i (Moses of Chorene) also identified the root alu as the basis of the name Ałuank'.<sup>56</sup> According to him, the name of this land derives from the nickname alu (meaning sweet), given to Sisak from the Haykazun-Sisakian dynasty for his merciful character. Following that, he proves that alu is the root of the name.

Although different, the abovementioned views state that the geographic names Ałuank' or Albania were created under the influence of the geographical and climatic conditions and characteristics of the terrain and do not have any ethnic origin. That is, these toponyms did not originate from the name of a tribe called Ałuan or Alban, which is not evidenced in any source representing the ethnic scope of the left bank of the Kura River.<sup>57</sup> As for Utik' and Arts'akh provinces of Greater Armenia being called Ałuank', let us mention again that it is based on the fact that the given regions were temporarily included in the marzpanate of Ałuank'.

According to a legendary report from *History of the Land of Ałuank'*, at the end of the sixth century, the Mihranian Dynasty, which had a kin relationship with the local Aranshahiks, came to power in Ałuank', the eastern parts of Armenia.<sup>58</sup> Originally established in the Gardman district of Utik', the Mihranians, who were fighting the local Aranshahiks, eventually took over the principedom of Ałuank', which secured the autonomy of the Christian population, and expanded their domination to the Kura-Araxes.<sup>59</sup> Their power gradually weakened from the beginning of the ninth century, giving way to the representatives of the Khach'en branch of the Aranshahiks. As early as in the 830s, under the rule of the Arabian Caliphate, the principalities of the two branches of the Aranshahik Dynasty, Esayi Abu

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55 Cf. HARUTYUNYAN, On Several Issues Concerning the Ethnic and Political..., pp. 131-135; SVAZIAN, History of Ałuank', pp. 49-51.

56 KHORENATS'I, History of the Armenians, "Matenagirk' Hayots'", vol. 2, p. 1859.

57 For the examination of the sources on the tribes that lived in Ałuank' see HAKOBYAN, Albania-Ałuank' in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, pp. 36-95; Idem, A Chronology of the Process of Consolidation of Udis and Lezgins, pp. 129-147; see also, HARUTYUNYAN, On Several Issues Concerning the Ethnic and Political..., pp. 135-156.

58 In *the History of the Land of Ałuank'*, the Mihranians are mentioned as relatives of the Sasanian king Khosrov II Parviz (KALANKATVATS'I, pp. 170-171). For the views on the origin of this family Ulubabian, Essays (5th-7th centuries), pp. 234-235; SVAZIAN, History of Ałuank', pp. 222-230; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 161-173.

59 SVAZIAN, History of Ałuank', p. 230; HAKOBYAN, The Historical Basis of the "Aranshahiks - Mihranids"..., pp. 109-113.

Musa and Sahl Smbatian, became stronger. The first of them was located in the south of Arts'akh and was called after the Goroz Fortress, and the second one was situated in the center of the province and was named after Khach'en Fortress.<sup>60</sup> These principalities became part of the Bagratuni Kingdom of Greater Armenia established in the late ninth century.<sup>61</sup> According to a very certain testimony of the historian Catholicos Hovhannes Draskhanakertts'i, the Bagratuni Kingdom included the territory of the former Arminia administrative unit, that is, Armenia, Iberia', and Aġuank'. He writes, "Thus, he [King Smbat I - V. T.] extended the boundaries of his domain as far as the city of Karin in the northeast, and to the farther side of Kġarjk', as far as the shores of the great sea and the borders of Egerk', as well as to the foot of the Caucasus Mountains, that is to say, Gugark', and Canark' as far as the Gate of the Alans, where he also seized the fortress guarding the pass. From there the boundary [ran] southward to the city of Tp'xis (Tbilisi) along the course of the Kur River, and [continued] on to the district of Uti, as far as the city of Hunarakert, to Tus and to Šamk'or."<sup>62</sup> In the second half of the tenth century, another administrative-political unit dependent on the Bagratids, Kingdom of P'arisis, was established in the northern K'ust-i P'arnes district of Arts'akh (in the Šamk'or River basin).<sup>63</sup>

Ninth-century Armenian sources report about a so-called Arevelits' Mets political unit formed on the left bank of the Kura River- in Shaki, Hereti, and Kambechan, one of the rulers of which, Hamam, received a crown from the Armenian king Smbat II Bagratuni in 894 and established the kingdom of Shak'i or the second kingdom of Aġuank'.<sup>64</sup> Hamam is considered to be descended from either the Aranshahiks or the Bagratunis of Taron.<sup>65</sup> This kingdom on the left bank of the Kura is called Hereti in Georgian literature, Albania in Byzantine sources, and simply Shaki in the works of Arab authors.<sup>66</sup> Hovhannes Draskhanakertts'i, who once escaped from the persecution of the amir Yusuf of Atropatene, once took refuge with Artrnerseh, who succeeded Hamam, reports the following on the

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60 HAKOBYAN, Khach'en-Khokhanaberd Fortress, col. 71-170; for the history of the Principality of Khach'en see also Ulubabian, The Principality of Khachen.

61 YEGHIAZARIAN, The Power of Armenian Bagratunies, pp. 150-164; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 174-175.

62 DRASKHANAKERTTS'I, History of Armenia, ch. XXXI, p. 139; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 226-227; YEGHIAZARIAN, The Power of Armenian Bagratunies, pp. 47-48.

63 HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 233-242.

64 YEGHIAZARIAN, The Power of Armenian Bagratunies, pp. 61-65; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 223-233.

65 BARKHUDARIAN, The Princedoms, № 1, pp. 52-76; YEGHIAZARIAN, The Power of Armenian Bagratunies, pp. 190-195; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 190, 223-225.

66 VAKHUSHTI BAGRATIONI, Kingdom of Georgia, pp. 125-127; Arab Historians, 9th-10th centuries, p. 641; CONSTANTINE VII PORPHYROGENITUS, Book of Ceremonies, p. 152; HAKOBYAN, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 227-231; YEGHIAZARIAN, The Power of Armenian Bagratunies, p. 195.

inhabitants of his kingdom: “These people were of our fold, and flocks of our pasture”, that is, they were Armenians, followers of the Armenian Church.<sup>67</sup> The kingdom of Shaki, however, did not last long. In the second half of the tenth century, it was annexed to the kingdom of Kakhet-Tsanark.<sup>68</sup>

Among the principalities of Arts'akh and Utik' (Khach'en, Goroz, P'arisos), Khach'en was more viable. It became especially strong in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. This was facilitated by the establishment of kinship ties with the princely houses of Khach'en and the Zakarids, who founded a principality in the central and north-eastern regions of Armenia under the auspices of the Georgian kingdom. Thus, Zak'are Zak'arian's sister, Dop', married Prince Hasan of Upper Khach'en-Tsar (this principality was later renamed Dop'ian after Dop'), and the other sister, Khorishah, was married to Vakht'ang Tangik, ruler of Lower Khach'en. Born from the marriage of Khorishah and Vakht'ang, Hasan-Jalal Dola became the most powerful ruler of Khach'en and put the beginning of the famous Hasan-Jalalian dynasty, which was destined to play a significant role in the further history of Arts'akh.

These principalities maintained their existence in later centuries as well, becoming melikdoms. Along with them, several other melikdoms were established in Arts'akh, which had the right to keep troops, collect taxes, as well as had judicial rights, that is, they were endowed with the features of state power and are rightly considered manifestations of statehood. Thus, in Arts'akh, which began to be referred to as Karabakh in the fourteenth century, operated under the general name of Khamsa (five in arabic) from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries in following melikdoms: Gulistan, Jraberd, Khach'en, Varanda, and Dizak.

Gulistan extended from the Kurak (K'yurak) River, that is from the borders of Gandzak to the Trtu (Tartar) River. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, Gulistan was ruled by the Melik-Beglaris, whose residences were the Gulistan Fortress and the palace near Talish Village in front of Horeka Monastery.

Jraberd extended from the Tartar River to the Khach'en River. The melikdom got its name from the Jraberd Fortress. Jraberd was ruled by the Melik-Israyelians, whose residences were the palace of Hin (Old) Mokhrat'al and the fortress-settlement named Mayrak'alak' or K'alak'atel.

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67 DRASKHANAKERTTS'I, *History of Armenia*, p. 220; YEGHIAZARIAN, *The Power of Armenian Bagratunies*, p. 187.

68 MINORSKY, *A History of Sharvan and Darband*, p. 117; HAKOBYAN, *The Royal and Princely Houses...*, pp. 272.

Khach'en stretched from the Khachen River to the Karkar River through its tributary Vararakn. Khach'en was ruled by Hasan-Jalalians, descended from the ancient Aranshahik Dynasty. Their residences were Khokhanaberd or T'arkhanaberd and Kach'alakaberd.

Varanda stretched from the Karkar and Vararakn rivers to the mountain area of K'irs-Dizap'ayt. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, Varanda was ruled by the Melik-Shahnazarians, whose residence was the Avetaranots' or Ch'anakhch'i fortress-settlement.

Dizak stretched from the Dizap'ayt Mountain and Ishkhanaget, to the Araxes River near the Khudap'erin Bridge. From the beginning of the eighteenth century it was ruled by the Melik-Yeganians or Melik-Avanians, whose castle was located in Tol Village.<sup>69</sup>

The melikdoms of Arts'akh actively participated in the struggle against the Ottoman Empire by the Persian Empire. Taking all this into account, in 1736, Nader Shah recognized the sovereignty of the meliks of Arts'akh and re-established their autonomy under the name of Khamsa (that is, five) Melikdoms (Persian: "Mahale Khamse").

In 1752, with the permission of melik Shahnazar II of Varanda, Panah Khan from the Sarijali branch of the clan of Javanshir settled in Arts'akh. It was from that time that the penetration of a non-armenian, turkic element, into Arts'akh began. With the settlement of Turkish-Tatar tribes, the foreign ethnic element penetrated Arts'akh, becoming a real evil for its homogeneous Armenian population. The struggle between the melikdoms and the khanate of Arts'akh continued until 1804-1813 - the end of the Russian-Persian war - when, by the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813, Arts'akh became part of the Russian Empire.<sup>70</sup>

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69 For the history of the melikdoms and melik houses of Arts'akh from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries see MAGHALYAN, *The Melikdoms*; Idem, *Artsakh Meliqutyuns (principalities)*, vol. 10, pp. 87-112; Idem, *The Melikdoms of Arts'akh as a Manifestation of...* pp. 16-19.

70 YUZEFOVICH, *Treaties between Russia and the East*, pp. 208-214.

## A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF AĽUANK'

Scholars have opposing views of how Christianity spread in AĽuank' and the establishment of the Church of AĽuank' more generally. One of the main sources for this is *the History of the Land of AĽuank'*, according to which, after the martyrdom of one of Christ's apostles in Armenia, St. Thaddeus, his disciple, Yelisha, returned to Jerusalem and, after being ordained by St. Jacob, traveled back to Armenia's eastern parts. He first settled in Ch'ol, then moved to the right bank of the Kura, the city of Soharn (Srarn) in the province of Uti, and from there to Gis Village,<sup>71</sup> where he founded a church and was martyred in a valley called Zergun.<sup>72</sup> Yelisha, as an apostle of Christ, is mentioned in the same source (without Thaddeus)<sup>73</sup> related to the events of the early seventh century. The source reports that Yelisha directly traveled to AĽuank' Proper from Jerusalem, where he founded a church. According to the source, this allegedly happened earlier than it did in Armenia.<sup>74</sup>

Based on this information referring to Yelisha, some scholars believe that Christianity entered AĽuank' through Yelisha's preaching as early as in the first century or on the border of the first and second centuries.<sup>75</sup> Although the sources provide information about the legend of Yelisha, scholars generally agree he is the founder of the Church of AĽuank'.<sup>76</sup>

According to other scholars, the information found in *the History of the Land of AĽuank'* about the preaching, martyrdom of Yelisha and founding of the Church of AĽuank' is a seventh-century legend, created under the influence of certain religious and political events, and apparently in pursuit of the goal of removing the Church of AĽuank' from the influence of the Armenian Church.<sup>77</sup> It was also considered that the legend was initially anti-Armenian.<sup>78</sup> Among other arguments, these scholars rightly point out that the *Novel of Vach'agan* (early sixth century), which is a separate unit copied in *the History of the Land*

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71 There are also other views on the location of the Gis Village (see SVAZIAN, Ecclesiastical Relations between Armenia and AĽuank', p. 51; BALAYAN, The Armenian Church of AĽuank', pp. 16-17; KHARATYAN, Touching upon issues of Yeghishe the Apostle, Grigoris..., pp. 50-59).

72 KAĽANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 9-11.

73 Based on these differences, some scholars thought that two legends had been created about Yelisha, one of which under the "Armenian influence" (The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests, vol. I, p. XII).

74 KAĽANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 274-275.

75 The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests, vol. I, p. XI-XIII; BALAYAN, The Armenian Church of AĽuank', pp. 16-17; SVAZIAN, Ecclesiastical Relations between Armenia and AĽuank', pp. 50-67.

76 The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests, vol. I, p. XI-XIII; BALAYAN, The Armenian Church of AĽuank', pp. 16-17; SVAZIAN, Ecclesiastical Relations between Armenia and AĽuank', pp. 50-67.

77 HAKOBYAN, Albania-AĽuank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, pp. 183-184; Idem, Novel of Vach'agan, p. 47; KHARATYAN, Touching upon issues of Yeghishe the Apostle, Grigoris..., pp. 40-59.

78 SMBATYAN, Remarks on the Book by R. Geyushev, pp. 406-429; KHARATYAN, Touching upon issues of Yeghishe the Apostle, Grigoris..., p. 46.

of *Ahuank'*, while providing detailed information about the discovery of relics of saints in the marzpanate of *Ahuank'* during the reign of King Vach'agan the Pious, does not mention the apostle Yelisha.<sup>79</sup>

As we can see, all scholars agree that the purpose of the legend was to show the independence of the Church of *Ahuank'* from the influence of the Armenian Church. Historical sources reveal that the Church of *Ahuank'* made the first such attempt in the late sixth, or early seventh century. With reservations, it should be considered that Abas, spiritual leader of the Church of *Ahuank'*, bore the title *Catholicos*, which perhaps was not acceptable for *Catholicos Hovhannes II Gabelenats'i* of the Armenian Church. In his letter to Abas, the latter called him Bishop of Partav,<sup>80</sup> while in the version of the letter found in *the History of the Land of Ahuank'*, he is mentioned as the *Catholicos* of *Ahuank'*.<sup>81</sup>

Attempts to evade the influence of the Armenian Church were made by the Church of *Ahuank'*, not only in the seventh century, but also later. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the seventh century, the Church of *Ahuank'* struggled against the Armenian and Georgian churches. According to *the History of the Land of Ahuank'* and other sources, in the late sixth and early seventh century, the Byzantine Empire blamed the Armenian Church for the fact that its hierarchical structure, consisting of seven degrees, did not have the rank of patriarch. Therefore, it demanded that the Armenian *Catholicos* either complete the nine-level hierarchy, or submit to one of the patriarchal sees of the Universal Church. In order to complete its hierarchical structure, the Armenian Church decided to give the *Catholicos* of *Ahuank'*, under its influence, the status of archbishop and the Georgian *Catholicos* – the status of metropolitan, by which the Armenian *Catholicos*, having supremacy over them, would receive the rank of patriarch.<sup>82</sup>

The well-known testimony of the sixth-century Syrian chronicler Zacharias Rhetor about the supremacy of the Armenian Church over the churches of *Ahuank'* and Iberia' is noteworthy: "In addition to the above-mentioned Sarmatians, Scythians, and Seriks mentioned in the Ptolemy's *Geography*, we find five Christian peoples in these northern regions... with a resident *Catholicos* in the city (capital) of Dvin, in Persarmenia."<sup>83</sup> The Syrian chronicler lists the five peoples (that is, the countries): Armenia, Iberia', Arran (*Ahuank'*), Syunik' (at that time, the Diocese of Syunik' operated independently from the

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79 HAKOBYAN, Albania-Ahuank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, pp. 183-184; Idem, Novel of Vach'agan, p. 47; KHARATYAN, Touching upon issues of Yeghishe the Apostle, Grigoris..., p. 47.

80 Book of Letters, p. 81.

81 KALANKATVATS'I, History, p. 122.

82 KALANKATVATS'I, History, p. 274.

83 MELKONYAN, Syriac sources, p. 313.

Armenian Catholicosate),<sup>84</sup> and Bazgun (Balasagan).<sup>85</sup>

As it is known, opposing the decision of the Armenian Catholicos Abraham I Albat'anets'i (607–615), the Georgian Church adopted Chalcedonism, and came out of the influence of the Armenian Church.<sup>86</sup> *The History of the Land of Aġank'* reads: "The Greek generals at first encouraged him [Kurion – V. T.] to seek precedence over the Albanians, but the latter would not yield and pointed to a certain apostle who came in ancient times to Albania, Eliša by name, one of the disciples of the Lord who was consecrated by Jacob, brother of the Lord, and who preached there and built a church before there was one in Armenia, namely, the church of Gis, the first mother church of the east."<sup>87</sup> The abovementioned events reveal the intention pursued by the Byzantine Empire against the Armenian Church: the Byzantine authorities did not want to see the Church of Aġank' under the influence of the Armenian Church and tried to weaken it at all costs, preventing the reorganization of its hierarchical structure. All this was part of the Byzantine Empire's policy of territorial conquest, that is, the project of advancing to the east, in which a great deal of attention was paid to the spread and imposition of Chalcedonianism.<sup>88</sup> The withdrawal of the Georgian Church from the influence of the Armenian Church, which was to be followed by the withdrawal of the Church of Aġank', served that purpose. However, the efforts of Byzantium were unsuccessful. The Armenian Church completed the nine levels of the hierarchical structure, and the Church of Aġank' occupied the level of archdiocese or episcopate. *The History of the Land of Aġank'* bypasses that fact,<sup>89</sup> whereas Ukhtanes provides interesting information about it. In a near quotation of the contents of Chapter 48, Book 2 of *the History of the Land of*

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84 According to the historian Sebeos, Prince Vahan of Syunik' for not taking part in the anti-Persian uprising of 571–572 asked the Sasanian king to make Syunik' a separate administrative unit and attach it to the Diwan al-Kharaj of Atropatene. (SEBEOS, History, pp. 67–68).

85 MELKONYAN, Syriac sources, pp. 313–314.

86 KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, p. 274; DOWSETT, Movsēs Dasxurançi, pp. 176–177.

87 KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, p. 274. In two of the manuscripts of this work it is mistakenly written that the Byzantine generals encouraged and pushed the Armenians to seek precedence over the Church of Aġank'. In the English translation of the work, the translator also wrote "them", most likely referring to the Armenians: "The Greek generals at first encouraged them to seek precedence over the Albanians" (DOWSETT, Movsēs Dasxurançi, pp. 176–177). Whereas, it is clear that in this case we are talking about the Georgian Catholicos Kurion. This is confirmed by a late tenth-century historian Ukhtanes, who made almost literal excerpt from this work, which clearly states that the Byzantine emperor and his generals pushed the Georgian Catholicos Kurion to gain precedence over the Church of Aġank' (UKHTANES, History, p. 596).

88 SMBATYAN, Remarks on the Book by R. Geyushev, p. 410.

89 In the 940s, the Catholicosate of Aġank' made a new attempt to get out of the influence of the Armenian Church, in response to which the Armenian Catholicos Anania I Mokats'i (946–968) left for Khach'en to solve the problem on the spot. He testifies about this in detail in his small work entitled On the Rebellion of the House of Aġank', stating that he had asked the local clergy to show the passages from *the History of the Land of Aġank'* telling that the Church of Aġank' was allegedly founded earlier. It is further stated that they avoided to provide him the manuscript, as it "represented the Church of Aġank' [allegedly] as an archbishop [= archbishopric], and the Armenian Church as a patriarch [= patriarchate] (MOKATS'I, On the Rebellion of..., p. 263).

*Ahuank'*, which speaks of Kurion's attempt to gain supremacy over the Church of *Ahuank'* (with the encouragement of the Byzantine Empire, and to which the Church of *Ahuank'* responded with the legend about the Apostle Yelisha), the historian states that Catholicos Abraham I *Albat'anets'i* gave the Church of *Ahuank'* the rank of archbishopric, and the Diocese of Syunik – the rank of metropolitan.<sup>90</sup>

With the Apostle Yelisha's preaching and insisting on the establishment of a church in *Ahuank'*, the Church of *Ahuank'* opposed both the Georgian and Armenian churches. It is not accidental that Yelisha allegedly "preached there, as well as built a church before there was one in Armenia."<sup>91</sup> It is possible that the Catholicos of *Ahuank'* also wanted to receive a patriarchal degree. The fact that the Holy See of Syunik' passed under the influence of the Catholicosate of *Ahuank'* could have contributed to it to some extent.<sup>92</sup> It should be noted that in order to complete the hierarchical structure, the Armenian Catholicosate granted this See the status of metropolitan. In fact, the legend of Yelisha did not serve its purpose. After all, with the story of Yelisha's preaching and founding a church in *Ahuank'*, it was difficult to achieve equality with the Armenian Church that according to tradition was founded by Thaddeus, one of Christ's apostles.

Why did the Church of *Ahuank'*, nevertheless, decide to remain united with the Armenian Church and occupy the rank of archbishopric or episcopate of its hierarchical structure? It is not difficult to guess that Kurion, the leader of the Georgian church at the instigation of Byzantium, aspired to the patriarchal rank. For that, it was necessary to have under its influence an archbishopric or episcopal See, which could become the Catholicosate of *Ahuank'*. In other words, in the case of joining the Georgian Church, the same archbishopric or episcopal rank should have been provided for the Church of *Ahuank'*. Additionally, under the influence of the Georgian Church, the Church of *Ahuank'* had to accept the Chalcedonian Creed, which could have been met with serious opposition within that church. The fact that the seat of the Catholicos of *Ahuank'* was transferred to Partav also contributed significantly to the growth of the influence of the Armenian element in that church. It was already more culturally connected with the Armenian environment. Also, the divine service in the Church of *Ahuank'* was mainly held in Armenian.<sup>93</sup>

The plan of the Byzantine Empire to remove the Church of *Ahuank'* from the influence of the Armenian Church via the spread of Chalcedonism was reactivated at the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century. At that time, Catholicos Nerses Bakur of *Ahuank'* (686–704), adhering to the Chalcedonian Creed and collaborating with the wife of Prince Varaz Trdat of *Ahuank'*, a pro-Chalcedonian princess Spram, decided to convert the

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90 UKHTANES, *History*, pp. 596–597.

91 KALANKATVATS'I, *History*, pp. 274–275; DASXURANCI, *History*, p. 177.

92 KALANKATVATS'I, *History*, pp. 273–274.

93 HAKOBYAN, *Albania-Ahuank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources*, pp. 138–139.

Church of Aġuank' to that creed. Several local bishops and high-ranking secular officials were very concerned about this, so much so that they convened a council and excommunicated Bakur. The participants of the council decided to turn to the Armenian Catholicos Yelia I Archishets'i for help.<sup>94</sup> The latter, correctly assessing the seriousness of the problem and well realizing that the Byzantine Empire, enemy of the Caliphate, was behind all this, immediately turned to the Arab authorities. "He who is now catholicos of Albania and has his throne in Partav has come to an agreement with the emperor of Greece, mentions him in his prayers and forces the land to adopt his faith and unite with him. Let this now be known to you, and do not hesitate to act in this matter, for he is in league with a noblewoman. Order those who wished to sin against God to be punished upon your great authority as their deeds deserve."<sup>95</sup> With the help of the Arabs, Yelia succeeded in overthrowing Catholicos Nerses Bakur of Aġuank' and Princess Spram. Then, the council convened in Partav under the leadership of the Armenian Catholicos and elected a new Catholicos of Aġuank'. At the same time, they reaffirmed the previous order by ordinating the church leader from the Armenian Catholicos, which, according to *the History of the Land of Aġuank'*, was established at the beginning of the fourth century: "We also defined the following for the ordination of the Catholicos of Aġuank': since for a short time our catholicos were ordained by our bishops, and now that [the ordination] happened in an inexperienced and reckless way as a result of which our country was divided, that is why we made a promise before God and You that the ordination of the patriarchate of Aġuank', would be from the see of St. Gregory, as it was since St. Gregory, because we accepted Christianity there and we know for sure that what you choose is acceptable to God and to us."<sup>96</sup>

Armenian sources provide remarkable information about the ordination of a bishop and a catholicos of the Church of Aġuank'. One of them, the ancient Greek version of Agat'angelos' *History (The Life of Saint Gregory)* reports that "Saint Gregory ordained bishops and elder priests and sent them to all regions of Greater Armenia...And a holy man was sent to Aġuank', T'ovma, who was originally from the small town of Satal."<sup>97</sup> Without mentioning any name, *the History of the Land of Aġuank'* also reports that Gregory the Illuminator ordained a bishop for Aġuank'.<sup>98</sup> According to *The Life of Saint Gregory*, at the invitation of Trdat or Tiridates III, the kings of Iberia', Aġuank', and the Laz people also took part in the council convened for sending Gregory the Illuminator to Caesarea for ordination. Along with the Armenian king, they also saw off and then met Gregory, who was returning to his homeland from Caesarea.<sup>99</sup> The same source reports that in addition to King Tiridates III, Gregory

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94 DASXURANĀI, History, p. 191, KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, p. 295..

95 KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 295-296; DASXURANĀI, History, p. 191.

96 KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 302; cf. HAKOBYAN, Yelia Archishets'i, col. 1-24.

97 AGAT'ANGELOS, Greek Version, p. 85.

98 KAĀANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 19-20.

99 AGAT'ANGELOS, Greek Version, pp. 79, 84.

the Illuminator baptized the kings of Iberia', Aġuank', and the Laz people in the Aratsani River.<sup>100</sup> *The History of the Land of Aġuank'* also mentions that the king of Aġuank'<sup>101</sup> accepted Christianity from Gregory the Illuminator and established it in his country: "He was reborn through St. Gregory the Illuminator and clothed in the Holy Spirit, and he converted the Albanians."<sup>102</sup> Based on these testimonies, it was mentioned that the official adoption of Christianity in the Kingdom of Aġuank' immediately followed the conversion of Armenia.<sup>103</sup>

The next bishop of Aġuank' mentioned in the sources, was Grigoris, the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator. It is noteworthy that P'avstos Buzand identified him not only as the bishop of Aġuank' but also of Iberia': "Then, the elder, Grigoris [son of Catholicos Vrt'anes - V. T.], attained the episcopal dignity in the regions of Aġuank' [Albania] and Virk' [Iberia], for he was of handsome stature, outstanding in spiritual merit, and filled with the knowledge of God."<sup>104</sup> Moses of Chorene also mentioned Grigoris as the bishop of Aġuank'.<sup>105</sup> Referring to his appointment, *the History of the Land of Aġuank'* reaffirms that the order of consecration of the bishop of the Church of Aġuank' by the Armenian Catholicos was established in the fourth century: "He lived as a son of the eternal light and then quit this human life. After his death, the Albanians asked for the young Grigoris to be their catholicos, for our king Urnayr had asked St. Gregory to consecrate him as a bishop of his country—not by necessity or because the Armenians are senior to the Albanians, but they decided to submit voluntarily and summoned the worthy heir of St. Gregory, and were pleased."<sup>106</sup> Grigoris was martyred upon the order of King Sanesan, the head of the Mazkut tribe. P'avstos Buzand writes that his body was transported from the place of martyrdom, the Vatnian field in Aġuank' Proper, to the Haband district of Arts'akh and buried in Amaras Village,<sup>107</sup> where the famous Amaras Monastery was later built.

Abas was the first spiritual leader of the Church of Aġuank', who, as already mentioned, was named Catholicos. *The History of the Land of Aġuank'* reads: "Lord Abas, who at the beginning of the Armenian era (in 552 - V.T.) transferred the patriarchal throne from Čolay to Partav; summoned from the bishopric of Mec Iranġ', he was patriarch for forty-four years. In his time it became the custom to write "Catholicos of Aġuank', Lp'ink' and Čolay" on the cover

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100 Idem, p. 84.

101 Urnayr is mentioned in the sources as the first Christian king of Aġuank'; however, a comprehensive examination shows that the first Christian king of that kingdom was probably Vach'agan I the Brave (298–318), see HAKOBYAN, Novel of Vach'agan, p. 78; Idem, The Royal and Princely Houses..., pp. 66–85; KHARATYAN, Touching upon issues of Yeghishe the Apostle, Grigoris... pp. 59–64.

102 DASXURANÇI, History, p. 8, KAĒANKATVATS'I, History, p. 14.

103 HAKOBYAN, Albania–Aġuank' in Greek–Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, p. 126; Idem, The Royal and Princely Houses... pp. 66–85.

104 BUZAND, History, book III, chap. 5, p. 70.

105 KHORENATS'I, History of the Armenians, vol. 3, pp. 2009–2011.

106 DASXURANÇI, History, p. 8, KAĒANKATVATS'I, History, pp. 14–1.

107 BUZAND, History, book III, pp. 72–73.

of letters.”<sup>108</sup> The mentioned Aĥuank' refers to the right bank of the Kura River, that is Utik' and Arts'akh, while Lp'ink' and Ch'or (Čolay), as known, were located on the left bank of the Kura. This once again confirms that as early as in the sixth century, the toponym Aĥuank' mainly referred to Utik' and Arts'akh provinces of Greater Armenia. Even after holding the rank of archbishopric or episcopate in the hierarchical structure of the Armenian Church, the leaders of the Church of Aĥuank' retained the title of Catholicos, perhaps without the consent of the Armenian Catholicos.

The order of the spiritual leaders of the Armenian Church to ordain the catholicoi of Aĥuank' or to establish their power seems to have been observed when the Armenian Catholicosate was transferred from Greater Armenia to the vicinity of Cilician Armenia, then to the latter's capital Sis. Thus, when in 1103 Catholicos Step'anos of Aĥuank' died, Barseġ Anets'i, who was in Edessa at that time, and who apparently held the executive power of the Catholicosate, sent one of his bishops to Armenia's eastern regions, where the episcopal conference with his participation elected Step'anos' brother as Catholicos. The latter was excommunicated by Barseġ Anets'i shortly after due to his bad behavior.<sup>109</sup> This order of consecration of catholicoi of Aĥuank' or the establishment of their power was maintained later as well, throughout the entire existence of the Catholicosate of Aĥuank'. However, this does not mean that there were no exceptions. As mentioned above, the bishops of Aĥuank', then the catholicoi, from time to time sought to get out of the influence of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which in some cases was expressed in violation of the accepted rite of ordination.

The churches of Aĥuank' and Armenia shared the same faith. In the documents related to the First Council of Dvin (506), the Armenian Catholicos Babken Ot'msets'i (490–516), who headed the meeting, repeatedly stated that the Armenian, Georgian and Caucasian Albanian churches had the same religion.<sup>110</sup>

It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the eighth century, after re-establishing the previous order of ordination of religious leaders of the Church of Aĥuank', the Armenian Catholicos Sion I Bavonats'i (767–776) convened a council in Partav in 768, which was attended by Catholicos Davit' of Aĥuank' and other high-ranking local clergymen and secular officials. The canons established by the council applied both to the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Catholicosate of Aĥuank' with its subordinated dioceses.<sup>111</sup> The Catholicos of Aĥuank'

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108 DASXURANÇI, *History*, p. 228, KAEANKATVATS'I, *History*, pp. 342–343.

109 URHAYETS'I, *The Chronicle*, p. 295.

110 *Book of Letters*, pp. 43, 45, 46, 51. Although Georgian and Caucasian Albanian clergymen are not mentioned in the list of participants of the Council of Dvin, they were probably present, as the third letter sent to Catholicos Kurion of Georgia by the Armenian Catholicos Abraham Albat'anets'i clearly states that the clergymen of Aĥuank' and Georgia attended the council convened by Babken Ot'msets'i (*Book of Letters*, pp. 182–183; cf. HAKOBYAN, *Albania-Aĥuank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources*, pp. 127–129).

111 HAKOBYAN, *Armenian Book of Canons*, pp. 3–18.

also took part in the Council of Hromkla (1178)<sup>112</sup> examining the issue of the union of the Armenian and Byzantine churches, confirming once again that the Catholicosate of Ałuank' was one of the hierarchical sees of the Armenian Church.

The Catholicosate of Ałuank' was first located in Kapałak on the left bank of the Kura, after which it was moved to Ch'ol (Derbent), from where, in the sixth century, as already mentioned, it was transferred to Partav in Utik' on the right bank of the Kura.<sup>113</sup> Even after moving to the right bank of the Kura River, the Catholicosate of Ałuank' retained its authority over the dioceses of Ałuank' Proper on the left bank of the river. In the fourteenth century, the Gandzasar Monastery, built by Prince Hasan-Jalal Dola of Lower Khach'en in 1216-1238, became the seat of the Catholicosate of Ałuank'. After that, this see of the Armenian Apostolic Church was also called the Holy See of Gandzasar.<sup>114</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Arts'akh came under the rule of the Russian Empire, the influence of the Russian authorities over the local church life increased significantly. The Russian Empire, which had clear plans to expand its borders to the Araxes River, was greatly interested in strengthening the power of the Catholicosate of All Armenians in the Armenian regions under its influence. Therefore, it is not accidental that the Russian authorities were categorically against the separation of the Catholicosate of Ałuank' (Gandzasar) from the Armenian Apostolic Church, which the local Muslim authorities sought. They skillfully used the unstable situation of the Holy See of Gandzasar and the aspirations of the clergy who wanted to become independent from the Catholicosate of All Armenians. In order to put an end to all this, the Catholicos of All Armenians Yep'rem I Dzoraget's'i (1809-1830), with the approval of the Russian authorities, abolished the Holy See of Gandzasar in 1815 and granted the rank of metropolitan to its leader.<sup>115</sup> Under the Russo-Persian treaty of Turkmenchay (1828), Eastern Armenia, where the Catholicosate of All Armenians was located, passed to the Russian Empire. In 1836, on the initiative of the Russian authorities, the religious charter of the Armenian Church (known as "Polozhenie") was adopted, which established six dioceses under the Armenian Church in the territory of the Russian Empire. The Diocese of Arts'akh (Karabakh), which received the status of a metropolitanate in 1815, was among them.<sup>116</sup> It still exists as a diocese named the Diocese of Arts'akh.\*

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112 SHNORHALI, General Epistle, p. 198.

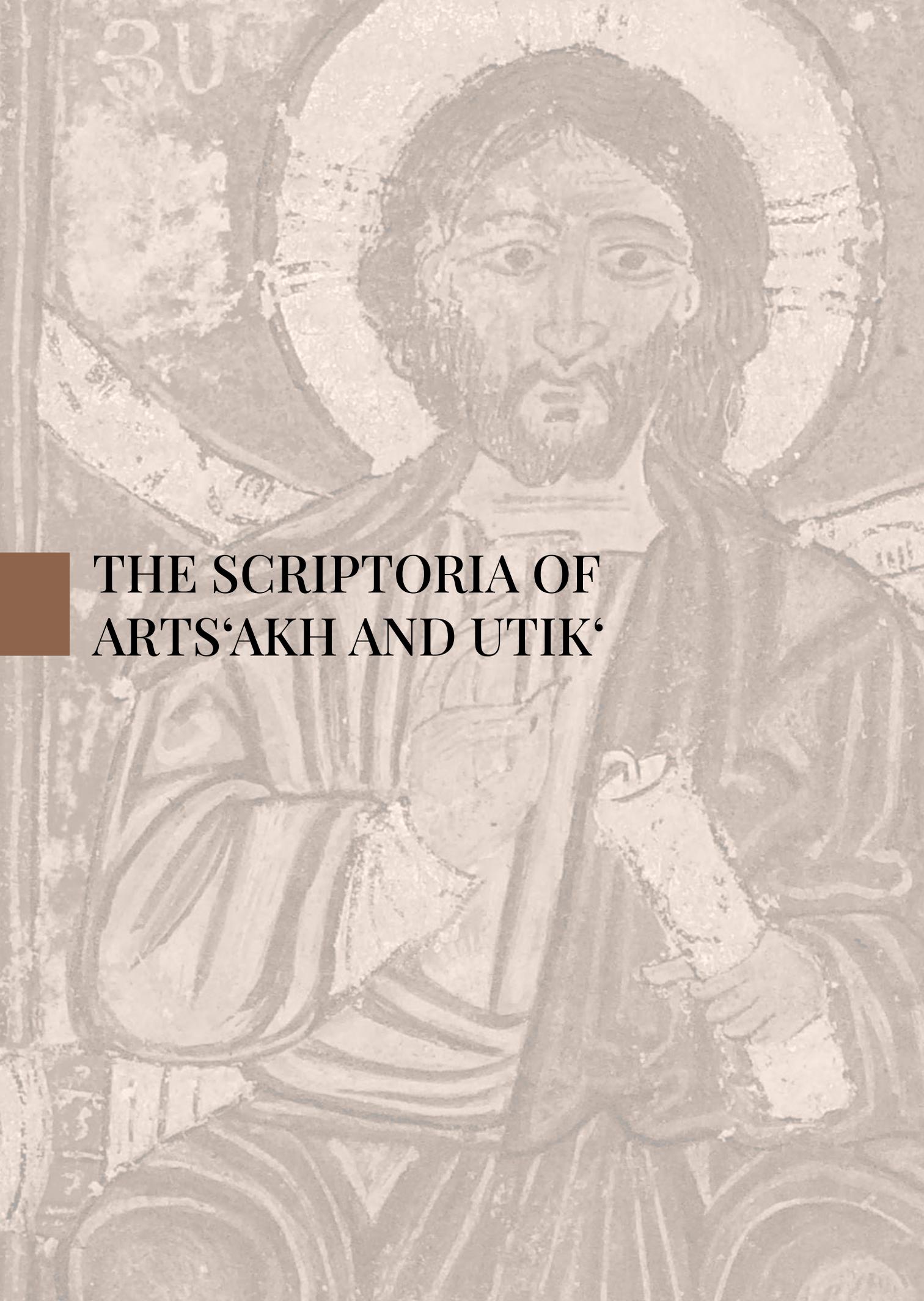
113 HAKOBYAN, Albania-Aluank in Greek-Latin and Ancient Armenian Sources, pp. 132-134.

114 On the Gandzasarian period of the Catholicosate of Ałuank' see Ulubabian, The Church and Culture of the Eastern Parts of Armenia, pp. 204-255; MKRTUMYAN, Catholicosate of Ałuank'; MAGHALYAN, Chronological Table of Catholicosates... pp. 268-271; BALAYAN, Armenian Church of Ałuank', pp. 158-188.

115 Mat. MS 4331, f. 164v; Acts collected by the Caucasian Archaeographic Commission, vol. 5, p. 443; MKRTUMYAN, Catholicosate of Ałuank', pp. 206-207.

116 YERITSYAN, Catholicosate of All Armenians... p. 567.

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**THE SCRIPTORIA OF  
ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'**

TAMARA MINASYAN

## THE SCRIPTORIA OF ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'

### GANDZASAR

As one of the largest provinces in the region, Khach'en played major role in the economic, political, and cultural life of Arts'akh. During Seljuk-Turkish rule, Khach'en received a heavy blow. Mkhitar Gosh (1130-1213) records that Khach'en was destroyed in 1143 by commander Ch'oli.<sup>1</sup> That same year, the Samvel Anets'i Continuatus wrote that Ch'oli destroyed and plundered the fortresses of Khach'en by deceit, and took captive the people and holy testaments of the city.<sup>2</sup> Noteworthy here is the mention of manuscripts likewise being plundered.

From the second half of the 12th century, the Principality of Khach'en was divided into three new regions: Lower Khach'en, Hat'erk, and Upper Khach'en or Tsar, with the respective residences of the princes at Khokhanaberd, Hat'erk, and Handaberd.

Gandzasar was the spiritual center of Lower Khach'en. The monastery received its name from the mountain which it faced, named Gandzasar (Treasure Mountain) for its silver, copper, and other mines. During the 9th-10th centuries, the ancient church of Gandzasar served as a site of political and religious gatherings for Arts'akh and its surrounding provinces.

First mention of Gandzasar appears in records written by Catholicos Anania Mokats'i (Anania of Moks) (946-968). In 949, he ventured to the region-to a place called Ardakh, where he was greeted by Grigor, prince of Khach'en-in order to settle Armenian-Chalcedonian disputes. Catholicos Anania Mokats'i ordered an assembly to be held, wherein priests and nobility of Arts'akh and Utik', among whom was Father Sargis, a monk from

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<sup>1</sup> GOSH, Chronicle, p. 608.

<sup>2</sup> ANETS'I AND CONTINUATORS, Chronicle, p. 213; AYRIVANETS'I, History of Armenia, p. 63.



Gandzasar Cathedral and *gavit'* [narthex] from the northwest (photo credit: Sasun Danielyan)

Gandzasar, would participate.<sup>3</sup> According to Mkhit'ar Gosh, in 1140, the corpse of prince Grigor, who died in the war against the Seljuks, was brought to Gandzasar to be buried. Gandzasar later served as a burial site for the princes of Khach'en.<sup>4</sup> Khachk'ars erected by Hasan the Great and Vakht'ang-Tangik dating to 1174, 1181, and 1202, are today preserved in the churchyard.<sup>5</sup>

By the will of his father, Prince Vakht'ang-Tangik, Hasan-Jalal Dola, Prince of Princes and ruler of Lower Khach'en, built a magnificent church in Gandzasar from 1216 to 1238. According to tradition and with great difficulty, Hasan-Jalal Dola brought the head of St. John the Baptist back to Gandzasar, where it was later interred and became the church's namesake.<sup>6</sup> An inscription relates that the

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3 MOKATS'I, *On the Rebellion of the House of Ałuank'*, p. 42; see also ORBELIAN, *History of Sisakan*, pp. 278-279.

4 GOSH, *Chronicle*, p. 610.

5 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 67.

6 BOLARIAN, *Catalogue*, p. 282; Hasan-Jalal Dola built and made prosperous not only the monasteries of Gandzasar but also Metsaranits' (also known as Surb Hakob), Surb Step'anos in the village of Vachar, as

consecration of the church took place on July 22, 1240, on the day celebrating the Feast of the Transfiguration, or Vardavar. By accepting the rule of the Mongols, who had conquered Armenia, Hasan-Jalal Dola was able to preserve his estates.

Historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i wrote with admiration about the construction of the Gandzasar monastery, recounting the many in attendance at the church's consecration, including: Catholicos Nerses of Ałuank'; several bishops and princes, the famous Vanakan *Vardapet*, along with many teachers, the spiritual leaders of many monasteries, archimandrites Grigoris and Yefia from Khach'en, and at least 700 priests.<sup>7</sup> The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist of Gandzasar was unique in its time for its rich artistic decoration and variety of ornamental motifs. It embodied the highest achievements of the 13th-century Armenian art and was considered the pearl of Armenian architecture.<sup>8</sup>

The monastic complex is complete with monks' cells and auxiliary buildings, enclosed by a three-gate wall. The narthex, or gavit, is located on the western side of the cathedral. An inscription tells that it was built in 1261-1266 under the sponsorship of prince Hasan-Jalal Dola, princess Mamk'an, and their son At'abak, who also donated a gospel book, bound with a golden cover, to the monastery.<sup>9</sup> Below the *gavit*, the Hasan-Jalalyan family is interred, and the monastery leaders and learned priests, or *vardapets*, are buried within the yard of the monastery.

From the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, Gandzasar was the episcopal residence; bishops Sargis and Vardan are known and identified by name.<sup>10</sup> In the centuries that would follow, the names of subsequent bishops are recorded, including: *Vardapet* Mat'eos (a student of Grigor Tat'evats'i) Hovhannes, Yefia, Nerses, Łukas Lorets'i, Step'anos *Vardapet* Shirakuni, and several others.<sup>11</sup>

In the fourteenth century, the monastery became the seat of the Catholicosate of Ałuank', where the Hasan-Jalalyans served as Catholicoi. Under the patronage of the princes of the Hasan-Jalalyan dynasty, the monastery would operate not only as a spiritual, but also an important cultural center for centuries.

Gandzasar was the main educational center of the region and one of Armenia's famed scriptoria. Information concerning the local chief-teachers, scholars, scribes, painters,

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well as those of Valahas, Mayrak'aghak' and Kochlot villages with their narthexes, monastic cells, and educational centers.

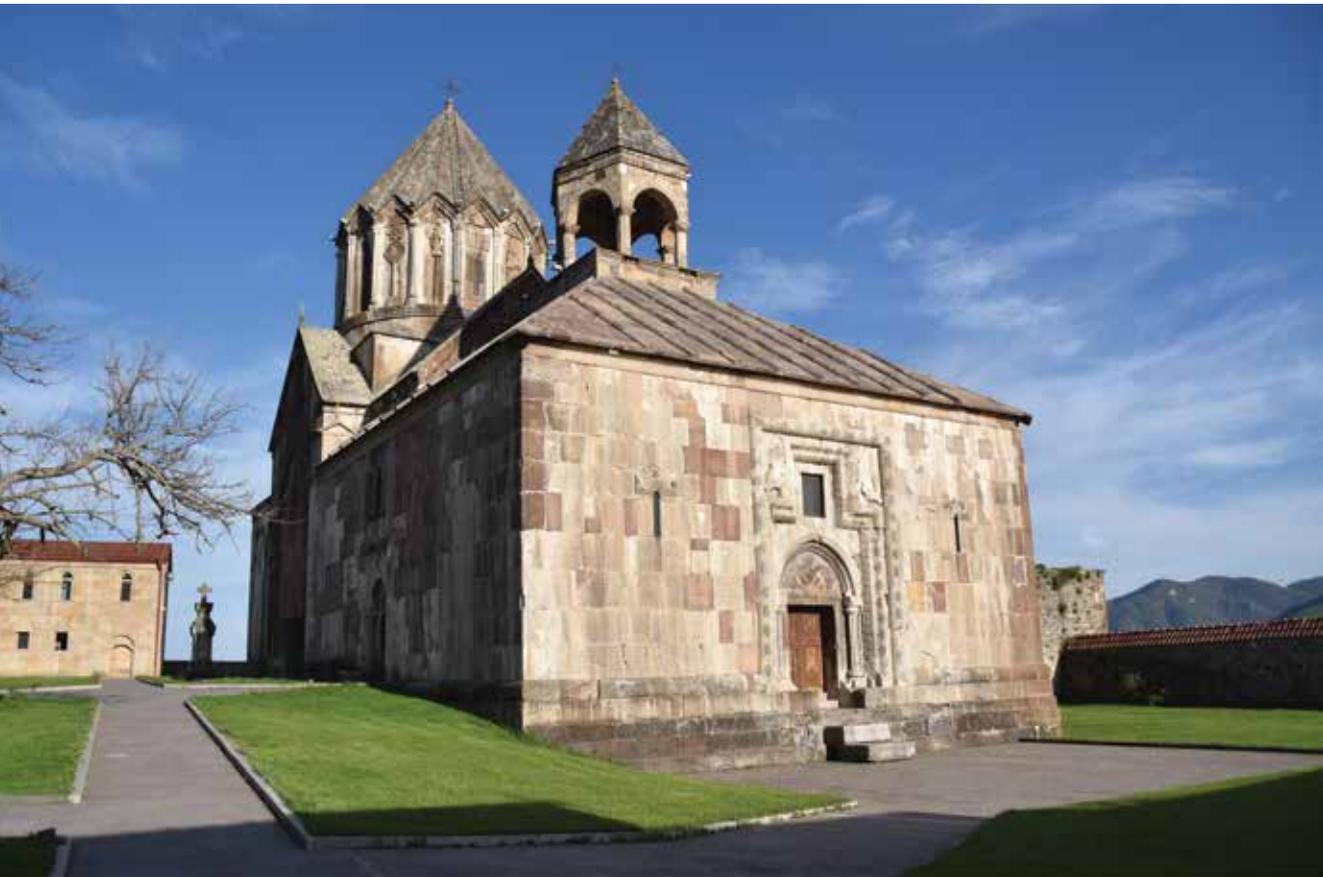
7 GANDZAKETS'I, pp. 269-270.

8 YAKOBSON, From the History of Medieval Armenian Architecture, p. 151; T'ORAMANIAN, On the Issue of Interaction of Armenian Architecture, p. 25.

9 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 41.

10 BARKHUDARIANTS', History of the Country of Ałuank', p. 194.

11 SHAHKHAT'UNIANTS', Signature..., pp. 571-577; JALALEANTS', A Journey to Armenia, pp. 186-192; Arts'akh, pp. 177-178.



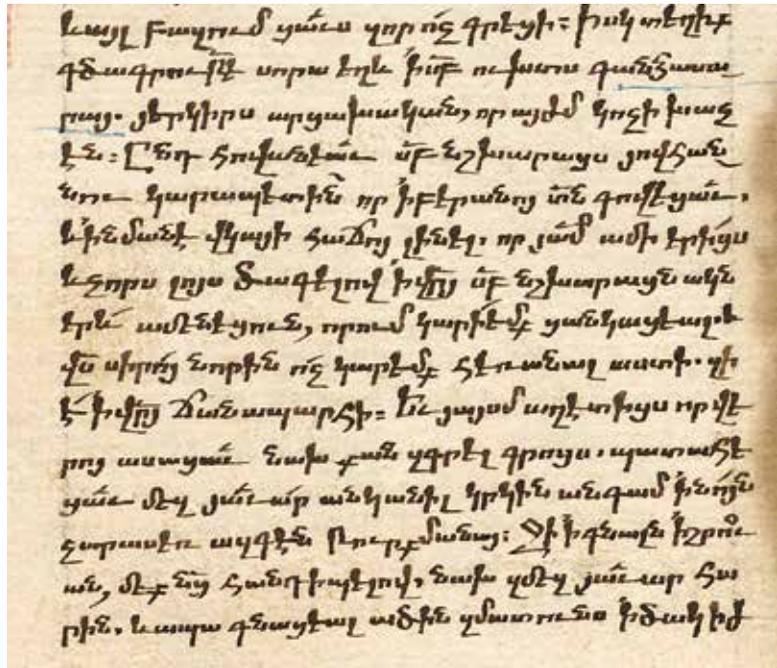
Gandzasar Cathedral  
from the side of the gavit'  
(photo credit: Sasun  
Danielyan)

donors, binders, and restorers is preserved on the walls of the church and on *khachk'ars* (cross-stones) as inscriptions, and within the colophons of manuscripts.

The monastery's library held a rich collection of manuscripts. A great number of significant manuscripts were written, illuminated, and later, preserved in the depository. Sadly, very few have survived. In the colophon of a miscellany dated to 1417, Bishop Mat'eos of Gandzasar wrote with deep sorrow that the enemy looted all the wealth of the monastery (Mat., MS 8689, f. 89v). Notwithstanding the invasion, and the loss of manuscripts, cultural life at Gandzsar continued.

Thirteen manuscripts survived from the scriptorium at Ganzasar, copied between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. A single example is currently housed at the library of the Cathedral of Saint James in Jerusalem, and the remaining twelve are stored at the Matenadaran in Yerevan.

Fragment of the colophon  
written in 1417 in Gandzasar  
(Mat. MS 8689, f. 89v)



Approximately four dozen manuscripts have surfaced from the collection of Gandzasar's depository. In addition to the manuscripts that survived from Gandzasar, several relics were kept there in silver gilded arm-shaped reliquaries and monstrances, including: the relics of St. John the Baptist, the Apostle James, Catholicos Grigoris I, the prophet Zechariah, and Saint Pantaleon.<sup>12</sup>

The oldest extant manuscript from Gandzasar is a gospel (Mat. MS 378) (fig. 1–5) copied by scribe T'oros in the early thirteenth century, who decorated his manuscript with impressive examples of Armenian calligraphy and illustrated it with a great artistic taste. In the manuscript's primary colophon, he asks the reader to remember him (ff. 2r, 9v, 3r, 258v). The manuscript is copied on parchment, written in rounded erkat'agir script, and bound in a stamped brown leather cover. It was copied and illustrated at the request of Vakht'ang-Tangik, Prince of Khokhanaberd, and his wife Khorishah, whose colophon is preserved on f. 308v. In the main colophon prince Vakht'ang mentioned his grandfather Vakht'ang the Great, his father Hasan the Great, and his father-in-law commander-in-chief Sargis Zak'arian (f. 308r). The gospel is thus known as Vakht'ang-Tangik's Gospel and has attracted the attention of many scholars.<sup>13</sup>

12 Jalaleants', Arts'akh, pp. 175–176.

13 This manuscript has been described by Hovsep'ian G., other scholars such as Barkudaryants' M., Ulubabian B. referred to the main colophon, and Svirin A., Lazarev V., Durnovo L, Hakobyan H. referred to the illumination of the manuscript (HOVSEP'IAN, Colophons, pp. 761–764; BARKHUDARIANTS', History of the Country of Aghuank', p. 142; Ulubabian, The Principality of Khach'en, pp. 142–144; SVIRIN, The Miniature Painting of Ancient Armenia,

The manuscript has ten canon tables, semi-canon tables, title pages dedicated to the evangelists Matthew, Mark, and John, drafted portraits of two evangelists that remained uncolored (f. 6v), many beautiful ornaments, floral and faunal marginalia, and knotted initials. The first rows are written in golden letters.

The manuscript also hosts a scene from the life of Christ that differs from the general artistic decoration of the manuscript. In the image, the Mother of God holds the Christ child. The archangel Gabriel is on her right side with open wings, and below, the two evangelists hold holy books to their chests (f. 5r). This image does not resemble T'oros' known style. The miniature is, in fact, an addition, likely painted by his pupil.

The main colophon is not dated. The scribe writes that Khorishah built a church. It is known that Khorishah reconstructed Surb Hakob church in Mets'aran in 1212,<sup>14</sup> and Vakht'ang died in 1214,<sup>15</sup> hence, the manuscript was likely written between 1212 and 1214.

The colophon of Hasan-Jalal Dola appears on f. 8v. In 1261, when the prince returned from a trip to the palace of the Mongol Mangu Khan, he found his wife Mamk'an dead, and thus wrote this colophon in deep mourning.<sup>16</sup>

The Gospel became the property of the people of Khokhanaberd and was kept in Gandzasar. However, along with the wealth and treasures of the monastery, this book was also taken and remained captive until 1589. In the same year, prince Jalal, the son of Mehrab Bek, ransomed the captured manuscript and returned it to the people of Khokhanaberd (f. 7r).

The second famous scribe from Gandzasar was Mat'eos *Vardapet*, who copied a collection of poems and odes for priest Manuel (Mat. MS 8689) in 1417. The primary colophon provides much information about the events of the time.<sup>17</sup> At first, Mat'eos *Vardapet* wrote about the catastrophe that befell the world of Syunik'. In 1417, due to a severe drought everything dried up. He then wrote about prince Smbat Burt'elyan, who died in Georgia. The scribe also mentioned one of Khach'en's princes, Zaza, and his captive sons and relatives.

Mat'eos wrote with deep sorrow and grief about the wrongdoings committed by Kara Koyunlu Yusuf, telling how his savage soldiers ruthlessly plundered Gandzasar Monastery, destroyed it, and took the monastery's wealth and treasures.

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p. 82; LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, pp. 186–188; DURNOVO, *Essays on the Fine Arts of Medieval Armenia* p. 248; HAKOBYAN, *Miniatures of Arts'akh-Utik'*, pp. 38–50; idem, *The Miniature Art of Arts'akh*, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> CIArm, chap. 5, p. 12.

<sup>15</sup> VARDAN *VARDAPET*, p. 140.

<sup>16</sup> In the same year, Hasan-Jalal fell victim to the intrigues of the Mongols and was brutally killed by Arghun Khan in Qazvin. At'abak brought the relics of his martyred father to the homeland and buried them in their family tomb (GANDZAKETS'I, pp. 391–392; HAKOBYAN, *Minor Chronicles*, p. 43).

<sup>17</sup> KHACH'IKIAN, *Colophons*, pp. 193–197.

In 1420, Father Sargis received a copy of Grigor Tat'evatsi's (Gregory of Tat'ev) *Book of Questions*. (Mat. MS 4004). The manuscript was copied by a scribe named Rstakes, and bound it in Geghark'unik' by the monk Arak'el. Two centuries later, in 1624, another scribe, again named Rstakes, copied a manuscript based off the earlier 1420 version.

In 1551, at the request of priest Ghazar, monk Hayrapet copied a Gospel in Gandzasar, "in the land of Arts'akh, which is called Khach'en instead of Mets'aranis, where Gandzasar is, where the head of John the Baptist is" (Mat. MS 6513, f. 280v). It is noteworthy that this is the only manuscript written in Gandzasar, in which Gandzasar's location is so clearly mentioned. The name of the miniaturist, who painted the portraits of the evangelists and the title pages, is unknown.

The scribe wrote that the gospel was written and completed in the year of renovation of Gandzasar which was done by Catholicos Sargis of Ałuank'. There is also a small, undated inscription on the wall of the church confirming this. In this part of the colophon, the scribe also mentions the bishops Israyel, Kostandin, and priests Hovhannes, Mkrtych, and T'uma.

This manuscript was stolen from the monastery, which is evident from the colophon of the last recipient. Khoja Miansar, son of Arev and Nigar, rescued the manuscript from captivity in the 18th century and donated it again to Gandzasar Monastery.

The next manuscript is a collection of prayers and psalms that was copied by scribe Karapet in bolorgir script and illustrated by painter At'anas with marginalia and ornamental incipit letters in 1576 at the request of Catholicos Hovhannes of Ałuank' (Mat. MS 1923). In the brief colophon, the scribe advises his reader to wash away the "filth of sin" by saying a psalm, as the psalm is a treasure and a source of immortality.

In the schools of Arts'akh, grammar and logic were taught in tandem with a religious education, which prompted the copying new manuscripts to meet such needs. Special attention was paid to grammar, due to literacy requirements and the need to produce scribes who could properly copy manuscripts, canonize the gospels, and follow correct orthography. To meet these requirements, specialists were invited from other locations in order to teach, and if necessary, copy manuscripts.

As such, in 1659, the elder Hovhannes Apahunets'i went to Gandzasar to teach grammar and copied a collection of grammatical materials (Mat. MS 2277). In 1660, the monk Mkrtych' arrived to Gandzasar from Kaffa (Crimea) for the same purpose. In 1667, he completed a miscellany in Gandzasar, the copying of which he had started in Kaffa in 1654 (Mat. MS 8504). In one of the colophons (f. 219r), the scribe records important historical events. He chronologically lists the events of 1603-1654, beginning with the capture of the fortress of Yerevan by Shah Abbas I, and ending with the solar eclipse of 1654.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. DAVRIZHETS'I, *History*, pp. 496-506.

In 1664, Movses Kalankatvatsi's *The History of the Land of Aĥuank'* was copied by scribe Simon at the request of Archbishop Barseġ (Mat. MS 2561). In the colophon, the scribe respectfully remembers Catholicos Petros of Aĥuank' and paid tribute to him. The latter had appointed Archbishop Barseġ as bishop of Amaras Monastery, the episcopal center of Varanda. Barseġ restored Amaras and fenced it. The Catholicos founded Surb Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God) Church in the village of Herher and again trusted its leadership to Barseġ who made the monastery prosperous.

In 1760, Davit' *Vardapet* Tbilisets'i copied a collection of prayers in Gandzasar which includes the prayers of Catholicos Benik *Vardapet* of Aĥuank', Grigor Hesats'i or Maralats'i, and Grigor Vanets'i (Mat. MS 38).

In 1766, Archbishop Abraham Shak'ets'i copied a ritual book (*Mashtots'*), for Catholicos Hovhannes of Aĥuank' from a reliable and fine copy (Mat. MS 3971).

Mat. MS 3497 was copied by an unknown scribe. It is a collection of laws including Mkhitar Gosh's *The Lawcode (Datastanagirk')* (ff. 1v-76v), *The Law of Moses* (ff. 77r-86r, 163r-4v), and political (ff. 114r-9v, 178r) and military laws (ff. 114r-9v, 178r). In 1778, Catholicos Hovhannes Aghvanets'i filled in the missing parts (ff. 20r-3v, 242r-54v) and recorded in the colophon that he was a descendent of the Vakht'ang-Sakaryan princely family (f. 254v).

Mat MS 9923 is a copy of Esayi Hasan-Jalaleants' *Notebook of Wall Inscriptions*. In 1718, Catholicos Esayi of Aĥuank' carefully collected and recorded the inscriptions of Gandzasar, Khadavank', Dadivank', Gtch'avank', as well as the inscriptions of the monasteries and *khach'k'ars* present in the surrounding area. The location of his autography copy is unknown. Two manuscripts copied from his original are kept at the Matenadaran (MS 7821 and MS 9923). It is unknown where and by whom MS 7821 was copied. It was part of the personal collection of Hovhannes Shahkhat'unyants', and in 1938, was brought to the Matenadaran.<sup>19</sup> MS 9923 was copied in 1822 when the Armenian Catholicos Ep'rem visited Gandzasar. Hovhannes Ērimets'i, the clerk of the patriarchate residence, accompanied the catholicos during his visit. By his order, Hovhannes copied the notebook of Catholicos Esayi from a 1718 example in the manuscript depository at Gandzasar.<sup>20</sup> He left a note about this commission.

In 1657, at the behest of Catholicos Petros, the elder priest Grigor copied and illustrated a missal (Jerusalem MS 2273).<sup>21</sup> The scribe painted the manuscript both beautifully and tastefully: the first rows, initials, and the Lord's names are painted in gold, the sheets are taken in decorative circles, and there is abundant marginalia.

In 1632, Poġos Vanets'i copied a gospel which was written in Gandzasar and kept at Surb

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<sup>19</sup> HAKOBYAN, *Armenian Inscriptions and Khach'atur Abovyan*, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> ĒRIMETS'I, pp. 135-136.

<sup>21</sup> BOĒLARIAN, *Catalogue*, p. 366.

Hovhannes Church of Gandzak. In 1713, the elder priest Hakob copied a collection of prayers and poems, a text which remained in the personal collection of Galoust Sharmazanian. The current location of these two manuscripts is unknown.<sup>22</sup>

The depository of the monastery was enriched with donations of manuscripts brought from other places, very few of which have been preserved. A gospel copied in Alt'amar (Vaspurakan) by scribe Hovhannes in 1477 was saved and brought to Arts'akh. Another gospel, copied in 1502, was donated to Gandzasar Monastery by a priest who bought it for 6000 pence.<sup>23</sup> The current location of the manuscript is also unknown.

The manuscript of Tabriz (Mat. MS 22) contains the *Histories* of Movses Khorenats'i (Moses of Khoren) and Yelische. It was copied before 1689. The name of the scribe and the origins of this manuscript are unknown. In 1689, the manuscript was brought to Gandzasar and was kept in the depository of the monastery.<sup>24</sup>

The Red Gospel, written in erkat'agir script on parchment, was once owned by Raphael Stora and later preserved in Gandzasar. Today it is kept at the depository of the University of Chicago (MS 949). It is extremely valuable for its illustrations made by miniaturist Abbas.

Polos, a student of Esayi Nch'ets'i went to Gladzor from Akner (Cilicia) in 1314 and copied a gospel for Tarsayich, the grandson of Tarsayich Orbelian. This manuscript later became the property of Gandzasar Monastery. Only the colophon of the manuscript has been preserved (Mat. MS 9150).

Among the manuscripts kept in Gandzasar are the following: a gospel copied by scribe Karapet and illustrated and bound by Zak'aria Avants'i in 1599 in the village of Avants' of Vaspurakan. In 1606, this manuscript was received by Jalal, the eldest son of Mehrab Bek (Mat. MS 5794). The skilled scribe Avetis copied a gospel on parchment (Mat. MS 3196) at an earlier date in K'arahat, however, he did not manage to illustrate it. In 1655, by order of Catholicos Petros, the manuscript was illuminated by priest Grigor. In 1656, the elder priest Gaspar copied a gospel on parchment (Mat. MS 2399) in Aspahan (Isfahan) at the behest of Khojamal. In 1658, the manuscript was received by Minas in Gandzasar.

The following manuscripts were also part of Gandzasar's collection: the Commentaries of Sargis Shnorhali (Mat. MS 3780, 14th century, scribe: Martiros), Grigor Tat'evats'i (Mat. MS 4055, 1655), Gevorg Skevrats'i and Grigor Narekats'i (Mat. MS 4383, 17th century), the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite (Mat. MS 3829, 1664, scribe: priest Barsel), Petrus de Aragonia (Mat. MS 4048, 1680, recipient: Movses *Vardapet*), a Ritual Book of Ordination (*Mashtots' Dzernadrut'ean*), donated to Catholicos Hovhannēs of Aġuank' (Mat. MS 4051), a gospel copied by elder priests Arak'el and Petros in the province of Varanda (Mat. MS 4176, 1652),

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<sup>22</sup> EGANIAN, Works, p. 62.

<sup>23</sup> BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 112.

<sup>24</sup> ACHARIAN, Catalogue, p. 20.

a 13th-century gospel copied by scribe Daniel (Mat. MS 4185), among several others. (See appendix). Among these manuscripts is Grigor Tat'evats'i's autograph copy of his *Book of Questions* (Mat. MS 3616), written in 1387 in Shahaponk' fortress.

In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the manuscript heritage of Lower Khach'en, one must remember a number of scribes who are related, though not directly, to the history of the region and to the House of Hasan-Jalalyan.

Hasan Jalal's daughter Mama-Khat'un was married to Umek from Manazkert, a wealthy merchant during the period of the Mongol rule. Kirakos Gandzakets'i wrote about Umek with great respect.<sup>25</sup> Umek lived in T'bilisi, Georgia, where he patronized a large church in 1251 (now Surb Gevorg, or St. George, Church, the cathedral of the Georgian Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church) and maintained close ties with Arts'akh and Utik'. He bought Getik with its surrounding area and was engaged in charity. Vakht'ang, Umek and Mama-Khat'un's younger son, was brought up by his pious mother with love for the national culture, and attracted the attention of the prominent Hovhannes Yerznkats'i when he was still a young man. In 1284, Hovhannes Yerznkats'i delivered a sermon dedicated to the heavenly bodies in the church built by Umek in T'bilisi. Inspired by that speech and at his mother's urging, Vakht'ang turned to the great scholar and asked him to write it down. The written version of the sermon was entitled *On the Celestial Movements*.<sup>26</sup> There are two more instances in which Vakht'ang is mentioned—he is memorialized in the colophons of two manuscripts as mets' paron (great lord). One of the manuscripts is a Gospel written on parchment containing only the Gospel of Matthew, which opens with a portrait of the evangelist (f. 1v) and one semi-canon table (fol 2r). The manuscript was copied by Vardan by order of Vakht'ang in 1279 (Mat. MS 5669).

The second manuscript that mentions Vakht'ang is the undated Epistles of Paul (Mat. MS 155), (fig. 12–16). Scholars Garegin Hovsep'ian<sup>27</sup> and Hravard Hakobyan<sup>28</sup> have studied these two manuscripts. Hovsep'ian postulates that the manuscript was copied in 1280, probably in Tpkhis (Tbilisi), whereas Hakobyan posits that it was copied from 1274 to 1275 in the Arts'akh-Utik'-Syunik' region. Despite the fact that there is no concrete data which makes the assumptions of Hakobyan and Hovsep'ian facts, these manuscripts remain representatives of the cultural traditions of the Hasan-Jalalyan family. In the second manuscript especially noteworthy is the portrait of the young Vakht'ang dressed in princely robes sitting on a high chair (f. 106v). It has a unique ethnographic significance.

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25 GANDZAKETS'I, p. 363.

26 YERZNKATS'I, Brief Notebook.

27 HOVSEP'IAN, Vakht'ang, pp. 217–233.

28 HAKOBYAN, Miniatures of Arts'akh-Utik', pp. 65–71; see also GABRIELIAN, Arts'akh, pp. 76–81.



Monastery of Surb Hakob  
(Mets'aranits'),  
(photo credit: Hrair  
Hawk Khatcherian)

## SURB HAKOB (SAINT JACOBS) MONASTERY (METS'ARANITS')

The monastery of Surb Hakob (Hakobavank'), which received its name from storing the relics of Patriarch Hakob Mtsbna (Saint Jacob of Nisibis), was the second residence of the Catholicos in the province. In the 14th and 15th centuries, both Gandzasar and Surb Hakob Monasteries were the residences of the catholicoi Hasan-Jalalyans. Surb Hakob monastery was likewise one of the most important spiritual and educational centers in Khokhanaberd. While the sources do not provide the exact foundation date of the monastery, it is assumed to have been built before the 9th century. The oldest extant source is the inscription from 853 preserved on the pedestal of a *khach'k'ar*, on which the names of prince Hovhannes, son of Sahl Smbatian, and Bishop Solomon of Mets'aran, who erected the *khach'k'ar*, are both mentioned.<sup>29</sup>

Churches, monks' cells, auxiliary buildings, and a wall have been preserved in the monastery complex. The main church

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<sup>29</sup> CIArm, ch. 5, p. 12.

was rebuilt in 1212 by prince Vakht'ang of Khach'en and his wife Khorishah.<sup>30</sup> The monastery was renovated for the second time in 1691 by Bishop Grigor. An inscription on the shutter of a reliquary which holds the right hand of Patriarch Hakob preserves this fact.<sup>31</sup> According to the inscription on the south wall of the complex, in 1241 in the time of Father Sarg, Smbat's son Grigor donated lands, a gospel, and a holy cross to the monastery.<sup>32</sup> This is the earliest evidence of a manuscript donation to this church. Few manuscripts have come down to us from this once famous scriptorium and its surroundings. At the request of the priest Grigor, a scribe named Hovhannes, copied a gospel in 1297 at Surb Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God) Church in Yelegis and wrote in the colophon of the manuscript how the churches of the province were destroyed and looted by the enemy's invasions (Mat. MS 7482, f. 245r).<sup>33</sup> Priest Grigor asked to mention the names of monks Hovhan and Hakob. We have evidence that a gospel was copied here in 1383.<sup>34</sup>

In 1577, during the tenure of Catholicos Hovhannes, monk Salat'el copied a gospel (Mat. MS 5507) in Surb Astvatsatsin Church at the request of Archbishop Simeon. Barseł *mahtesi* (a title given to pilgrim to Jerusalem) provided him with paper, and the scribe's friends Father Unan and monk Avanis helped him as he copied. In the main colophon the scribe mentioned the Bishop Barseł, priests Yeliske, Voskan, Barseł, and Sargis, deacons Ulu and Basbar, as well as Gohar and Maria who worked at the monastery. The scribe also mentions his late uncles Bishops Simavon and Vardan.

In 1594, at the request of Karapet, the manuscript was illuminated by Zak'aria Avants'i in the village of Avants' in Vaspurakan. Zak'aria painted Christological scenes, portraits of the evangelists with their title pages, canon tables and semi-canon tables.

The sources do not provide any information about the activity of this scriptorium from the end of the 16th century through the 19th century. At Hakobavank', Hovsep' *Vardapet* Arts'akhets'i (Ter-Avagian) (d. 1847) was famous for his pedagogical and scientific activities. He was born in Shushi. There he received his education and established a school. Hovsep' *Vardapet* called himself a philologist in the colophons he penned. He authored several grammatical and philosophical works. He taught Armenian language, Theology, Logic, and Philosophy. At Surb Hakob Monastery, Hovsep' *Vardapet* wrote *The Book of Theoretical Philosophy*, which consists of four chapters: On Logic, On Nature, On Metaphysics, and On Morality (Mat. MS 2828). In 1816, Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i and his pupil copied another manuscript (Mat. MS 2525). In 1835, the author copied two more examples of this book at the request of Archbishop Baldasar (Mat. MS 3619, MS 4038).

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30 Ibid.

31 Ibid. p. 11.

32 Ibid. p. 13.

33 Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 13th century, p. 798.

34 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 263.

In 1839, Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i wrote a book titled *Grammar of the Armenian Language* (Mat. MS 2563) and another work on grammar (Mat. MS 3620). In 1817, Hovsep' *Vardapet* copied John Chrysostom's *Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew* (Mat. MS 3618). In 1830 and 1840, two of his works were published in Shushi: *A Brief Dictionary from Grabar* (Classical Armenian) to *Ashkharhabar* (Modern Armenian), and *A Brief Grammar of the Classical Armenian Language* (first volume). Both of these works later served as textbooks.

Manuscripts were copied in the village of Khandzk' near Surb Hakob Monastery. In 1560, the monk Hovhannes copied a *mashtots'* and mentioned in the colophon Mehrab Bek Hasan-Jalalyants' and Catholicos Grigoris (Mat. MS 9872). In the colophons of two other gospels—copied in 1560 and 1569 in Khandzk'—the monk Hovhannes remembered prince Mehrab Bek and his son Catholicos Grigoris.<sup>35</sup> In 1569 and 1571, Hovhannes copied two more gospels under the auspices of Surb Astvatsatsin Church within the monastery of the Holy Savior in Khach'en.<sup>36</sup>

In 1566, the elder priest Arstakes copied a *mashtots'* in the Khandzk' village during the tenure of Catholicos Grigoris and reign of prince Mehrab Bek (Mat. MS 3427, f. 158v). From this colophon, written in 1721, we learn of the plight of the province.

Below are represented the manuscript traditions in several other places of Lower Khach'en.

In 1232, in Getik Monastery, prince Jajur's daughter Vaneni asked the scribe Step'anos to copy a gospel on parchment in erkat'agir script in the memory of her father (the current location of the manuscript is unknown). She received this manuscript and donated it to Havaptuk Monastery.<sup>37</sup>

The monastery of Koshik Anapat in Khach'en was a royal cemetery. According to an inscription carved on the wall of *gavit'*, prince Vasak's son Prosh donated a gospel, a *tonapatchar* (lectionary), and a cross to the monastery.<sup>38</sup> In 1493, the scribe Sargis copied a gospel after the fine example of Ephraim the Syrian.<sup>39</sup> Harut'yun, the landlord of Verinshen, bought the manuscript from impious men and gave it to priest Vardan, the son of the elder priest Aristakes, to bind it in 1749. Afterwards, he donated the manuscript to the village church in Vernishen in Jraberd.<sup>40</sup>

In 1490, an unknown scribe copied a gospel at Surb Gevorg Monastery (Ptiki Surb Gevorg).<sup>41</sup> Later, in 1760, the monk Hovhannes copied a miscellany there (Mat. MS 8508).

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35 BARKHUDARIANTS', *The Land of Ałuank'*, p. 177; *Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts of the Library of the Monastery of Bzommar*, p. 5.

36 VOSKIAN, *The monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 51–52.

37 HOVSEPIAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians*, p. 29.

38 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 169; VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 79.

39 *Idem*, p. 80.

40 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 247.

41 ACHARIAN, *Catalogue*, p. 22.

Manuscripts from Khanatsakh have also come down to us. In 1693, the priest Ep'rem copied a gospel on parchment at Surb Astvatsatsin Church at the request of Melik Hakhnazar's wife Mahp'ar. This manuscript contains impressive calligraphic examples (Mat. MS 7840). The scribe wrote the text in bolorgir script, and the first rows and initial letters of key texts are written in gold. Combining gold with dark and light red, blue, green, and orange, the scribe embellished the manuscripts with elegant miniatures. The manuscript has a gilded silver binding with the image of the Nativity on the front, and an image of the Crucifixion on the back.

A richly illuminated lectionary, copied on fine paper by the scribe P'ilipos at Surb Hrip'sime Church (Gomorants') has been stored in the same church. Its date is missing. Thanks to the efforts of the village priest and other locals, the manuscript was restored.<sup>42</sup> A gospel copied on paper at the request of Manvel the Philosopher at Surb Astvatsatsin Church of Drazark (Cilicia) has also been preserved here.<sup>43</sup> The fate of these two manuscripts is unknown.

Manuscripts were also stored at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Arajadzor Village. From an undated colophon we learn that, at the request of priest, a certain Bishop Vardan copied a gospel on paper that was illuminated by Bishop Hordan. Additional information has been preserved about a bible, copied by scribe Khosrov. In a later colophon added to the manuscript, we learn that in 1617 the manuscript was restored by local villagers.<sup>44</sup>

In the fifteenth century, Matt'eos copied Grigor Tat'evats'i's *Book of Questions* at the request of the priest Hovhannes (Mat. MS 801). A colophon records that Matt'eos came from a family of teachers. As an adult, he copied this manuscript on a crude paper. Fortunately, the name of the location where the manuscript was written is preserved (f. 1r).

In 1326, at the behest of the priest Vanakan, scribe T'uma copied a gospel at Surb Nahatak Church (church of the Holy Martyrs) of Khach'en (Jerusalem MS 1794).<sup>45</sup> The manuscript is incomplete as some leaves are missing, including the portrait of the evangelist Matthew. The portraits of the other three evangelists, as well as head-pieces and marginalia have been preserved. The name of the leader of the covenant, Father At'anes, is mentioned in the main colophon.

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42 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 153.

43 Idem, p. 154.

44 Idem, p. 186.

45 BOĀARIAN, Catalogue, v. 6, p. 142.



Khadavank' Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair  
Hawk Khatcherian)

## KHADAVANK'

Khadavank' was a prominent scriptorium in Upper Khach'en. It was named after one of the first preachers of Christianity in Arts'akh, Bishop Khad, who was a disciple of the Apostle Thaddaeus.<sup>46</sup> Initially, the monastery was the patriarchal residence of Mets Koghmank', or Mets Kvenk', province.<sup>47</sup> The monastery was founded in the early medieval period and became the spiritual center and site of burial for the rulers of Upper Khach'en, or Tsar, in the 12th century. After the death of prince Vakht'ang-when the territory of the Principality of Hat'erk' was divided between the peoples of Lower and Upper Khach'en, and the renowned apostolic monastery of Dadivank' in Hat'erk' became the spiritual center and site of burial for the princes of Tsar-Khadavank' remained the patriarchal residence and main mausoleum.

Khadavank' is located about 8 km west of Valuhas, on the right bank of T'art'ar, on an impregnable forested mountain range surrounded by valleys. The main sources for studying

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<sup>46</sup> JALALIANTS', *Journey*, v. 2, p. 229.

<sup>47</sup> Ulubabian, HASRAT'IAN, *Khadavank'-Khat'ravank'*, v. 10, p. 24.

the scriptorium of the monastery are epigraphic inscriptions, the manuscripts created there, and their colophons, which provide reliable and trustworthy information.

Hovhannes Khach'ents' from the Vakht'angyan family is believed to have renovated the monastery. In inscriptions and colophons he is mentioned as "Hovhannes Khach'ents'i" or "Hovhannes from the region of Khach'en." He was the teacher of *Amirspasalar* (commander-in-chief) Sargis' sons, Zak'arē and Ivanē.<sup>48</sup> Zak'arē appointed him Dean of Sanahin (1170–80s) and later of Halbat (1180s). Hovhannes reconstructed churches in Sanahin, Halbat, and Khach'en. He is remembered as a benefactor-builder, patron of the art of writing, and science. Many valuable manuscripts were prepared in Halbat, Sanahin, and Khach'en during his years in office. Kirakos Gandzakets'i called him "a virtuous and holy man" and with great reverence wrote about the construction of the large narthex of Halbatavank'.<sup>49</sup> Later, Hovhannes used details from the narthex of Halbat in the reconstruction of other buildings in Khach'en.

Between 1195 and 1204, Hovhannes Khach'ents'i rebuilt the church of Surb Astvatsatsin in Khadavank', which was destroyed as a result of an earthquake in 1139, and damaged due to the invasions of the Seljuk-Turks in 1143. He amassed a large number of manuscripts and cross-stones at Khadavank' where he established a depository and gifted gardens to the monastery. By the mediation of Vakht'ang, ruler of Hat'erk', he gifted all this to his elder brother, the prince Hasan of Tsar, and to his sons; this information is preserved in an inscription.<sup>50</sup>

From the same inscription we learn that Hasan gifted the garden of Khndzorabak to the monastery.<sup>51</sup> This laid a stable economic foundation for the monastery's cultural life. We do not find mention of Hasan elsewhere. After the latter's death, his wife Dop'-after whom their princely house was named Dop'ian, and sister of Zak'arē and Ivanē Zak'arian-began to rule. Due to Dop''s activities, the Melikdom (Principality) of Tsar was strengthened, and the spiritual centers, especially Khadavank', flourished.

According to the inscription, Princess Dop' built the narthex of the church and a small chapel in 1225, in addition to gifting both gardens and a magnificent Gospel to the monastery.<sup>52</sup> Dop''s son, prince Grigor Dop'ian of Upper Khach'en, and his wife Aspa, daughter of prince Tarsayich of Syunik', commissioned the main altar of Surb Astvatsatsin Church and donated a luxurious gospel written on parchment to the monastery known as "T'argmanchats Gospel" (Mat. MS 2743), (fig. 16–24).<sup>53</sup>

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48 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 171.

49 *Idem*, pp. 174, 216.

50 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 121.

51 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 75. This inscription, which is the first testimony on the establishment of the scriptorium and repository of Khadavank', was engraved on the eastern façade of the church. Today it is displayed at the Matenadaran.

52 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 127.

53 For the detailed examination of the Gospel see MATEVOSYAN, *T'argmanch'ats' Gospel*, pp. 102–114; *idem*

T'argmanchats Gospel was copied by scribe Tirats'u and illuminated by Grigor in 1232 in Karin. The recipient of the gospel was priest Hovhannes. During the Mongol invasions, the manuscript appeared in the hands of Armenian soldiers, who brought it to Arts'akh and gave it to the prince and princess. The princess ordered the artist Grigor to paint portraits of the Evangelists and scenes from the Life of Christ, previously lacking from the manuscript. In the colophon the prince and princess are mentioned as "the recipients and decorators of the Holy Gospel."<sup>54</sup> Artist Grigor, adhering to Grigor Tsalko's palette (who painted the canon tables and title pages), added the portraits of the Evangelists and the Life of Christ series, which are of exceptional value. These miniatures are bound in different parts of the manuscript. Scholars have been often confused due to the shared name of both painters—one Grigor painted the ornamented illustrations, and the other the miniatures from the Christological cycle. Since the second Grigor illuminated the manuscript in Arts'akh, he is referred to as Grigor Arts'akhets'i, whereas the other is known as Grigor Tsalko.<sup>55</sup>

In 1312, in memory of his wife Asp'a, who died the year prior, the prince gifted villages, gardens, orchards, various dishes and garments to the monastery, and ordered to embellish the Gospel with gold and silver for his wife's grave.

A Gospel written on parchment by Kozma in 1166 in St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Hromkla at the request of Bishop Arak'el Antstunya was also kept in the depository of Khadavank'. Ivanē's son Avag bought it in Caesarea from a sale organized by the Mongols and later brought it to Arts'akh. There, in 1244, prince Grigor Dop'ian received the manuscript and donated it to Khadavank' (Mat. MS 7347). In the colophon, prince Grigor recounts how, during the Mongol invasion of Karin—in which he and his soldiers took part and later accepted Mongol supremacy—tried to provide aid to their relatives, ransomed many of them, as well as saved or bought looted Armenian manuscripts and church relics from their invaders. The prince mentions four books (gospels and lectionaries for festivals) that he brought and donated to Khadavank' in 1243.<sup>56</sup> Historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i also reported about the plundered property and the sale of manuscripts organized by the Mongols.<sup>57</sup> Among those who ransomed books, Kirakos Gandzakets'i mentioned the names of Ivanē's son Avag, the abovementioned Grigor Khach'ents'i, Shahنشah, and Albuła.

One of Grigor Khach'ents'i ransomed gospels, also called the Gospel of Karin, or Theodopolis,

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1993, pp. 105–118. In 1911, Hovsep'ian G. put the miniatures of the Gospel in scientific circulation (HOVSEPIAN, *Miniatures of the Etchmiadzin Gospel*, № 5–6. The art historian survey of the miniatures has been done by Chookaszian L. (CHOOKASZIAN, Grigor Tsalko). The manuscript is named T'argmanch'ats' Gospel because of being kept at the T'argmanch'ats' monastery of Gandzak.

54 KHACHIKIAN, MATEVOSYAN, GHAZAROSYAN, *Colophons*, 14th century, v. 1, p. 215.

55 MATEVOSYAN, *T'argmanch'ats' Gospel*, pp. 105–118.

56 MATEVOSYAN, *Colophons*, 13th century, p. 228.

57 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 279–280.

is currently kept in the library of the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice (MS 129).<sup>58</sup> The lectionaries for festivals were copied in 1227 by the scribe Nerses at the request of Vardan *Vardapet* and Turk'. Today they are part of Matenadaran collection (MS 6196, MS 3779).<sup>59</sup>

The manuscript of Halbat or Getashen (Mat. MS 6288) was also once kept in Khadavank'. This magnificent manuscript was copied on parchment in *erkat'agir* script in 1211 at the monastery of Halbat and illuminated at the monastery at Bekhents' in Ani. In 1223, the priest Sargis bought it in Ani and sent it to Khadavank' with a certain Mkhitar'.<sup>60</sup> The manuscript was restored and rebound in Arts'akh three times. It is unknown for how long it remained in Khadavank'. The manuscript was then taken to Getashen village in the province of Gardman (Utik) and kept there until the beginning of the 20th century. Garegin Hovsep'ian, brought it to Etchmiadzin from there.<sup>61</sup> This manuscript is a unique example of miniature painting from Ani, where secular features dominate.<sup>62</sup>

The Vehap'ar Gospel—a manuscript which exhibits rare paleographic and codicological features—was one of the treasures of the depository of Khadavank' (Mat. MS 10780).<sup>63</sup> The colophons of this tenth-century manuscript, once written on parchment, have not been preserved. However, later colophons and notes give us an idea about its contents. Following a codicological and paleographic analysis, Artashes Matevosyan, stated that the manuscript was created in one of the provinces around Lake Van, and the scribe, who doubled as the painter, was one of the most skilled scribes of the time, who could write in all scripts. The first mention of the manuscript refers to its restoration in 1088. It was restored by priest Sargis.<sup>64</sup> In the fifteenth century, the manuscript was acquired by monk Sargis, who was educated at Tat'ev Monastery. He took it to the K'yurlar Village in P'arisos Province in Arts'akh where his relatives lived. From here the manuscript got its name—the Gospel of K'yurlar. The names of Sargis' offspring, who preserved the manuscript with care, are also mentioned in the colophons. Later, the gospel was captured and ransomed, restored and rebound several times. When the village was destroyed by the Lezgins, the looters neglected the manuscript and only took the silver covers and *shushpa* (a piece of cloth or leather used to wrap gospels or saints' relics). In 1720, the villagers of Nyukzar again restored and rebound the manuscript. In 1729, a man named Shaho received the manuscript and donated it to Khadavank'. In 1978, Vazgen I, Catholicos of All Armenians, obtained the gospel and gifted it to the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran.<sup>65</sup>

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58 SARGISEAN, Catalogue, v. 1, p. 567.

59 MATEVOSYAN, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel, pp. 109–110.

60 MATEVOSYAN, The Halbat Gospel.

61 HOVSEP'IAN, A Masterpiece of the Halbat School, v. 1, pp. 254–290.

62 MATEVOSYAN, The Halbat Gospel.

63 MATEVOSYAN and IZMAYLOVA, The Vehap'ar Gospel.

64 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 5th–12th centuries, p. 115.

65 MATEVOSYAN and IZMAYLOVA, The Vehap'ar Gospel, pp. 555–572.



Dadivank' Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair  
Hawk Khatcherian)

## DADIVANK'

Dadivank' was one of the most important scriptoria of Arts'akh. The monastery is named after Dadi or Dado, a disciple of the apostle Thaddeus, who, according to tradition, preached Christianity in Arts'akh and was martyred there.<sup>66</sup> The precise date of the monastery's foundation is unknown. It is believed to have been founded between the fourth and fifth centuries. Sources first mention the monastery in the ninth century.<sup>67</sup> Movses Kalankatvats'i wrote about Dadivank' as "Khoradzor called Dado Monastery".<sup>68</sup> The monastery was the spiritual center of Hat'erk' and the burial site of the Vakht'angian princes. It had a narthex, bell tower, several chapels, and rooms for guests.<sup>69</sup> From the 12th century, the monastery was an episcopal residence. The spiritual leaders

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66 ASORI, *Chronicle*, p. 33.

67 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 197.

68 KALANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Ahuank'*, p. 340.

69 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 205–206.



Fresco of 1297 in Dadivank'  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

of the monastery were members of the Vakht'angian family. The names of Grigoris, At'anas, Vasak, the monk Hasan's son Grigoris, Vasak's son bishop Grigor, Sargis, and Petros are linked to the monastery.

In 1145, Mkhit'ar Gosh reported that Dadivank' was destroyed and plundered as a result of warlord Choli's attack, during which manuscripts and church relics were also looted.<sup>70</sup> The monastery was restored in the 1170s. The main church of the monastery, Surb Katolikē (the Cathedral), was built in 1214 by the princess of Hat'erk', Arzu Khatun (daughter of prince K'urd), in memory of her late husband, Vakht'ang, and their two sons. The latter's reliefs (Hasan and Grigor) are carved on the southern wall and those of prince Vakht'ang and Dade are located on the eastern façade. Arzu Khatun also embroidered. She, along with her daughters,

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<sup>70</sup> GOSH, Chronicle, p. 608.

embroidered the altar curtains of Dadivank', Halbat, Nor Getik, and Makaravank'.<sup>71</sup> Dadivank' is also famous for its exceptionally valuable frescoes created in 1297 (dated by their inscriptions). The images represent scenes from the lives of Saint Stephen Protomartyr and Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker.<sup>72</sup>

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, two Hovhanneses from Tsar, who were famous in Upper Khach'en, carried out their activities in Dadivank'. The second Hovhannes often called himself "Little Hovhannesik" (also known as Hovhannesik Tsarets'i) so that he might be distinguished from the elder, who was his grandfather's brother.

Hovhannes *Vardapet* Tsarets'i was born in Tsar. He was a student of Łukas Halbatets'i, a famous and educated clergyman who spent whole his life in Dadivank'. Here, he served as Hovhannesik's teacher. Hovhannesik always remembered him with gratitude, calling him "a decent and pious, a humble and praying man." Hovhannes Tsarets'i died in 1583 and was buried in Varkashen Village.<sup>73</sup>

We have more information about Melk'on's son Hovhannesik. He was born in 1560, was educated at Dadivank' under the instruction of his first teacher Hovhannes *Vardapet* and later, the famous head teacher Nerses Gnunets'i. He then became a monk at Dadivank'. He is famous for authoring his Chronicle, which is preserved in two copies at the Matenadaran (MS 2776, f. 266r-271a) and MS 8245, f. 93r-95v).

Hovhannesik not only copied manuscripts at Dadivank' but also received and restored them, enriching the collection of the monastery. In 1583, he received a manuscript copied by the priest Sargis' in 1381. It was a copy of Vardan Arevelts'i's Commentary on the Pentateuch. In the colophon Hovhannesik mentioned himself and the name of his teacher Hovhannes Tsarets'i (Mat. MS 1136, f. 2v). In 1411, he received another manuscript copied by Matt'eos Jułayets'i in the Monastery of Aprakunis, wherein he wrote in bolorgir script the name of his teacher (Mat. MS 2519, f. 3v). In 1588, Hovhannesik restored a copy of Vardan Arevelts'i's Commentary on the *Song of Songs*.<sup>74</sup> When in 1594 he received Gregory of *Tat'ev's Book of Questions*, copied earlier in the 15th century by the elder priest Petros, he left a few notes throughout the manuscript (Jerusalem MS 2208).<sup>75</sup> In 1606, Hovhannesik received a manuscript copied by the monk Daniel of Sevan in 1451 (Mat. MS 1301, f. 23v).

Epigraphic inscriptions testify that Hovhannesik also built churches. According to an inscription from Surb Astvatsatsin Church in the province of Sodk' in Gelark'unik', the church was built in 1618 by Hovhannesik Tsarets'i.<sup>76</sup> In another, more extensive inscription

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71 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 215-216.

72 MATEVOSYAN, AVETISYAN, ZARIAN, LAMOUREUX, *Dadivank Revived Miracle*, pp. 137-183.

73 HAKOBYAN, *Minor Chronicles*, v. 2, pp. 244-245.

74 *Idem*, p. 237.

75 BOŁARIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 7, p. 282.

76 CIArm, chap. 4, p. 369; SMBATEANTS', *Bulletin of the Tsovazard region of Gelark'unik'*, p. 628.

found on the southern wall of the church, Hovhannesik recorded the origins of his family.<sup>77</sup> Based off of this evidence, Hovhannesik died no later than 1623.<sup>78</sup>

Hovhannesik's *Chronicle* covers the period from 1572 to 1600. The following events are described in his text: the invasions and wars of 1578 led by the Ottoman general Lala Mustafa Pasha across Southern Caucasus, the severe famine and epidemic of 1579–1580 in Atropatene and Ahuank', the liberation struggle of the Georgian people in the late sixteenth century against the Ottoman Empire, and the policies of Shah Khudabanda of Persia, and later Shah Abbas. The information provided by Hovhannesik, an eyewitness to the events, is credible and has important historical value. It was Arak'el Davrizhets'i who first referred to Hovhannesik's *Chronology*, recopying it as a separate chapter in his own authored *History*.<sup>79</sup> The original text of Hovhannesik's *Chronicle* was later attached to an older manuscript dated to 1334 (Mat. MS 2776, f. 266r–271r).

Tsar' or Upper Khach'en, was also identified as Little Syunik' in the sources. One can find this name recorded in the colophons of manuscripts in later periods as well.

In 1684, head teacher Petros from the Dop'ian princely family ordered scribe Varvare to copy Gregory of Tat'ev's Book of Sermons for him in memory of his brother, Bishop Grigor (Mat. MS 2067). In the colophon, the scribe wrote that she had copied the manuscript at Kusanats' Anapat (Monastery of the Holy Virgin) in Tsar, under the auspices of the churches of the Holy Apostles of Dade, Surb Katolike, Surb Astvatsatsin, and Surb Nshan (f. 471r). Varvare' was a skilled scribe and wrote neatly and proportionately. She paid attention not only to her calligraphy, but also to the correctness of the text she was copying and carefully proofreading the texts. Her manuscript was illuminated with beautiful marginalia and ornamental letters by the artist Barseł, who also bound the manuscript. Barseł's brother, the Deacon Łhazar, helped him.

In 1684, the scribe Barseł illuminated a gospel using gold leaf and a rich palette of colors. This manuscript was copied by the priest Ep'rem in 1671 in Olverdž at the behest of Petros *Vardapet* (Mat. MS 7232). The illumination of the gospel was initiated by the priest Grigor who passed away in 1676 before its completion. Years later, his son Barseł continued the work left unfinished by his father. He painted a series of twenty-four images depicting the Life of Christ, portraits of the Evangelists, title pages, canon tables and semi-canon tables. Another gospel was copied in Dadivank' in 1694, again under the watch of the head teacher Petros.<sup>80</sup>

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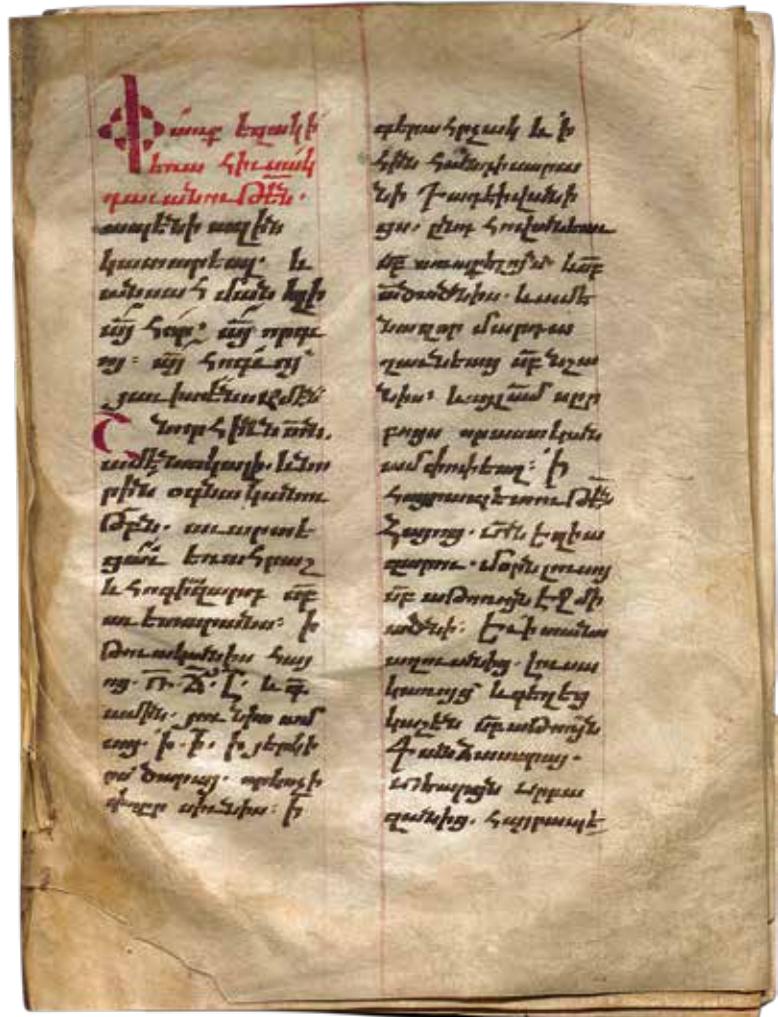
77 CIArm, chap. 4, p. 371.

78 Ulubabian, *The Principality of Khach'en*, p. 403.

79 DAVRIZHETS'I, *Book of Histories*, pp. 605–619.

80 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 110.

Colophon written in 1671  
in Dadivank'  
(Mat. MS 7232, f. 322r)



In 1699, when Zak'aria was the spiritual leader of Dadivank' monastery, T'ovma *Vardapet* copied a Miscellany (Mat. MS 8505).

Few manuscripts have come down to us from other locations of the Upper Khach'en region.

A testimony is preserved concerning a gospel copied by Sargis *Vardapet* in 1387 in Tsar.<sup>81</sup> T'uma also copied and illustrated a gospel in Tsar (Mat. MS 8124). In 1402, in the time of Archbishop Zak'aria, the priest Hunan asked T'uma Syunets'i to prepare a copy of Gregory of Tat'ev's *Commentary*

81 BARKHUDARIANTS', *The Land of Aduank' and its Neighbours*, p. 220.

*on the Gospel of Matthew* in memory of his parents Arak'el and Minakhat'un. He writes that the manuscript was written in the village of K'arvachar in Tsar (MS 3578, f. 293v).

In 1411, scribe T'ovma copied a lectionary at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Getamej.<sup>82</sup> At the same church, the priest Vrt'anes received a gospel from T'ovma in 1456 in memory of his parents Murat and Sara.<sup>83</sup> In 1661, in the monastery of Getamej, Khanum ordered Hovhannes to copy a gospel in memory of her husband.<sup>84</sup>

In 1652, Movses Gorisets'i copied a hymnal and illuminated it with images from the Christological cycle, headpieces, and marginal ornamentations in the village of Apahen (Mat. MS 1626). In 1647, Movses restored a gospel in the capital of Sot'e, which was copied in 1490 at Khorotka Monastery in Gardmank' (Mat. MS 8135)<sup>85</sup>.

In 1653, the priest Father T'adeos ordered the scribe Martiros to copy a gospel for him in the village of Sos in memory of his parents. The elder priest Movses illuminated and bound the manuscript and placed on its cover a jeweled, metal cross (Mat. MS 3647).

In 1663, the scribe Yerets' copied and illuminated a Gospel in Tsar at the behest of Simeon (Mat. MS 4053, f. 301r). As the last leaf of the colophon is missing, the precise place of its copying remains unknown. Ten years later, in 1673, the scribe Yesayi completed a *mashtots'* ordered by Barsel in the village of Dashtak (Mat. MS 3601). It is thought that the previous manuscript was also copied by Yesayi in Dashtak.

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82 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 1, p. 122.

83 Idem, v. 2, p. 66.

84 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 162.

85 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th century, v. 3, p. 261.



Gtch'avank'  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## GTCH'AVANK' AND DIZAK PROVINCE

The historical principedom of Dizak was founded in the late sixteenth century in the southern part of the province of Myus Haband. The princely residences, Goroz and Gtich' fortresses, and the village of Tol are located in Dizak. A branch of the Aranshahik Dynasty—descendants of Yesayi Abu-Muse (825–855) of Gtich'—ruled over Dizak. This dynasty remained in place until 1271 and at the end of the sixteenth century became the ruler of the melikdom of Dizak.

Gtch'avank' was the diocesan seat of Dizak. It was established in the early medieval period. Since the fifth century it is mentioned as an episcopal residence. Since the eighth century, together with the adjacent fortress, it was under the auspices of the Dizak line of the Aranshahik princely house. According to Movses Kalankatvats'i, a representative of Gtch'avank' participated in the Council of Partav in the

eighth century.<sup>86</sup> The mountain and fortress built above the monastery share its name. The fortress was one of the oldest and most powerful in Arts'akh. In the ninth century, it was the residence of prince Yesayi, and later served as the seat of the princes of Dizak. In the ninth century, the military commander of the Caliphate Bula sieged the Castle Gtich' and demanded that prince Yesayi Abu-Musa come down from the mountains and surrender. After much resistance, Bula was forced to make peace. Prince Yesayi's letter addressed to Bula has been preserved. Asatur Mnats'akanian considers it one of the most remarkable examples of literature from the ninth century.<sup>87</sup>

The monastic complex consists of multiple single-nave, domed churches adjacent to each other, a narthex, and living quarters. The main church was built from 1241 to 1247 by two brothers from Amaras, the bishops Sargis and Vrt'anes. This is evidenced by an inscription found on the northern wall of the monastery.<sup>88</sup> As early as in the fifteenth century, Gtch'avank' was already a renowned cultural center and had a scriptorium. It became more prominent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when Melik Yegan ruled.

There are few manuscripts that have come down to us from this scriptorium. They primarily serve ritual functions and are either gospels, rituals or hymnals. Manuscripts preserved from this province were mainly copied, illuminated and stored in Gtch'avank', although a few codices survive from the villages of T'alaser, Shakhkakh, Dizap'ayt, Tol, and T'aghlar of Hadrut' Province.

The earliest testimonies concerning manuscripts from Dizak date back to 1428. From the colophon of a now lost manuscript, we learn that Bishop Manuel of Amaras copied a gospel in Gtch'avank' at the request of Asadi's son the monk Melik'sed.<sup>89</sup>

The scribe Manuel was again mentioned in a gospel copied in 1428 in the village of Shosh in the region of Amaras. Fortunately, this manuscript itself survives (Mat. MS 8211), and the portraits of the four Evangelists have been preserved.

In 1464, at the behest of *Mahtesi* Murat and his wife Dilshat, the scribe Malak'ia copied a gospel at Yereran monastery in Vayots Dzor (Mat. MS 3701). In the colophon, the scribe asked their reader to remember Murat, his parents, brother, and sister. The manuscript was donated to Gtch'avank'.

In 1477, Archbishop Aleksianos bought a manuscript copied by the monk Zak'aria at Vomavans monastery in Amaras and took it to Gtch'avank', where he ordered a colophon to be written in memory of his parents and relatives, as well as his teacher, the Bishop Manuel of Amaras, and priest Grigoris. Aleksianos also expressed his sorrow about the difficult situation in

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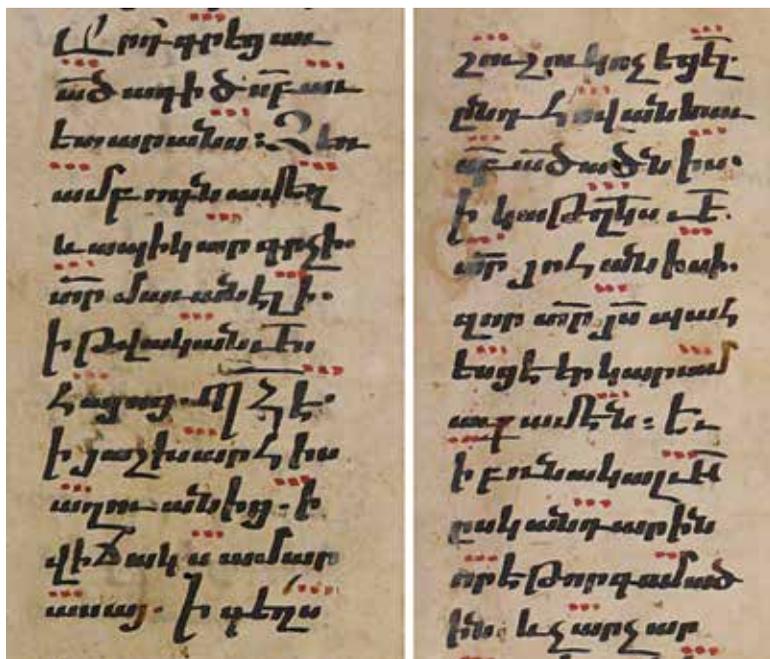
86 KALANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Ałuank'*, p. 372.

87 MNATS'AKANIAN, *On the Issue of Literature of the Country of Ałuank'*, pp. 181-182.

88 CIArm, chap. V, p. 183.

89 KHACH'IKIAN, *Colophons, 15th century*, v. 1, p. 385.

Colophon written by the  
scribe Manuel in 1428 in  
Shush Village in Amaras  
(Mat. MS 8211, ff. 359r-360v)



the country, and begged his reader not to forget him and his brother, both monks at Gtch'avank' (Mat. MS 9792).

The colophon of Archbishop Alek'sianos contains historical facts about Georgia as well. As an eyewitness, he wrote about being embittered by the reality of that turbulent time, the great losses that the neighboring country of Armenia suffered—symptoms of the destructions caused by Uzun Hasan (1423-1478), ruler of Ak-Koyunlu dynasty.

In 1575, abbot Petros copied a *mashtots'* (Mat. MS 6834) at Surb Astvatsatsin Church at Gtch'avank' in the time of Bishop Galos. Beki, who mentioned the names of his many living and deceased relatives, was the recipient of the manuscript.

In 1653-1675, a gospel was copied for the priest Matt'eos, brother of Catholicos Petros Khandzk'ets'i of Aduank' and a monk in Gtch'avank', for whom another gospel was copied in 1668.<sup>90</sup>

Arak'el Kostanyants' lived and worked in Gtch'avank'. He was appointed abbot of the monastery in 1853 and for many

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90 ALISHAN, Sisakan, p. 270.

years dedicated himself to the monastery's development; he taught Armenian language and religion and wrote histories that have, fortunately, come down to us.<sup>91</sup> Between 1858 and 1880, Arak'el wrote *History of Arts'akh* in two manuscripts (Mat. MS 7822, MS 7823) and dedicated it to the memory of his spiritual father, Hakob *Vardapet*. In this work, the author provided valuable geographic information about the history of Arts'akh, and especially the melikdom of Dizak. *History of Arts'akh* is a unique geographical manual about Arts'akh. Later, it served as a source for famous armenian novelist Raffi's Melikdoms of Khamsa.

In 1884, Arak'el Kostanyants' wrote the history of Gtch'avank' (Mat. MS 3966).<sup>92</sup> As he mentioned in the colophon, this work is a supplement to the previous two volumes. This manuscript is an important source, and provides reliable information on the life of the congregation of the monastery. The author introduced previous abbots,<sup>93</sup> and provided information on the boundary lines of Gtch'avank', which was confirmed by a reference letter addressed to the consistorian of Karabakh concerning the monastery's estate, dated December 1, 1856.<sup>94</sup> From this manuscript we also learn about the Muslimized branch of the Melik-Yeganian Dynasty.<sup>95</sup> The author also included autobiographical information.

The next extant manuscript from Gtch'avank' was also copied by Arak'el Kostanyants'. It is a collection of historical material, written in 1886–1888 (Mat. MS 3881). Here, the author inserted various historical information, and provided a chronology of the Melik Shahnazarian Dynasty, reporting that Melik Yesayi was killed in 1781 by Ibrahim Khan of Shushi.

Thus, the manuscripts written in Gtch'avank', or related to this cultural center, occupy a significant place in the manuscript heritage of Dizak Province.

There are manuscripts preserved from other areas within Dizak Province. One is a gospel, copied in Khandzadzor in 1604 by the priest Martiros of Dizak and received by Sujum.<sup>96</sup>

In 1631, scribe Baldasar copied a *mashtots'* (Mat. MS 3580) in T'alaser. In the colophon he mentions the name of Father Melik'set', who taught the art of writing and copied manuscripts with his brother, the priest Kirakos. Together, they copied a gospel at Surb Sargis Church in the village of T'alaser in Dizak Province. This manuscript was taken to the city of Tabriz, from where, in 1806, Mkrtich' from Erzurum redeemed it and gifted it to *Mahtesi* Srapion

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91 Mat., Archive, folder 168, doc. 41.

92 Maghalyan A. published the text with an extensive foreword; MAGHALYAN, *History of Gtch'avank'*, pp. 283–304.

93 Arak'el Kostanyants' reported that Melik Yegan's father, Lukas *Vardapet*, was the abbot of Gtch'avank', who was followed by Bishop Mesrop. He was appointed by Melik Yegan in 1723 and led the congregation for around 25 years. His son Bishop Simeon succeeded him. The latter in its turn was succeeded by Hovhannes *Vardapet*. The historian presented the events of the years of these two abbots.

94 Mat., Archive, folder 182, doc. 449.

95 LEO, *Collected Works*, v. 3, book 2, p. 364.

96 HAKOBYAN, *Arts'akh and Utik'*, p. 117.

Shkheyants' from Shushi. The manuscript was kept at Agulets'ots' Church of Shushi.<sup>97</sup> The fate of the manuscript is unknown. In 1638, in the same place, Kirakos copied a *mashtots'* (Mat. MS 5380) at the behest of Father Hovhannes. From extant colophons we learn of two other lost manuscripts which were copied and kept in T'alaser.<sup>98</sup>

In 1574, a monk named Abraham copied a gospel in the village of P'arajants'.<sup>99</sup> In 1584, at the request of elder priest Hovhannes, Abraham copied another gospel at Shakhkakh Monastery near Hadrut'.<sup>100</sup> Little information has been preserved in the colophon about the congregation of the monastery. It is known that at that time Bishop Hovhannes was the spiritual leader of the convent.

Manuscripts have also come down to us from the village of Tak' in Shakhkakh. In 1563, Deacon Nasip copied a gospel here at the request of the elder priest Hovhannes. That manuscript contains portraits of the Evangelists, semi-canon tables, and marginalia (Mat. MS 7571). Another Gospel was copied in Tak' in 1673. Its colophon names the Bishop Hakob, priests Mkrtych' and Barsef'.<sup>101</sup>

Some information about the manuscripts of Dizak Province is known from manuscripts written in other places. For example, a bible was copied by Bishop Hovhannes of Ani for the head teacher Simeon at the end of the fourteenth century. Only the colophon of this manuscript is known, from which we learn that in the nineteenth century it was kept in the village of Tol'.<sup>102</sup> There, at Surb Hovhannes Church, relics of the apostles and a piece of the True Cross have also been found, in addition to a number of silver crosses. Several decrees of Catholicoi Yesayi, Nerses, and Hovhannes of Ahuank' were also kept at the monastery of Spidak Khach' (White Cross) in Dizak. These were, unfortunately, looted along with the relic of the white cross.<sup>103</sup> In the colophon of a manuscript copied in 1775 in Varagavank', the scribe Gevorg Nalash asked his reader to remember the spiritual leader of the convent of Dizap'ayt and his spiritual father, the deceased Bishop Yermia.<sup>104</sup>

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97 T'OPCH'IAN, Catalogue, part 2, p. 46; Arts'akh, p. 143.

98 In 1635, a Gospel was copied at Surb Astvatsatsin Church of T'alaser (Handes Amsorya [Monthly Review] 1925, p. 476). Another Gospel (in a bad condition) has come down to us from the old church of the village: its colophon has been stolen (Arts'akh, p. 69).

99 TER-AVETISYAN, Catalogue, v. 1, p. 127.

100 K'ESHISHIAN, Catalogue, p. 37. CIArm, chap. V, p. 181.

101 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 20.

102 BARKHUDARIANTS'; Arts'akh, p. 78; see also MATEVOSYAN, Ani, pp. 313-314.

103 BARKHUDARIANTS'; Arts'akh, pp. 66-78; JALALIAN'S, Journey, v. 2, p. 263.

104 ACHARIAN, Catalogue, f. 18v.



Monastery of Amaras  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## VARANDA REGION

The region of Varanda was established in the sixteenth century in the northern part of Myus Haband Province. The region stretched from the right bank of the Karkar River, to as far as the Kirs–Dizapayt mountain range. According to sources, the region was also called Haband, Myus, or Little Haband, Mukhank', Varand, Verende, K'och 'iz, as well as Amaras (the name of its center).<sup>105</sup>

According to the fifth-century historian P'avstos Buzand, the monastery of Amaras of Varanda was founded by Gregory the Illuminator at the beginning of the fourth century, although its completion and consecration are attributed to Gregory's grandson, Grigoris.<sup>106</sup> In 330–331, during the

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105 KHORENATS'I, *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 2188; YEREMIAN, Armenia according to the *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 70.

106 BUZAND, History, p. 428; KALANKATVATS'I, History of the Land of Ałuank', p. 68.

spread of Christianity in Aġank', Grigoris was martyred. His disciples brought his remains and buried them in the courtyard of Amaras church. In 489, upon finding the tomb of Grigoris, King Vachagan III the Pious erected a chapel over it and completed the construction of the church.<sup>107</sup> In the following centuries, a wall, cells for monks and pilgrims, as well as auxiliary buildings were built in the monastery complex.

In the early Middle Ages, Amaras was famous as an episcopal residence, as well as a cultural and spiritual center. According to tradition, after the invention of the Armenian alphabet, Mesrop Mashtots' founded Arts'akh's first school here. Unfortunately, no manuscript written here has been preserved. There is scarce information about the monastery as a cultural and spiritual center—epigraphic inscriptions, colophons of manuscripts written in other places, and official documents about the monasteries compiled by Anastas *Vardapet* are included in Movses Kalankatvats'i's *History*.<sup>108</sup>

From the period of Arab Caliphate to the years of the the Mongol Ilkhanate and Timur (Tamerlane), the monastery was repeatedly invaded and looted. Despite being destroyed many times, the monastery was restored by Catholicos Petros of Gandzasar in the seventh century (Mat. MS 2561, f. 264r), and it did not cease to be a religious and cultural center even in difficult times. There is an evidence that in the fifteenth century the scribe Manuel, who copied manuscripts in Gtch'avank', also worked in Amaras.<sup>109</sup> As mentioned above, a gospel copied by Manuel in the village of Shosh survives today and is kept at the Matenadaran (MS 8211). The name of the painter is not mentioned, however, the painter and scribe are most likely one and the same. Within this manuscript he painted the portraits of the Evangelists, title pages, semi-canon tables, marginalia and ornamental letters. The manuscript was copied during the time of Catholicos Hovhannes. The latter, who was prince Jalal's son, was the Catholicos of Aġank' for many years. This manuscript is especially valuable for its colophon, wherein Hovhannes is referred to as Catholicos (in 1428) for the first time (f. 359v-60r). In other manuscripts, Hovhannes was mentioned in the years 1456, 1464, 1466, 1467, 1468. According to the inscription of his tomb, he passed away in 1470.<sup>110</sup>

Only one manuscript from the sixteenth century copied in the village of Shosh has survived—a Gospel copied, and most likely illuminated, by the priest Hovhannes at Surb Step'anos Church (Mat. MS 4375). The manuscript is decorated by the portraits of the Evangelists, semi-canon tables, many marginalia, and ornamental letters. In the main colophon the scribe mentioned his parents and other relatives.

In 1477, the monk Zak'aria copied a gospel at Vomavans Monastery in Amaras (MS 9792). The scribe was the pupil of Father Barseġ. In the colophon Archbishop Alek'sianos of Amaras

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107 KALANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Aġank'*, pp. 72–73.

108 *Idem*, p. 74.

109 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 27.

110 KHACH'IKIAN, *Colophons, 15th century*, v. 2, pp. 66, 219, 244, 245, 272; *CIArm*, chap. V, p. 17.



Kusanats' Monastery in  
Avetaranots'  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetyan)

remembered Father Barsel with gratitude. He bought it from Zak'aria and brought to Gtch'avank'.

In the seventeenth century, Varanda was under the leadership of the Melik-Shahnazarians, descendants of the Dop'ian noble family. Melik Husein, a descendant of Melik Shahnazar I, came from the village of Mets' Mazra in Gelark'unik' and re-settled in the village of Avetaranots', establishing the Melik-Shahnazarian branch of the family in Varanda. Avetaranots' became their residence. They were buried under the narthex of Kusanats' Monastery. Manuel *Vardapet*, Melik Mirza, Melik Husein, Melik Hovsep', and their wives are laid to rest there.<sup>111</sup> The history of this family is recounted by Mik'ayel Bek Lalabekian-Melik-Shahnazariants' in his *About the Origin of the Melik-Shahnazariants' Family* (MS 7429, Matenadaran).

From the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, the scriptorium of Kusanats' Monastery in Avetaranots' was

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<sup>111</sup> CIArm, chap. V, p. 148.

*Mashtots'*, 1641, Avetaranots';  
scribe: Gayane  
(Mat. MS 2404, f. 159r)



associated with the names of the virgins Gayane and Hripsime. Abbess Hripsime, aided by Gayane, was in charge of organizing monastic life.<sup>112</sup> Gayane, also called Varandats'i, was the daughter of Melik Husein and the ruler of Dizak, Melik Avan's sister Anna. Legend holds that this brave Armenian woman from royal lineage was killed, along with her mother, Anna, by the soldiers of Ottoman army who invaded the village. Upon seeing Gayane, the Turkish commander fell in love with her and wanted to marry her (Mat. MS 7429, f. 8v). In 1733, Gayane went to the convent and devoted herself to the art of writing for the rest of her life.<sup>113</sup>

Three manuscripts are known to have been copied and illuminated by Gayane. The first is a *Mashtots'* that she carefully copied in bolorgir script in 1641 at Surb Harut'yun Church (Holy Resurrection) in the village of Avetaranots'.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup> JALALIANTS', *Journey*, p. 246; HATS'UNI, *The Armenian Woman in History*, p. 174.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> HAKOBYAN, *Colophons, 17th century*, v. 3, p. 14.

The modest illustrations—a few headpieces, marginalia, and ornamental letters—were also completed by Gayane. In the main colophon, where the scribe wrote her name in a cryptogram, she asked her reader to remember her spiritual parents Arak'el and Hrip'sime (MS 2404, f. 228r).

Gayane copied a gospel at Kusanats' Monastery in Avetaranots' in 1671, however, its location is unknown.<sup>115</sup>

The second manuscript is also a gospel. It was copied in bolorgir script by Katarine in 1650 and illuminated by Gayane at the behest of priest Sargis in the village of T'alavard in Varanda. Gayane was skilled in copying, but not accustomed to painting. Today, this manuscript is kept in the library of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Vienna (MS 931).<sup>116</sup>

Katarine was Mariam's pupil. The latter took care of her student's education, taught her to read, and sent her improve her singing and other skills under priest Astvatsatur at Shenher Monastery in Syunik'. In the colophon, Katarine mentioned her two teachers, priest Astvatsatur from Van and Mariam from the village of Darashamb, as well as Father Arak'el, the painter-scribe Gayane, and abbess Hrip'sime.

In 1667, the scribe Khosrov copied Grigor Khlats'i's synaxarion in Avetaranots' at the request of Hrip'sime (Mat. MS 7421). In 1671, an unknown scribe copied and illuminated a gospel on paper at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Avetaranots'.<sup>117</sup>

A gospel belonging to Arsen and Arman P'ushmanns (New York, USA), written in bolorgir script on parchment, was copied by the elder priest Grigor at the request of the hermit Yehia.<sup>118</sup>

In 1717, in the village of Upper T'alavard, an unknown scribe copied Arak'el Syunets'i's *The Book of Adam* (Mat. MS 3888). In the 15th century, the elder priest Arak'el and his brother Polos copied a gospel at Surb Hovhannes Church in Lizner Village (Mat. MS 4176).

A gospel copied by scribe Vardan, and illuminated by Grigor Vanets'i in 1672 in Van, was kept in the village of Khnushinak (Mat. MS 9032). Deacon Anastas Ter-Mkrtch'ian from Shushi donated a *Mashtots'* to the church of Khnushinak in 1855.<sup>119</sup>

Manuscripts also survive from T'allar Village. In 1834, the priest Gaspar copied a *Mashtots'* in bolorgir script.<sup>120</sup> A hymnal written in 1665 was kept in T'allar (Mat. MS 2464). The second recipient of this manuscript, Mirza, bought it from foreigners in memory of his relatives.

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115 JALALIANTS', *Journey*, p. 246.

116 VOSKIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 2, pp. 515–517.

117 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 94.

118 Banber Matenadaran [Herald of the Matenadaran], № 12, pp. 258–261; BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 94–95.

119 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 119.

120 T'OP'CHIAN, *Catalogue*, part 1, p. 50.

In 1707, Melk'um left notes on several pages of the manuscript on behalf of the recipient. The main colophon recounts how the enemy entered the provinces of Arts'akh, looted them, captured the manuscripts, destroyed and plundered the spiritual centers of Gandzak, Dizak, Varanda, and Khach'en.

In 1776, the Deacon Aristakes copied a gospel at Surb Gevorg Church in the village of Lor in Vorotan at the request of the priest Vrdanes of Kak'avaberd in Mahravu Village. This manuscript was kept at the Church of the Holy Savior in T'allar.

The Priest Sargis copied a gospel on paper at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in the village of Azokh. A gospel copied by Alek'sandr in the village of Khach'mach' at the behest of priest T'adeos was kept in Ghazanch'ets'ots' Cathedral of the Holy Savior in Shushi. The priest of Surb Step'anos Church in Khach'mach' held two psalters. One was written on parchment with beautiful calligraphic examples. It contained Bishop At'anas' *Commentary of the Prophet David*.<sup>121</sup> The destinies of the final four manuscripts are unknown.

The old Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Sarushen was notable for its interior and exterior decoration, but was also famous for a manuscript it housed—the Red Gospel.<sup>122</sup> Many pilgrims, not only Christians from Arts'akh, but also from neighboring countries and faiths, came to Sarushen to see the Red Gospel for its believed ancient power.

The illustrations of the gospel are modest. It is copied on parchment, most likely in 1182. The date written in the colophon is nearly illegible.<sup>123</sup> However, since the whole manuscript is written in erkat'agir script, Garegin Hovsep'ian. has theorized that it was copied earlier, and restored in 1182.<sup>124</sup> The portraits of archimandrites Rstakes, Vrt'anes, and Step'anos, who also shared the task of copying this manuscript, are depicted in it. Rstakes was the first scribe, copying the gospels of Matthew and Mark. He left notes at the beginning of the manuscript and inside the canon tables, asking the reader to remember him. His colophon remained incomplete because he passed away. Later, the scribe Vrt'anes finished it by copying the gospels of Luke and John. Under his portrait the scribe left a note asking the reader to remember him—the sinful scribe. The third scribe of this manuscript was Step'anos, who wrote his name under his portrait. The manuscript was illuminated by Hakob, who left a colophon under the portrait of Matthew. The gospel was captured and taken to Iran. In 1827, Mirza Ohanesian-Zarkaryants'ov from the village of Łal in Shushi saw the manuscript in Tabriz and paid a high price for it in order to return it to Shushi, where they ordered it to be restored.<sup>125</sup> The fate of this manuscript is unknown.

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121 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 86–88, 100, 140.

122 Idem, p. 101.

123 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 5th–12th centuries, p. 234.

124 HOVSEP'IAN, Colophons, p. 491.

125 JALALIANTS', Journey, vol. 2, p. 342.

A relic of the True Cross inside a silver cross, as well as an illuminated gospel copied on paper by the scribe Hovhannes in 1477, were both kept at Surb T'argmanch'ats' (Holy Translators) Church in the village of Kłarts. The gospel was brought to Arts'akh, where a priest bought it in 1502 with 6000 dahekans (monets) and gifted it to the spiritual leader of Gandzasar.<sup>126</sup>

Nineteen manuscripts copied during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have come down to us from Shushi. These manuscripts—today kept at the Matenadaran—are primarily dictionaries, collections of philosophical and moral texts, calendars, and medical texts.

A large number of manuscripts were stored within the churches of Shushi. A gospel copied and illuminated on parchment by Yesayi at Hermon Monastery in Vayots' Dzor has been kept at the Ghazanch'ets'ots' Cathedral of the Holy Savior (Mat. MS 9431). Additionally, a gospel<sup>127</sup> copied on parchment in 1658 by scribe Nikolayos in Kaffa from an accurate and fine example, as well as a gospel<sup>128</sup> copied in 1460 in Van by Vardan, were kept there. In 1656, the scribe Lhazar copied and illuminated a gospel on parchment with eleven elegant miniatures which was received by Łukas in the Church of the Holy Savior.<sup>129</sup>

Others include: A gospel<sup>130</sup> copied in 1645 in the village of T'ovuz in Tavush region by the scribe Yesayi at the request of Sarukhan, a gospel<sup>131</sup> restored in 1641 by Bishop Davit's pupil, the monk Sargis, at Ch'arek'a Monastery, a gospel<sup>132</sup> copied by Łukas in 1308 in Aspinska and then illuminated by Tserun and restored by the priest Kirakos.<sup>133</sup> The last recipient of the manuscript stored it at Agulets'ots' Surb Astvatsatsin Church (Shushi).

A gospel copied in 1414 in Ktuts' Monastery (Lake Van) by the priest Hovhannes, a gospel copied in 1473 by the famous scribe Israyel from Moks, a gospel copied in 1778 by Mesrop and later restored by Hakob, as well as a small gospel ordered by Mariam for the monk Hovhannes,<sup>134</sup> were kept at Melrets'ots' Surb Astvatsatsin Church (Shushi).

Avag Danielian—Łazariants' donated a gospel copied on parchment in the village of Kits' in Gelvadzor to Surb Hovhannes Mkrtych' (John the Baptist) Church in Nor T'ał in Shushi.<sup>135</sup>

We have information about some of the abovementioned manuscripts due to copied or published colophons, however, the fate and location of most of them is unknown.

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126 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 112.

127 Idem, p. 138.

128 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, 15th century, v. 2, p. 146.

129 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th century, v. 3, p. 701.

130 Idem, pp. 181–182.

131 Idem, p. 47.

132 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 144.

133 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, 14th century, p. 57.

134 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 147–148.

135 Idem, p. 147.



Monastery of the Apostle  
Yeliske (Jrvshetik),  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## JRABERD REGION

The region of Jraberd spreads across the Mrav mountain range, on the left bank of the T'art'ar River and its tributary T'rghi, and on the right bank of the Kurak River.<sup>136</sup> The region shares its name with Jraberd Fortress, the princely residence. In some sources, the region was also called Metskoghmank',<sup>137</sup> Metskuank',<sup>138</sup> Ch'araberd,<sup>139</sup> T'alish, Kulistan (Gulistan), Jivanshir. After the formation of the melikdom in the seventeenth century, the region was divided in two—Jraberd and Gyulistan, each with their own melik houses.<sup>140</sup>

As early as the fifth century, Vach'agan III had established a school in Dyut'akan, his summer residence, where the sons of the priests were taught Christianity.<sup>141</sup>

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136 HAKOBYAN, MELIK'-BAKSHYAN, BARSEGHYAN, Dictionary of Toponymy, v. 4 p. 417.

137 KALANKATVATS'I, History of the Land of Aluank', p. 264.

138 KHORENATS'I, *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, v. 2, p. 2153; KALANKATVATS'I, History of the Land of Aluank', p. 140.

139 KALANKATVATS'I, History of the Land of Aluank' , p. 209; GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 216.

140 BARKHUDARIANTS'; Arts'akh, v. 1, p. 145.

141 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 102.

In the region of Jraberđ, there were active scriptoria at the monasteries of Yelische the Apostle and Yerits' Mankants' (the monastery of Three Infants), as well as in Gyulistan.

The monastery of the Apostle Yelische (Jrvshtik), established on a rocky, forested hill on the slope of Mount Mrav, was a pre-Christian, pagan sanctuary called Mihr Nerseha, or Nersmeha.<sup>142</sup> After the adoption of Christianity, the monastery was called Jrvshtik after a nearby waterfall. Since the fifth century, the monastery was called Yelische, after the apostle. According to tradition, King Vach'agan the Pious brought the relics of the apostle from Horeka Monastery to Jrvshtik, where he buried them and upon which he built a chapel atop the burial site. Later, the king himself was buried there.<sup>143</sup>

In 1286, Abbot Simeon built a church over the tomb of Vach'agan III. An inscription about this has been preserved on the wall of a chapel located south-east of the monastery.<sup>144</sup> Father Simeon died in 1298 and was buried in the narthex of the monastery.<sup>145</sup>

After him, Hovhannes, Vardan, Matt'eos, the bishops Karapet and Davit', as well as Melik'sed, Kirakos, and the archbishop Avag Dali Mahrasa became the spiritual leaders of the monastery. The leaders and monks<sup>146</sup> of the monastery, as well as the renowned melik' Adam,<sup>147</sup> are all buried in the graveyard of the monastery. The monastery of the Apostle Yelische was an episcopal residence, sanctuary, and a spiritual and cultural center, which brought into contact several prominent religious and secular groups. For some time, the monks of Mak'enyats' Monastery in Gelark'unik' took shelter at this monastery.<sup>148</sup>

The monastery complex consists of a church, narthex, refectory, monastic cells, the melik' palace, seven chapels, which served as tombs, and other auxiliary buildings. Khach'k'ars (cross-stones) dating from the twelfth to thirteen centuries are placed in the churchyard.<sup>149</sup>

Manuscripts copied in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries survive from this monastery, though it is suggested that manuscripts were copied here earlier. This is evidenced by the colophon of a 1554 gospel copied on parchment at Surb Mesrop Church in Shulaver during the time of the bishops Karapet and Davit'. It was illuminated and bound under the auspices of the churches of Surb Yelische, Three Infants, and Avag Surb Nshan (Holy Sign).<sup>150</sup> The illumination of the gospel was completed in 1555, the year of death of Catholicos Sargis of Ałuank'.

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142 ORBELIAN, Sisakan, p. 159, KAŁANKATVATS'I, History of the Land of Ałuank', p. 41.

143 TASHEAN, Catalogue, p. 60.

144 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 110.

145 Idem, p. 108.

146 Idem, pp. 108–110.

147 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 117.

148 ORBELIAN, Sisakan, p. 119.

149 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 106.

150 SMBATEANTS'; St. Karapet Monastery, p. 146.

In the mid-sixteenth century, At'anas copied and illuminated manuscripts in Jraberđ. From his colophons we learn information about him. In 1551, At'anas painted the title pages, marginalia, and ornamental letters of a Gospel copied by the scribe Terunakan in 1534 in Sanahin (Mat. MS 217). In 1559, in the time of bishops Hovhannes, Karapet, and Davit', At'anas copied and illuminated a *haysmawurk'* (synaxarion) at the behest of Bishop Karapet (Mat. MS 4477) at the famed monastery of Surb Yelische the Apostle in Jraberđ. The main colophon is incomplete as the final leaves of the manuscript are missing. In it, the scribe asks his readers to remember the recipient of the manuscript, his parents, brothers and sisters. The recipient left many notes on different pages throughout the manuscript in which he mentioned Bishop Karapet's cousins, the monks Hovan and Malak'ia.

Two years later, in 1561—and under the auspices of the monasteries of Surb Yelische the Apostle, Yerits' Mankants', Avag Surb Nshan, and T'uma the Apostle—the monk At'anas illustrated a *haysmawurk'* copied in 1560 by Bishop Yelia Berkrats'i and the priest Margara in Ayrarat at the request of chief teacher Lukas (Mat. MS 6282). From the painter's colophon it becomes clear that At'anas was self-taught and did not master the art of miniature painting, asking for blame to be absolved because he did his work to the best of his ability. This manuscript remained in the personal library of the great Armenian writer Hovhannes T'umanian (1869–1923), and is marked by his personal stamp on some of the pages.

The next manuscript that has come down to us from At'anas is a gospel, copied in 1565 at the monastery of Yerits' Mankants' (Mat. MS 2928). The hermit Rstakes, who traveled to Jerusalem several times for worship, along with his brother, K'arimish, asked At'anas to give them the gospel in memory of their family. The scribe illuminated the manuscript with taste and simplicity. In some areas, in the lower margins of the page, he left instructions and made corrections in red ink. In the main colophon, At'anas mentions his parents for the first time—the priest Vrt'anes and Gulpahar—as well as his teacher Lukas and Archbishop Hovhannes.

In 1576, at the behest of Catholicos Hovhannes of Aġuank', At'anas illustrated a psalter copied by the scribe Karapet in Gandzasar (Mat. MS 1923).

In 1681, Aharon Mayekats'i copied a *mashtots'* at the monastery of Yelische the Apostle at the request of the priest Hakob (Mat. MS 8125). In 1682, in the time of Archbishop Hovhannes, in the monastery of Yelische the Apostle, Sargis' wife Mariam asked the priest Hovsep' to give her a gospel, which she then donated to Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Jraberđ, located near the church of Yerits' Mankants' and Ch'araberđ.<sup>151</sup> In 1787, the psalm-reader Hovhannes donated a *Book of Sermons* to Archbishop Solomon, son of Father Melik'set' from Metsshen.<sup>152</sup>

The depository of the monastery was enriched due to donations. According to inscriptions

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151 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 116, 123.

152 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 192.



Monastery of Yerits' Mankants'  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

within the narthex, a monk named Grigor built Oultapat Church, purchased a gospel, and along with the land called P'ert', donated it to Father Simon, the spiritual leader of the covenant. He also conducted a two-hour liturgy with the monks on the Feast of the Ascension. Priest Serob gifted three books to Father Serob, and the monks conducted two liturgies on the feast day of St. Blaise. Davit' and his wife donated a cross to the congregation and attended three liturgies on the Feast of the Apostles.<sup>153</sup> In 1607, the spiritual leader of the monastery, Archbishop Avag Dali Mahrassa, also donated multiple manuscripts.<sup>154</sup>

The next prominent center where manuscripts are known to have been copied is the monastery of Yerits' Mankants', located on the southern, forested slope of the Mrav mountain range, near the famous Jraberd fortress. Since Yerits'

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<sup>153</sup> CIArm, chap. 5, pp. 106–107.

<sup>154</sup> BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 261; VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 123.

Mankants' was near the monastery of Surb Yelische the Apostle, the two holy places were often mentioned together in colophons. In 1691, Catholicos Simeon I Khotorashents'i, along with his brother, Ignatios, commissioned the building of main church at Yerits' Mankants'. The latter made it the anti-throne Catholicosate of Gandzasar, and from then until 1819, conflicts between the two Catholicosates continued, therefore the Catholicoi of All Armenians had to make conciliatory mediations. In an inscription dated 1664, Ignatios is mentioned as the chief teacher of Yerits' Mankants'.<sup>155</sup>

The scribe Ignatios, who was also called Metsshents'i after his birthplace of Metsshen, was educated at the monastery of Yerits' Mankants' under Andreas Jughayets'i. In 1661, Ignatios copied *The Book of Chries* from Hovhan Tat'evats'i's copy, brought to the monastery of Yerits' Mankants' from Tat'ev (Mat. MS 3446). In the main colophon, Ignatios remembered his teacher, Andreas, and his fellow monks at the monastery. He also names several family members including his grandfather (Hanchar), father and mother (Sargis and Salvar), uncles, and brothers.

Only a few manuscripts have come down to us from the monastery of Yerits' Mankants'.

In 1619, the scribe Yesayi copied Nerses Lambronats'i's *Collection of Works* and donated it to the monastery of Yerits' Mankants'.<sup>156</sup>

In 1760, Bishop Abraham Shak'ets'i, a student of Abbot Nerses of Aġuank' who later became a composer of psalms, finished copying a Ritual Book of Ordination after an example provided by his teacher (Mat. MS 1078). In the main colophon, the scribe asks their reader to remember the Abbot and his late parents, Khoja Zak'aria and Khat'un. In 1766, Bishop Abraham Shak'ets'i of Aġuank' copied another Ritual Book of Ordination in Gandzasar at the request of Catholicos At'anas (Mat. MS 3971).

In 1725, Allahverdi Panazurts'i saved a gospel, chasuble, and crown "from the hands of the wicked," which he later donated to the congregation at Yerits' Mankants'.<sup>157</sup>

Manuscripts were also copied in Gyulistan. The names of the elder priest Yesayi and Davit' are recorded, and two manuscripts from each have come down to us.

The first manuscript was copied and illuminated by the scribe Yesayi—a gospel completed in 1681 (Mat. MS 4228). Yesayi, son of Hakhnazar and Pekaġ, studied scribal arts under the supervision of his uncle Melk'um, who he mentions in his colophon with great respect. This gospel is the earliest surviving example of Yesayi's work and exhibits some scribal errors. In his colophon, Yesayi confesses he is untrained and asks for blame to be absolved. A deacon named Step'anos is recorded as helping Yesayi prepare the paper used to copy the manuscript.

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155 JALALIAN'S; *Journey*, v. 1, pp. 178–179.

156 ACHARIAN, *Catalogue*, p. 81; VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 126.

157 BARKHUDARIAN'S; *Arts'akh*, p. 43, VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 126–127.

In 1686, in the time of Bishop Vlas Shamakhets'i, Yesayi completed his second manuscript—a *Mashtots'* written in a more regular, even, and beautiful hand (Mat. MS 10472).

In 1689, at the request of the priest Yesayi, a scribe named Davit' copied a *mashtots'* under the auspices of Surb Astvatsatsin and Surb Minas Churches in Gulistan (Mat. MS 9043). Davit' copied a second *mashtots'* in 1692 at the behest of the priest Melik'set' (Mat. MS 1032). Priest Melik'set' dedicated this manuscript to memory of his parents.

In the nineteenth century, Makar Barkhudariants' discovered a gospel copied by the scribe Grigor in Gulistan Village. Since the manuscript lacked its main colophon, he was unable to date or locate where it was copied.<sup>158</sup>

At the end of the sixteenth century in Mokhrat'al, not far from Metsshēn, a scribe named Sargis copied a *haysmawurk'* at the request of Grigor (Mat. MS 1338). A certain Akhichan is identified as polishing the paper on which the manuscript was copied. Grigor patronized the manuscript in memory of his parents, and for the whole population of Mokhrat'al. Hasan, the village leader, took care of providing the other materials used in the preparation of the manuscript. It is noteworthy that the whole village participated in the creation of this *haysmawurk'*. Thus, Sargis recorded a number of villager's names such as Hasan, Isam and his mother Khial, Khochik, the elder priest Sargis, Father Petros, Father Lazar, Father Hovhannes, and the Deacon Davit'.

In 1776, Mkrtich' *vardapet* (archimandrite), born in Mokhrat'al Village to the monk Matt'eos of Surb Karapet Monastery in Muḡni, found a gospel in Karin, bought it and donated it to Surb Innmas Church in Mokhrat'al (Mat. MS 11204).

Two ancient and incredibly valuable manuscripts were kept in Jraberd. The first is known as the Red Gospel of Metsashen (Mat. MS 6202). In 909, the scribe T'ut'ayel copied the Red Gospel in Constantinople, in *erkat'agir* script on thick parchment. The manuscript was commissioned by Ashot Sparapet, cousin to the Armenian King Smbat I.<sup>159</sup> The name of the first painter to work on the manuscript's decoration is unknown. A single image from the Christological cycle has been preserved—the Nativity (f. 1v). The title pages which begin the gospels of Mark and John are incomplete. These were most likely started by the first painter. Ignatios Horomosts'i is identified as the manuscript's second painter.<sup>160</sup> Between 1236 and 1242, Ignatios added six parchment pages to the beginning of the manuscript, on which he illustrated the canon tables and portraits of the evangelists Matthew and Luke. In the lower margins, he left notes which subtly mention Mongol invasion. Ignatios also copied the beginning of the gospels of Matthew and Mark. In 1252, the monk Hayrapet bought the manuscript in the city of Vostan and donated it to Surb Khach Church (Holy Cross on

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<sup>158</sup> BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 241.

<sup>159</sup> HOVSEPIAN, *Colophons*, pp. 106–108.

<sup>160</sup> HOVSEPIAN, *Ignatios*, v. 1, pp. 250–253; MATEVOSYAN, *Ani*, p. 282.

Akhtamar Island, Lake Van) in memory of his parents Khach'ik and Tiknots'.<sup>161</sup> It is not known how the manuscript reached Arts'akh from Vaspurakan.

The second manuscript once kept in Jraberd is the Begyunts' Gospel. Its exact date is unknown, however, it was likely started sometime during the tenth or eleventh centuries by the scribe Step'anos, who also painted the portraits of the evangelists and marginal illustrations. In 1060, the renowned scribe and painter Hovhannes Sandġkavanets'i completed the Begyunts' Gospel at Kanch'nut Monastery, where it was also restored.<sup>162</sup> Before 1272, the gospel was saved-brought from Caesarea by Ouzi's son Hasan. For a long time, it remained in T'alish Village in Jraberd and was guarded by the Begyunts' family, after whom the manuscript was later named.<sup>163</sup> Only eighteen pages have come down to us from this once beautiful gospel (Mat. MS 10099).

Few manuscripts survive from other areas in the region. The priest of Surb Gevorg Church in Malavuz Village preserved a *mashtots'*, copied in 1575 by the monk Hovhannes at the request of a certain Grigor. In 1662, the manuscript belonged to the elder priest Hovhannes. In 1729, Markos, the son of Father Melik'set', gifted it to the priest Davit' from the village of Eanshalġn in Tsar. There was also a gospel in the church of Malavuz. The name of the second recipient is known-Shalupar.<sup>164</sup> In 1615, the elder priest Yesayi restored a gospel, rebound by the elder priest Gaspar. In 1637, the elder priest Sargis restored another gospel at the behest of Gaspar (Mat. Fragment 795).<sup>165</sup>

Another gospel was kept in the village church in Khrkhap'or. It belonged to the brothers Melk'um and Apres, who left a colophon at the end of the gospels of Matthew and Mark.<sup>166</sup> The gospel was copied on parchment by the scribe Sargis in 1493 and kept in the village church in Verinshen.<sup>167</sup> Harut'yun, the village leader, purchased the manuscript-which contains beautiful examples of calligraphy-from the Muslims, and later donated it to the church. Two gospels written on paper were once housed in the church at Nerġinshen-one copied in 1678 by the scribe Abraham in the village of Lor in Vorotan, the other lacks a full colophon. The gospel was received by the hermit Hovhannes and his brother Hovasap'. In 1628, the manuscript belonged to the brothers Hunan and Davit'.<sup>168</sup>

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161 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 13th Century, p. 267.

162 Idem, 5th-12th Century, p. 100.

163 Idem, 13th Century, p. 426; BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 226.

164 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 220-221.

165 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v.1, p. 699.

166 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 243.

167 Idem, p. 246.

168 Idem, p. 245.



Monastery of Nor Getik  
(Goshavank'),  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## THE SCHOOL (*VARDAPETĀRAN'*) AND SCRIPTORIUM OF NOR GETIK

Nor Getik (New Getik) was one of the most prominent Armenian medieval spiritual and cultural centers, in large part due to its renowned scriptorium. Located in what is today the region of Aghve in the province of Utik', it was later included in the historical region of Dzorop'or in the province of Gugark', then within the region of Kayeno—a spiritual center in Tavush province within the Republic of Armenia, located ten kilometers east of the city of Dilijan. The establishment of the school of Nor Getikavank' is linked to the great medieval scholar, chronicler, legislator, and fable writer Mkhit'ar Gosh. In 1213, after his death, it was renamed Goshavank'.

The historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i, a student of Nor Getik school, provided reliable information about the founding of Nor Getik Monastery, its founding leader, congregation, and educational center in his *History* (chapters 13-17).<sup>169</sup>

Several historians writing in the thirteenth century and beyond left mention of Mkhitar Gosh. The exact date of Mkhitar Gosh's birth is unknown, although it is thought he was born between 1120 and 1130. He was born in the city of Gandzak in the Utik' province. For this reason, he was occasionally called Gandzakets'i. Later, as a monk at Hin Getik (Old Getik), he was called Getikts'i, before he became the founder and spiritual leader of Nor Getik (New Getik). According to Kirakos Gandzakets'i, he received the nickname Gosh due to his thin beard.<sup>170</sup>

Gosh received his primary education in his birthplace, where he was later ordained as a priest. He continued his education in Tavush Village, where he studied under the famous Hovhannes Tavushets'i and received the title of *vardapet*.

Unsatisfied with the knowledge he had acquired, Gosh concealed his identity as *vardapet* and visited Cilicia from 1162 to 1163, where he continued his education under famed instructors at the Red Monastery on Mount Sev (Amanus mountains). It was here that he received the title of *vardapet* for the second time. According to a testimony, in Cilicia Gosh was a pupil of Catholicos Grigor Tla (1173-1193).<sup>171</sup> In 1169, Gosh returned to Cilicia, where he copied Khosrov Gandzakets'i's martyrology<sup>172</sup> and composed a hymn dedicated to the latter in the same year.<sup>173</sup>

On the way back from Cilicia, Mkhitar Gosh visited Karin (Erzurum), where he met the Prince of Princes of Kayen and Mahkanaberd, and the emir of Tbilisi, K'urd Artsruni, who had taken refuge in Karin after persecution by King George III of Georgia.<sup>174</sup> They developed a lifelong friendship. After the death of King George in 1184, Queen Tamar called Prince K'urd back to his native lands. At the time, Gosh was in Khach'en in the palace of Prince Vakht'ang of Hat'erk'. When he heard the news of K'urd Artsruni returning from exile, he came to him. The residents of Mahkanaberd lived within the valley of Akstev River, in the province of Mahkanaberd and Kayen. Thus, Gosh, under the patronage of the prince, settled in Getik Monastery on the right bank of Akstev River.<sup>175</sup>

In 1187, Gosh began copying the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, which he finished the next year.<sup>176</sup>

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169 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 207-223.

170 Idem, p. 220.

171 Mets *Mashtots'*, ff. 336r-336v; SHNORHALL, Pontifical Letter, Jerusalem, 1871, pp. 307-308.

172 GOSH, *Chronicle*, pp. 574-582.

173 Idem, pp. 583-587.

174 CIArm, chap. 6.

175 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 209.

176 HOVSEPIAN, *Colophons*, pp. 521-522; MATEVOSYAN, *Colophons, 5th-12th Centuries*, p. 253.

Although this manuscript does not survive, a copy made after it in 1198 has (Mat. MS 2606). In 1188, Getik Monastery was completely destroyed by a severe earthquake. Mkhit'ar Gosh asked Ivane Zak'arian, nephew of Prince K'urd, to provide a suitable place for the construction of a new church. Under the patronage of the Zak'arian princes, and with the help of monks, the wooden church of Surb Grigor the Illuminator of Nor Getik was built in 1188 on the site of the fallen church in the forested Tandzut gorge. Gosh moved the congregation here. Khach'atur Taronats'i, Abbot of Halartsin Monastery, attended the consecration ceremony of the church.<sup>177</sup>

Shortly after, Gosh undertook the construction of a second wooden church named after Hovhannes Karapet. From 1191 to 1196—under the patronage of Prince K'urd's sons Davit' and Sadun, Prince Vakht'ang of Hat'erk', and his brothers—Gosh built the main church of Nor Getik, Surb Astvatsatsin.<sup>178</sup> On the occasion of the consecration of the church, the monastery received many donations, including lands, gardens, precious liturgical utensils, and manuscripts. The Zak'arian brothers donated huge plots of land to the monastery, including a mine in Abasadzor and the territory of Zoradzor in Bjni Province.

A gospel was copied on paper in bolorgir script at the request of Prince Davit', the name of the scribe and where it was written, however, were not preserved. Today, the manuscript is kept in the depository of the Holy Savior monastery in New Julfa (Isfahan, Iran). The manuscript is in poor condition—the text is incomplete, the final folios are missing, as is the primary colophon. The name of the patron of the manuscript, Davit', son of prince K'urd, is preserved on f. 185r. The manuscript is illustrated modestly with one half canon table, headpieces, marginalia, and a few ornamental initials at the beginning of the gospels (№ 171, MS 710, New Julfa). The manuscript was most likely copied no earlier than the late 1190s—when Davit', along with his brother Sadun, and his sister princess Arzukhat'un, assisted Mkhit'ar Gosh in the construction of New Getik—and no later than the first decade of the thirteenth century, when Prince Davit' had died. However, one cannot rule out other circumstances of the manuscript's commission. For example, that Davit' ordered the manuscript be copied and to be remembered in its colophon on the occasion of the consecration of the church, and later donated it to Nor Getikavank'.<sup>179</sup>

Princess Arzukhat'un and her daughters wove an altar curtain for the church at Nor Getikavank'.<sup>180</sup> From 1197 to 1203, Mkhit'ar Hyusn built the narthex of the church, leaving an extensive inscription on the arch that connects the columns of the narthex.<sup>181</sup> In 1208, the chapels of the Holy Apostles and Surb Hrip'simian Virgins were built.<sup>182</sup>

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177 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 210–212.

178 *Idem*, pp. 164, 216.

179 MINASIAN, *Colophons*, p. 183.

180 GANDZAKETS'I, pp. 215–216.

181 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 93.

182 *Idem*, p. 101.

Thus, the necessary conditions were met for the establishment of an educational center. Gosh was concerned with a variety of economic, educational and scientific issues. At the same time, he was engaged with religious debates and preaching. Gosh's role in northern Armenia's religious life and culture was profound. He was a leader among *vardapets*, and participated in the ecumenical councils at Lori (1205) and Ani (1207)-convened under the initiative of Amirspasalar Zak'are in order to institute the liturgical reforms adopted at the council of Sis (Capital of Cilician Armenia) within Armenia.<sup>183</sup> Gandzakets'i recorded the names of council participants, identifying them as prominent *vardapets*, naming Mkhi'tar Gosh first.<sup>184</sup> Amirspasalar Zak'are's respect for Gosh was so great that Gosh served as his confessor and advisor. Gosh's initiatives were sponsored by the Zak'arian brothers until Ivane's death, when his son, Avag, continued this tradition.

Gosh fought against the innovations threatening the Armenian Church by defending certain ecclesiastical traditions and preaching religious tolerance among the churches. At the behest of Prince Zak'are and Prince Ivane, Gosh composed a letter to the Georgians, responding to accusations made against Armenians in Arsen Vachesdze's *Dogmatikon (Book of Teachings)*.<sup>185</sup>

The school of Nor Getik-also called a college, university, or seminary in the sources-soon became a popular and important spiritual, educational, and cultural center in northern Armenia. Gosh enlarged New Getik's congregation, regulated and raised the prestige of the school, wherein he also created favorable working conditions, and paid great attention to teaching. He expanded the curriculum to include Armenian, Greek, and Latin language and grammar, philosophy, rhetoric, music, calligraphy, and miniature painting.

The school's curriculum was focused on secular sciences, informed by a new worldview and developments in literature. All spheres of science and culture were beginning to be secularized. This led to the creation of new schools in northern Armenia, based in Ani, Halbat, Sanahin, and Gandzak. Expressions of this movement can be found in the philosophical works of Vardan Anets'i,<sup>186</sup> in Discourse on Wisdom, a poem by Hovhannes Imastaser, which revolutionized literature,<sup>187</sup> and in painting found within the Halbat Gospel illustrated in Ani.<sup>188</sup> The highest place in this literary movement belongs to Mkhit'ar Gosh. His *Datastanagirk' (The Lawcode)* and 190 fables were a completely new phenomenon in the history of our literature.

*Datastanagirk'* is a cross between Armenian and western traditions, and defines the

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183 GANDZAKETS'I, History, pp. 166-178.

184 Idem, p. 170.

185 GOSH, Chronicle, v. 20, book 2, pp. 452-508; MURADIAN, Armenian-Georgian Religious Issues. 2011.

186 MNATSAKANYAN, Vardan Anets'i, pp. 261-291.

187 ABEYAN, Hovhannes Imastaser, pp. 72-82.

188 MATEVOSYAN, The Halbat Gospel.

principles of nation and statehood, the laws affirming the idea of statehood, protecting the rights of all classes.<sup>189</sup> Moving beyond a religious framework, Gosh, as a broad-minded thinker, sought to solve problems through parables.<sup>190</sup> The fable collection by Gosh was used as a textbook during the medieval period. The purpose of the parables was not only to teach and educate, but also to develop pupils' logical and interpretive skills.

News of Mkhit'ar Gosh's fame as a scientist and pedagogue spread fast, and students came to his school from all over the region to receive an education. Among them was Vanakan, an especially outstanding student, who later founded the school at Khoranashat, and became a historian, commentator, and an ecclesiastical figure. Another student was Vardan Arevelts'i, who opened schools in the monastery of Surb Andreas in Kayeno province, and within the monasteries of T'elenyats', Aljots', Harich, Salmosavank' and Khor Virap. In addition to Mkhit'ar Gosh, the scribe Martiros and historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i were also head instructors at Nor Getik at different times in the school's history.

Gosh's tenure as a chief teacher at Nor Getik was very productive. At the same time, he supervised the copying of manuscripts and copied many works himself.<sup>191</sup> Mkhit'ar Gosh died in 1213 and was buried at Nor Getik.<sup>192</sup> Before his death, he blessed the members of the school and congregation, and handed over his position to Martiros, one of his younger, but promising students.

Kirakos Gandzakets'i wrote about Martiros, recording his sweet voice when singing songs of worship, skill at reading, and speed in writing.<sup>193</sup> Unfortunately, his autographed manuscripts have not survived. Nor Getik's second period of flourishing is associated with Martiros' leadership. He initiated construction works within the monastery complex, ordering Mkhit'ar Hyusn to build a chapel and library.<sup>194</sup> Later in 1291, Grigor and Zak'ios built the library's second floor.

In 1231, in place of the wooden church built by Mkhit'ar Gosh, the brothers Martiros and Grigor built a stone church—Surb Gregory, a five-altar church, whose construction remained incomplete due to the invasions of Jalaleddin, until its completion in 1241 under the patronage of prince Grigor Kapalets'i.<sup>195</sup> In 1237–1241, prince Tla, son of Sargis and grandson of Vakht'ang, built Surb Gregory the Illuminator, a three-altar church.<sup>196</sup>

Ivane Zak'arian died in 1227 and was buried in Pndzahank' (Akht'ala). His son Avag continued

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189 For more details see the section about the Dasno Monastery, where Datastanagirk' was written.

190 GOSH, *Fables*, pp. 42–106.

191 GANDZAKETS'I, p. 221.

192 Archimandrite Vardan, p. 140.

193 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 219.

194 *Idem*, p. 222.

195 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 97.

196 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 223.

the patronage of Nor Getik Monastery. From a colophon from 1244 (preserved within a Gospel copied by the scribe Kozma in Hromkla in 1166), we learn that Avag saved many manuscripts in Caesarea from Mongol traders and brought them back to Armenia, enriching the depositories of his native land (Mat. MS 7347, f. 342v).

During the years of Avag's patronage—when Martiros was the chief teacher and following the construction of the library—the congregation grew, and number of clergy and students seeking education multiplied. Martiros headed the school for twenty years and left his position voluntarily.

After Martiros, the position of the chief teacher was held by Mkhit'ar *vardapet*, then Hovasap' and Abraham. Each of them headed the congregation for a short period. Later, Hovhannes Armanets'i, who had come from Halartsin Monastery, became the new spiritual leader of Nor Getik. In 1255, he built Surb Gevorg Church,<sup>197</sup> and in 1260, through the mediation of Kirakos Gandzakets'i, exempted the dwellers of Getik from taxes.<sup>198</sup> Hovhannes Armanets'i was ordained a bishop in 1256, and after some time, he was transferred to Halbat.

The library of the monastery had a rich depository which was also enriched by the manuscripts copied by local scribes. However, only few manuscripts have come down to us from this once-famous center. Most of Mkhit'ar Gosh's works were written here, though only their later copies have reached us.

Kirakos Gandzakets'i spent most of his life in Getikavank'. From his *History* we gain key biographical information about him. When he identifies Deacon Hovhannes, T'ok'aker's son Grigor and Davit' Alavkaordi as originating from Gandzak, Gandzakets'i wrote that he was also from there.<sup>199</sup>

Kirakos was born in 1203 in Gandzak in Utik' Province. In the sources, he is mentioned as Kirakos *Vardapet*, Kirakos Getikts'i, and most often as Kirakos Gandzakets'i. He called himself Arevelts'i. From an early age, Kirakos studied at Nor Getikavank' and then moved to Khoranashat where he continued his education in the school of Vanakan *Vardapet*. In 1236, Kirakos and his teacher were captured by the Mongol forces, however, he later managed to escape and return to Nor Getikavank'. At his behest, Vardan Arevelts'i mentioned Vanakan as “chief teacher” in the preamble of his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*.<sup>200</sup>

In 1241, Gandzakets'i began to write the *History of the Armenians*, which begins with the life of Saint Gregory the Illuminator and ends with a detailed description of the events of his own days. The original manuscript has not been preserved. As an eyewitness, Gandzakets'i provided important information about the Mongol invasions of Armenia and aspect of

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197 Ibid; CIArm, chap. 6, p. 101.

198 Idem, p. 82.

199 Idem, p. 116.

200 ANT'APIAN, Vardan Arevelts'i, p. 139.

everyday life including: language, behaviors, social structure, the political and economic history of the Huleguid period, and a history of the Armenian princes, as well as the relations between the Mongols and the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. Gandzakets'i narrates these events up to the year 1265.

He also wrote letters to Vanakan *Vardapet* and Vardan Arevelts'i which have not come down to us. Gandzakets'i edited a *haysmawurk'* in 1253, most likely in Nor Getik, supplementing the collected texts with readings for 112 new holidays (Mat. MS 7433, f. 428v, Mat. MS 7463, f. 349v).<sup>201</sup> He edited a second *haysmawurk'* in 1269 in Sis, where he added 170 new sections to the text (Jerusalem MS 75).<sup>202</sup>

Kirakos Gandzakets'i was concerned with the issue of enriching the depository of the monastery with new manuscripts. According to the inscription carved on the arch connecting the southern columns of the narthex, he donated twenty manuscripts to the monastery, along with numerous other gifts.<sup>203</sup>

In the early thirteenth century, the scribe Sargis rose to prominence in Nor Getik. Sargis, together with his pupil Step'anos, copied a gospel in *erkat'agir* script on fine parchment (Chester Beatty MS 557).<sup>204</sup> The scribe managed to finish the manuscript but since the main colophon is missing the precise date and location of copying remains unknown. According to Garegin Hovsep'ian, the gospel was prepared in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, whereas Artashes Mat'evosyan has dated it to 1232, suggesting that it was copied at the monastery of Nor Getik.<sup>205</sup> A note left by the scribe on f. 272r helps determine the approximate date of the manuscript: in it, the scribe asks to remember the late Mkhitar *vardapet* and prince Sadun, who funded the copying of the manuscript. Mkhitar *vardapet* is surely Mkhitar Gosh, who passed away in 1213. Prince Sadun, who sponsored the creation of the manuscript, is the son of Prince K'urd, who had a certain authority in Mahkaber and Kayen when his father was alive. After his father passed, Sadun was coronated prince and continued to patronize Nor Getik.<sup>206</sup>

The scribe asks the reader to remember other members of the congregation, including: Serovb and Hovasap', and their brothers and parents who aided in the process of creating the manuscript by preparing the materials and binding it. At the end, the scribe asks his reader to remember him and his pupil Step'anos. The manuscript must have been written after 1213, after Gosh had died, and no later than the first thirty years of the thirteenth century. It can be dated conditionally to the year 1232, when Sadun was still alive. The

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201 AVDALBEGYAN, The "*Haysmawurk'*" Collections, p. 147.

202 BOĀARIAN, Catalogue, v. 1, pp. 260, 374; AVDALBEGYAN, The "*Haysmawurk'*" Collections... p. 148.

203 CIARM, chap. 6, p. 90.

204 K'URDIAN, Catalogue, pp. 165-169.

205 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 13th Century, pp. 183-184.

206 MARGARIAN, The Mahkanaberts'is, p. 21.

manuscript was restored in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. During its restoration, missing sheets were added, as well as portraits of the evangelists Mark and John, and Prochorus.

In 1232, Step'anos copied a second gospel at the request of the daughter of Prince Jajur Khalbakiant's, and the wife of Prince Kuk Sevatyants', Vaneni. She ordered the scribe to copy the manuscript in memory of her father, who passed away that very year, and donated it directly to Havaptuk Monastery.<sup>207</sup> In the late nineteenth century, the gospel was found in the village of Geoybulał in Nukhi.<sup>208</sup> The current location of the manuscript is unknown.

The next manuscript that has come down to us from Getik is a collection of texts copied in 1273 by Georgi and Mamakhat'un's son Mkhitar, containing Vanakan Vardapet's *Book of Questions*, Movses Khorenats'i's *On the Geography*, David the Philosopher's *Book of Beings*, and Samuel Anets'i's *Chronicle* (Jerusalem MS 1288).<sup>209</sup>

At the request of the priest Grigor, Mkhitarich' copied a gospel in Getikavank'. He used as his example a copy prepared by the prominent eleventh-century scribe Grigor Murlanets'i. The gospels of Theodosiopolis (Venice MS 129)<sup>210</sup> and T'argmanch'ats' (Mat. MS 2743,) were also copied from Grigor Murlanets'i's manuscript.<sup>211</sup> This copy was provided to Mkhitarich' by Kirakos Gandzakets'i (Mat. MS 2814). The gospel has come down to us in poor condition, missing sheets at the beginning and the end, and lacking a full colophon. The date of its copying is unknown. Since the gospel was copied in the years when Kirakos Gandzakets'i was the chief teacher, the manuscript must have been copied not later than 1271, the year of Gandzakets'i's death.

T'oros Vardapet Arelvelts'i, son of Manuel and Tavus, was educated at Getikavank'. He came to Nor Getik from Gandzak. In 1262, he, together with his spiritual brother, the priest Makar, went to Rome and copied a gospel. In the colophon of this manuscript, he wrote that he received an education in Getik.<sup>212</sup>

In 1274, Alek'sios' son Sargis *vardapet* also studied in Nor Getik. In order to patronize the manuscript of his desires, he went to Deldzut in 1280, where a "Tonapatchar" collection was copied for him at Arak'el *vardapet*'s school (Mat. MS 5197).

Hovhannes was one of the scribes of Nor Getik. In the time of chief teacher Kirakos, he copied a Festal at the latter's behest. But since this was his first experience in copying, the scribe apologized to Kirakos *Vardapet* and the readers, stating that he was not skilled in

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207 HOVSEPIAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians*, p. 34.

208 BARKHUDARIANTS', *The Land of Ałuank'*, p. 234.

209 BOĽARIAN, *Catalogue*, pp. 484-496.

210 SARGISEAN, *Catalogue*, p. 567.

211 MATEVOSYAN, *T'argmanch'ats' Gospel*, pp. 102-114.

212 TER-AVETISIAN, *Catalogue*, pp. 45-46; see also MATEVOSYAN, *Colophons, 13th Century*, pp. 313-314.

writing and wrote with large letters and that his text contained mistakes (Mat. MS 3931).<sup>213</sup> In the colophon he also wrote that he copied the manuscript in the monastery of Mkhit'ar Gosh (f. 345v).

The construction of Getikavank' was completed in 1291 when monks Dasapet and Karapet built the bell tower and walls of the monastery.<sup>214</sup> The last mention of the scriptorium of Nor Getik dates back to the fifteenth century, when the scribe Łazar copied a collection of commentaries and grammatical materials, edited by Gevorg Yerznkats'i (Mat. MS 3653).

It is worth mentioning that Nor Getik, or Goshavank' as it is commonly called, is also famous as a historical and architectural complex, fit with beautiful churches and an "embroidered" *khachkar* (cross-stone) carved by the master Połos.

In conclusion, we can say that the formation, establishment and flourishing of Nor Getik Monastery, as a spiritual and cultural center of medieval Armenia and scriptorium, were connected with the efforts of the great scholar, legislator, and clergyman Mkhit'ar Gosh. During his years as a chief teacher, the school of Nor Getik was prominent and had a good reputation. It became one of the most advanced educational centers in northern Armenia, which continued its activity until the end of the thirteenth century. The next waves of production are associated with Martiros and Kirakos Gandzakets'i. The latter paid great attention to the copying of manuscripts, enriching the depository of the monastery. Sargis, Step'anos, Hovhannes, and Mkhit'ar were among Nor Getik's well-known scribes.

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<sup>213</sup> KHACH'IKIAN, MATEVOSYAN, GHAZAROSYAN, Colophons, p. 167.

<sup>214</sup> CIArm, chap. 6, p. 104.



Halartsin Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## THE MONASTIC SCHOOL OF HALARTSIN

The monastery complex of Halartsin was one of the most prominent spiritual and cultural centers of medieval Armenia. It is located in the historical province of Kayen in a beautiful plain, surrounded by forested mountains and gorges. There, two tributaries of the Halartsin River form a peninsula at the foot of the mountain, then join below the monastery and mix with the Alstev River.

The main sources of information about Halartsin Monastery come from the epigraphic inscriptions on site. In them, one finds important information about the congregation, the socio-political and socio-economic history of the region, and the spiritual and cultural life of this popular center.

Unlike the epigraphic inscriptions, the literary sources are scarce. The earliest information is reported by Kirakos Gandzakets'i, who, in 1197 wrote that Khach'atur Taronats'i-Abbot of Halartsin, a holy and virtuous man, famous as a scholar and famed especially for his musical skills-attended the consecration ceremony of the church at Nor Getik.<sup>215</sup> The historian testified that in 1246, when Vardan Arevelts'i brought with him to Armenia the canon laws established by Catholicos Constantine in Cilicia, the signature of the spiritual leader of Halartsin was among the prominent spiritual leaders of Karin, Ani, Bjni, Amberd, Halpat, Sanahin, Getik, Kech'aris, Ayrivank', and others.<sup>216</sup> Next testimony is given by Vardan Arevelts'i, who called the monastery Holartsin.<sup>217</sup> Step'anos Orbelian called the monastery "the famous covenant of Halartsin."<sup>218</sup>

Although the earliest mention of Halartsin dates back to the twelfth century, it is believed that there was a congregation there prior to this, as the monastery complex consists of buildings built between the tenth and thirteenth centuries.

The monastery complex of Halartsin consisted of Surb Grigor, Surb Kat'olike, Surb Step'anos, Surb Astvatsatsin churches, two narthexes, a refectory, royal tombs, monks' cells, chapels, *khach'k'ars*, and auxiliary buildings.

Most likely, the oldest structure is Surb Grigor Church. Judging from the architectural style it was built in the tenth-eleventh centuries. Allegedly, Surb Astvatsatsin Church was built in 1071 and restored in 1281.<sup>219</sup>

The monastery was destroyed during the Seljuk invasions. At the end of the twelfth century, when the Zakarids established their presence in this province and began their reign in 1184, Khach'atur *vardapet* Taronats'i and Suk'ias, who Makar Barkhudariants' called Arts'akhets'i,<sup>220</sup> restored the monastery and regained its land rights. This information is preserved in an inscription on the eastern wall of the narthex adjacent to Surb Grigor Church.<sup>221</sup>

After the death of his brother Zak'are in 1212, Ivane Zak'arian built the narthex of the church in his brother's memory and left a long inscription on the western entrance about the victorious wars of the Zakarids and the liberation of their native lands from the Seljuk invasions. In this inscription, the territories and fortresses liberated by the Zak'arian brothers are listed, and the Zakarids are considered descendants of the Bagratuni Dynasty.<sup>222</sup>

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215 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 211-212.

216 *Idem*, p. 310.

217 AREVELTS'I, *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 12.

218 ORBELIAN, *Sisakan*, p. 342.

219 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 44; TER-MOVSISIAN, *Three Major Armenian Monasteries*, pp. 74-75: 364; TOKARSKI, *The Architecture of Armenia*, pp. 288-289.

220 BARKHUDARIANTS', *The History of Aġuank'*, v. 1, p. 195.

221 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 37.

222 *Idem*, pp. 22-23.

It is noteworthy that images of two large figures have been preserved on the ceiling of the narthex. According to the inscription, the figure who carries a bucket in his hand is Simeon, the steward of the monastery. The other is Abbot Daniel, whose presence is attested in 1219.<sup>223</sup>

The royal family's crypt was adjacent to the southern wall of the narthex of Surb Grigor Church. In 1865–1895, when Polos *vardapet*, a monk from Etchmiadzin, became the abbot of Halartsin, he demolished the walls of the mausoleum and used the stones in the construction of other buildings.<sup>224</sup> Today, only the foundations of the mausoleum and two tombstones are preserved. It is believed that the Kyurikian kings are buried here.<sup>225</sup>

In the 12th–13th centuries, Halartsin was one of the most important educational centers of Armenia. The founding and flourishing of the local school are associated with Khach'atur Taronats'i, the spiritual leader of the monastery, as well as a teacher, poet, and musician.<sup>226</sup> Kirakos Gandzakets'i wrote about him with great respect, saying that he brought a brilliance and fame to this congregation which was "barren" and "faded" before his arrival.<sup>227</sup>

Based on the name of Khach'atur Taronats'i or Taronets'i,<sup>228</sup> it is assumed that he must have been born in Taron in western Armenia. He most likely came to Halartsin before 1184, as an inscription dated to the same year mentions him as the leader of the congregation. At that time, along with Suk'ias Artsakhets'i, he restored the monastery destroyed during the Seljuk invasions. In 1194, according to the inscription found on façade of the western entrance of the church, Kat'olike Church was built under the patronage of Khalt', son of Harb.<sup>229</sup>

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223 Idem, pp. 43–44, 60.

224 SMBATIANTS', Bulletin of the Tsovazard Region of Geghark'unik', pp. 179–185.

225 There were three tombstones here, one of which was made of limestone and was completely destroyed and turned into small pieces, therefore it is impossible to find out whose tombstone it is. Jalalians' S. once read the inscription on the tombstones: "Այս է հանգստարան թագաւորաց Գագայ և Գոգայ" [This is the tomb of kings Gagai and Gogai]. Today only the initial of one of them is preserved: "Այս է հանգստարան թագաւորաց Գ" [This is the tomb of kings G]. On the third tombstone we read "Սմբատ թագաւոր" [King Smbat]. Gurgen (Kyurikē) I (982–989), the younger son of Ashot III the Merciful, founded the Kyurikian Kingdom in Tashir-Dzoraget. He was buried in Sanahin. The next ruler of the Kyurikian Kingdom was his son David Anhoghin (989–1048) who had four sons: Gurgen, Gagik, Atrnerseh, and Smbat, as well as a daughter, Hranush. In 1037, Gagik ascended the throne of Kakhet' and Heret' and became the founder of the junior branch of the Kyurikian dynasty. After the death of David Anhoghin, his eldest son Kyurikē II (1050–1089) became the king of Tashir-Dzoraget, and Smbat ruled with him, see CIArm, chap. 6, p. 59; YEGHIAZARIAN, The Halartsin Monastery, p. 39.

226 KHACH'ERIAN, Educational Centers of Armenian Learning, pp. 593–596; MOVSISIAN, Armenian School and Pedagogy, pp. 257–259.

227 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 211.

228 T'AHMIZIAN, Khach'atur Taronets'i, pp. 46–52; idem, The Haghartsin Monastery and Musician Khach'atur Taronets'i.

229 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 52.

Well aware of the traditions of spiritual music of the Cilician school, Khach'atur Taronats'i founded a music school adjacent to the monastery. Khach'atur's school was not inferior to similar music centers in Cilicia or Greater Armenia. As a gifted musician and scholar, he collected and developed *khaz* (a system of medieval musical notation) from Cilicia, which had not existed in Armenia before.<sup>230</sup>

Khach'atur Taronats'i brought songbooks edited in Cilicia and distributed them in the northeastern regions of Armenia.<sup>231</sup> Khach'atur Taronats'i wrote *gandzer* (treasures) and *sharakanner* (hymns). His most famous work is the extensive version of the *Oh Mystery Deep*,<sup>232</sup> which he performed for the first time in the presence of high-ranking clergymen during an open-air liturgy in Lori by order of Prince Zak'are.<sup>233</sup>

It is unknown how long Khach'atur Taronats'i was the spiritual leader of Halartsin Monastery. Most likely, he died in 1205–1206, as in an inscription found on the entrance of the narthex names Father Step'anos as the monastery's spiritual leader in 1206.<sup>234</sup>

Information about the early period of the scriptorium at Halartsin is limited to what is preserved about Khach'atur Taronats'i. No manuscripts survive from the early period, however, as Khach'atur diligently spread songbooks, or as Gandzakets'i says, *khazes*, he likely took care to reproduce and copy the collections of ritual chants.

The fact that manuscripts were highly valued in Halartsin is evident from two inscriptions concerning donations of manuscripts preserved on the arches connecting the columns of the eastern wall of the narthex. As mentioned in one of the inscriptions, the priest Nerses donated a gospel decorated with gold and silver to Surb Grigor Church.<sup>235</sup> A second inscription was left by the priests Hovhannes and Sargis in 1217. They donated a precious monstrance, chasuble, and gospel to the church.<sup>236</sup>

The second period of flourishing at Halartsin Monastery is linked to Hovhannes Armanetsi's leadership. In 1248, he ordered a refectory be built.<sup>237</sup>

The only manuscript that has come down to us from Halartsin is from the thirteenth century, currently housed in the depository of the Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem (MS. 2905).<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 212.

<sup>231</sup> T'AHMIZIAN, *Grigor Narekats'i*, p. 278.

<sup>232</sup> *Chants of the Divine Liturgy*, p. 192; AVETIK'IAN, *Sharakans*, pp. 584–585; ANASIAN, *Armenian Bibliography*, p. LXVIII.

<sup>233</sup> CH'AMCH'IANTS', *History of Armenia*, pp. 179–182.

<sup>234</sup> CIArm, chap. 6, p. 24.

<sup>235</sup> *Idem*, p. 41.

<sup>236</sup> *Idem*, p. 36.

<sup>237</sup> The refectory was built by architect Minas whom helped Grigores and Muses, and the financial expenses were covered by a clergy named Kuta (CIArm, chap. 6, p. 58).

<sup>238</sup> BOĀARIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 9, p. 105.



A gospel copied in 1284 in  
Halartsin, scribe: Astvatsatur  
(Jerusalem, MS 2905)

It is a gospel written in erkat'agir script. The manuscript is bound in leather, with scenes of the resurrection and crucifixion tooled on its surfaces. Astvatsatur, son of Husik', copied the gospel in 1284 at Halartsin at the request of the priest Grigor.<sup>239</sup>

There are three manuscripts, copied elsewhere, but illuminated and bound in Halartsin. In 1296, Deacon Anania copied a *mashtots'* in Barjanj Village at the behest of Deacon Ishkhan. Later, in 1429, Deacon Sargis bound the manuscript in Halartsin (Mat. MS 1028).<sup>240</sup> In 1624, Hovhannes bound a gospel, which was copied and illuminated by Bishop Sargis Partavets'i in 1422. The manuscript reached Halartsin in a dilapidated state. Hovhannes copied the first two chapters, illustrated the title page for the Book of Mark, and bound the manuscript (Mat. MS 8423),<sup>241</sup> whereas the title pages of Luke and John were painted by Sargis Partavets'i.

239 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 13th Century, p. 560.

240 Main Catalogue, v. 4, pp. 113–118.

241 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 2, p. 145.

Although Sargis Partavets'i worked in Gelark'unik', he was influenced by the traditions of Utik'. He was born in the city of Partav. From the colophons we learn that his parents were Sultanshah and Minakhatun (Mat., MS 4873, f.366r, MS 8765, f. 227v). Sargis was born in 1357, and after receiving education moved to Gelark'unik', where for forty-two years he copied manuscripts at Kot'ip'oro Monastery. He wrote quickly and accurately, and could finish copying a manuscript in a month. However, only six manuscripts have come down to us from Sargis, copied in the final years of his life (between 1416 and 1427).<sup>242</sup>

In 1627, Hovhannes *vardapet* illuminated and bound a gospel in Halartsin at the request of the priest Manuel. It was copied by the scribe Girgor in the village Sot'a in 1511 (Mat. MS 10162).

In the seventeenth century, the monastery flourished again. In 1681, the churches of Surb Astvatsatsin and Surb Grigor were restored by the sons of the Ch'it'alian from Tiflis (Tbilisi) and Khojagyul. The expenses of the dome were covered by Grigor and Davit'.<sup>243</sup> In the time of Bishop Hakob, the restoration of Surb Step'anos Church was sponsored by Hogijan's sons and grandsons from Tiflis.<sup>244</sup> Unfortunately, in the late nineteenth century, the monastery was again deserted. Renovated again, it serves as one of the functioning monasteries within the Diocese of Tavush.

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<sup>242</sup> For more information about Sargis Partavets'i, see GHAZAROSYAN, Scribe Sargis Partavets'i, pp. 95-101.

<sup>243</sup> CIArm, chap. 6, p. 48.

<sup>244</sup> Idem, p. 55.



Moro Dzoro Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## MORO DZORO MONASTERY

One of the most prominent centers of the historic province Kayen is Moro Dzoro Monastery. However, very little information survives about it. No literary records have been preserved. The epigraphic inscriptions remain the main source of studying the history of the monastery. They reference the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Based on the architectural features and style of the relief sculptures, scholars place its foundation during the early medieval period—to the sixth or seventh century—and the reconstruction took place sometime during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>245</sup> The monastery was completely

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<sup>245</sup>AVAGIAN, Moro Dzoro Monastery, № 3, pp. 56–60, № 4, pp. 56–60.

rebuilt and prospered under the auspices of the Artsrunis of Mahkanaberd, and later the Zak'arian princes. With the special permission of King George III of Georgia and under the patronage of prince K'urd, the monastery was exempted from all taxes, and the priest Hovhannes became its spiritual leader.<sup>246</sup>

In 1197, the monastery was renovated and the dome of the church was restored, a project sponsored by Prince Ivane Zak'arian and his sister Nana.<sup>247</sup> After Hovhannes, a certain Grigor became the spiritual leader. He tended to the congregation's economic issues and importantly, rebuilt the monastery, according to an extensive inscription left on the main altar in 1213 by Ivane. Yevagr assumed leadership after Grigor.

Thirteenth century sources do not mention Moro Dzoro Monastery. Due to Mongol invasions, the monastery lost the former prestige it held during Mahkanaberdts'i rulership, and instead functioned as a mere parish church until the end of the nineteenth century.

No manuscripts survive from Moro Dzoro Monastery. However, we have data concerning five manuscripts that were once housed there.<sup>248</sup>

Two gospels, today stored at the Matenadaran, were once held at Moro Dzoro Monastery. One was copied by the scribe Grigor, and illuminated by Abraham *vardapet* in 1431 in Amida (Mat. MS 6130). The second was copied and illuminated on paper at the request of Gulibat *mahtesi*. The location and name of the scribe remain unknown as the main colophon no longer survives (Mat. MS 3975).

Information about the remaining three manuscripts once housed at Moro Dzoro Monastery is lacking. One was considered one of the oldest manuscripts copied on paper entirely in capitalized letters. Because the manuscript lacks a colophon, no additional information about the manuscript survives. The second was a gospel, also copied on paper and illuminated. The scribe, Hakob, copied it at the request of a clergyman named Movses. The colophon is not complete, however, its location of origin and date of copying are preserved. The gospel was copied in 1322 at Alvanadzor Monastery, which, according to Barkhudariants', was in the Van-area. The third and final gospel was copied in 1778 by Bishop Grigor Ashtarakets'i at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Bjni. Melik'khat'un and her husband were the patrons of the manuscript and donated it to Karmravor Church in Ashtarak.

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246 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 139.

247 Idem, p. 135.

248 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 343-344.



Deldzut Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## DELDZUT MONASTERY

Deldzut Monastery was one of the spiritual and cultural centers of the historical province Kayen. The main sources of evidence concerning Deldzut's rise as a scriptorium and center of cultural production are a set of twelve epigraphic inscriptions and three colophons. They reveal that Deldzut was quite popular in the medieval period, and its head teacher was honored as a "great and proclaimed teacher."

Deldzut Monastery was first mentioned in the colophon of a twelfth-century gospel copied in 1042 in erkat'agir script in the city of Vordir in Basen province. It was copied by the scribe Sargis for the priest Sarkavag, whose father was

Mesrop. From the colophon we learn that the manuscript was purchased by Hovhannes, who donated it to Deldzut Monastery (Mat. MS 6384, f. 107v).<sup>249</sup>

It is a palimpsest—in the thirteenth century, the text written on parchment was scraped off and a new text was added in bolorgir script. Fortunately, Hovhannes' colophon was not erased by the secondary scribe. Although first mention of Deldzut dates to the twelfth century, the main church was most likely erected in the place of an eighth-century structure.<sup>250</sup>

Testimonies referencing Deldzut Monastery survive in the form of epigraphic inscriptions. They date to the second half of the thirteenth century, when Sadun II, grandson of Prince K'urd, became the ruler of Mahkanaberd, and when Arak'el *vardapet* became the spiritual leader of Deldzut and Arak'elots' (Holy Apostles) Monasteries. According to an inscription, the construction of the monastery complex was finished in 1274. The main church of the monastery complex is similar to Surb Gregory the Illuminator Church in Getkavank'. This leads us to believe that these two churches were designed by the same architect. On the west side, the narthex is adjacent to the church. A second small church is located on the north side; it is a vaulted, simple building with semi-finished stones and mortar. There were also once cells for monks and auxiliary buildings, in addition to an adjacent cemetery and settlement, which were spread across the northwester side of the monastery.

Arak'el *vardapet* left an inscription about the construction of the church on a beautifully sculptured *khachk'ar* erected at the entrance of the main church. The inscription states that Arak'el is from Tarson Province in Cilicia, and arrived to Deldzut during the reign of Abala Khan, under the spiritual leadership of Hovhannes Khach'ents', and the rule of Sadun II.<sup>251</sup> According to this inscription, Arak'el must have come to Mahkanaberd in 1265, if not earlier, but certainly before 1267 because he is called "Great *Vardapet*" in another inscription dated to 1267.<sup>252</sup> Arak'el's name is also referenced in inscriptions that date from 1276 to 1292, as well as in the colophons of two manuscripts copied in 1280.

Garegin Hovsep'ian identifies Arak'el *vardapet* as Vanakan *Vardapet*'s pupil, Arak'el, who, after becoming a *vardapet*, came to Mahkanaberd and established a school of writing in Deldzut.<sup>253</sup>

Arak'el ran the school for about three decades. His school was famous for its manuscript repository. In the school, manuscripts were copied from "fine and correct" examples. Colophons preserve the names of Arak'el's six pupils, who came to Deldzut from different regions to copy manuscripts under his instruction. Unfortunately, only two manuscripts copied by his students are known.

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249 MATEVOSYAN, Colophons, 5th–12th Century, pp. 88, 327.

250 HAKOBYAN, MELIK-BAKSHSHYAN, BARSEGHYAN, Dictionary of Toponymy, v. 2, p. 76.

251 CIArm, chap. 6, p. 112.

252 Idem, pp. 211–212.

253 HOVSEP'IAN, All Savior Church of Havuts' T'ar, p. 70, fn 185.

One of Arak'el's pupils was the priest Gevorg, son of Pak'ut and grandson of Hzar. In 1280, Gevorg and Avetis copied a collection of commentaries, containing works of Vardan Arevelts'i, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, Philo of Alexandria, Gregory the Theologian or Gregory Nazianzen, and Nonnus (Mat. MS 5254).

From this information, we can conclude that Arak'el's school curriculum focused on teaching and copying commentaries and their spread. Gevorg copied a manuscript from an example provided by his spiritual brothers Vahram and Step'anos, who were also Arak'el's pupils. They graduated from the school and returned to their birthplace, Ayrarat.

From the colophon of the second manuscript, we learn that there were valuable and sought-after manuscripts at Deldzut. For example, Sargis, son of Alek'sios and Gohar, who studied in the school of Getik, came to Deldzut in 1280 to purchase a copy of a manuscript he desired. The scribes Grigor and Shmavon copied and bound a *tonapatchar* collection for Sargis (Mat. MS 5197).

Last mention of Arak'el appears in an inscription dated to 1292. It states that a rich merchant named Asil came to Deldzut from Mesopotamia to make a large donation.<sup>254</sup> Thus, Arak'el was still alive in 1292. It is likely that he died of old age shortly after Asil's visit and was buried in the narthex of the monastery.

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<sup>254</sup> CIArm, chap. 6, p. 117.



Khoranashat Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## THE SCHOOL AND SCRIPTORIUM OF KHORANASHAT

The school of Khoranashat was one of the most famous educational centers and scriptoria in Armenia during the medieval period. It was founded by Vanakan *Vardapet*. The information we have about Vanakan's life and work is accurate, reported by his pupils Kirakos Gandzakets'i, Vardan Arevelts'i, and Grigor Aknerts'i. Another version of his hagiography is preserved within a *haysmawork*'.<sup>255</sup>

Vanakan *Vardapet* was born in 1181 in Tavush.<sup>256</sup> He came to Nor Getik and became a student of the priest Polos, his elder

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<sup>255</sup> ALISHAN, *Hayapatum*, p. 462.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

brother. At the age of twenty, he was ordained a priest, then became a student of the great scholar Mkhit'ar Gosh. In 1207, he received a *vardapet*'s staff (*vardapetakan gavazan*) from him. Vanakan was distinguished by his abilities and immense diligence during his studies. Not only was he favored by his teacher but he became his assistant. He participated with him in the ecumenical councils of Lore (1205) and Ani (1207), and wrote an eyewitness account of those meetings. Kirakos Gandzakets'i writes about this.<sup>257</sup>

Vanakan returned from Nor Getik to his birthplace. According to the preserved inscriptions, from 1211 to 1222<sup>258</sup> and under the patronage of Prince Vahram II Gagets'i, he built a monastery. The monastery, which is called Khoranashat because of its many altars (Khorans), is located behind Gardman, in front of Yergevank' Fortress.<sup>259</sup> The monastery complex consisted of Surb Astvatsatsin Church and its adjacent narthex, Surb Kiraki (Holy Sunday), and Surb Chgnavor (Holy Hermit) Churches, a cemetery for the poor, as well as other buildings in the vicinity.<sup>260</sup>

Khoranashat became the spiritual and cultural center of the Vahramian princes, where Vanakan founded a school and became its first teacher. In 1240, he took part in the consecration ceremony of Gandzasar at the invitation of Prince Hasan-Jalal Dola of Khach'en. Vanakan *Vardapet* Tavushets'i died on March 18, 1251. According to his will, he was buried in the cemetery of the poor.<sup>261</sup> Vanakan's death was a heavy loss for everyone. According to Kirakos Gandzakets'i, the congregation was deprived of the enlightened doctrine of bliss and soul-saving words following his death.<sup>262</sup>

The school of Khoranashat was one of the most famous academic, cultural, and spiritual centers of Utik', and its teacher, Vanakan *Vardapet* Tavushets'i, was one of the most highly respected theologians and scholars of the time.

The school operated for eighty-seven years. In addition to religious subjects, history, philosophy, literature, music, grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astrology, logic, and other subjects were taught.

The school focused on the art of copying manuscripts. In addition to his educational and preaching activities, Vanakan *Vardapet* paid much attention to scribal activities. He gave his students fine manuscripts to copy. Gandzakets'i writes that Vanakan, as a very studious and pious man, collected large quantities of books from other places and brought them to the monastery.<sup>263</sup> Vanakan's works were written in Khoranashat and used as textbooks, first in his own school, and then within other schools in different regions.

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257 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 178.

258 LAFADARIAN, Kyurikian Kingdom, pp. 173-174.

259 GANDZAKETS'I, History, pp. 346-347.

260 K'ARTASHIAN, Khoranashat, pp. 42-52.

261 GANDZAKETS'I, History, pp. 347-348.

262 Idem, pp. 218, 348.

263 Idem, p. 244.

So, what has come down to us from this academician?<sup>264</sup> Vanakan's *Questions and Answers* was key source of knowledge for pupils. Today, a copy of this manuscript is stored in the library of the Armenian Cathedral of Saint James in Jerusalem (Jerusalem MS 1288, f. 2r-141r).<sup>265</sup> It was copied by a scribe named Mkhitar at Nor Getik in 1273. He wrote *Halags Tarentin (Concerning the Beginning of the New Year)*, a book on astronomy informed by Anania Shirakats'i's writings. This text was intended to read in religious settings.<sup>266</sup> The earliest copy of this work is preserved in a collection dated to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. A scribe named Grigores copied it from a manuscript provided by Grigor Bjnets'i. We do not know where it was copied (Mat. MS 5561, f. 271r-276v). Vanakan's other works are: *Commentary on Habakkuk's Prayer* (1859), *Commentary on the Book of Job* (consists of excerpts of previous commentators Hesik'sos, Step'anos Syunets'i, Davit' K'obayrets'i, (Jerusalem, MS 68, ff. 252-378),<sup>267</sup> *Commentary on the Arajavorats' Pahk'* (a five-day fasting period decreed by Gregory the Illuminator) (Jerusalem MS 173, ff. 496-500),<sup>268</sup> *Comparing the Old and New Testaments* (Jerusalem MS 587, ff. 1-3),<sup>269</sup> and *Commentary on the Hymn the Virgins' Crown* (Jerusalem MS 617, ff. 151-6).<sup>270</sup>

Kirakos Gandzakets'i and Vardan Arevelts'i write that Vanakan wrote about the history of the Mongols and their invasions. This remains an important source for learning about the Mongol invasions of Armenia.<sup>271</sup> Unfortunately, this work does not survive. Vardan Arevelts'i wrote that he used Vanakan's *History* as a source when composing his *Historical Compilation*.<sup>272</sup>

On the occasion of a Roman-Byzantine theological dispute that arose in the middle of the thirteenth century, Vanakan wrote *Confession of Faith*, which is preserved in Kirakos Gandzakets'i's *History* (Kirakos Gandzakets'i, ch. 50). In 1250, the sectarian movement, led by Davit' Tsarets'i and started in the Tsar province of Verin Khach'en, became very dangerous. Many prominent spiritual figures and a struggle ensued. Davit' Tsarets'i and his supporters were excommunicated.<sup>273</sup> Vanakan *Vardapet* was also fighting against this dangerous movement.

In addition to copying manuscripts, Vanakan was focused on editing. He ordered his students to compile and edit collections of rituals, in particular, *haysmarurk's* and *Tonapatchars*. Israel Khach'ents'i and Kirakos Gandzakets'i both prepared their own textual

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264 VOSKIAN, Monk Hovhannes, pp. 20-36.

265 BOĹARIAN, Catalogue, v. 4, p. 484.

266 KHACH'IKIAN, Vanakan *Vardapet*, pp. 156-169.

267 BOĹARIAN, Catalogue, v. 1 p. 221.

268 Idem, p. 514.

269 Idem, v. 2, p. 620.

270 Idem, v. 3, p. 18.

271 Idem, p. 151.

272 AREVELTS'I, *Historical Compilation*, pp. 92, 146-147.

273 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, pp. 326-328.

editions of the *haysmatourk'*—the Ter Israel and Kirakos editions. Vardan Arevelts'i edited and re-compiled *tonapatchars*.<sup>274</sup>

The art of writing flourished at Khoranashat. In their colophons, scribes provided information about the location where manuscripts were copied and often mentioned the name of their head teacher, i.e. Vanakan *Vardapet*. Vanakan's students referred to him with great admiration. Kirakos Gandzakets'i reports that under such a highly esteemed and intelligent teacher, the school acquired a great reputation, and drew people from different places to be educated.<sup>275</sup> Vardan Arevelts'i<sup>276</sup> and Grigor Aknerts'i<sup>277</sup> also wrote about Vanakan *Vardapet* with deep admiration.

Among Vanakan's students were Kirakos Gandzakets'i, Vardan Arevelts'i, Malak'ia, Step'anos Alt'amarts'i, Grigor Aknerts'i, Archbishop Israel of Lower Khach'en, the philosopher Sost'enes, Arak'el, Hovsep', and Markos, each continued to work as teachers in different religious centers upon leaving the school.

The first known scribe from Khoranashat is Step'anos Alt'amarts'i. According to Nerses Akinian, Step'anos was actually the Catholicos Step'anos II Nkaren of Alt'amar, who passed away in 1272.<sup>278</sup> In 1223, Step'anos copied a miscellany at Khoranashat. In the colophon he mentions Vanakan *Vardapet*, who, "shone like a morning star." He also mentioned three priest-Sargis, Hovhannes and Ignatios—his father, uncle, and brother, respectively. (Mat. MS 2101).

A year later, in 1224, by the order of Vaneni, daughter of Prince Jajur Khalbakian, a gospel was written in erkat'agir script and illustrated. Vanakan *Vardapet* named it the Gospel of Tavush, but it was later called the Gospel of Khoranashat (Mat. MS 4823) (fig. 6-11).<sup>279</sup> The names of the scribe and painter are unknown. The talented painter, who was most likely not a professional, illustrated the manuscript simply and harmoniously. There are the portraits of the four Evangelists, eight canon tables, semi-canon tables, and various marginalia painted with natural pigments and adorned in gold.<sup>280</sup> Further information about the manuscript concerns its captivity and ransom.

According to Kirakos Gandzakets'i, when Khoranashat Monastery was destroyed by Jaleddin's invasions, Vanakan *Vardapet* avoided the enemy by refuge in a cave near Lorut village in 1229. Here, he founded a church and continued to teach. Mongols learned where

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274 ANT'APYAN, Vardan Arevelts'i, v. 1, p. 244.

275 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 218.

276 AREVELTS'I, Historical Compilation, p. 146.

277 AKNERTS'I, History of the Tartars, p. 27.

278 AKINEAN, Book of Catholicoi, pp. 40-41.

279 The following scholars referred to the Gospel of Khoranashat: Srvandziant's G. (T'oros Albar, pp. 272-275), Hovsep'ian G. (The Khalbakians or the Proshians, pp. 837-842), Svirin A. (The Miniature Painting of Ancient Armenia, p. 90), Lazarev V. (History of Byzantine Painting, p. 12), Durnovo L. (Essays, p. 32), Hakobyan H. (Miniature Painting of Arts'akh and Utik', pp. 51-62).

280 DURNOVO and DRAMBIAN, Armenian Miniature Painting, p. 204.

Vanakan had hidden, and stormed the cave in 1236, capturing him and his students. Of those captured were Kirakos Gandzakets'i, and the looted goods included the monastery's precious property, including chasubles, silver crosses, vessels, numerous books, and two gospels bound with engraved silver covers.<sup>281</sup> Sometime later, the inhabitants of Gag Fortress paid a ransom of eighty dahekans (gold coins) and released Vanakan and Kirakos, who at the time worked as a translator and scribe for the Mongol army. They fled and took shelter in Nor Getik Monastery. After returning to Khoranashat, Vanakan reconstructed the monastery, restored the school, and continued to teach.

The fate of the second Gospel captured by the Mongols is still unknown. The Gospel of the Khoranashat, however, was sold by the Mongols in Tbilisi in 1238. Fortunately, Vanakan *Vardapet* purchased the manuscript, paying a high ransom and returning it to Khoranashat. Following these events, he added a secondary colophon, which details his rescue mission. In 1517, the gospel was taken to Tat'ev, where the monk Alexanos, at the request of a certain Łasum, replaced the silver cover with a new leather binding and a metal cross. The manuscript has been preserved with this cover. In the sixteenth century, the gospel was captured and rescued again, this time with the help of Melik Hovasap', who then donated it to Surb Vardan Zoravar Church in Van. In 1915, Historian Ter-Avetisyan saw the gospel in Van and sent it to Holy Etchmiadzin through the mediation of Governor Ditmen.<sup>282</sup>

After Vanakan's death, his nephews Polos *vardapet* and Grigoris became the spiritual leader of the monastery and the school's head teacher, respectively.<sup>283</sup> Grigoris was not able to maintain the school's reputation, and its former glory faded. Under the leadership of Petros *vardapet*, the period of prosperity ended entirely. Despite this, scribes later referred to the former fame of Vanakan's school in their colophons, and mentioned the monastery as the "renowned," "prominent holy covenant Khoranashat."

Several manuscripts copied after Vanakan's death have come down to us. Grigoris, former head teacher, was also a scribe. In 1252, he copied a miscellany at the behest of the priest Step'anos (Mat. MS 2273). In 1255, he copied Vanakan's *Questions and Answers* for the brothers T'ade and Hayrapet (Mat. MS 6106). In the thirteenth century, the scribe Sargis copied Vardan Arevelts'i's Commentary on Song of Songs (Mat. MS 5452). In 1283, during Petros *vardapet*'s leadership, the elderly scribe Martiros copied Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentation* (Mat. MS 1563).

Vahram II was succeeded by his son Ābula. During his rule, the power of the Vahramians weakened, which affected the spiritual and cultural life of the monastery.

Further sources about the activities of the scriptorium of Khoranashat survive. A fifteenth-

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281 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 247.

282 VARDANIAN, Khoranashat Gospel.

283 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 248.

century gospel survives from Khoranashat, illustrated by Bishop Step'anos. He painted portraits of the evangelists and semi-canon tables. He left a colophon under Luke's portrait, asking his reader to remember him (Mat. MS 5601, f. 137v).

Khoranashat flourished again in the seventeenth century, under the leadership of Bishop Hovhannes.

In 1620, the elder priest Hakob copied a gospel, where he situated Khoranashat within the Zakam district in his colophon (Mat. MS 6669, f. 284v). The scribe asked for forgiveness for the mistakes he made, such as writing with large letters. He writes that he is old, his eyesight is diminished, and reports unfavorable times due to troubles waged by Shah Abbas (1571-1629).

From 1631 to 1657, the scribe Yesayi, son of Israel and Khondal, copied a few manuscripts.

In 1631, the priest Khach'atur asked the scribe Yesayi to copy a miscellany in memory of his parents, Hovhannes and Khat'un.

Elder priest Polos, who had lost his entire family—parents, spouse, and children—purchased the manuscript from Khach'atur in memory of his family.<sup>284</sup>

In 1637, the scribe Yesayi copied a *mashtots'* (Mat. MS 8941). Later, he copied a gospel for the priest T'uma, and mentioned in his colophon that he wrote the manuscript under the auspices of Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Khoranashat, located in the Zakam district.<sup>285</sup> Another *mashtots'* was copied by the same scribe in 1460 (Mat. MS 3998).

In 1642, T'amur ordered a *Book of Hours* for Yesayi's son, the Deacon Davit' (Mat. MS 8882). Yesayi's last manuscript was a miscellany, which he copied in 1657 for the priest Astvatsatur (Mat. MS 2116).

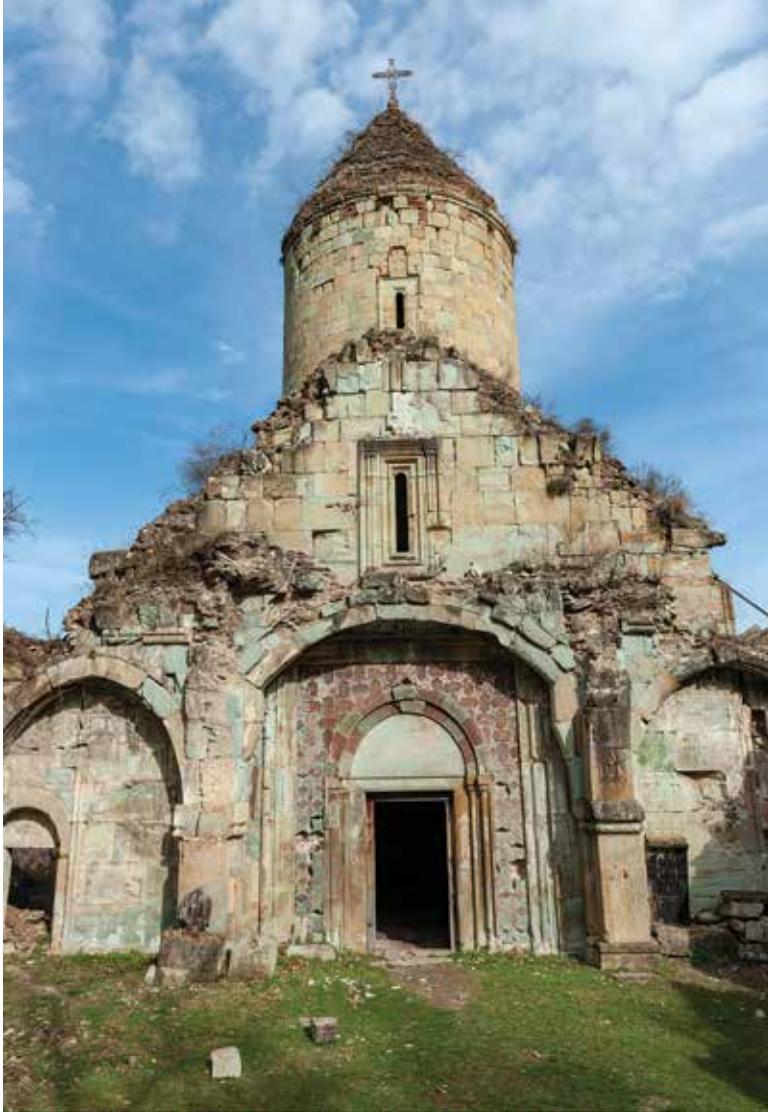
In 1674, during the time of the Catholicos Petros, the priest Avetis copied a *mashtots'* at Khoranashat (Mat. MS 3536). The manuscript has water damage and is illegible in some places. Only part of the colophon survives, as much of it is missing or damaged. The beginning is missing and only the last part is legible.

In summary, Khoranashat Monastery's scriptorium, established sometime between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was a direct continuation of the school of Nor Getikavank'. It gave the Armenian Church great personalities, wise intellectuals, and dedicated religious figures, who spread their experience and knowledge to several spiritual centers within medieval Armenia. The productivity of Khoranashat's scriptorium gradually weakened after the death of Vanakan *Vardapet*, and experienced a small revival in the seventeenth century.

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<sup>284</sup> HAKOBYAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 2, p. 466.

<sup>285</sup> Idem, p. 785; VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 157-158.



Nor Varagavank' Monastery  
(photo credit: Hrair Hawk  
Khatcherian)

## NOR VARAGAVANK' (ANAPAT)

Nor Varagavank', called "Queen of the North" by locals, is located southwest of Varagavan Village, on the slope of a forested mountain. Epigraphic inscriptions and literature reveal that the monastery complex was also called Anapat. Nor Varagavank' was the spiritual center for the Vahramian princes. The monastery's double-altar, single-nave church is called Anapat, founded in 1198 by Davit' II Kyurikian, the prince of Nor Berd.<sup>286</sup> Two years later, in 1200, Davit' built the Kyurikian's crypt.<sup>287</sup> Later, in 1224-1237, Vasak, son of Davit' sponsored the construction of Surb Astvatsatsin Church next to Anapat, which, according to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, was consecrated in 1240 under the leadership of Archbishop Hovhannes Tvets'i.<sup>288</sup> On the occasion of the

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286 SARGSIAN, Anapat or Nor Varag Monastery, № 9, p. 28.

287 LAFADARIAN, Kyurikian Kingdom of Nor-Berd, № 4-5, p. 168.

288 K'ARTASHIAN, The Architectural Ensemble of Nor Varagavank', № 7, p. 68; SARGSIAN, Anapat or Nor Varag Monastery and its Epigraphy, p.

death of Hovhannes Tvets'i, Vardan Arevelts'i reports that this prominent and famous man died in 1263 and was buried in the renowned Anapat Monastery of Nor Berd.<sup>289</sup>

The architect of Surb Astvatsatsin Church was Gazan Anets'i from Ani. His name was preserved atop the altar.<sup>290</sup> It is believed he is the same architect whose name appears on one of the walls within the city of Kars.<sup>291</sup>

The monastery complex consists of two churches, two narthexes, three chapels, and a mausoleum. Anapat began to be called Nor Varagavank' after the Mongol invasions, when the monk Lukas, abbot of Varagavank' of Vaspurakan, fled to the north in 1231 to save a relic of the True Cross. After wandering for six years, he settled in Anapat in 1237.<sup>292</sup> This is recorded in the inscription preserved on the north wall of the church.

We do not know of any manuscripts copied in Nor Varagavank', but in the late medieval period, gospels prepared in other scriptoria were kept here.<sup>293</sup> For example, a gospel copied on paper by the monk Martiros at Surb Karapet Monastery of Mush in 1505, a gospel copied by the scribe Nerses in 1586 at Surb Sargis Church in Dvnik Village, a gospel copied by the elder priest Hovhannes, son of the priest Davit', in the village of Shak'arbek of Upper Zakam in 1633. This gospel was donated to Surb Astvatsatsin Church of Qaramurat in 1674. Two other gospels were kept at Anapat, however these do not have their main colophons and the circumstances of their stories remain obscured. The whereabouts of all five gospels are unknown.

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30, GANDZAKETS'I, p. 153.

289 VARDAN *VARDAPET*, pp. 153-155.

290 K'ARTASHIAN, Nor Varagavank', p. 69.

291 BARKHUDARIAN, *Medieval Armenian Architects and Stonemasons*, p. 56.

292 The relic of the True Cross remained in Nor Varagavank' until 1651, from where it was taken to the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. Every year on the day before Holy Cross of Varaga Day, the relic of the True Cross is brought to Nor Varagavank'.

293 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 333-334.

## ZAKAM DISTRICT

The Zakam district was situated in the valley of the Zakam River, spread across its lower and upper streams. The name Zakam is mentioned in sources from the thirteenth century. Most likely, from this time onward, the name began to be used for both the district and settlement. According to Vardan Arevelts'i, the monasteries of Khoranashat, Halartsin, and Getik were situated in the Zakam district.<sup>294</sup> Khoranashat was mentioned as part of the Zakam district in the colophon of a gospel copied by the elder priest Hakob in 1620 in the village of Lłarak (Mat. MS 6669, f. 284v).

In the early modern period, the district was situated in the historical provinces of Alve and Tuch'katak. Later, it corresponded to a part of Kołt' Province.<sup>295</sup> In the late medieval period, Zakam was divided into two parts: the northern part was called Ner'k'in (Lower) Zakam, and the southern part was called Verin (Upper) Zakam. Lower Zakam was situated downstream of the Kur River. The winter palace of the kings of Armenia and Alvank' and the historical town of Khalkhał were also located here. Upper Zakam was the center of the district, occupying the upper reaches of the Kur River. Catholicos Yesayi of Aluank' called the two regions Amirash Shatinlu.<sup>296</sup>

In 1490, the monk Alexanos copied a gospel on paper at Khorotik Monastery at the request of Khontk'ar (Mat. MS 8135). Khontk'ar and her husband Łaripsha did not have children. They commissioned this gospel in memory of their family. The scribe also gives information about the once desolate and deplorable condition of the monastery, which was demolished to the ground. Upon seeing the convent in an uninhabited and ruined state, Łukas restored it. Łukas was the spiritual leader of the monastery during those years. The names of the priest Simeon and steward Shanshin were

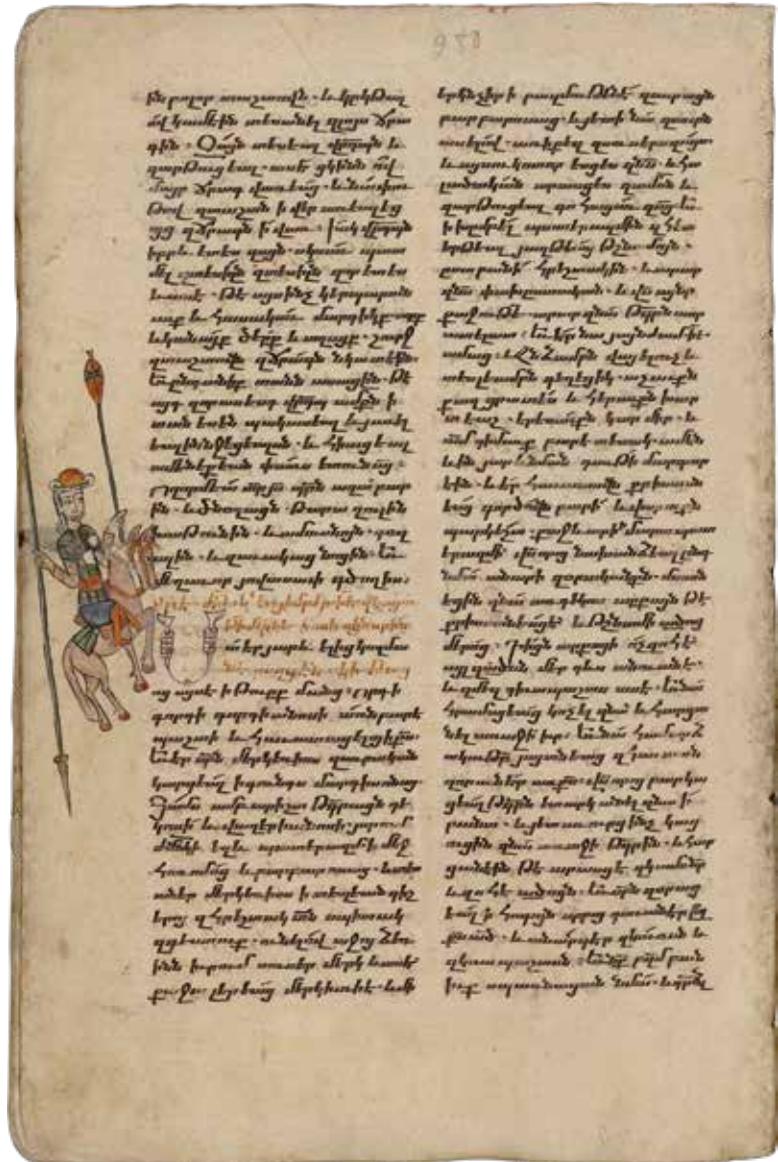
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294 AREVELTS'I, *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 12.

295 HAKOBYAN, MELIK-BAKHSHYAN, BARSEGHYAN, *Dictionary of Toponymy*, v. 2, p. 259.

296 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 420.

A Page from a *Haysmavurk'*  
copied in Qaramurat Village  
of Zakam, 1610,  
(Mat. MS 3812, fol. 140 v)



also been recorded in that colophon.<sup>297</sup> Later, in 1515, the monk Alexanos copied a *mashtots'* for the spiritual leader of Surb Hovhannes Monastery in Gardman, Archbishop Barseł.<sup>298</sup> In 1575, the monastery was led by Davit' Gelamets'i.

The village of Qaramurat was one of the ancient settlements of the district. It was a well-known village in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was famous for its churches.

297 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, 15th Century, v. 3, p. 161.

298 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 5.

Eyewitnesses spoke about the glorious architecture of Surb Amenap'rkich' (Holy All-Savior) Church with admiration.<sup>299</sup> The church had a scriptorium, where manuscripts were created before the eviction of Armenians from the village in the late eighteenth century. According to an inscription preserved on a *khach'k'ar* inside the church, manuscripts were bound by a man named Mirza.<sup>300</sup> The Harants' and Kusanats' Monasteries in Łaramurat also had scriptoria. Not only were they enriched with manuscripts written on-site, but also with donated manuscripts copied in other places.

In 1610, during the time of Bishop Melik'set', Alabab commissioned a copy of Grigor Khat'ets'i's edited *haysmazurk'* (Mat. MS 3812) from Bishop Davit' Gelamets'i and the elder priest Hovasap'. The scribe mentioned the parents of Hovasap', his brother, sons and daughters, as well as all close relatives. The priest Sargis, who participated in the creation of the *haysmazurk'*, is also named in the colophon.<sup>301</sup> In addition, the priests Step'anos, Matt'eos, Hakob, Łazar, the monk Mkhit'ar, Alek'sianos *vardapet*, and the scribe's parents, siblings, and sons were all mentioned in the colophon.<sup>302</sup> Davit' Gelamets'i was a renowned church figure, bishop, and spiritual leader of Khorotik Monastery. He also wrote poems. His poem Lament on Juła (Julfa), in which the author criticizes Shah Abbas' policy of forced deportation of Armenians, has come down to us in this very manuscript. In the lament-colophon, Davit' Gelamets'i reports on events that took place in Gandzak, Shamakh, and Shirvan. Shah Abbas conquered Gandzak from Turks and appointed AIsal Mahmat Khan as governor.<sup>303</sup> Who was this Alabab, who built a church and requested Bishop Davit' to copy the manuscript, paint thematic images, headpieces, marginalia, and ornaments?

The construction of the church was completed in the 1610s. On the occasion of the consecration, Alabab built two watermills and donated the above-mentioned *haysmazurk'* to the church.

Alabab is also mentioned in 1609 when he rescued the Vehapar Gospel from foreigners. This manuscript was copied in one of the provinces surrounding Lake Van. It dates back to the tenth century and bears unique paleographical and codicological features. Alabab returned it to the descendants of the monk Sargis, the son of Hamazasp, whose family owned the Gospel in the fifteenth century.

In 1682, the elder priest Łukas copied a *mashtots'* at the Church of the Holy Savior in Qaramurat (Mat. MS 5868). In 1659, the scribe Grigor copied a Gospel at Surb Astvatsatsin

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299 GAT Museum, S. Kamalian's collection, folder № 1, VI-11, № 30-31; BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 308-309.

300 GAT Museum, S. Kamalian's collection, folder № 1, VI-11, № 29.

301 On the mediators of manuscripts in medieval Armenia, see MATEVOSYAN, The Middleman between the Scribe and the Recipient, № 4, pp. 121- 131.

302 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 1, p. 362.

303 DAVRIZHETS'I, Book of the Histories, p. 113.

Church in K'arahat at the request of *Mahtesi* Elia, a monk from Harants' Monastery in Qaramurat. He also painted the canon tables, portraits and title pages of the Evangelists, marginalia and ornamental letters, as well as bound the manuscript in leather. After receiving the gospel, Elia gifted it to his spiritual father, Terun. On behalf of the commissioner, the scribe mentioned the names of Bishop Grigor, monk Karapet, and the priest Terun in his colophon.<sup>304</sup>

In 1679, the elderly scribe Avetis K'amalets'i copied a gospel at Harants' Monastery (Mat. MS 6705). He also illustrated the portraits of the Evangelists, their title pages and symbols, as well as many ornamental letters and marginalia. This manuscript was kept in Surb Lusavorich' Church in the village of Mets Banants'.<sup>305</sup>

In 1633, the elder priest Hovhannes copied a gospel in the village of Shak'arbek in Upper Zakam. The manuscript was donated to Surb Astvatsatsin Church at Harants' Monastery.<sup>306</sup>

In 1647, Mkhitar, son of the priest Hayrapet, copied a gospel for Tsatur at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in the village of Sultanets'ik' (Mat. MS 223). The scribe recorded the names of his parents Hayrapet and Gohar, his teacher Movses *vardapet*, the priest Step'anos, and Hrip'sime.<sup>307</sup> Mkhitar copied another manuscript twenty-four years later. In 1671, a plague claimed many lives in Upper Zakam. Due to this cruel disaster, the family of Voskan's brother, Mkhitar, died. Eva and Voskan lost relatives and asked Mkhitar to copy and illuminate a Gospel in memory of them. He did so at Surb Astvatsatsin Church (Mat. MS 6759). Eva donated the manuscript to Kusanats' Anapat (Convent of the Virgins), led at the time by Sandukht. The scribe Mkhitar also lost his family members as a result of the plague. In the colophon, he asks the reader to remember his teacher Movses *vardapet* and the priest Step'anos. Later, the manuscript was taken to Mets Banants' Village and preserved in Surb Lusavorich Church.

Mkhitar's last surviving manuscript is a *mashtots'*, copied in 1678 for Bishop T'at'eos, again in Sultanets'ik' (Mat. MS 968). Here, in 1709, the scribe Vardan copied a *haysmazurk'* for Sargis which included the biography of Mkhitar Gosh (Mat. MS 3813), and in 1844, Grigor Lori-Melikian completed his collection of poems (Mat. MS 7501).

The depository of Kusanats' Anapat was enriched by donations. In 1636, on the occasion of the founding of the convent, Catholicos P'ilippos of All Armenians donated a *haysmazurk'* prepared in New Julfa in 1633. At Erdam's request, it was copied by Hayrapet, Astvatsatur, and Gaspar, and illustrated by Martiros (Mat. MS 1503). The Abbess of the convent was Hrip'sime.<sup>308</sup> The convent received another manuscript in the same year: a hymnal copied

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304 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 3, pp. 851–852.

305 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 284.

306 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 2, p. 531.

307 Idem, v. 3, p. 247.

308 Idem, v. 2, p. 656.

on parchment by the priest Ep'rem and Grigor in the sixteenth century, also in New Julfa (Mat. MS 7222).

Papachan Village in Upper Zakam had a scriptorium where manuscripts were copied and illustrated by the priest Avetis (son of Arak'el and Nazlukhan), and the elder priest Hovhannes. In 1655, Avetis began to copy a hymnal here, which he completed at Jukhtak Church in Khavunis Village. A year later, he finished copying a *mashtots'* for the priest Nerses in Srsrut Village in Shamk'or.<sup>309</sup> In 1659, at the request of Hakhum Pasakerts'i, Avetis copied a gospel, in which he also painted the portraits and title pages of the four Evangelists, many marginalia, and ornamental letters (Mat. MS 3542). In the main colophon, Avetis left his name using a cryptogram. Hakhum and his wife Gulkhat'un bought the gospel and donated it to their son, the priest Barsef. Avetis mentioned his teacher first, Mkhith'ar *vardapet*, then the head teacher Sargis, and the priest Hakob.

In 1661, Avetis copied, illuminated, and bound a second gospel (Mat. MS 7687). Avetis' last surviving manuscript is a hymnal, copied in the winter of 1668, where he also mentions Mkhith'ar *vardapet* (Mat. MS 8549).

In 1661, the elder priest Hovhannes copied a gospel at Jukhtak Church. In the same year, the Abbot of Harants Anapat, Terun, died and Father Grigor became its new spiritual leader.<sup>310</sup> A year later, in 1662, the elder priest Hovhannes copied and illuminated a gospel at the same location (Mat. MS 337).

In 1652, the priest Hakob copied a Gospel in Melik'zata Village.<sup>311</sup> The manuscript was found in Surb Lusavorich Church in Mets Banants' Village. Today, we do not know where the manuscript is.

In the seventeenth century, the priest Grigor copied a Gospel in Zakam (Mat. MS 7299). In 1703, the elder priest Aristakes copied Grigor Khlatsi's edited *haysmazurk'* at the behest of Yesayi and Voskan in a place called Sardari T'ala (Mat. MS 9088).

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309 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 388.

310 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, pp. 165-166.

311 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 3, p. 476.

Surb Hovhannes Church  
of Gandzak  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetyan, 1980s)



## GANDZAK AND ITS ENVIRONS

Information about the Armenian manuscripts in Gandzak<sup>312</sup> and its surrounding settlements is mainly limited to the late medieval period.

Among the manuscripts produced in Gandzak is a remarkable Armeno-Persian gospel. It was copied by the scribe Mik'ayel Astapatets'i in 1779 (Mat. MS 3044). The scribe used an Armeno-Persian (a text in Persian language written in Armenian letters) gospel copied by Hakim Yaľub (Hakob *vardapet*) as his example, which he began to copy in 1717 in Shamakhi, and finished in 1721 in Tiflis (Mat. MS 8492). Hakim Yaľub included an Armeno-Persian commentary copied by Yahya (Hovhannes) ibn Eyvaz Tabrizi (Mat. MS 8492) in the preface of his copy. The scribe Mik'ayel explained in his colophon that he copied the gospel in Persian for Muslim scholars, many of whom argued with the Christian community over religious issues.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> Gandzak was the center of Shakashen or Sakasene region. In the colophon of the Lawcode, Mkhit'ar Gosh mentioned Gandzak as a capital. In 1804, the Russians captured the city and it became the center of the similarly named province. Later, Gandzak was renamed Elisabethpol after Russian Queen Elizabeth, and in 1935 - Kirovabad after Communist leader Sergei Kirov. It is now called Ganja. HAKOBIAN, MELIK-BAKHSHYAN, BARSEGHYAN, Dictionary of Toponymy, v. 1, p. 785.

<sup>313</sup> For more information about these manuscripts see KIRAKOSYAN, Two Armeno-Persian Gospels, pp. 56-70.

In 1783, Mik'ayel Astapatets'i copied a medical book in the same place (Mat. MS 6234). In 1682, the scribe Hovhannes copied a miscellany in 1682 (Mat. MS 8967). In 1881–1882, *Mahtesi* Mkrtich' Alachanian–Isahakian authored a collection of various materials (Mat. MS 9770). The manuscript heritage of Gandzak was enriched by codices written and preserved in other places.

A gospel, known as the gospel of Keran and Het'um, was produced by Step'anos in 1283 in Skevra (Cilicia) by the order of Queen Keran and kept in Surb Hovhannes Church (Mat. MS 6764).<sup>314</sup>

Another gospel, written in erkat'agir script on parchment, was also kept here. The location and date of its copying remain unknown as the main colophon did not survive. There is no information about the current location of this manuscript.<sup>315</sup>

The following manuscripts were part of the collection of Surb Hovhannes Church: a gospel copied on parchment by the philosopher T'oros and the scribe Hovan in 1295 in Drazark for the philosopher Hovsep' (Mat. MS 6290), a gospel copied and illuminated in 1663 by the elder priest Yesayi at the request of Simeon (Mat. MS 4053), a gospel produced by the scribe Mkrtich' in 1555, a gospel copied for Amirkhan in 1678 by the priest Łukas, a gospel copied by the scribe Hovhannes and illuminated and bound by Grigor K'arahatts'i at Holy Savior Church in Malaznaberd in 1666 at the behest of Hakob (Mat. MS 11060), a gospel that Panazurtts'i Allahverdi saved in 1745 and donated to Yerits' Mankants' Monastery (Monastery of the Three Children), a gospel that Melik Yesayi donated to the same monastery in 1724, a gospel that Yelen's son saved in Kakheti in 1505,<sup>316</sup> and a gospel that the priest Step'annos copied in bolorgir script on fine paper in 1660.<sup>317</sup>

Gandzak's Surb Lusavorich Church produced only one gospel copied by the scribe Hovhannes in 1668 in Harts'hankist (Mat. MS 10966). A gospel was copied in Surb Astvatsatsin Church by the scribe Vardan in 1322 in Peshgena Gomer Village.<sup>318</sup>

The Gospel of Mułni, one of the masterpieces of eleventh-century Armenian manuscript painting, was captured and taken to Gandzak during the reign of Georgian King Simon I (1588–1600) and Mohammad Khodabandeh, Safavid Shah of Persia (1578–1586). It was written on parchment, copied in erkat'agir script and illustrated in the school of Hovhannes

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314 The Gospel of Queen Keran (1272) is stored in the depository of the Cathedral of Saint James in Jerusalem (MS 2563). To distinguish the mentioned manuscript from this one, Matevosyan K. conventionally called MS 6764 Gospel of Keran and Het'um, referring to the names of the recipient and her son. MATEVOSYAN, *The Gospel of Queen Keran and Prince Het'um*, № 3, pp. 46–49.

315 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 40.

316 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 40–43.

317 VOSKIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 2, pp. 719–720.

318 KHACH'IKIAN, MAT'EVOSYAN, GHAZAROSYAN, *Colophons, 14th Century*, v. 1, p. 444.

Sandġkavanets'i in the 1060s (Mat. MS 7736).<sup>319</sup> Prior to its capture, it was kept at Halbat Monastery for several hundred years. Bayandur, son of Ap'ilo, paid for the gospel's ransom with three Iranian tomans and a silver bookstand. Upon its rescue, he donated the saved manuscript to Surb Nshan Church of Halbat and left a note about it (Mat. MS 7736, 300r).

Manuscripts produced in the scriptoria of different settlements and churches of Gandzak province, such as Garnaker, Ablah, K'aratak, Dastip'yur, Voskanapat, Shatakh, etc., prove that the tradition of manuscript painting long existed in Gandzak. Their colophons provide information not only about their scribes and commissioners, but also historical information about events of the time, naming churches and monasteries where these codices were created, and members of their congregations.

The clergyman Azaria, son of Barseġ and Khonak'ar, self-identifies as a painter in his gospel colophon, written in the time of Archbishop Tserun and illustrated in 1467 in Yelvard. In 1466, it was copied by the monk Matt'eos (New Julfa, MS 60).<sup>320</sup> Azaria painted the portraits of the evangelists with their title pages, as well as bird letters and marginalia. The manuscript was commissioned by the priest Matt'eos, who sold all his property and bought the gospel in memory of his parents and relatives.<sup>321</sup> At the end of the colophon, the scribe asks his reader remember the monks of the monastery, his pupil Melik'set', Simon *mahtesi*, and the steward Kirakos. In Garnaker Village, the priests Hovhannes and Hovsep' Balenats'i had manuscripts of their sermons, but as pages were missing from the beginning and end of the manuscripts, it remains unknown where, when and by whom they were copied.<sup>322</sup>

In 1515, the monk Alegsanos copied a *mashtots'* in Gardmanadzor for the spiritual leader of Surb Hovhannes Church, Barseġ.<sup>323</sup>

At the request of Grigor, a gospel was copied in 1639 by the elder priest Hovhannes (Mat. MS 7980).<sup>324</sup> The monks of the monastery illustrated the manuscript and the scribe mentioned them in the colophon. Among them were the priests Anton, Zhamhar (Bell ringer) Nerses, Hovhannes, and the steward Baraġam.

In 1763, the scribe Hovhannes copied a gospel at Surb Hreshtakapet (Holy Archangel) Church.<sup>325</sup>

In 1669, the elder priest Sargis copied a bible (Mat. MS 3856) in K'aratak Village at the request of Mirum, who donated it to Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Voskanapat.

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319 The manuscript was called gospel of Mulni, for being kept in Surb Gevorg Church of Tbilisi for hundred years. See MATEVOSYAN, Scribe Hovhannes Sandġkavanets'i, № 10, pp. 379–398.

320 TER-AVETISYAN, Catalogue, v. 1, pp. 92–93.

321 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 2, p. 244.

322 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 315.

323 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 5.

324 HAKOBIAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 2, p. 772.

325 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 7.

In 1671, under the patronage of both Surb Astvatsatsin and Saint Pantaleon Churches in Hamtivna Village, the priest Łazar completed a gospel left unfinished by his master, the priest Azaria. The latter copied the gospels of Matthew and Mark and Łazar copied the gospels of Luke and John. He also illuminated the manuscript with the portraits of the Evangelists, marginalia, and ornamental letters (Mat. MS 3541).

Manuscripts have also come down to us from Shatakh Village. The scribe Ovanes, son of the priest Akob and Elisabet, produced a miscellany in 1621 at Surb Astvatsatsin Church. In the colophon, the scribe described his feelings, writing that he was saddened by the difficult times in the country because the living conditions had changed (Mat. MS 728).

Ovanes finished a Gospel in 1634 that was commissioned by Amir, who ordered the manuscript in memory of his family.<sup>326</sup> The scribe Hovhannes, son of Davit' Shatakhets'i, copied a gospel in Shak'arbek Village in Upper Zakam, and left information about himself in the colophon.<sup>327</sup> In another colophon, Davit' mentioned Hovhannes as his pupil.

Mat. MS 713 consists of two different manuscripts and was also copied in Shatakh. The first one is a *parzatumar* (Armenian liturgical calendar), copied by the elder priest Hovhannes at the request of Melik Simavon in 1636. The second one was produced by the scribe Barseł in 1687 at the behest of Melik Hakhnazar. The scribe called his work "Excerpts" as it is a collection of different materials, containing *The Story of Ahiqar*, excerpts from Gregory of Narek's *Book of Lamentation* (chapters 12, 94), prayers, riddles, and a chronology of events from 1658 to 1718.

In Shatakh, manuscripts were bound and restored by Davit' and Hovhannes Shatakhats'i. In 1617, at Surb Step'anos Church in Hamasraybak Village in Gandzak, Davit' bound a gospel copied by the priest Matt'eos in 1460 in Yeludzor Village. In the colophon, he asks his reader to remember his parents, as well as his pupils, Father Hovhannes, Smeov, and deacons Akob and Avanes (Mat. MS 6316). Two years later, in 1619, Davit' restored a gospel that was copied in 1351 in Cilicia which had become the property of the elder priest Akob of Gandzak (Mat. MS 2745). In 1644, the elder priest Davit' left a colophon on behalf of Jilavkhan, who was the last recipient of a gospel copied in 1524 by Alek'sanos at Mak'enyats' Monastery (Mat. MS 8196, f. 2r). In 1625, Hovhannes restored the Vehap'ar Gospel in Mets Banants' Village. At the request of Archbishop Hovhan, he also restored a gospel produced in 1477 in Basen province (Mat. MS 6319).

The next gospel that has come down to us from Shatakh was copied by the scribe Nazar in 1661 (Mat. MS 5072). The manuscript was commissioned by the landlord Khach'atur, who asked for his son to be remembered in the colophon—Father Hovhannes, Father Martiros, and all his living and deceased relatives.

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326 HAKOBYAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 2, p. 560.

327 *Idem*, p. 531; BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 334.

The scribe and painter Sargis lived and worked in Dastip'yur Village. He copied his first gospel from 1671 to 1673. He illustrated the manuscript with the portraits of the Evangelists, their title pages and symbols, thematic images, many marginalia with floral and bird motifs, as well as ornamental letters. The gospel has an encrusted cover with a metal bejeweled cross on the front side (Mat. MS 6746). In 1673, Sargis began to copy the second manuscript, a *mashtots'* (Mat. MS 3576), that he completed in 1674. The third manuscript, a Gospel written in bolorgir script, was commissioned by Vardan. Sargis also painted the portraits of the four Evangelists, their title pages, marginalia, and then bound it with leather cover. The colophon is not complete as the last pages are missing, therefore the exact date of its copying remains unknown. Vardan and his wife Maryan, who ordered the manuscript in memory of Vardan's parents Ovanes and Marta, donated it to the village church (Vienna, MS 914).<sup>328</sup>

A fragment of a colophon written in 1626 by the priest Vardan survives from Voskanapat Village (Mat. fragment 848). Vardan wrote about the looting carried out by the Georgian army in Voskanapat, Getashen, Bars, and other Gandzak-region villages. As result, many people were killed or taken captive. The army looted Voskanapat Church and took all of its property-valuable manuscripts and church utensils. While the priest managed to escape and reach Dadivank', his father was killed.<sup>329</sup>

A beautiful gospel written on parchment and adorned with gold, silver and precious stones by Kirakos *Vardapet* was kept in Surb Hakob Church in Voskanapat Village. It was copied by the scribe T'oros in Drazark. In 1331, Metropolitan Step'anos Tarsayich of Syunik<sup>330</sup> received it. A gospel copied by the scribe Israel in 1463 at P'asavank' Monastery in Mokk' was also preserved at this church.<sup>331</sup>

Manuscripts were also stored in Surb Minas Church in Ablah Village in Gandzak. One, an illuminated gospel, was copied on paper in 1463 in Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Van by the scribe Nikolayos. This manuscript belonged to Catholicos P'ilipos.<sup>332</sup>

The second gospel was produced in 1374. The name of the scribe is unknown. We learn from a later colophon that during the invasions of Shah Abbas in 1607, Ohanes Łalabek released many captives from the city of Gandzak, ransomed a large number of manuscripts, and donated them to the priest Melik'set', a monk at Surb Yelische Monastery.<sup>333</sup>

Another gospel, the colophon of which has not survived, also came down to us from Ablah. The commissioner was Muradshah, who sold the manuscript to Hovhannes in 1448, son of the elder priest Khach'atur from the Monastery of the Apostle Yelische in Jrvshtik.<sup>334</sup>

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328 VOSKIAN, Catalogue, v. 2, p. 502.

329 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 2, p. 206.

330 KHACH'IKIAN, MATEVOSYAN, GHAZAROSYAN, Colophons, v. 2 (1326-1350), p. 98.

331 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 274.

332 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 2, p. 198.

333 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 1, p. 282.

334 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 1, pp. 618, 268.

## SHAMK'OR

Shamk'or is one of the famous fortress cities in historic Utik' Province. It formed part of Gardman and Shakashen districts. The early seventh-century foundation of the city is attributed to Catholicos Viro of Ałuank'.<sup>335</sup>

Shamk'or was a medium-sized city, located on the Partav-Gandzak-Hunarakert-Tpkhis (Tbilis) transit trade highway and protected by fortifications. The city was a center for handicrafts, renowned for its high-quality pottery and textile production. Shamk'or prospered until 1236, the year when it was captured and destroyed by the Mongols.

Shamk'or was mentioned among the medieval scriptoria from the seventh century, but manuscripts survive only from the seventeenth century. They were copied in different settlements around Shamk'or. The philologist Sargis, monk Step'anos, elder priests Yesayi, Hovhannes, Sargis, and Avetis were famous among the scribes. Since the whole land was called Shamk'or, the place of writing was often referred to as "the country of Shamkor" in colophons.

In the seventeenth century, Shamk'or Anapat is mentioned as a scriptorium. The exact date of the foundation of the monastery and its location remain unknown. It is supposed

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<sup>335</sup> GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 195.

that the location of origin is Berd Monastery, mentioned by Movses Kalankatvats'i. Here, a church meeting convened in the eighth century in the time of Catholicos Mik'ayel of Ałuank'.<sup>336</sup> The earliest information about the monastery appears in a colophon copied by the philologist Sargis (Mat. MS 3944).<sup>337</sup> In 1635, the philologist Sargis copied the Epistles of St. Paul. Most likely, Sargis was the head teacher of the monastery, and for whom the priest Grigor copied and illuminated a missal in 1651.<sup>338</sup>

In 1656, the priest Avetis produced a *mashtots'* in Srsrut Village. In the colophon we read that he asks for the strength and ability to complete the manuscript.<sup>339</sup> This *mashtots'* was commissioned by the priest Nerses. Avetis wrote his name in code.<sup>340</sup> This is his second extant manuscript. From 1655 onward, Avetis, son of Arak'el and Nazlukhat'un, is mentioned in Papachan Village in Zakam Province. Avetis typically wrote his name in code as he was familiar with cryptography. He also wrote a coded gospel in 1659 at the request of Hakhum Psakerts'i.

Getabak, or Getabek, is a fortress cities in Gardman, and is mentioned in sources as early as the seventh century. Hovhan Mayragomets'i (Mayrivanets'i) was a prominent theologian and church figure there. Kirakos Gandzakets'i writes that Hovhan Mayragomets'i went towards Getabak and chose a suitable place to live.<sup>341</sup> Asolik reported that he went to Gardman.<sup>342</sup> Vardan Arevelts'i mentioned that Hovhan Mayragomets'i's tomb was in K'art'manik in Gardman Province.<sup>343</sup>

In 1659, the scribe Hovhannes completed a *haysmazurk'* at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Getabak Village at the request of Alek'san and his son Mik'ayel (Mat. MS 4559).

There was also an active scriptorium in Lelan Village. Two manuscripts copied there survive. Interestingly, in the fifteenth century, the village is mentioned as part of Gandzak, whereas in the seventeenth century, it is situated in Shamk'or.

During the reign of King George VIII of the United Georgia and Jahanshah, the monk Step'anos, son of Łaraman and Ulus, copied a gospel at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Lelan for Father Sahak, son of Abraham (Mat. MS 3992). The scribe painted the portraits of the Evangelists, canon tables, semi-canon tables, numerous marginalia, and ornamental letters. After receiving the manuscript, P'ilippos Kech'arats'i, son of Sahak, ordered an ornamental cover for it. The date of the manuscript has not been preserved, however, considering that

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336 KALANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Ałuank'*, p. 388.

337 HAKOBIAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 2, p. 611.

338 *Idem*, v. 3, p. 450.

339 QOSIAN, *Catalogue*, pp. 40-42; HAKOBIAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 3, p. 740.

340 *Ibid.*

341 GANDZAKETS'I, *History*, p. 55.

342 ASOLIK, *Universal History*, v. 2, p. 694.

343 AREVELTS'I, *Ashkharhats'uyts'*, p. 12.

it was written during the reign of George VIII of Georgia (1446–1466) and Jahanshah (1437–1467), Leon Khach'ikian suggests it was copied in 1466 at the latest.<sup>344</sup>

In 1650, the scribe Yesayi copied a collection of teachings and parables at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Shamk'or.<sup>345</sup>

In 1671, the elder priest Hovhannes *mahtesi* copied a gospel in memory of his parents at Surb Hovhannes Church in Berdatak. He also illustrated the manuscript with canon tables, semi-canon tables, and marginalia. Later, the gospel appeared in Kars. Here, in 1737, a pious man named Hampar, bought the manuscript and donated it to Surb Step'anos Nakhavka Church in memory of his parents and deceased brother (Mat. MS 6645).

In 1717, the scribe Sargis copied a prayer book at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Bert'atak Village, containing the prayers of Gregory of Narek, Ephrem the Syrian, Benik *vardapet*, and Sarkavag *vardapet* (Mat. MS 1574). The commissioner of the manuscript was Mkhit'ar. The elder priest Sargis copied an identical prayer book there in 1721, this time for Arak'el, from Dandzut Village in Shamk'or (Mat. MS 7008).

Four gospels are known from Surb Step'anos Church in the Nor P'ip' district of Shamk'or.<sup>346</sup> Two of them do not have colophons. The scribe of the third manuscript is At'anas, who copied it in 1486 at Surb Astvatsatsin Church at Otsop Monastery.<sup>347</sup> In 1605, in Artamet, the elder priest Karapet copied a manuscript on paper, and Father Atom illustrated it. It has simple illustrations and a rich colophon, wherein the scribe describes, in detail, the emigration, famine and rising prices following the catastrophes of the century.<sup>348</sup>

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344 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 2, p. 245.

345 VOSKIAN, Catalogue, v. 2, p. 454; HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 3, p. 409.

346 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, pp. 296–298.

347 KHACH'IKIAN, Colophons, v. 3, p. 90.

348 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 1, p. 193.

## DASNO MONASTERY

Dasno Monastery, also called the Red Monastery<sup>349</sup> due to its reddish stone, is located on the banks of the Shamk'or River, northwest of the village of Gulambar. According to tradition, the monastery was founded by religious Armenians from the Byzantine Empire in 751.<sup>350</sup> The first and only mention of the monastery's scriptorium survives in a colophon from 1184 within Mkhitar Gosh's *The Code of Laws*. In it, Gosh lists the reasons for writing this book, and describes its importance and significance.

Because of his strained relationship with Catholicos Step'anos of Ałuank', Mkhitar Gosh remained in Dasno Monastery. Here, at Horomashen, he wrote the preface of The Code of Laws.<sup>351</sup> This is the earliest copy of this work. Today it is kept in the library of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice (Venice, MS 993).<sup>352</sup> It is written in bolorgir script and the initial letters and the first rows of each section are written in erkat'agir. The book does not have any illustrations. It is currently in a sufficient state, although the text is partially damaged and it is not complete. The first chapter of the preface, part of the second chapter, and various other pages are cut and missing. Nevertheless, it is valuable for its date. Despite philological disputes concerning the date, Sahak Jemjemian *vardapet*, believes the book to be an autograph edition based on the type and style of the script.<sup>353</sup>

The recipients of the manuscript are Prince Vakht'ang of Hat'erk' and his wife Arzukhat'un, Prince Kurd's daughter. Throughout his life, Mkhitar Gosh had always remembered Prince Vakht'ang, as well as his brothers Grigor, Grigoris, Khoydan, Vasak, and Princess Arzukhat'un with gratitude. As a token of gratitude, Mkhitar donated this copy to the prince and princess. It is not known how long the manuscript remained with the princess of Hat'erk'. In 1387, it was purchased by Navroz's sons, Payazit' and Khzrahr. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the book belonged to Atom, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—to Simeon.

Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the sources remain silent about the monastery. Gradually the monastery lost its independence and in 1804 it passed under the control of Surb Amenap'rkich' Monastery in Nyukzar Village.<sup>354</sup> In the 1840s, it was completely abandoned and deserted. Today, only the ruins of the monastery remain.

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349 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 295–296; VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 137–138; KARAPETYAN, *Northern Arts'akh*, p. 486.

350 JALALIAN, *Journey*, v. 1, p. 162.

351 See also HOVSEPIAN, *Colophons*, p. 505; MATEVOSYAN, *Colophons, 5th–12th Centuries*, p. 243.

352 JEMJEMIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 6, p. 326.

353 *Ibid.*

354 KARAPETYAN, *Northern Arts'akh*, p. 467.



T'argmanch'ats' Monastery  
in the 19th century  
(photo from the archive of  
the Mekhitarist  
Congregation in Venice)

## T'ARGMANCH'ATS' (TRANSLATORS') MONASTERY

T'argmanch'ats' Monastery, or the Monastery of the Holy Translators, is one of the oldest spiritual and cultural centers within Gardman Province. It is located in front of Khach'akap Village, between two small gorges on the southern slope. According to tradition, the monastery was founded by Mesrop Mashtots' in the fifth century, when he conducted educational activities in Utik'.<sup>355</sup>

In three places—on the wall of the southern depository of the church, and on the southern and northern walls of the narthex—the year 989 is recorded. This is likely the year of restoration.<sup>356</sup>

The narthex was built in 1800, in the time of Bishop Samuel Dadian, and was the burial place of subsequent monastery leaders. In 1856, under the sponsorship of Polos

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355 ALISHAN, Political Geography.

356 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 252.

Amirkhaniants', the bell tower was built. The monastery complex also included cells for monks and pilgrims, auxiliary buildings, and the enceinte.

In 1884, T'eodoros *Vardapet* Shirakuni<sup>357</sup> became the spiritual leader of the monastery, and following the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1898, he was allowed to remain in office until the end of his life. Shirakuni reconstructed the monastery and left an inscription about it on the entrance wall of the church.<sup>358</sup> He also founded a seminary here in 1872, which operated until 1885, when the tsarist government closed Armenian schools.<sup>359</sup> T'eodoros Shirakuni taught Armenian language – both *ashkharhabar* (vernacular) and *grabar* (Classical Armenian) – Russian language, arithmetic, and divine service.

In 1877, with the efforts of T'eodoros Shirakuni, the depository<sup>360</sup> of the monastery was reopened. One thousand manuscripts were kept there.<sup>361</sup>

For about a century, until 1900, the famous T'argmanch'ats Gospel (Mat. MS 2743, copied in 1232 and later illustrated in Arts'akh), was kept in T'argmanch'ats Monastery, from where it received its name.

Sargis Jalaliants' testifies that he saw a manuscript at T'argmanch'ats' Monastery which contained works by T'ovma Metsopets'i, Socrates, Michael Asori (Michael the Syrian), the monk Malak'ia, and Dionysius the Areopagite.<sup>362</sup> In 1583, Bishop Hovhannes compiled a treasury book at T'argmanch'ats' Monastery.<sup>363</sup> A gospel, copied by Grigor Byurakants'i in 1652 at the request of Sarkhosh Vardenists'i, was also kept in the monastery, however its current location is unknown.<sup>364</sup> T'eodoros *Vardapet* also wrote his works and made translations from T'argmanch'ats', where relics were also kept. These include an episcopal mitre from 1640, and the relic of Saint Step'anos Nakhavka, which the priest Ignatios donated to the monastery in 1558.<sup>365</sup>

Due to the indifferent and careless attitude of the monks towards the manuscript depository, the number of manuscripts gradually diminished. The deplorable condition of the depository in mind, the manuscripts were sent to Holy Etchmiadzin following a decision made at Synod of Etchmiadzin, on January 12, 1911. Part of the monastery's collection of printed books were given to the Armenian school in Banants' Village, and the rest to the parish schools at Surb Hovhannes and Surb Lusavorich' Churches in Gandzak.

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357 ARARAT, 1884, pp. 420–421.

358 KARAPETYAN, Northern Arts'akh, p. 222.

359 Idem, pp. 230–231.

360 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 136.

361 JALALIANIS', Journey, v. 1, pp. 168–169.

362 Ibid.

363 VOSKIAN, The Monasteries of Arts'akh, p. 136.

364 EGANIAN, The Manuscripts of T'argmanch'ats Monastery, p. 19.

365 LALAYAN, The Gandzak Province, v. 1, p. 133.



Ch'arek' Monastery  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetyan 1980's)

## CH'AREK' ANAPAT MONASTERY

Ch'arek' Monastery is located in the Gardman District of Utik' Province in Greater Armenia, on the left bank of the Shamk'or River, in a picturesque forested area southwest of the confluence of the Getabek tributary and the Shamk'or River. Although Ch'arek' Monastery has existed under this name since the medieval period, a nearby fortress bears the same name, and was mentioned earlier, from the twelfth-thirteenth centuries by Vardan Arevelts'i, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, and Step'anos Orbelian in their respective *Histories*. The monastery was thus called Ch'arek' after the fortress.<sup>366</sup>

The exact date of the fortress' foundation is unknown. Vardan Arevelts'i reports that Ch'arek' Fortress was raided by the Seljuk Turks and liberated in 1206 by the Zak'arian brothers.<sup>367</sup> In 1214, after the death of Prince Vakht'ang of

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366 BARKHUDARIANTS', *History of Aġuank'*, v. 1, p. 193.

367 ANT'APIAN, *Vardan Arevelts'i*, p. 138.

Hat'erk', part of his territory was relegated to Ivane Zak'arian. This included Ch'arek' and its surroundings.<sup>368</sup>

After the Mongol invasions, Ch'arek' lost its strategic importance and sources remained silent about it until the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Although Arak'el Davrizhets'i believes that the monastery was founded in the seventeenth century, it was most likely built on the site of an earlier building. Kirakos Gandzakets'i writes that the Patriarchal See of Ahuank' was established in a cave near the Ch'arek' Fortress. Gandzakets'i also writes that after much suffering and hardship at the hands of the Seljuk Turks, the catholicos of Ahuank' wandered from place to place until he came to a cave within a fortress called Ch'arek'.<sup>369</sup>

The monastic complex of Ch'arek' was surrounded by a strong wall and included Surb Astvatsatsin Church, with its adjacent *gavit'*, a bell tower, and more than thirty monk cells and auxiliary buildings. The monastic complex became complete with Harants' Monastery, which is situated beyond the monastery's walls. It was the graveyard of the spiritual leaders of the monastery.

According to Arak'el Davrizhets'i, the monastery was founded by Bishop Davit'. He was educated at Great Syunats' (Harants' Anapat). Davit' was called Shamk'orets'i after his birthplace, and Laramanents' after the noble family of which he was a descendent.<sup>370</sup> When Harants' Anapat rose to prominence as an educational center, Arak'el Davrizhets'i reports that people from all walks of life flocked to be taught here—unknown and celebrated figures, clergymen, *vardapets*, and bishops. After receiving their education from Bishop Sargis Salmosavanets'i, priest Kirakos Trapizonts'i and Movses Tat'evats'i *vardapet* established convents and monasteries in various places and carried out spiritual, cultural and educational activities.

For instance, Nerses Mokats'i *vardapet* went to Lim and founded a monastery there, Bishop T'ovmas Tat'evats'i founded a monastery in Shamakh (an island on the lake Van) Province, Bishop Karapet Etchmiatsnets'i founded one on Sevan Island, Father Aristakes from Barkashat province built one in Tandzap'arakh, Aristakes Shambets'i *vardapet* stayed at Harants' Monastery, and after the death of Bishop Sargis, Bishop Davit' Shamk'orets'i founded Ch'arek' Monastery.<sup>371</sup>

Bishop Davit' has been mentioned in the colophons of two later manuscripts prepared in Getat'al and Shinuhayr Villages. These manuscripts made their way to Ch'arek' Monastery at the hand of monks from Harants' Monastery. The first colophon is bound within a copy

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368 Idem, p. 140.

369 GANDZAKETS'I, History, p. 178.

370 DAVRIZHETS'I, chap. 21.

371 Arch. ORMANIAN, Azgapatum [Narratives of the Nation], vol. 2, p. 1620.

of Nerses Lambronats'i's Commentary on the Eucharist,<sup>372</sup> copied in 1619 at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Getat'al Village in Vorotan. It was copied by the scribe Łukas at the request of the Bishop Sargis and the priest Łazar. In the recipient's colophon, Bishop Davit' asks the reader to remember him and other monks of the monastery—the priests Khach'atur, Barseł, Anton, and Sargis.<sup>373</sup> The second manuscript, a miscellany, was copied in 1635 by a scribe named Hovhannes at Surb Step'anos Church in Shinahayr Village in Vorotan. Aristakes *vardapet* and the priests Hakob and Barseł sold the manuscript to Ch'arek' Monastery (Mat. MS 2608).<sup>374</sup>

The hagiography documenting the life and death of Andreas Agulets'i is attributed to Bishop Davit'. He wrote it shortly after Andreas was martyred in 1617, between 1617 and 1620.<sup>375</sup> Andreas' hagiography survives thanks to a copy made by the scribe Matt'eos in 1641 (Mat. MS 784, ff. 383r–384v), when Davit' Shamk'orets'i was still alive. Arak'el Davrizhets'i used it as a source for his *History*, and titled it “On the Martyrdom of the Priest Andreas”.<sup>376</sup> Versions of this vita that appear in synaxaria originate from Davrizhets'i's *History* (Mat. MS 1501, ff. 165r–167r; MS 1534, ff. 173v–175r). Bishop Davit' Łaramanents' is buried in the monastery. According to the inscription on the tomb, he died in 1643.<sup>377</sup>

After Bishop Davit's death, Sargis *vardapet* became the spiritual leader of the monastery and remained in office until 1671. We learn a lot about Sargis *vardapet*, as well as the monastery and the activities of the congregation, from the colophon of a *mashtots'*, copied at the request of the congregation. In 1665, the priest Grigor, a famous scribe and miniaturist in K'arahat, copied the manuscript and illuminated it with twenty-five elegant images, semi-canon tables and ornaments (Mat. MS 986).

According to the colophon, from an early age, Sargis devoted himself to the monastery. Upon ascending to the rank of *vardapet*, he became the spiritual leader of the congregation and dedicated himself to the development and improvement of the monastery. He began by renovating the monastic cells and building a beautiful bell tower dedicated to the Archangels Michael and Gabriel.<sup>378</sup> Sargis *vardapet* enriched the monastery's library with manuscripts and embellished the aforementioned *mashtots'* with gold and in bright colors, dedicating it to the memory of his parents, Hovhannes and Elisabet', and his late brother, Hakob. Two years later, in 1667, he erected a *khach'k'ar* in Harants' Chapel in memory of his late parents and the monks there.<sup>379</sup>

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372 HAKOBYAN, Colophons, vol. 1, p. 685.

373 Idem, vol. 2, p. 704.

374 Idem, pp. 702–703.

375 SUK'IASSIAN, Andreas Agulets'i's Martyrdom and Its Author, № 1, pp. 199–202.

376 DAVRIZHETS'I, History, ch. 27.

377 CIArm, chap. 5, p. 268.

378 Idem, p. 268.

379 Ibid.

Sargis *vardapet* assembled seventy monks, and as the priest Grigor writes, they were “united and like-minded.” These monks were mentioned in a colophon as: Nerses *vardapet*, who became the spiritual leader of the monastery after Sahak *vardapet* and built the *gavit* in 1684, Father Nahapet, Sahak the Confessor, Father Khach'atur, Father Hovhannes, Father Yelie, Father Lazar, the supervisor of Gaspar Monastery, two Hovhanneses and two Martiroses, Gaspar and Simeon, Minas, who always brought fish for them, Kostand, Grigor, etc. The scribe recorded the names of all seventy monks. They were also mentioned in the monastery's donor inscriptions.<sup>380</sup>

The scribe Grigor also remembered his parents, Hovhannes and Margarit, his wife, brothers, and sons Palasan, Lazar, and Hakob. The latter, along with Grigor's pupils—the priests Aristakes, Sargis, Yesayi, Melik'set', and Nerses—were also mentioned in the colophon of a *haysmazurk'* copied by Lazar in 1691.

The monastery's third wave of production occurred under the leadership of Mkrtych' *vardapet* (1710s–1746), who fortified the monastery. The monastery was subjected to destructive invasions by the Lezgins, who looted manuscripts and depleted the monastery's treasury. In 1730, with the permission of and a decree by Catholicos Karapet and Grigor, Patriarch of Jerusalem, Mkrtych' *vardapet* restored the monastery. Despite his efforts, almost nothing from the collection of the depository of manuscripts was preserved.<sup>381</sup>

Today the following is known about the manuscript heritage of Ch'arek' Monastery: in 1579, the scribe Arak'el copied a gospel,<sup>382</sup> and in 1637 the monastery received a manuscript from Mets' Anapat (Great Monastery).<sup>383</sup> Bishop Davit's student Sargis restored a gospel in 1641, which was later preserved in Agulets'uots' Surb Astvatsatsin Church of Shushi.<sup>384</sup> In 1655, the priest Avetis, son of Arak'el and Nazlukhan, finished a hymnal, the copying of which began in Papachan Village in Upper Zakam.<sup>385</sup> Mkhit'ar restored a manuscript. The spiritual leader of the monastery, Nerses *vardapet*, completed the “Letter of Blessing”<sup>386</sup> in 1699 and *Gavazanagirk'* (*List of Vardapets*) in 1704.<sup>387</sup>

As it was isolated from settlements, Ch'arek'avank' became a place of exile for disobedient clergy in the nineteenth century, who were sent here to repent for long periods of time.<sup>388</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth century, the monastery was deserted.<sup>389</sup>

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380 Ibid.

381 ARDZAGANK', № 23, p. 330.

382 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 175.

383 AKINIAN, *Catholicos Moses III Tat'evats'i and His Times*, p. 161.

384 HAKOBYAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 3, p. 47.

385 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 388.

386 CONYBEARE, *Catalogue*, p. 265.

387 T'OP'CH'EAN, *Catalogue*, part 2, p. 52.

388 KARAPETYAN, *Northern Arts'akh*, p. 117.

389 LEHMANN-HAUPT, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, p. 133.



Lower K'arahat Village  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetian, 1985)

## THE SCRIPTORIUM OF K'ARAHAT

K'arahat Village is located on the left bank of the river Art'inajur in the Gardman district of historic Utik' Province. Archeological studies reveal that the village was established in the early medieval period, however, it only appears in written sources from the second half of the seventeenth century onward. According to the information sources manuscript colophons, the scriptorium at K'arahat had been operating for almost four decades by the time the manuscripts were copied. The first extant manuscript dates to 1655 and the last, 1691. The first twenty years were especially fruitful due to the work of the priest Grigor, son of Hovhannes and Margarit, who headed the scriptorium. In a short time, the prestige of the scriptorium grew so much that Grigor and his students were ordered to produce manuscripts by the secular elites of Arts'akh and Utik'.

K'arahat had a scriptorium, library, and depository. Three artists rose to prominence here, and represent the directions of its school of miniature painting. The most renowned among them was the priest Grigor who self-identified a

painter and bookbinder in his colophons. His sons, Barseł and Łazar, were also well-known. Although they lived in K'arahat, they often visited different settlements in Arts'akh and Utik', where they also worked. Grigor was not only a painter and bookbinder, but also a skilled scribe and teacher of the art of writing. He taught his art to Barseł and Łazar (two of his five sons)—his first students, who were quite talented.<sup>390</sup>

The disciples of the scriptorium of K'arahat were especially skilled in the art of miniature painting. They were good calligraphers and used a rich palette of colors, painting exclusively in bright and vivid hues. They also used gold leaf in their works. In the colophon of a *mashtots'* copied for Sargis *vardapet*, Grigor names his students: his sons, Barseł and Łazar, the priests Aristakes, Yesayi, Sargis, Melik'set', and Nerses (Mat. MS 986, f. 551r).

The manuscripts that came out of Grigor's school were mostly ritual books, and their colophons serve as key sources of the history of the scriptorium of K'arahat. From these colophons, we gain significant and accurate information about the scribes, painters, and the secular and religious elites who patronized manuscripts. Additionally, we learn the circumstances under which the manuscripts were produced. The colophons of manuscripts produced in Grigor's school are similar to each other, distinguished by the style and lexicon in which they are written.

Grigor's name first appears in a gospel copied and illustrated by Avetis in 1655. Final mention of him dates to a 1676 manuscript completed by his elder son, Barseł, who took over his father's school upon his death. Barseł recounts how he and the other students suffered from the loss of their teacher.

Many manuscripts produced by Grigor, Barseł, and Łazar survive, all of which are illustrated masterfully, in a unique style, testifying to the high level of development of the school's miniature painting.

In 1655, the scribe Avetis copied a gospel in bolorgir script in Gandzasar at the request of Łukas, the head teacher there, and his pupil, Catholicos Petros Khandzkets'i of Aħuank'. The scribe wrote on well-crafted parchment, with beautiful and symmetrical letters. Although there were plans to illustrate the gospel, its scribe died, leaving it unfinished. Later, Catholicos Petros ordered the priest Grigor illustrate it. Grigor painted two thematic images (Joseph and an angel on f. 6r, and the Lord and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove on f. 276r), the portraits of the Evangelists, semi-canon tables, marginalia, and ornamental letters. Grigor bound the manuscript with silver covers (Mat. MS 3196).

In the main colophon, the scribe recorded the names of Kirakos *vardapet* from the Monastery of Yefishe the Apostle, Archbishop Astvatsatur, Hovhannes, and the Bishops Yelia and Minas from Gandzasar.

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<sup>390</sup> On the manuscripts illuminated by Grigor, Barseł, and Łazar see GEORGIAN, *Armenian Illuminators*, pp. 138–139, 93–95, 350–351.

Title Page of the Gospel of  
John, scribe: Grigor, 1657  
(Mat. MS 6873, f. 237r)



Two years later, Grigor copied and illuminated a missal for Catholicos Petros (Jerusalem, MS 2273).<sup>391</sup> The scribe beautifully decorated the initial letters and first rows, painted many marginalia.

In the same year, Mirza ordered Grigor to produce a gospel in the memory of his parents. Grigor painted the portraits of the Evangelists, canon tables, and marginalia, using gold leaf. He left part of the marginalia and initial letters unfinished for a young painter to complete (Mat. MS 6873). Grigor's fourth manuscript is a gospel, copied at the request

<sup>391</sup> BOĽARIAN, Catalogue, v. 7, pp. 366-367.

Silver cover of a gospel,  
bookbinder: Barsel,  
K'arahat, 1676  
(Mat. MS 5636)



of the monk Yelia from Qaramurat Monastery. This manuscript later became the property of Arsen and Arman P'ushmans from New York.<sup>392</sup>

Grigor copied this magnificent manuscript in 1659 at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in K'arahat. He painted the canon tables, portraits and title pages of the Evangelists, marginalia and ornaments in various colors and gold, and then bound the manuscript in leather. Yelia donated the manuscript to his spiritual father, Terun *vardapet*. The gospel became the property of Qaramurat Monastery. On behalf of the recipient,

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<sup>392</sup> HAKOBYAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 3, pp. 851-852.

the scribe asked his reader to remember Terun *vardapet*, Bishop Grigor, the monk Karapet (among other monks), the scribe and Father Davit', who helped the scribe, and the commissioner Yefia. At the end of the colophon, the scribe also asks the reader to excuse him because the quality of the parchment was poor, he struggled to finish the illustrations, and he forced himself to work during an illness. Years later, the hermits Yefia and Mkhit'ar decided to add to the magnificence of the gospel by embellishing it with a silver cover with an image of the crucifixion.

In 1662, Grigor copied and illuminated a second manuscript on parchment for Catholicos Petros—a feastal calendar (Mat. MS 10743). A year later, at the request of Sandukht, Grigor produced a hymnal, decorating it again with various colors and in gold leaf (Mat. MS 10044).

In 1665, Grigor copied and illuminated a horologion (Mat. MS 9448). In the same year, he copied, decorated, and bound a *mashtots'* for the head teacher from Ch'arek' Monastery, Sargis, illuminating it with thematic images, semi-canon tables, and ornaments. (Mat. MS 986).

The elder priest Grigor illuminated and bound a gospel copied by the scribe Hovhannes in 1666 at Holy Savior Monastery in Malaznaberd. Grigor decorated the gospel at the request of Hakob at Surb Malaznabert' Church in Harts'hankist Village (Mat. MS 11060). Two years later, in 1668, Grigor illuminated another gospel that was copied for Khoja Hovhannes P'arsadan in Harts'hankist (Mat. MS 10966).

The priest Grigor illuminated the gospel copied by the elder priest Sargis in 1667 in Gullar Village in Gandzak and donated it to Surb Hovhannes Church (Mat. MS 6771). Years later, in 1741, an ornamental silver cover was added to the manuscript's binding.

In 1675, Grigor copied and illuminated a gospel for Ignatios *vardapet* from Gandzasar (Mat. MS 8965). In 1676, Grigor managed to paint the canon tables and portraits of the evangelists of a gospel copied by Barseł for the priest Movses (Mat. MS 5636). Unfortunately, Grigor passed away and left the illustrations unfinished. Barseł completed the manuscript's illustration with scenes from the Christological cycle and added a silver cover to its binding. Later, the recipients of the manuscript—Movses and his brothers—donated it to Surb Hovhannes Church in Gandzak in memory of their parents.

In 1683, the priest Hovhannes copied a gospel in Harts'hankist Village in Gandzak for the priest Nazar (Mat. MS 3994). This scribe died of an illness without finishing the manuscript's illustration. In Gandzak, where Barseł had already gained a reputation, Melik Hakhnazar asked him to finish it. Barseł worked with his brother, Lazar, on the manuscript, and Ovanes, an elder priest, bound the manuscript.

In 1684, Barseł richly illuminated and bound a gospel copied on parchment by the priest Ep'rem in 1671 in Olverdz at the request of Petros *Vardapet* (Mat. MS 7232). The illustration of this manuscript was initiated by Grigor, however, did not finish it. Barseł continued his

father's work upon his death. He painted twenty-four images depicting the life of Christ, portraits of the Evangelists with their title pages, canon tables, and semi-canon tables. In 1684, in Olverdz, Barseł illuminated and bound a copy of Grigor Tat'evats'i's *Book of Sermons* copied by Varvare for Petros, the head teacher.

In 1682, Vlas *vardapet* ordered Barseł to produce a copy of Shamakh Nerses Lambronats'i's *Commentary on the Psalms* (Mat. MS 2613). Barseł managed to copy only part of the manuscript, paint the canon tables, semi-canon tables, ornamental letters, and marginalia. Later, two scribes—the priest T'uma and Baldasar—completed the work.

At the newly built Surb Astvatsatsin Church in K'arahat, Łazar copied a *haysmazurk'* at the request of Lalarbek (completed in 1691).<sup>393</sup> In order to fulfill his order, Vlas *vardapet* brought another *haysmazurk'* from Ararat province, copied in Ayrivank' in 1444. Barseł helped his brother with the copying of text and illustrating. In the colophon, Łazar remembers his parents and brothers. This is the only manuscript in which the names of all members of the priest Grigor's family are recorded. From the colophon, we learn that the priest Grigor was married to Nazum, and they had five sons—Barseł, Hakob, Sahak, Łazar, and Yevar—however Nazum died during the copying of this *haysmazurk'*.

In 1691, the elder priest Hovhannes passed away. He started to copy a gospel, and managed to finish the gospels of Matthew and Mark before he died. Łazar continued his work and copied the gospels of Luke and John, as well as painted the portraits of the Evangelists, the canon tables, semi-canon tables, and beautiful ornamentation: he used gold leaf and various colors to decorate the book, and bound the manuscript himself (Mat. MS 10660). After this, the scriptorium of K'arahat stopped functioning.

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393 JEMJEMIAN, Catalogue, v. 5, pp. 241-247.



Avag Surb Nshan Church  
in Getashen  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetian, 1989)

## MANUSCRIPTS OF AVAG SURB NSHAN CHURCH IN GETASHEN

Getashen Village is mentioned as being looted by the Georgian army in a fragment of a treasury, written in 1626.<sup>394</sup> The village was known as Avag Surb Nshan, or Nahatak (Martyr) Chapel, built in 1677 under the leadership of Kamal Bek. Precious relics were kept there, including: a piece of the True cross encased by a small silver cross, the arm of the Apostle Yelische within a gilded silver reliquary (brought from Kaffa (Crimea) by Bishop Ignatios), and a relic of an unknown saint, enclosed in an ornate cross.<sup>395</sup> Manuscripts were also stored within this chapel.

One of the manuscripts is a gospel with silver, gilded headbands copied on fine parchment. Today, this manuscript is housed at the Republican Manuscript Fund (Academy of Sciences) of Baku (MS 8315).<sup>396</sup> Barkhudariants' describes

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394 HAKOBIAN, *Colophons, 17th Century*, v. 2, p. 206.

395 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 264.

396 EGANIAN, *The Armenian Manuscripts of Avag Surb Nshan Chapel in Getashen*, p. 78.

this manuscript as beautifully decorated, copied on fine parchment, fit with masterfull illustrations, painted with a delicate combination of precious dyes and gold. The gospel was copied and illuminated by the scribe Nikolayos in Kaffa in 1667. He painted portraits of the Evangelists and images depicting the miracles of Christ. Years later, the manuscript reached Nakhijevan and was kept at the local All Savior Church. Under unknown circumstances, the manuscript was captured by foreigners. In 1753, Melik Adam bought the manuscript, decorated it with silver and gold binding, and donated it to the Monastery of the Apostle Yelische. It is not known how it reached Baku.<sup>397</sup>

Until the 20s of the twentieth century, a gospel, known as Halbat Gospel (Mat. MS 6288), copied by the scribe Hakob in 1211 in Halbat and illuminated by Margare at Bekhents Monastery in Ani, was kept in Avag Surb Nshan Chapel. This glorious parchment manuscript, written in erkat'agir script which Garegin Hovsep'ian took to Holy Etchmiadzin, was called Getashen Gospel after the village.

The third illuminated gospel was written on paper in bolorgir script (Mat. MS 6303). As the main colophon does not survive, the names of the scribe and painter, as well as when and where the manuscript was produced, remain unknown. Despite this lack of information, the illustrations were most likely done by the scribe—he painted the portraits of the four Evangelists, a Christological cycle, canon tables, semi-canon tables, and marginalia.<sup>398</sup> Later colophons provide information on the restoration and subsequent ownership of the gospel.<sup>399</sup>

Two other gospels were kept here: one of them was copied and illuminated by the philosopher T'oros and Yohan in 1295 (Mat. MS 6290), the second one was produced by the elder priest Sargis in the village of Dastip'yur in 1671–1673 (Mat. MS 6746).

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397 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 259–261.

398 HAKOBYAN, *Miniature Painting of Arts'akh–Utik' (13th–14th c.)*, p. 80.

399 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 261–262.



St. Gregory the Illuminator  
Church in Mets' Banants'  
(photo credit: Samvel  
Karapetian, 1986)

## THE MANUSCRIPTS OF METS' BANANTS'

Excavations of graveyards near the village of Mets' Banants' in Gardman district show that the site was inhabited since ancient times.<sup>400</sup>

Information about the manuscript culture and history of this settlement are preserved in a colophon of a gospel copied in 1652 in Melik'zata Village in Upper Zakam.<sup>401</sup> This manuscript later became the property of the Melik Ovanes' family, and sheds light on the violence that took place in Mets' Banants' from 1796 to 1797, as well as the epidemic of

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<sup>400</sup> In 1889, German archaeologist Emil Roesler conducted the first archeological excavations here. The results of the excavations showed that the tombs belong to the period from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. See KARAPETYAN, Northern Arts'akh, p. 139.

<sup>401</sup> HAKOBYAN, Colophons, 17th Century, v. 3, p. 476.

1811.<sup>402</sup> This colophon was written by Ałajan and Sargis, grandsons of Melik Ovanes' grandson, Melik Matt'eos.

According to the colophon, in 1796, the Georgian king Heraclius, Sultan Shamshadin, and Ibrahim Khan of Shushi invaded Gandzak. Unable to resist the forces, Javad Khan of Gandzak fled. Sultan Shamshadin attacked the village of Banants' and captured and killed its inhabitants. The Georgian army, together with the Lezgins, set the village ablaze. This event was followed by famine, inflation, and an epidemic. Those who survived left the village and settled in nearby settlements. However, despite these difficult conditions, Ałajan and Sargis saved their great-grandfather's gospel and had it restored in 1814. The colophon ends with the capture of Gandzak by the Russians.<sup>403</sup>

Later, the gospel was safeguarded in St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Mets' Banants' along with twelve other manuscripts.<sup>404</sup> Today, the faith of the manuscript is unknown.

One of the most valuable examples of Armenian manuscript culture is a seventh-century gospel known as the Vehamor Gospel. It was kept at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church (Mat. MS 10680). This is the oldest surviving complete Armenian manuscript. Unfortunately, the manuscript's first colophon, which could provide information on its creation, does not survive. From the later colophons we learn that the gospel was preserved at Havuts' T'ar Monastery in the twelfth century. In the fifteenth century it was kept at Mak'enyats' Monastery, and from the sixteenth century, the village of Mets' Banants'. It was in Mets' Banants', in 1625, that the elder priest Hovhannes Shatakhet's'i restored the manuscript with funds donated by the village's inhabitants. Before this, it was twice restored—in both 1453 and 1511. The Vehamor Gospel is not illuminated, however, its binding is

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402 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 282–284.

403 Here, the scribe's provided information is not accurate: Gandzak joined Russia in 1804, becoming the capital of the state and was later renamed Elizavetpol after Queen Elizabeth.

404 EGANIAN, *Works*, p. 76.

adorned with precious stones and nails. Barkhudariants' called the manuscript "old" on the basis of its early date of production.<sup>405</sup> The people of Banants' called it the "Guardian" or "Banants'" Gospel. Later, the manuscript was taken to Surb Grigor Church in Gandzak, from where the Primate of the Armenian Diocese, Bishop Vahan Terian, brought it to Holy Etchmiadzin and donated it to Catholicos Vazgen I, Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians. His Holiness Vazgen I highly valued the gospel and donated it to the Matenadaran in 1975 in memory of his mother, Siranush Baljian. For this reason, the manuscript is known as the "Vehamor Gospel" (Gospel of the Patriarch's Mother).<sup>406</sup>

The following manuscripts were part of the collection held at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church in Banants': a gospel copied in 1461 in Utik' and illuminated at Malazker Monastery by Grigor Tsarets'i at the request of the priest Nerses (Mat. MS 6367), a beautifully illustrated seventeenth-century gospel ordered by a certain Babajan (Mat. MS 6432), a gospel copied in 1585 at Mets' Anapat in Tat'ev by Bishop Hovhannes (Mat. MS 6339), a seventeenth-century gospel bound by Father Mkhit'ar in 1762 (Mat. MS 6427), a gospel copied by the monk Grigor in 1455 in Halbat at the request of Amirbek and Elkhat'un (Mat. MS 6683), a gospel copied on paper in 1524 at Mak'enyats' Monastery by the monk Alegsanos (Mat. MS 8196), a gospel that the scribe Mkhit'ar produced in Upper Zakam in 1671 for Eva and Voskan (Mat. MS 6759), a gospel copied on parchment by Hovsep' in 1451 at the request of the elder priest Hovhan (Mat. MS 6667), a gospel produced by the monk Avetis K'amalets'i in 1679 at Harants' Monastery (Mat. MS 6705), and a gospel copied by Avetik' Julayets'i in 1670, illuminated and bound by Ałamal at Surb Astvatsatsin Church in Tbilisi, who moved there from Julfa (Mat. MS 6560).

Of the thirteen manuscripts once in Banants', twelve are housed in the Matenadaran in Yerevan, and the location of one is unknown.

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405 BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, p. 279.

406 MATEVOSYAN, *Two Manuscripts of the Catholicos*, pp. 32–34.

## KALANKATUYK' AND MOVSES KALANKATVATS'I

Kalankatuyk' was one of the settlements in the district of Arandznak, located on the left bank of the Trtu River near Dyut'akan Village. It was one of the most important stations on the Dvin–Partav caravan road in the medieval period. Movses Kalankatvats'i mentioned the village in his *History of the Land of Aġuank'*.<sup>407</sup>

Movses Kalankatvats'i's *History* provides little information about his life and activities. He writes that he was born in the village of Kalankatuyk', hence his nickname.

Movses Kalankatvats'i is a seventh-century historian, a contemporary of Prince Jivanshir.<sup>408</sup> He is thought to be a relative of Catholicos Viro of Aġuank', and served as his ambassador. Thus, he was present with the Catholicos' meeting with Shat', commander of the Khazar army.<sup>409</sup>

Kalankatvats'i's *History of the Land of Aġuank'* has come down to us as a copy. The earliest copy of this work dates to 1289. At the behest of Bishop Hamazasp, the scribe T'ot'ik copied it at Hovhannavank' and inserted it into a collection of works (Mat. MS 1531, ff. 231r–377r).

As the narration of events in Kalankatvats'i's *History* goes back to the mid-tenth century, scholars disagree about the author's identity and the time in which he lived. He was considered to be a tenth-century historian, identified as Movses Dashkhurants'i, who lived during that time and was from the village of Daskhuran in the district of Uti Arandznak.<sup>410</sup> It is also assumed that Movses Dashkhurants'i was the spiritual leader of P'arisis Monastery, called Father Movses, who later became Catholicos Movses of Aġuank' (982–988).<sup>411</sup>

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407 KALANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Aġuank'*, p. 184.

408 Idem, p. 236.

409 ABELYAN, *Yerker*, v. 3, p. 506.

410 The village is mentioned as Movses Daskhurants'i's birthplace. See HAKOBYAN, MELIK-BAKHSHYAN, BARSEGHYAN, *Dictionary of Toponymy*, v. 2, p. 3; BARKHUDARIANTS', *Arts'akh*, pp. 419–420.

411 AKINEAN, *Movses Daskhurants'i*, p. 49; YEGHIAZARIAN, *Gregory of*

*History of the Land of Aĥank'* was composed by different authors. The history consists of three books. The author of the first two books is the seventh-century historian Movses Kaĥankatvats'i. He wrote about the events taking place from the time of Adam to the mid-seventh century. The *Histories* written by Agat'angelos, P'avstos Buzand, Yelische, Movses Khorenats'i, the epistles of Catholicoi Viro and Gyut, and T'ovma Aĥvanets'i *vardapet*, and the canons of King Vach'agan served as sources for his books. Movses Kaĥankatvats'i provides information about the early history of the eastern parts of Armenia, the conversion to Christianity, the activities of Mesrop Mashtots' and his disciples, as well as the establishment of Armenian schools. Information about the writing, literature, and culture of this early period is very important.<sup>412</sup>

Contemporary documentation of Armenia's Eastern parts early period is nonexistent. Little information survives concerning the literary heritage and scriptoria of this time. From this perspective, Kaĥankatvats'i's *History* is extremely important.

The historian provides little information about contemporary literature. However, through his *History*, episodes related to the fifth-century theological literature have come down to us: the letters of Catholicos Gyut of Aĥank' addressed to King Vache II, the epistle of T'ovma Aĥvanets'i *vardapet* written in the Monastery of Panda in Jerusalem on the spread of Chalcedonian Creed in Aĥank' in the sixth century, and the response of Catholicos Abas to this letter, as well as the canons of Vachagan III. Kaĥankatvats'i also writes about select extant fragments of fiction created here. The prayer "My Lord, Lord..." was written in a poetic spirit: Prince Jivanshir recited it during the liturgy in the church he built in the Gardman canyon, where he kept the relic of the true cross, donated by Emperor Constantine.<sup>413</sup>

Jivanshir, son of Varaz Grigor, was the prince of Arts'akh and Utik' and ascended to the throne in 637, replacing his

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Narek, p. 268.

412 KAĤANKATVATS'I, *History of the Land of Aĥank'*, p. 3.

413 *Idem*, p. 244.

father. The Byzantine emperor Constantine called him “Lord of Gardman and Prince of Aĥuank’”, and the Persian king Yazdegerd called him “*Sparapet* (military leader) of Aĥuank’”.<sup>414</sup> Jivanshir was a skilled military expert and a keen politician. The Persian general of Atropatene suggested he marry his sister, but Jivanshir refused and married Khosrovanush, daughter of the Sisakan prince of the Aruichan family. Jivanshir’s sister was Heline, the wife of the ruler of Armenia, Prince Grigor Mamikonian (661–685).

Thanks to Kaĥankatvats’i’s *History* we have received a “gem” of secular poetry—the funeral oration on the occasion of the tragic death of Prince Jivanshir, entitled *The Elegy on the Death of the Great Prince Jivanshir*. The author is Davit’ K’ert’ol (ca. 600–670), who became the first secular poet in Armenian literature with this poem. Given the nickname K’ert’ol (meaning “poet” in Armenian), it is assumed that he was educated at the K’ert’olakan (Poetical) School of Syunik’. The poem is written in alphabetical (Armenian alphabet) acrostic verse and has thirty-six passages.<sup>415</sup>

The third book of *History* was completed by the tenth-century chronicler Movses Daskhurants’i. It starts with the history of the Arab invasions, and ends with the reign of Ashot Bagratuni (887), the rule of Hamam Arevelts’i over parts of eastern Armenia (894–895), and the Caspian expeditions of the Rus’ and their conquest of the city of Partav in 914. The book ends with a list of Catholicoi of Aĥuank’, ending with Catholicos Movses III (988). In the twelfth century, Mkhitar Gosh supplemented the list.

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414 Idem, p. 228.

415 Idem, p. 176.

## EPILOGUE

The historical provinces of Arts'akh and Utik' occupy a special place in the history of Armenian scriptoria, where Armenian writing traditions developed over centuries in harmony with the cultural life of all of Armenia. The establishment of these scriptoria dates back to the early medieval period, when, at the dawn of the invention of the Armenian alphabet, Mesrop Mashtots' spread the word of God in Arts'akh and Utik', where he founded the first Armenian schools, sponsored by King Vachagan the Pious.

Different scriptoria, where numerous manuscripts were produced, functioned adjacent to famous monasteries and in various settlements of Arts'akh and Utik'. Many codices, copied and illuminated in different places within Greater Armenia and Cilicia, were brought and preserved here as well.

Alongside scriptoria, there were also binderies where the art of bookbinding developed as a branch of decorative and applied art, and master binders created leather and metal covers for manuscripts.

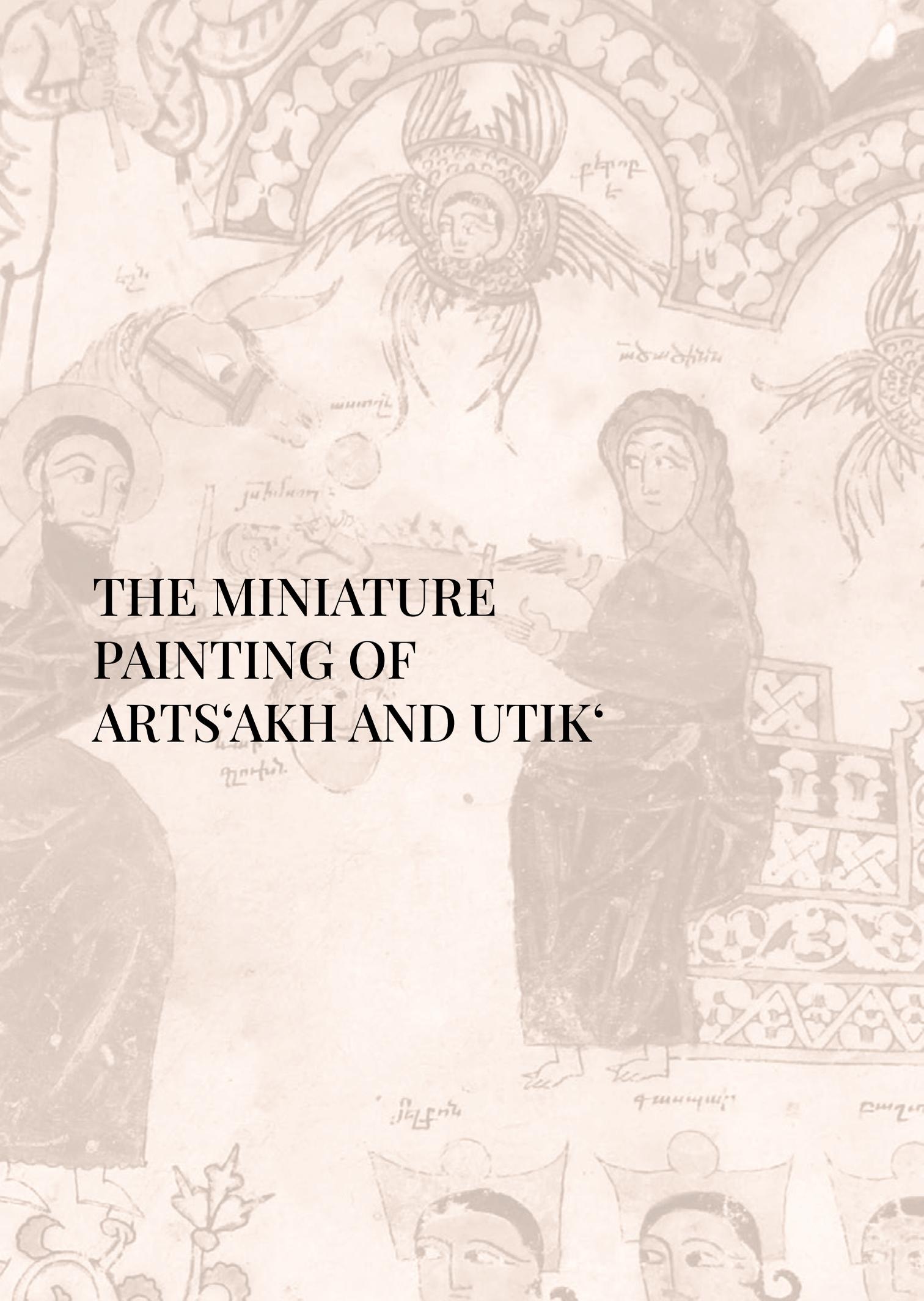
Among the prominent scriptoria of Arts'akh and Utik', one must mention the following monasteries: Gandzasar, Dadivank', Khadavank', Gtch'avank', Gandzak, Shamk'or, Ch'arek', Dasno, Yerits' Mankants', Yeliske the Apostle, T'argmanch'ats', Khoranashat, Nor Getik, Deldzut, Halartsin, and K'arahat. They were each well-known and had close ties with the renowned scriptoria within Armenia's other provinces. Many of these scriptoria had specific orientation and many came to study there from different parts of the country.

Gandzasar was the seat of the Catholicosate, and a famed center of writing. The *vardapetaran* at Khoranashat was focused on history, and many prominent chroniclers, such as Vardan Arevelts'i, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, and Grigor Aknerts'i, studied there. The school at Halartsin, headed by Khach'atur Taronats'i *vardapet*, was one of the most important spiritual and cultural centers of medieval

Armenia, where students studied musicology and actively spread knowledge about *khaz*, a system of musical notation, in the schools of northeastern Armenia. The *vardapetaran* at Nor Getik trained teachers, commentators, and skilled church figures. In the school at Deldzut, the pupils learned writing skills and copied manuscripts from rare examples. Ch'arek Monastery, which bore the traditions of Mets Anapat (Great Hermitage) of Tat'ev, was distinguished by its monastic life and the art of writing. The school at K'arahat focused on miniature painting, where educated painters were ordered by religious and secular lords to illuminate manuscripts. The scribes of Gandzak and Shamk'or wrote colophons in a unique matter. In them, they provided accurate historical information about the events of the time through, eyewitness accounts, and at times, wrote in a way more similar to the style of chroniclers.

The following figures were part of the cultural life of Arts'akh and Utik' and the glory of the Armenian schools of the time: Movses Kalankatvats'i, Movses Daskhurants'i, Hamam Arevelts'i, Davit' Alavkaordi, Grigor, son of T'ok'aker, Deacon Hovhannes Imastaser, Hovhannes Tavushets'i, Khach'atur Taronats'i, Mkhit'ar Gosh, Vanakan *Vardapet*, Vardan Arevelts'i, Kirakos Gandzakets'i, Grigor Aknerts'i, Arak'el *vardapet*, and others.

A complete list of manuscripts produced and preserved in Arts'akh and Utik' can be found at the end of the book.



**THE MINIATURE  
PAINTING OF  
ARTS‘AKH AND UTIK‘**

HRAVARD HAKOBYAN

## THE MINIATURE PAINTING OF ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'

Studies carried out at the Matenadaran have allowed us to collect a number of valuable manuscripts that represent the unique character of medieval miniature painting from two of Armenia's historic regions—Arts'akh and Utik'. The development of this art, which began in the second half of the twelfth century and continued through the eighteenth century, was naturally linked to the rise of political and cultural life there, and northern Armenia more generally.

Churches and monasteries, the most famous of which are the monastery complexes of Dadivank', Gandzasar, Goshavank', Halartsin, and Makaravank', occupy an important place in the cultural heritage of Arts'akh and Utik'. Sculpture and wall painting developed in tandem with architecture. Much of this region's material culture also survives.

With the rise of social and cultural life throughout Armenia, the art of copying and illustrating manuscripts likewise flourished. Scriptoria functioned adjacent to almost every monastery.<sup>1</sup>

The illuminated manuscripts of Arts'akh and Utik', housed in the Matenadaran, are represented in this chapter in three groups. The first group includes MS 378 (1212), MS 4823 (1224),

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<sup>1</sup> The cultural centers of Arts'akh and Utik', in particular the scriptoria and manuscripts copied and illustrated there, were closely connected with the culture of the neighboring Syunik' province.



Decoration of the dome of  
Gandzasar's Cathedral,  
Prince Hasan Jalal with a  
model of the church (1238)

MS 155 (thirteenth century), and several other manuscripts. They are characterized by the unique design of their canon tables and title pages, as well as the portraits of the Evangelists, which well exhibit certain national-local features covered in the sections that follow.

Manuscripts illuminated in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries comprise the second group (Mat. MS 316, 4820, 6303, 6319, and 4023). In addition to their unique style, the miniatures are distinguished by iconographic peculiarities. In contrast to the previous group, this collection presents an extensive range of images of the Christological cycle, in addition to canon tables, portraits of the Evangelists, and title pages.

The third group includes seventeenth-century illuminated manuscripts, which demonstrate new artistic tendencies of the time.

## VAKHT'ANG-TANGIK'S Gospel (Mat. MS 378)

The rise of cultural life, especially the establishment of scriptoria adjacent to monasteries and their efficiency, gradually led to the development of miniature painting. Several beautifully illuminated manuscripts have survived from the thirteenth century, of which is a gospel commissioned by Vakht'ang-Tangik, the prince of Khokhanaberd, and his wife, Khorishah. This is the earliest extant illuminated manuscript from Arts'akh and Utik' (Mat. MS 378).<sup>2</sup>

Vakht'ang-Tangik was a prolific patron of the arts. One can find his name on a *khach'kar* dating to 1202.<sup>3</sup>

On behalf of the prince, scribe and painter T'oros wrote in the colophon that Vakht'ang and his wife Khorishah had two sons and three daughters. He also recorded that the prince ordered a replication of the gospel to be decorated with colorful canon tables and gold script (ff. 308r,v).

Despite these details, the colophon is incomplete and the year of production is unknown. According to Garegin Hovsep'ian, the manuscript was produced between 1212 and 1223,<sup>4</sup> whereas other scholars have dated it to sometime before 1261.<sup>5</sup> Ulubabian B. suggests it was copied in 1212 based on historical sources.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> She was the daughter of Sargis Zak'arian, amirspasalar (commander-in-chief) of the Armenian-Georgian troops.

<sup>3</sup> ULUBABIAN, *The Principality of Khach'en*, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> HOVSEPIAN, *Colophons*, pp. 759-762.

<sup>5</sup> MAIN CATALOGUE, v. 1, p. 309.

<sup>6</sup> Ulubabian, *The Principality of Khach'en*, pp. 142-144.

The manuscript's secondary colophon is dated to 1261. Vakht'ang's son, Hasan-Jalal, wrote it shortly after Mangu Khan's visit (f. 8v-9r). Later, Vakht'ang-Tangik's gospel became the property of the people of Khokhanaberd.

Most likely, the gospel was illustrated at his residence—the fortress of Khokhanaberd—or in their family monastery just south of the fortress.

T'oros is mentioned in the colophons on multiple occasions (ff. 2r, 9v, 258v). Despite efforts to locate more of his manuscripts to expand our knowledge about this wonderful master of Armenian book arts, none of the contemporary scribes and painters named T'oros can be identified as him. Thus, Vakht'ang-Tangik's gospel book is T'oros' only known manuscript.

The manuscript is fit with ten canon tables, title pages for the gospels of Matthew and Mark, portraits of the two Evangelists, an image from the Christological cycle, and remarkable marginalia (fig. 1-5).

The art historian Svirin A. N. began the fifth chapter of his book *Miniature Painting in Ancient Armenia* (“*The Thirteenth-Century Book Art in Central Armenia*”), with a brief examination of this manuscript's decoration.<sup>7</sup> Later, Vakht'ang's gospel was mentioned by Durnovo L., Korkhmazyan E., and Drambyan I. We will refer to them in our overview of the stylistic features of its illustrations.<sup>8</sup>

## The illustrations of the manuscript

**Canon tables:** The letter of Eusebius to Carpianos is placed between ornamental columns on folios 1r-2v, followed by ten canons. Pairs of canon tables on facing pages share a compositional and structural design. Together with the cornice, the height of the headpieces are almost equal to that of the columns. The canon table's structure is divided into two equal parts. This symmetry, as well as various details—such as the horizontal base of the pedestal, cornice, capitals, and pedestals, and the bands surrounding the headpiece—give the canon tables a heavy and solid appearance.

The headpieces on folios 1v-2r are entirely covered with small cubes that have three-sided protuberances. Their blue, green, brown, and white colors create an illusionary effect, pleasing to the eye. The wide, light brown columns are brightly decorated with red sparkles, and are reminiscent of marble architectural prototypes. The semicircular pedestals and capitals are comprised of floral ornaments.

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7 SVIRIN, *The Miniature Painting in Ancient Armenia*, p. 82. Svirin dated the manuscript to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

8 Some ornamental motifs from this Gospel found place in prof. Asatur Mnatsakanian's book - *Armenian Ornamental Art* (Yerevan, 1955). Mnatsakanian also dated the manuscript to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries (p. 620).

The heavy and solemn impression of these folios is slightly animated by ornamental designs.<sup>9</sup> Folio 1v depicts a headpiece decorated with two peacocks that are linked to one another at the neck. There is a chalice depicted on the protuberance of each table with a bird resembling a pheasant on it. At the base, there is a fruit-bearing pomegranate tree, and a similar pheasant-like bird wrapped around its trunk by its neck. In the early medieval period, during the formation of Christian ornamental system, the ornaments of canon tables had a symbolic meaning.<sup>10</sup> Over time, however, their decorative significance increased gradually.

As mentioned, the ornamental designs of canon tables on facing pages are alike, such as those on folios 3v-4r: inside the headpiece, a trefoil arch is embedded within it entirely. Additionally, there are small lattice ornaments in the trefoil arch. A large cross is drawn with the arrangement of the latter's light and dark colors. The ornaments surrounding the quadrangular headpiece are beautiful, especially the Hellenistic acanthus leaves, in a transparent blue design.

All canon tables of this manuscript consist of three columns. Their semicircular pedestals and capitals are made of stylistic floral ornaments. On the outer protuberances of the cornices, one sees similar leaves and the same pheasant-like bird. On the headpieces, roosters are depicted, ready to fight each other.

Several large ornamental circles and semicircles—each of which has different floral and geometric shapes and layouts—are located at the top of the canon tables on folios 5v-6r.<sup>11</sup> The central circle reminds us of a familiar wheel structure, inside of which the images of purple and green stalks end in small coils. The other circles are covered with symmetrical textures of leaves and stems, which have a unique composition in each case.

The decoration of folios 7v-8r is a different nature. The wide arch rising from the horizontal cornice of the canon tables forms a separate semicircle in the front, in which there is an equal-armed cross. In contrast to the decorative and slightly luxurious nature of the previous canon tables, here a tufted tendency is dominant. This is most evident in the theme depicted inside the arch, which shows lions fighting dragons in remarkable color palette.

The last pair of canon tables (9v-10r) is different from previous pairs. The colophon naming the patron and painter of the manuscript is located on the headpiece of folio 9v. Multicolored, stemmed ornaments are arranged inside the oval quadrangular frame on folio 10r.

In some cases, T'oros finds interesting decorative solutions in his compositions, however, mainly relies on the traditions of the cultural centers in Syunik' and Shirak-Ani, which

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<sup>9</sup> C. Nordenfalk divides the ornaments of the canon tables into two – Fulornamente and Besatronamente (see GHAZARIAN, Sargis Pitsak, p. 28).

<sup>10</sup> See Nerses Shnorhali's Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew; Commentery on the Ten Canon Tables, etc.

<sup>11</sup> These canon tables can be found in Svirin's abovementioned book, p. 83.

have a national character. The pattern made of acanthus leaves is especially attractive. The latter, in its original, more majestic form, was often used in early Armenian miniatures (for instance, in *The Gospel of Etchmiadzin*, 989 (Mat. MS 2374)).<sup>12</sup> The Cilician miniature painters were not indifferent to this “aristocratic” ornament. For example, in Grigor Mlichets'i's *Narek* of 1173 (Mat. MS 1568) the arches of Grigor Narekats'i's portraits are decorated in this ornamental motif.<sup>13</sup> T'oros used the acanthus ornament mainly for framing the edges of the headpieces (ff. 3v, 4r, 5v, 8r), as well as in the square ornaments of the title pages (ff. 11r, 104, 259r), which are made of light blue. Against a dark background, the latter acquires soft and tender shades.

One of T'oros' favorite motifs is a dense design of small crosses. Like the acanthus ornaments, they shine with their light shades on a dark green and blue background.

This ancient ornamental motif of Christian art first appeared in Armenian miniature painting in the eleventh-century *Mulni Gospel* (Mat. MS 7736). Another decorative motif found in the *Mulni Gospel*, the knot in the shape of a cross, was used by T'oros in the corners of the headpieces of almost all his canon tables. This motif was widely used by the architects of Arts'akh and Utik'.

The most common ornaments in these canon tables are those made of trefoils, a prevalent motif in Christian art. T'oros created many ornamental groups, from small cells (ff. 3v-4r) to large rosettes (ff. 5v, 6r, 7v, 8r).

Saturated and dense colors contribute to the majestic impression of solid, even heavy, structure of the canon tables. The main color shades are dark, velvet green and brown, which are surprisingly harmonious, with shimmering shades of blue and red, mixed with white. The gold background gives a noble appearance.

The headpieces of the title pages are completely in line with those of the canon tables, in both the choice of decorative motifs and colors—the title pages of the gospels of Matthew (f. 11r), Mark (f. 104r), John (f. 259r).<sup>14</sup> Alexei Svirin, emphasizes the extraordinary and majestic impression of these pages, including an eastern characteristics.<sup>15</sup>

Although these canon tables and title pages are not modeled after a certain prototype, they are generally reminiscent of manuscript decoration in Ani, the capital of the Bagratuni Kingdom.

T'oros' art can be compared to the work of another famous figure from Ani, the painter Ignatios. Two illustrated title pages of the *Bagnayr Gospel*, painted by Ignatios at Horomos Monastery near Ani, seem to be identically to T'oros' manuscript (Mat. MS 1519). The color

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<sup>12</sup> DURNOVO, *Ornaments of Armenian Manuscripts*, fig. 3.

<sup>13</sup> AZARIAN, *Cilician Miniature Painting*, fig. 14, 15.

<sup>14</sup> The portrait of Luke has not survived.

<sup>15</sup> SVIRIN, *The Miniature Painting in Ancient Armenia*, p. 82.

palettes are the same—dark tones of green, blue, and brown, bright and vibrant yellow, light pink, with gold glittering in the background. In connection with these folios, Garegin Hovsep'ian writes, “Ignatios’ art is of a purely eastern nature, free from Byzantine influence, closer to the Sassanid and Mesopotamian–Arab traditions.”<sup>16</sup>

The general structure of Ignatios’ canon tables—familiar wheel motifs, symmetrically arranged trefoils, semicircular pedestals and capitals—all testify to common tastes and preferences, as well as existence of the same painting principles and direction prevalent in those regions. Regarding the origin of these ornamental motifs, Garegin Hovsep'ian says, “In their entirety, these canon tables must be related to the eleventh century, though a few motifs—the baskets and stylized birds—are linked to Sasanian traditions.”<sup>17</sup>

Valery Lazarev briefly touched upon the issues of thirteenth-century Armenian painting, identifying two main artistic currents. The first is Cilician art, with a noticeable Byzantine influence. The second is the miniature painting of the eastern and northern regions of Armenia, which originates mainly from local, i.e. ancient eastern traditions.<sup>18</sup> It is more important that Mat. MS 378 and Mat. MS 4823 are included in this eastern group.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, as products of a shared cultural environment, Valery Lazarev cites Ani’s church frescos as eastern in character.<sup>20</sup>

## Thematic images

Initially, there were no thematic images in Prince Vakht'ang’s manuscript. However, in the headpiece of John’s title page (259r), the artist inserted a thematic scene. The Ascension is depicted inside a square framed with beautiful drawings of palm leaves. Four angels lift Jesus in a mandorla, upward to heaven. Christ holds a Bible against his chest. The lively movements of the angels, accentuated positions of the heads, and their slightly hesitant glances give the image an impressive force. This all is in line with the decorative “texture” of the whole title page, including the illustrated large letters, ornaments, etc.

Like the canon tables, T'oros painted these in velvety, dark tones. Against dark blue and green, the purple and pink images of Jesus and the angels boldly stand out. In cases when the main color is green, the vivaciousness is achieved with white and yellow additions.

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16 HOVSEPIAN, Ignatios, pp. 15-40.

17 Idem, p. 40.

18 LAZAREV, History of Byzantine Painting, pp. 186, 132.

19 Idem, p. 188.

20 Idem, p. 187.



Ascension, Gospel,  
artist: T'oros, 1212,  
MS 378, f. 259r

The faces are bright. Their dark brown eyes are soulful and expressive. These decorative traits have close commonality with another group of manuscripts created in Arts'akh and Utik' (Mat. MS 316, 6306, 4820, 4023, 6319), about which we will speak below.

In Vakh'tang-Tangik's gospel, however, one page is entirely devoted to a thematic image. On the back of the fifth page, one sees the Virgin Mary holding the Christ child. To their right stand the archangel Gabriel, fit with symmetrically opened wings. Below, two evangelists hold the Holy Bible to their chests.

This image and its location do not correspond to the general order of manuscripts' artistic decoration. It is not difficult

to guess that initially, during the copying of the manuscript, it was not a planned image, and did not exist. This is evidenced by the information provided in the colophon, which only mentions the canon tables and title pages. Therefore, this thematic image was added later. Moreover, no matter how close the artist of this image has adhered to the stylistic-pictorial principles of the original illustrations of the manuscript, if one looks carefully, distinctive features are notable. T'oros' illustrations demonstrate more accuracy and plasticity, whereas the second painter seems to be sharper in his expressions and somewhat rough. Such differences are personality traits of the individual masters working under the same artistic principles. By that logic, the thematic image could have been painted by a disciple of T'oros, or merely a follower.

The image seems to be an icon. There are no details representing the environment. Drawn faces are not devoid of majesty. Straight noses and barely perceptible mouths amplify the emphatic effect of the figures' wide-open eyes. The heads, as the main point of spiritual expression of the figures, are prioritized against all other body parts, which seem to be intangible decorative surfaces.

The image is dominated by dark colors—blues and greens—while impressive yellow and white ornaments lighten the heaviness of the image by highlighting the dense image from its background. The color contrast is especially beneficial in the case of the portraits of the Evangelists. Within general dark tones, their belts and books kept near the chest are given in bright red, which is somewhat reminiscent of the color range of T'argmanch'ats' Gospel.

The Gospel of Ayrivank', copied in 1217 (Mat. MS 4509)<sup>21</sup> is also reminiscent of Vakht'ang's gospel. The cultural centers of historic Arts'akh and Ayrivank' (or Gelardavank') had close relations at that time. In the twelfth century, Catholicos Step'anos of Ahuank' donated a relic of the apostle Andrew to Father Grigor, Abbot of Ayrivank'.<sup>22</sup>

The authors of the book *Art Treasures of the Matenadaran*—Irina Drambian and Emma Korkhmazian—have also noted that the miniatures of Vakhtang's manuscript have similarities with fresco painting.<sup>23</sup>

There is another image on folio 254r depicting Hovsep' Aremat'ats'i. This portrait leaves a deep and mystical impression.

T'oros was a skilled master, combining decorative and illuminating styles. This is evident in the images of birds embellishing the canon tables. The birds, as well as chalices and trees, depicted on cornices of the canon tables, are painted with thick, dark-colored stripes. These colorful images do not mix with each other, but form a beautiful whole, leave a lasting impression.

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<sup>21</sup> About this manuscript see HOVSEP'IAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians*, v. 1 pp. 87–91, fig. 152, 153, 154.

<sup>22</sup> *Idem*, vol. 2, p. 54.

<sup>23</sup> DRAMBIAN, KORKHMAZIAN, *Art Treasures of the Matenadaran*, p. 59.

Especially noteworthy are the roosters preparing to fight, as if they were carved with colors (ff. 3v-4r), as well as the pair of peacocks (f. 6r), pheasants (f. 4r), and pigeons (ff. 7v-8r). They are beautiful motifs for illuminating manuscripts with their typical stylistic features. These illustrations cannot be compared with the refined and magnificent Cilician motifs or the simple laconic drawings of Vaspurakan's miniatures.

Within the headpiece of the canon tables on folios 7v-8r, against a warm background, one sees lions fighting with dragons. The painter did not use any pigment to color the dragon, and instead left the color of the bone white parchment. The lions are painted yellow, their tails and legs are colored blue. These small images are extremely impressive and, undoubtedly, came from the hand of an artist with great imagination and experience. Svirin compared the image of the lions to reliefs on the tympanum of the door of the main church of Gelard Monastery, assuming that the manuscript's image could be the coat of arms of Vakht'ang's family.<sup>24</sup> Hovsep'ian suggests it the Proshian coat of arms. It is difficult to accept or deny these theories. However, their very existence confirms the probability of correlations and similarity between the fresco of Surb Astvatsatsin cave-chapel (1258) and the image on folio 5v of Vakht'ang's gospel that we have noticed.

The manuscript's marginalia is beautifully and ingeniously painted. Atop the circle which encloses the letter "U" (A), two cranes stand, their necks entangled (f. 198r). On folio 26r, a dove stands on the circle with a decorative cross on its beak.<sup>25</sup> The painter used dense and dark colors to paint the marginalia—blues, greens, yellows, and reds. Durnovo sees similarities between the marginalia of Vakht'ang's gospel and Homilies of Mush.

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<sup>24</sup> SVIRIN, *The Miniature Painting in Ancient Armenia*, p. 85. Drambian and Korkhmazian are in favor of this assumption (see the abovementioned book, p. 59).

<sup>25</sup> There are remarkable marginalia on folios 35v, 39r, 41r, 140r, 177r, 201r, 219r, 261v, 283v, 297r, which are mainly composed of circles and plant motifs.

## Gospel OF KHORANASHAT (Mat. MS 4823)

One of the brilliant examples of thirteenth-century miniature painting of Arts'akh and Utik' is a gospel copied and illuminated in 1224 at the request of Vaneni, the daughter of Jajur Khalbakian<sup>26</sup> and wife of Prince Kuk Sevadiants'. It is rightly considered to be one of the jewels of Armenian miniature painting. As it was copied in Khoranashat (according to Vaneni's colophon), the manuscript is called the Khoranashat Gospel (fig. 6-11). The circumstances of its creation are described in detail in its original colophon.<sup>27</sup>

The Monastery of Khoranashat<sup>28</sup> is nestled in a beautiful valley on the right side of a gorge. As previously stated, after graduating from Mkhitar Gosh's school, Vanakan Vardapet returned to his native province and built the Monastery of Khoranashat (primarily from 1211 to 1222). During his time there, he established his own school. The monastery possessed necessary literature for conducting the classes and liturgies, as well as a scriptorium, where the Gospel of Khoranashat was produced.

Hovsep'ian wrote the following about the decorations of the manuscript: "...The Gospel is illuminated with ten canon tables, portraits of the evangelists, title pages, ornamental letters and marginalia. The portraits of the Evangelists are painted very simply, whereas the initials and marginalia are elaborated better and are typical of eastern tradition..."<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, the skilled codicologist and art connoisseur criticized these miniatures on the basis of the rules of "classical art," which were broadly accepted at the time. However, we will see that the portraits of the evangelists of the Gospel of Khoranashat are not merely simple, but unique in their inner expression.

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<sup>26</sup> Jajur Khalbakian was a great general, comrade-in-arms of his brother, Vasak Khalbakian (see HOVSEP'IAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians...*, v. 1, pp. 27-34).

<sup>27</sup> HOVSEP'IAN, *Colophons*, p. 140.

<sup>28</sup> 2-3 km to the west of the present-day Chinar Village of Tavush.

<sup>29</sup> HOVSEP'IAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians*, v. 1, p. 34.



John the Evangelist and  
Prochorus (detail),  
Gospel of Khoranashat,  
1224, Mat. MS 4823, f. 247v

The unique charm of the miniatures of the Gospel of Khoranashat did not escape the attention of skilled art critic Durnovo L. She wrote quite rightly, “The movements and postures of the figures are not anatomically correct, but they are lively and expressive, especially in the case of John, who, with his arms outstretched, listens to the voice from heaven and conveys what he hears to Prochorus, who writes his words down. The faces are especially expressive... with strongly raised eyebrows, forehead wrinkles, wide-open or squinting eyes... The master created a self-contained appearance of a thoughtful, inspiring person through simple means of expression.”<sup>30</sup> She has compared the manuscript

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<sup>30</sup> DURNOVO, *Old Armenian Painting*, p. 32.

to the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel, which was a turning point in the evaluation of the Gospel of Khoranashat.<sup>31</sup>

The miniatures of the Gospel of Khoranashat were duly appreciated by Drambian and Korkhmazian. The two write, "The miniatures of this manuscript... are characterized by the structural mobility of the means of expression and decorative simplicity of the colors... The combination of exaggerated gestures with the movements of transformed characters creates an atmosphere of religious ecstasy, which is also reflected in the faces deprived of personality features, though expressive in a unique way."<sup>32</sup>

The Gospel of Khoranashat has ten canon tables and four portraits of the Evangelists with their title pages. There are no images depicting the life of Christ.

The first pair of canon tables (1v-2r) contains the letter of Eusebius of Caesarea. Like the canon tables painted by T'oros, these also have a common uniform structure. The headpiece and the field of columns below the cornice are of equal size, giving the impression of weight below. The pedestals and capitals of columns are made of double-lined frames, inside of which, against a gold background, blue and pink trefoils are painted. The columns are covered with triangular fan-shaped ornaments, sometimes arranged in opposite directions. The base, a common pedestal, is covered by the famous "tooth-shaped" ornaments that are widespread in carpet art.

There is a new motif inside the quadrangular headpiece—a bead-like chain. Not only does it cover the whole cornice, but the design also forms a wide arch and a circle inside the quadrangle.

In the Gospel of Khoranashat, each pair of canon tables is separated from the other by two blank pages. The tables of concordances begin on folios 3v-4r and the following six pages. Each table consists of three columns. Their pedestals and capitals are made of semicircular and triangular ornaments, inside of which stylized plant motifs are depicted against a gold background. In the above-mentioned folios, the headpiece is intersected with a ribbon protruding from the four corners, which are covered with ornamental motifs of grenades and almond leaves. Decorations on folios 5v-6r are more beautiful. In general, they are reminiscent of the illustrations of Vakht'ang's gospel, as well as the miniatures painted in the Ani-Horomos region (for example, the works of Margare, Ignatios). Arches decorated with grenade and shell motifs rise from the center of the cornice, while beautiful circles woven from trefoils cover the free spaces.

The columns are various colors, ornamental palm leaves are painted against the black background of the central column, while tooth-shaped ornaments are displayed on the remaining two. The combination of black, dark brown, and velvety green gives the structure of the canon table a sense of strength and majesty.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Idem, p. 61.

The palette of colors is mainly the same. Dark blue dominates, which elicits a pleasant glow when combined with the light pink and green. More impressive are the plant motifs made of bright red and green, which are striking against a dark brown background.

The Gospel of Khoranashat is rich in marginalia: peacock (ff. 1v-2r), rooster (ff. 3v-4r), partridge (ff. 5v-6r), sparrow (f. 10r), etc. Due to the painter's delicate elaboration, these bird paintings, arranged in a certain order, are distinguished by their species. In contrast to the decorative bold brushstrokes of the painter T'oros, in the Gospel of Khoranashat there is a sense of moderation and a touch of delicacy. The same is the case of plant motifs depicted on the pedestals and cornices of the canon tables—each detail is done with accuracy and rich imagination, wherein one can even notice the echoes of the old traditions of folk art. Lazarus writes, “Armenian artists were especially attracted by ornamental motifs, as their focus is not on the human image, but on the ornament, in which case they were unsurpassed masters.”<sup>33</sup>

The decoration of the title pages is very close to that of the canon tables. There are two concentric circles inside the headpiece of the title page of Mark, the frame of which is covered with small circles decorated with trefoils. Here, too, zigzag ribbons come down from the upper corners and intersect in the center circle. The title page of Luke is nearly the same. The title page of John is reminiscent of that of Matthew, except the wide arch is filled with rhombuses.

The ornaments in these pages are in complete harmony; there is no unnecessary burden or emptiness. The overarching charm of the manuscript can be attributed to lustrous shades exhibited within the color palette. According to Durnovo, the miniatures “attract the viewer with a game of harmoniously chosen bright colors, which shine like a necklace made of precious stones.”<sup>34</sup>

Lazarev writes, “Ornamental motifs are especially attractive for painters. It seems to be a familiar element to them. Compared to Cilician ornaments, they seem rather desiccated and primitive, but they have a wonderful monumentality that comes from “ancient Iranian and Mesopotamian traditions.”<sup>35</sup>

There are some new ornamental motifs in the Gospel of Khoranashat, more specifically, the garnet ornament. The arches and bands consisting of these “stones” in different colors (ff. 1v, 2r, 5v, 6r, 3v, 4r, 9v), make a strong impression.

Garnet ornaments were used in Armenian miniature painting in the early period. The Etchmiadzin Gospels, copied in 989 (Mat. MS 2374), becomes more relevant in this case, as it was produced directly next to Arts'akh, in Syunik' (Blëno Noravank'). Many things were

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<sup>33</sup> LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, v. 1, p. 98.

<sup>34</sup> DURNOVO, DRAMBIAN, *Armenian Miniature Painting*, p. 204.

<sup>35</sup> LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, pp. 187-188.

conditioned in that shared cultural environment, and perhaps this is the reason why a significant percentage of the ornament found in the Etchmiadzin Gospels are also seen in the Gospel of Khoranashat. Some notable examples include: the stylized palm leaves, ornaments created with the curves of the “rope,” acanthus leaves, floral motifs deriving from the ancient ornaments, etc.

Finally, one of the most popular ornaments of early Christian art present in the Gospel of Khoranashat is the rainbow-shaped rhombus, found on ff. 9v: arches, ff. 4r, 5v, 6r, 10r, 7v, 8r: pedestals and cornices of the canon tables. This motif appeared earlier in the Etchmiadzin Gospels.

The painter of the Gospel of Khoranashat had exceptional style. In his illustrated canon tables, a perfect mastery and subtle colors of Cilician manuscripts is balanced with the solid and monumental nature of the art of eastern Armenia. However, the combination of styles is not mechanical. Rather, the result was the birth of a unique, local-national style, with its own principles and structure, informed by its environment.

The portraits of the Evangelists are remarkable. Durnovo writes, “The ingeniousness of the Gospel of 1038 is manifested here in the portraits of the evangelists by a talented artist who, however, does not yet have professional painting skills. The movements of the evangelists, and especially their faces, have a unique expression of being cut off from the real world. Such a mystical facial expression seems to contradict the rationalist mood of the society of the thirteenth century. It should also be noted that these new trends occurred mainly in large cities, where trade routes passed, whereas the northeastern regions of Armenia were far from those roads and still kept feudal traditions.”<sup>36</sup>

The Evangelists are depicted before a gold background, which is partially missing, leaving behind only a reddish-brown primer.<sup>37</sup> The characters have wide, almond-shaped eyes, with pupils sharply turned either to the right or left. Prominent forehead wrinkles above arch-shaped eyebrows are typical facial features of Arts'akhian miniature painting. Noses are slightly longer and begin at the eyebrows. Mustaches and sharp beards are connected. The hair on the head is not lush, although is noticeably curly. The ears are painted quite primitively, typical of Arts'akhian miniature painting.

It is worth mentioning that these portraits, with their graphic elements and stylization, are reminiscent of the miniatures of Vaspurakan. The main difference is the lack of arched eyebrows in the miniatures of Vaspurakan.

The palette of colors is softer here compared to Prince Vakht'ang's manuscript. There is a

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36 DURNOVO, DRAMBIAN, *Armenian Miniature Painting*, p. 204.

37 Durnovo, who was an expert in the field of technology and restoration of artworks (particularly frescoes and miniatures), believes that the master who used the gold in the manuscript did not have much experience, as though the color layer was preserved excellently, most of the gold was spilled.

nuance of subtlety, perhaps a poetic emphasis. Red, purple, green, blue, and black-brown colors are dense and saturated, and partly with a mixture of white. The combination of colors against a gold background conveys an eye-catching, velvety softness.

The Gospel of Khoranashat is valuable for the study of the art of Armenian writing and the history of Armenian punctuation. The gospel contains some punctuation marks: full stop, comma, accent mark, question mark, quotation mark, apostrophe, etc.

As the Gospel of Khoranashat was ordered by the daughter of Prince Jajur Khalbakian, Vaneni, it is worthwhile to review another illustrated manuscript produced at the behest of the princess. Sadly, however, this manuscript fell victim to the political turmoil of the first decades of the twentieth century.

In 1232, eight years after the Gospel of Khoranashat was completed, the culture-loving and zealous Princess Vaneni commissioned a magnificent manuscript and donated it to Havaptuk Monastery. It was copied by the scribe Step'anos in Nor Getik, which was ruled then by the Zakarids.

The gospel was first seen in the nineteenth century by Sargis Jalaliant's in Geoybulal Village in the Nukhi region. Sargis copied the primary colophon, however did not mention the decoration of the manuscript.<sup>38</sup> Later, Makar Barkhudariant's, who also visited Geoybulal, described the manuscript, its illustrations<sup>39</sup>, and copied its colophons.<sup>40</sup> From his description, we can assume that this manuscript is similar to the Gospel of Khoranashat—there are no thematic miniatures or canon tables (likely that they have not survived), the headpieces and marginalia are beautiful, however, the portraits of the Evangelists are not “beautiful”. Hovsep'ian writes, “the portraits of the Evangelists are depicted very simply, whereas the initials and marginalia are done masterly.”<sup>41</sup> Most likely, Vaneni ordered this manuscript be copied by the same artist, whose spiritual inspiration did not correspond to the aesthetic ideas of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Thus, third manuscript illustrated in Arts'akh was brought to light. By virtue of eyewitness records, we know the following information about it:

- a) In 1232, by order of Princess Vaneni, a fine gospel was copied for Havaptuk Monastery.
- b) The decoration of the manuscript is similar to the gospel of Khoranashat's decoration, and, most likely, done by the same artist.
- c) The manuscript was illustrated with portraits of the Evangelists, title pages, and marginalia.

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38 JALALIANTS', *Journey*, v. 2, pp. 215-217.

39 *Idem*, p. 234.

40 BARKHUDARIANTS', *The Land of Ałuank'*, pp. 234-236.

41 HOVSEP'IAN, *The Khaghbakians or the Proshians...*, v. 1, p. 34.

## THE MISCELLANY HOUSED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JAMES IN JERUSALEM (MS 1288)

Two manuscripts copied in Arts'akh are now kept in the library of the Armenian Patriarchate of Saint James in Jerusalem. They are furnished with several miniatures.

One of them is a miscellany (Jerusalem, MS 1288) copied in 1273 in Nor Getik. Its colophon provides information about the circumstances of its creation.<sup>42</sup>

There are two miniatures in the manuscript: an image of a colored cross (f. 1v), and a portrait of Saint Anton (f. 142v). This thematic image was, most likely, painted by the scribe Mkhit'ar.

This depiction of Saint Anton is better understood when contextualized by his life as a hermit. Saint Anton is depicted in a monastery, holding a staff and a cross above his shoulder. He rebuked and subdued dragons and snakes.<sup>43</sup> The hermit wears a black hood on his head and a cloak on his shoulders. His belt is tied with a double layer and appears to be more of a secular costume.

Despite the simplicity of the image, let us single out a few typical features: the pointed eyes, accentuated arch-shaped eyebrows, not a full mustache or beard, and gently marked mouth. They indicate the unchanging nature of how facial features were rendered in Arts'akh and Utik'. Skilled artists surely depicted them in more impressive ways. However, regardless of the differences in execution, what is important in this case are the features that reflect the preservation of local traditions and the existence of a national-cultural environment.

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<sup>42</sup> BOĒARIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 4, pp. 495-496.

<sup>43</sup> For the Hagiography of Saint Anton see AVGERIAN, *Lives of the Saints*, pp. 57-101. Remarkable is the small dragon snake lying under his feet, reminiscent of the snakes in the image of Adam and Eve in MS 4820 (Mat.)

## A GOSPEL HOUSED IN THE LIBRARY OF THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JAMES IN JERUSALEM (MS 1794)

The second manuscript stored in the library of the Armenian Patriarchate of Saint James in Jerusalem is a gospel copied by the scribe T'oma in 1326.<sup>44</sup> The first pages and the portrait of Matthew have not survived, but the portraits of Mark (f. 106v), Luke (176v), and John (290v) (fig. 25–27), as well as several headpieces and marginalia, have been preserved.

The architectural environment of Mark's portrait is unusual—a building with a rich interior; the presence of stairs and doors indicates that it has a second floor; from the windows of this building, domes of other buildings are visible.

Mark sits on a high and luxurious armchair, holds the paper attached to the desk with one hand, and writes with the other. His body is painted in profile and his face is forward. His face and clothing reveal the local characteristics, typical of the painting traditions of the region—short forehead, curly hair, a slightly protruding mustache and beard, almond-shaped eyes, joined eye-brows, straight nose, etc.

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<sup>44</sup> BOĬARIAN, *Catalogue*, v. 6, p. 144.

THE MINIATURE  
PAINTING OF  
ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'

Mark the Evangelist (detail),  
Gospel, artist: T'oma, 1326,  
Land of Khach'en, Jerusalem,  
№ 1794, f. 106v



One can observe such features in the manuscripts of Vakht'ang Khach'entsi' (1212), Khoranashat (1224), as well as in the miscellany of Nor Getik (1273).

The image of the Evangelist John and Prochorus resembles the one from the Gospel of Khoranashat, as if both painters shared a prototype, which some exceptions, such as the local background of the Khoranashat Gospel, Prochorus' high chair, and John's depiction as a middle-aged man with a mustache and beard.

## THE MANUSCRIPTS OF PRINCE VAKHT'ANG, SON OF UMEK (Mat. MS 5669 and MS 155)

The historian Bagrat Ulubabian writes the following about the descendants of the renowned Prince Hasan-Jalal: “In contrast to Prince Hasan-Jalal, his successors were not that proactive in political and cultural life. Only scant information has been preserved about his only son, At'abak, whereas it is known that two of his daughters, Mama-Khat'un and Mina Khat'un, inherited the significant advantages of Hasan-Jalal and Mamk'an and deserve special attention.”<sup>45</sup>

Mama-Khat'un's husband, Umek was a wealthy merchant and one of the most influential people of the time. He hailed from Bardzr Hayk' (Upper Armenia) and later settled in Tbilisi. While living there, Umek established close economic and cultural relations, especially in Arts'akh and Utik'. It is known that he purchased the Monastery of Nor Getik as a “home base” for 40,000 ducats (gold), and became, together with his successors, the singular owners of it.

Prince Vakht'ang was the son of Umek and Mama-Khat'un, who “enjoyed the attention of noble people from early

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45 ULUBABIAN, *The Principality of Kach'en*, p. 219.

childhood, including Hovhannes Yerznkats'i."<sup>46</sup> Direct references to the ancient artistic traditions of the eastern regions of Armenia were undoubtedly critical for developing Vakht'ang's aesthetic preferences.

Vakht'ang's mother, Mama-Khat'un, used to tell her son memories of her beloved grandfather, and the rich culture of his homeland. She often took her son to Khach'en to take part in donation ceremonies. Therefore, the image of Vakht'ang, as a cultural figure or donor, must be viewed against the background of the rich cultural life and historical Arts'akh and within his family.

Prince Vakht'ang is also connected with two famous literary and miniature monuments. The first is a gospel copied in 1279 (Mat. MS 5669). The second is a collection of the Epistles of the Apostle Paul (Mat. MS 155), (fig. 12-14).

Mat. MS 5669 contains a portrait of the Evangelist Matthew, who holds a gospel book with his left hand and places his right on his chest (fig. 15). Although the page is poorly preserved, the artist's talent is notable. The title page is also skillfully painted.

The second manuscript, a collection of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle, is of great interest for the study of Armenian miniature painting.<sup>47</sup> The manuscript and its miniatures were examined in detail by Hovsep'ian<sup>48</sup> It has five thematic images, the first being the image Christ enthroned. Underneath, there is a long, ornately upholstered cushion. Paul is depicted in different poses on folios 32r, 73r, 80v, and 114r. The other scene, the "recurrence," is remarkable. In it, the apostle lies face down with his hands on a book. A hand comes out of the semicircle above (representing heaven), and three red rays descend to Paul. An inscription which reads, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

On folio 114r, Paul is nimbed, sitting on a beautiful throne. His posture and the elaboration of clothes resemble the Evangelists' portraits.

In the next scene, inside a tall canon table, Paul is shown standing erect. The apostle's right hand gestures a sign of benediction before his chest, and his left holds an open scroll.

On folio 136r the Apostle Paul is found seated, and on the right column of folio 32r, Paul is moving to the left with a book in his hand.

In some cases, the headpieces occupy the top half of the page (11r, 70r, 100r), and more often, only the top of a column (68v, etc.). Beautiful incipit letters are mainly composed of plant motifs. Ancient motifs dominate in marginalia and the ornamental program of the manuscript in general: leaves with a combination of small circles, architectural decorations (chapel), two-headed eagle (f. 128r), birds, etc.

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<sup>46</sup> Idem, p. 221.

<sup>47</sup> Hovsep'ian considers the year of the manuscript to be 1280 (see *Materials and Studies...*, v. 1, p. 4).

<sup>48</sup> Idem, v. 1, pp. 1-14.

The most interesting and valuable aspect of this manuscript is the portrait of Prince Vakht'ang. The young prince is sitting on a beautifully decorated throne, holding an open book, likely a gospel, with both hands on his right knee. The collar, chest, and hems are covered with interlaced palm ornaments. The prince wears a pointed hat on his head, which has hanging and golden ribbons on the back, as well as pointed shoes on his feet. Hovsep'ian G. writes, "He has delicate features, no beard...with a beautiful and small mouth, a pointed nose, the eyes are calm and large, eyebrows are thin and arched, wears earrings, slightly red cheeks, a serious and sad expression, his brown hair and two small bunches lay on the forehead, delicate hands, is slender, with long fingers, and his clothes resemble the fresco of Khutlu Bugha, son of Sadun At'abek, on the southern wall of Halpat..."<sup>49</sup>

Prince Vakht'ang's portrait occupies a special place in the Armenian miniature painting. Disregarding the historical and ethnographic significance of the image, we pay special attention to the issue of the model's similarity, something that we have few examples of. But it is here that one of the characteristic features of medieval art is revealed: along with the subtle features that express the personality of the young prince, the influence of the local style is notable in certain details- his eyes, nose, and the articulation of his clothes. This illustration is one of few examples of how a talented masters, while painting in the general stylistic principles of medieval art, could achieve the expression of unique features of the character.

After the death of his father Umek (1267), Vakht'ang (at the young age of 5 or 6), together with his mother, Mama-Khat'un, had to be more closely connected to the house of his grandfather, Hasan-Jalal, the once-powerful and brave prince of Khach'en. It is known that before 1287, Vakht'ang's uncle, Prince At'abek, ruled over the eastern parts of Armenia. It was a period of peaceful life after turbulent political events. At'abek was succeeded by his son Jalal, who

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49 Idem, v. 1, pp. 4-5. See Sadun At'abek's image in "Christian East" 1912.

ruled until 1318. The last inscription related to Vakht'ang is found on the tombstone near the Zorats' Church in the historical Yelegis (Alayaz) Village of Syunik'. The inscription reads, "1347. This is the final resting place of Prince Vakht'ang, son of Umek."<sup>50</sup>

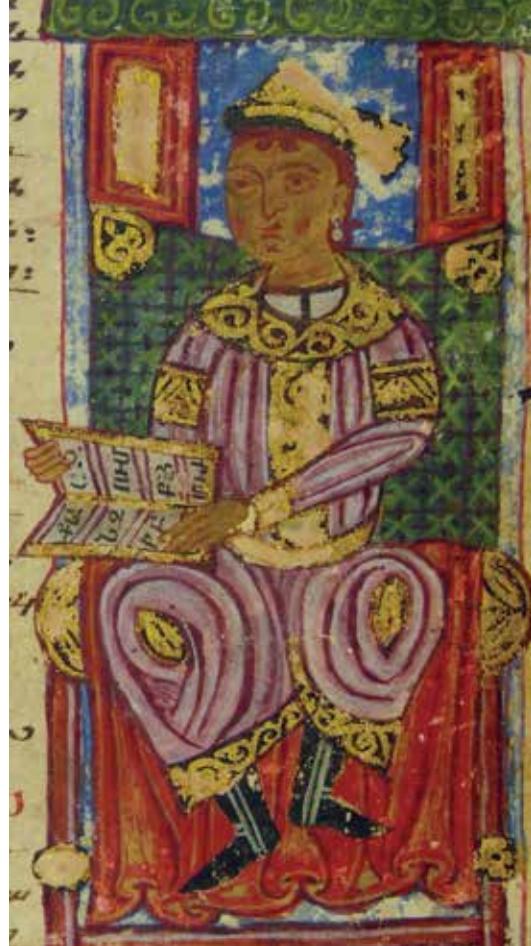
Comparing the miniatures of the Epistles of Paul the Apostle with the illustrated manuscripts from Arts'akh and Syunik' (Mat. MS 371, 4823, 9721), we see similar interpretations of the figures. In both cases, the faces have the same mysterious expression, resembling hermits—the accentuated eyes are sad and motionless, as if agitated and hesitant. Above their arched eyebrows, one sees a wrinkled forehead, which is typical of the miniatures of Arts'akh and Utik'. The hair on the head is thin, the mustaches and beards are not very protruding, the skulls are wide, faces are narrowed down to the jaw. Features of drapery and clothing are generally shared as well.

The color palette is comprised of dark brown, green, blue, and purple shades, which are distinguished from each other with clear outlines.

The miniatures of Prince Vakhtang's manuscripts allow us to identify similarities with the manuscripts copied in Yelegis, specifically, a gospel book copied in 1315 (Mat. MS 9721). Vakht'ang's manuscripts can also be compared to the frescoes found in Arts'akh, Utik, and Syunik'.

In general, in the miniatures of Arts'akh, Utik' and Syunik' one can see the phenomenon of combining the local old traditions with the preferences of the time, which does not distort folk influences.

The stylistic features of the manuscripts illustrated in Arts'akh and Utik' cannot be mistaken for painting from any other school of Armenian miniature painting. MS 155 and MS 5669, with the peculiarities of their miniatures, are linked to that school.



Prince Vakht'ang (detail),  
Relic of the New Testament,  
13th century,  
Mat. MS 155, f. 106v

<sup>50</sup> CIArm, ch. 4, p. 110.

## AN ARMENIAN GOSPEL FROM THE HALLE LIBRARY

The University of Halle holds an Armenian gospel book, copied in 1224 at the request of the priest Vahram by the scribe Sargis (University of Halle, N1B-308).

When the German scholar von Blau saw this manuscript in Iran in 1857, he purchased it, and, after returning to his homeland, donated it to the library at the University of Halle.

The manuscript was first published by Julius Assfalg and Joseph Molitor, who described the colophon and the manuscript's other notes in detail.<sup>51</sup> In 1976, Burkhard Brentjes, a professor at the University of Halle, published four of the manuscript's miniatures.<sup>52</sup>

Neither the manuscript's colophon, nor the subsequent works on the manuscript, provide any information concerning where it was produced. However, codicological data, including the peculiarities of the miniatures, help to orient the manuscript within the book culture of Arts'akh.

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<sup>51</sup> ASSFALG, MOLITOR, *Armenische Handschriften*, pp. 4-6.

<sup>52</sup> BRENTJES, *Das Armenische manuskript № 1* (Wiss, 7, Univers. Halle XXIV. 77. G. H. 2-5, 63, 5, 133-135. Halle, 1977). We express our gratitude to Prof. Brentjes for sending us all the photos of this manuscript.

From the late twelfth century to the beginning of the thirteenth century, a number of scribes named Sargis have been identified. Ten manuscripts copied by a certain Sargis are housed in the Matenadaran.<sup>53</sup> Beyond his name, the scribe of the Halle Gospel did not provide any information about himself. His signature lacks any family affiliation, as he does not name his parents. Thus, the manuscript's style is one of the only ways to identify its origins. After a preliminary survey, three manuscripts were singled out: Mat. MS 5356, 5929, and 5452. While the Halle Gospel share general characteristics with MS 5356 and MS 5929, MS 5452 is identical to Sargis' style. Some letters (such as ա [a], ն[n], թ[t']) are written in a unique way. As such, in both cases, we are dealing with the same scribe.

Where was MS 5452 copied? It was produced in Khoranashat Monastery in Utik', which is important for understanding where the Halle Gospel could have been copied.

Step'anos *vardapet*, the name of the figure who provided the scribe of the Halle Gospel an example to copy, has survived. This Step'anos is potentially the recipient of Mat. MS 2273, copied in 1252 in Khoranashat.<sup>54</sup>

The attribution of the Halle Gospel to the Arts'akh–Utik' School is also based on the stylistic similarities to miniatures firmly linked to Arts'akh.

Halle's manuscript contains the following thematic images: the baptism (f. 5r), the Last Supper (f. 5v), as well as the portraits of the four Evangelists (f. 4r).<sup>55</sup> The illustrations are simple. In the Baptism, the figures are painted frontally. John the Baptist wears a fur coat. As the artist was not skilled, John's hands appear to emerge from his right shoulder. Jesus is nimbed. Interestingly, during his baptism, Christ is fully clothed, rather than undressed. Six naked figures (other baptized men) stand to the right of Jesus. The fish that surround them and the small dragon under them symbolize the Jordan River. The right hand of God and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove are in the upper region.

This composition is rare; no other example of this iconography is known. However, it corresponds to the original version of the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew, 3, 5–17), where another scene of baptism is depicted. The same iconography is found in a twelfth-century Greek gospel held at the Vatican (N 2).<sup>56</sup>

The scene of the Last Supper is oriented horizontally, drawn along the page within an ornamental canon table. Jesus, stands to the right of the table, occupying the full width of the page, and is depicted much larger than the twelve apostles seated at a rectangular table:

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<sup>53</sup> Mat. MS 1500, 2589, 5356, 5448, 5451, 5862, 5929, etc.

<sup>54</sup> Most likely, this Step'anos is the same commissioner of the famous Gospel copied in 1181–1183 in Sarushen Village of Arts'akh, see HOVSEPIAN, Colophons, pp. 491–492; BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, p. 101; T'OP'CHIAN, Catalogue, v. 2, p. 47.

<sup>55</sup> Stepanian also briefly referred to Halle's manuscript, see BRENTJES, MNAZAKANJAN, STEPANJAN, *Kunst des Mittelalters in Armenien*, p. 304. pl. 251–253.

<sup>56</sup> LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, v. 2, fig. 27.



Halle Library, Gospel, 1224  
(Armenian manuscripts,  
№ 1B-308)

only their heads are visible (except for the last apostle). It is difficult to identify the iconographical origins of this scene. Some ancient monuments depict the apostles seated around an oviform table at the Last Supper, with the apostles symmetrically arranged in the upper register. This is similar to the mosaic of S. Apollinare Nuovo (493–526) in Ravenna.<sup>57</sup> The same composition is followed in the frescos and miniatures of the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>58</sup> Long, rectangular tables began to be depicted only in the tenth

<sup>57</sup> In the tenth-century Greek Gospel kept at the State Public Library of Leningrad (see LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, fig. 68) and in several eleventh-century manuscripts housed in the Matenadaran in Yerevan (MS 974, 3784, 3723).

<sup>58</sup> IZMAYLOVA, *Armenian Miniature Painting of the 11th Century*.

and eleventh centuries.<sup>59</sup> The third type of table is round and only rarely portrayed.<sup>60</sup> In the case of the Halle Gospel, one sees a round table, however, it is rendered in profile. Three seraphim are painted around Jesus.

The last thematic image depicts the four Evangelists standing together. The first three from the left are closer to each other and form a group. The fourth, John, stands apart from the rest. The tradition of depicting the four evangelists together on a single page dates back to ancient times. It remained popular until the twelfth century. Example survive as late as the fourteenth century.<sup>61</sup>

Sargis was a skilled scribe, but not a particularly strong painter. Thus, his figures, forms, faces, clothes, etc. are illustrated primitively. They give the impression of childish drawings.<sup>62</sup>

It is noteworthy, however, that the local stylistic features outlined above are expressed in his work, perhaps independently of the artist's will or subconsciously. In all cases, the figures are depicted frontally, with their feet pointing outward—e.g., feet facing right in the scene of Baptism, and to the left in the portraits of the Evangelists. All figures share the same clothing.

We pay special attention to images which leave an impression of asceticism, which have features typical of Mat. MS 4823 and Mat. MS 378. Line is the main means of expression. While line serves as an eye-catching decorative trick and is spiced with bold and graceful colors in the manuscripts of Khoranashat and Prince Vakht'ang, in the case of the scribe Sargis, it is not about line or color, movement plastics, artistic features, or decorative tricks. Rather, we can conclude that these are primitive, uneven drawings, with monotonously applied paints.

The heads are slightly larger and are wide at the top of the skull and narrow at the bottom. Faces end in a heart-shaped beard, reminiscent of the aforementioned heart-shaped faces. The lines of the arched eyebrows are connected and slant downwards to form the nose. The mouth is barely noticeable, the pupils are emphasized in the wide outlined eyes. The mustache and beard are thin. The double-arched wrinkles, typical of Arts'akhian miniatures, are marked on the foreheads. The cheeks are marked with dark spots. The ears are rendered in the form of simple double arches. Each of these facial features are typical of the portraits

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59 Such as the frescoes of the churches of Garikli and Goranli in Cappadocia (THIERRY, Une iconographie inédite de la cense de refectoire rupestre de Cappadoce, pp. 177–185). This is also met in the eleventh-century Armenian manuscript, such as the Gospels of 974 and 1038, Georgian frescoes (VOLSKAYA, Frescoes of the Medieval Refectories of Georgia, fig. 6, 7), etc.

60 Add. 7169 (12th–13th centuries) kept at the British Museum in London is a more typical example [LEROY, Les Manuscrits Syriaques à peintures, fig. 119].

61 In the Armenian miniature painting, one sees such examples in the works of the painters Hovsian (Mat. MS 4806, 4818) and Melik'sedek (Mat. MS 4813). To some extent, this is the result of local provincial conservatism.

62 In fact, in Arts'akh and Utik', as in Vaspurakan and other schools of Armenian miniature painting, we see both "primitive folk works" and, at the same time, works done at a high level of professionalism.

of Arts'akh and Utik' and help to define the local style as different against that of other schools.

One of the mentioned features can be found in another center of miniature painting, whereas all together they appear only in the manuscripts of Arts'akh and Utik'.

Both the scene of the four Evangelists and the image of the Last Supper are painted within an ornamental table that forms a frame. The latter is rendered horizontally, and such, the compositions are arranged from left to right. The tradition of painting thematic images within such ornamental tables or within wide, ornate frames, as in the case of the scene Baptism, is found in several other manuscripts of historic Arts'akh and Utik'.

The canon tables (ff. 1r,v, 2r,v, 3r,v) and title pages (4r, 64r, 103r, 169r) are painted much more skillfully, though they are mostly identical. The latter are unique in their simplicity.

The canon tables are made up of two arches supported by pillars. There are no central columns, which gives the impression of an entrance with a unique structure. The small headpiece, which rests on two pillars, is completely covered with plant motifs, with the image of a cross on a decorated background, flanked on either side by birds.

The columns are covered with stylized palm motifs, separated by horizontal lines, forming separate squares. The capitals and pedestals are decorated with leaves and are not framed. It is worth mentioning that some features, especially the decorative motifs of the Halle Gospel, are somewhat reminiscent of the eleventh-century Vehap'ar Gospel (Mat. MS 10780)



Entry into Jerusalem,  
Gospel, Mat. MS 7779, f. 5r

## MS 7779 GOSPEL OF THE MATENADARAN

Dr. Tatiana Izmaylova has drawn our attention to a twelfth century gospel (Mat. MS 7779). The exact location of its production is unknown. According to codicologist Artashes Matevosian, it could have been copied somewhere near the monasteries of Halpat and Sanahin (in Lori, bordering Utik').

The manuscript was entirely restored in 1477 in Golt'an District. The thematic miniatures are arranged on the first five pages (most likely, several pages are missing). The first image is a scene of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Jesus, sits on a donkey and approaches from the left. The greeters stand in a row and each hold palm branches in their hands. The Nativity is painted on the facing page. This is unusual, as these two topics are never bound in such proximity. The Virgin is not depicted, only the Christ child in the manger, which the three magi approach from the left.

The next page depicts a scene of communion. The composition is simple and shows Jesus and four disciples.

Simon's appearance in the baptism scene is remarkable, as this iconography is noncanonical. This Simon is likely the son of John the Baptist, who he stands beside. This figure could also be the apostle Peter, who confirmed the divine nature of Jesus in Philippi, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew: 16:15-17).

The four Evangelists stand together on the next page. The final scene on f. 5v is also noteworthy. A clothed Adam and Eve stand on the right. A snake whispers in Eve's ear, seducing her. Paradise is depicted on the left, enclosed within a square. Portraying Adam and Eve wearing clothing is rare.

In this case, we are more interested in the primitive stylistic features of these miniatures, which have a lot in common with the miniatures of the Halle Gospel. For example, the depiction of the forward-facing evangelists. Their sharply hemmed coats hang off their shoulders. The clothes are defined by simple, vertical lines (each figure wears an ornate, wide belt in Mat. MS 7779).

The characters are hairless and their faces are uniformly wide and round (this is also the case of the figures in the Halle Gospel). Sometimes the mustaches and beards are barely noticeable. The eyes and noses are depicted in the same way. The same principle was applied in the Halle Gospel. The only exception is in the nativity, where the faces of the magi are unsuccessfully painted. There are several images in the margins: Mary Magdalene on folio 105r, Joseph (this is probably the most successful work of the artist) on folio 173v, etc.

In fact, in both this and the Halle Gospel, we see primitive miniatures based on stylistically principles and interesting forms. The existence of the latter unites the mentioned manuscripts and gives the right to include them in this school.

Regarding the figures of the abovementioned manuscripts (Mat. MS 378, 4823, 7779, Halle N1), it is necessary to remember the four parchment pages attached later to the Mat. MS 379 gospel in twelfth century that depict the portraits of the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The dark and dense colors of the Evangelists, as well as the interpretation of their clothes with the already familiar facial features, are connected with the stylistic group with which we are concerned.

## T'ARGMANCH'ATS' GOSPEL

(Mat. MS 2743)

The T'argmanch'ats' Gospel is one of the most famous manuscripts held within the Matenadaran, known for its exceptionally miniature painting, which has gained it prestige and value in the study of medieval Armenian art.<sup>63</sup>

The manuscript was prepared in 1232 by the scribe Tirats'u and painter Grigor Tsalkol. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, it was brought to Arts'akh, where it was restored between 1305 and 1311 by princely order. During this period, the manuscript was decorated with images of the Christological cycle. The colophons revealed that the artist who made these illustrations was named Grigor. Following this discovery, researchers identified the manuscript's two painters as Grigor Tsalkol and Grigor Arts'akhets'i. This issue was clarified by the codicologist Artashes Mat'evosyan (b. 1922, d. 2004) who conducted a detailed study on the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel.<sup>64</sup>

The manuscript is named the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel after the monastery where it was held, T'argmanch'ats' Monastery in the Gardman District, where it was preserved until 1900. Then Garegin Hovsep'ian *vardapet* transferred the manuscript to the Matenadaran in Etchmiadzin.<sup>65</sup>

In this manuscript, two patterns of illustration become visible. The first shows Grigor Tsalkol's illustrations (1232)

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63 See CHOOKASZIAN, Grigor Tsalkol.

64 MATEVOSYAN, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel, pp. 102-114, 1993, 1-2-3, pp. 105-118.

65 HOVSEP'IAN, Miniatures of the Etchmiadzin Gospel.



The composition of angels in the fresco of Dadivank' (1297) and the portrait of the Virgin in the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel (1305-1311)

of ten canon tables, four title pages, marginalia, and ornaments, made during the initial copying of the gospel. This is confirmed by the painter's colophon and the shared decorative style of his work. The artist calls himself "tsalkol," or painter. The work of the second Grigor (early fourteenth century) is also remarkable. The images show the life of Jesus and the portraits of the Evangelists; they are arranged in the following manner: the Evangelist portraits were added separately, before the title pages, where they are usually placed (fig. 16-17). Each of the gospels ends with an image from the Christological cycle.

It is noteworthy that Grigor Arts'akhets'i retained the palette of Grigor Tsalkol. In some areas, he interferes with the colors of Grigor Tsalkol to maintain a certain harmony with his own illustrations.

In the early fourteenth century, the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel was preserved in Khadavank'. Asp'a, daughter of Prince

Tarsayich of Syunik', and Prince Grigor, acquired the manuscript and gifted it to Khadavank'. Shortly after, in 1311, he died and was buried in this monastery, where the Dop'ian family cemetery was located. In the colophons, Asp'a is mentioned as the receiver and "decorator" of the gospel. Before donating the manuscript to the monastery she was also referred to like this, as the portraits of the Evangelists and the images of the Christological cycle were painted by her order.

The following scenes depicting the life of Christ are included in the manuscript: the nativity on f. 15r (above the frame is inscribed "Birth of the Savior" with red ink), the baptism on f. 20r, the three Marys on f. 114r, the last supper on f. 170r, descent into hell on f. 184r, and the annunciation on f. 188v (above the frame one reads "The Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary"). The dormition of the Virgin on folio 294r (fig. 19-24). In regards to this last image, Sirarpi Ter-Nersesian noted the full development of the iconography, well into the fourteenth century. In addition to these complete images, Grigor Arts'akhets'i painted marginal illustrations to aid the reader, who was then able to see an image upon reading the accompanying passages. This resulted in an impressive reading experience and a charming manuscript.

It should be noted that the highly artistic illustrations by Grigor Arts'akhets'i within the T'argmanch'ats' Gospel have stylistic parallels with the Vakht'ang Gospel and Dadivank''s fresco of 1297 (especially remarkable is the similarity of angels' faces). These can be considered works of Arts'akh's nobility, rather than folk art, which we will present below.

## A GROUP OF ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE LATE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

In the early 1960s and 1970s, while studying the manuscripts of Vaspurakan, we came across five gospels similar in style—Mat. MS 316, 6303, 4820, 4023, and 6319 (fig. 28–50). The colophons of these manuscripts have not survived, and there is no information about the exact date and location of their copying. The Matenadaran's Catalogue dates them back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Upon researching the manuscripts, it became clear that the gospels were produced in the same scriptorium.

Mat. MS 6303's later colophons likewise that suggest that these manuscripts can be grouped. The first of the gospels was written in 1356, and most likely belongs to the manuscript's first or second owner, or one of their close relatives (f. 107v). This was recorded at least half a century after the manuscript was copied in the northern regions of Armenia. Mention of Tsar Province in Arts'akh is remarkable. Khatapt, the son of Ch'orman, was one of the witnesses to the sale of the gospel.

Eighteen years after those events (1372), the manuscript was bound. The colophon on f. 108r reads: "By the order and sponsorship of Grigor." Based on the date, this must be Grigor Gerak'arets'i, the leader of the spiritual center of the Melikdom of Tsar, whose residence was at Khadavank' Monastery.<sup>66</sup>

The next colophon is from 1672. It provides information about the restoration of the gospel and mentions the bookbinder Łap'ants'i T'uma on f. 269. Here, we find another toponymic name, Łap'an (Kapan, Syunik').

The latest information about the manuscript is reported by

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<sup>66</sup> Ulubabian, *The Principality of Khach'en*, p. 303.

Barkhudariants' in 1895, he saw the gospel in a church in Getashen Village in Arts'akh.<sup>67</sup> This manuscript was in the collection of Garegin Hovsep'ian and was later brought to the Matenadaran.

Based on the style and iconography of the illustrations of Mat. MS 4820, the manuscript can be dated to the fifteenth century. The most important thing is that these illustrations are typical of miniature painting in northern Armenia.

The colophons dated to 1511 and 1537 are left by the priest Aristakes, who mentions Gelark'unik' (f. 13r). Fifty years later, in 1586, Khoja Pareak', whose colophon on f. 5r was written in the northern regions of Armenia, is identified as the owner of the manuscript. He is mentioned in a sixteenth-century inscription from Gelark'unik': "I... Pareak' ordered my son Melk'um to erect this cross."<sup>68</sup> According to Barkhudariants', the family of this Pareak' moved to Noraduz from Gandzak. This manuscript (MS 4820) was brought to the Matenadaran from Nor Varagavank' Monastery in Utik'.

Mat. MS 6319 was copied in 1477 in Egapat Village in Basen Province. The colophon is found on folios 246v-247r. Later, illuminations were added to the manuscript. It is necessary to find out where the manuscript was restored, since, in all probability, these thirteenth and fourteenth-century pages were added to the manuscript there. Initially, the manuscript did not contain thematic illustrations.

A seventeenth-century-colophon found on f. 250r clarifies this issue. It reveals that exactly one hundred and fifty years after the copying, the manuscript arrived in Utik', where it underwent a major restoration by the order of Archbishop Hovhannes, the spiritual leader of Khoranashat Monastery. The five pages were added to the manuscript here. It is also noteworthy that the bookbinder Hovhannes was from Shatakh Village near Gandzak, where he also copied Mat. MS 728 in 1621.

The last colophon dates to 1731, written by the manuscript's new owner, T'uma, who ordered Aristakes K'art'mankets'i to recover it (f. 250v). Aristakes K'art'mankets'i was quite famous. He lived and worked in the beginning of the eighteenth century in the Gardman District of Arts'akh (K'art'manik Village is also located here). In 1749, he covered a gospel copied by the scribe Sargis in the Khach'enadzor District of Arts'akh in 1492.<sup>69</sup>

This manuscript was bound for the last time in Larał Gorge, located east of Khoranashat, on the Arts'akh-Utik' border, near the Zakam District.<sup>70</sup>

Mat. MS 4023 was initially housed in the collection of Sevan, which was comprised of manuscripts produced in the northern regions of Armenia.

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67 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 261-262.

68 BARKHUDARIAN, The Meliks and Landlords of Gelark'unik', pp. 191-227.

69 BARKHUDARIANTS', Arts'akh, pp. 246-247.

70 ALISHAN, Political Geography, p. 84.

In summary:

a) There are around twenty colophons in the abovementioned manuscripts. The earliest one dates to 1356, while the latest date to the eighteenth century.

b) The locations mentioned—either directly or indirectly—in those colophons are linked to the northern regions of Armenia, such as Tsar Province, Getashen Village, Gardman, Khoranashat, Brdenik', Utik', Gandzasar, Shatakh Village, Varagavank' in Tavush, as well as Gelark'unik', Kapan, etc.

c) We did not find any mention of Vaspurakan, or the Catholicosate of Altamar, which would have been unavoidable in the case of manuscripts copied in Vaspurakan. Rather, the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin, the diocese of Khadavank', and the religious center of Khoranashat were mentioned once. As for the churches of Surb Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God), Hovhannes Mkrtych' (John the Baptist), and Grigor Lusavorich' (Gregory the Illuminator), it can be assumed that these are the churches of Khamsh Monastery<sup>71</sup> or Havaptuk Monastery<sup>72</sup> in Arts'akh.

Churches named Surb Astvatsatsin and Grigor Lusavorich' are also found at Goshavank' Monastery.<sup>73</sup> There are two more churches with these names in Halartsin as well.

d) These manuscripts were moved to the Matenadaran from collections that were comprised of codices mainly produced in the northern regions of Armenia: for instance, MS 316 from the Karinyan collection, MS 6303 from Garegin Hovsep'ian's collection, MS 4024 from the collection of Sevan, MS 6319 from Surb Hovhannes Church in Yerevan, MS 4820 from Varagavank'.

There is no evidence to show that any of these manuscripts were connected to Vaspurakan, which is likely why they were not included in Yervand Lalayan's volume *Catalogue of Armenian Manuscripts of Vaspurakan* (Tbilisi 1915).

In summary, the abovementioned manuscripts were exclusively linked to the northern regions of Armenia, i.e. Arts'akh, Utik', and Gelark'unik', for around six hundred years. The stylistic similarities and connections of these manuscripts with the artistic traditions of the shared cultural environment speak in favor of this assumption. Dickran Kouymjian also referred to the miniatures of these manuscripts, locating them to the Arts'akh-Utik' region.<sup>74</sup>

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71 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, p. 147.

72 JALALIANTS', *Jambr*, pp. 216–217.

73 VOSKIAN, *The Monasteries of Arts'akh*, pp. 183–184.

74 KOUYMJIAN, *MUTAFIAN, Artsakh Karabagh*, pp. 106–135.

## IMAGES OF THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CYCLE

Within the aforementioned gospels, we see an extensive and unique selection of thematic images including: the annunciation, the nativity, the presentation of Christ at the temple, the massacre of the innocents, the flight into Egypt, the finding in the temple, the baptism, entry into Jerusalem, raising of Lazarus, wise and foolish virgins, the sin of Adam and Eve, washing of the feet, last supper, the betrayal, trial before Pilate, the crucifixion, the burial of Jesus, the resurrection, the harrowing of hell, the ascension, and the Pentecost.

The images of Christ's childhood are especially remarkable (the annunciation, the nativity, the presentation of Christ at the temple, the massacre of the innocents, the flight into Egypt, the finding in the temple).<sup>75</sup> Such a list of thematic illustrations does not entirely correspond to iconographic canon accepted by any school of Armenian miniature painting. The differences become more obvious when compared to manuscript illumination from Vaspurakan.

During subsequent restorations, the layout of some of the miniatures was altered. Here they are presented in the order in which they appear in the gospel text.

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<sup>75</sup> The complete series depicting Christ's childhood, is surely much wider.

The series of images begins with a scene of the annunciation, which appears in three of the gospel group: Mat. MS 316, MS 6303, and MS 6319 (fig. 28–43). An angel with wings spread open, playing a flute, appears before the Virgin at the well. A typical example of opened-winged angels at the annunciation is found in a sixth-century manuscript of *Jesu Nave*,<sup>76</sup> as well as in the mosaics and frescoes of Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice and Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv (11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries).<sup>77</sup> The motif of the flying angel is found in Syrian-Coptic (11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>78</sup> and Armenian (16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries) monuments. The motif of a flute or trumpet player only rarely appears in manuscripts from the tenth and fourteenth centuries. In European art, angles playing such instruments appears only in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, instead of a simple flute, a cornet is painted.

The motif of a trumpet entered the Armenian iconography from folk culture, as heralds announced the news by sounding a trumpet. This custom has been maintained by some Eastern cultures to this day.

This motif, apart from its appearance in the annunciation, is also found in other scenes, for example, in the resurrection. Such examples survive in the manuscripts prepared in Arts'akh, Utik', and Syunik'. For instance, the first known Armenian manuscript—wherein the unexpected news of the resurrection of Jesus is announced by a herald playing the flute or trumpet, is currently housed in the library of the University of Chicago (USA)—was copied in 1237 in the northern regions of Armenia.<sup>80</sup> In this manuscript, the trumpet is also found in the entry into Jerusalem, and the ascension, where it is in the hands of people standing on rooves.<sup>81</sup> The second is Mat. MS 2930, copied on the border of the regions of Nakhijevan and Syunik' in 1315. The third manuscript was produced in Tat'ev in the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries (Mat. MS 6305). There are a few examples from the scriptorium of Elegis as well. Examples survive carved in stone as well. In Gelard, inside the rock-cut church of Prince Prosh, there is an image of a cross with the motif of a trumpet player below. The relief likely depicts a scene of the second coming.<sup>82</sup>

Thus, the motif of trumpeting news is found in a number of Armenian manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, all of which are the product of the same or close cultural environment: Ani, Syunik', Tat'ev, Arts'akh, that is, in northern Armenia.

Scenes of the nativity are found in four manuscripts. All four share the same composition and differ only slightly in terms of each miniature's details. In the center, Mary and Joseph

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76 KONDAKOV, *History of Byzantine Art and Iconography*, p. 64.

77 POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, pp. 23–24.

78 A gospel N154 kept in Vienna (MILLET, *Recherches sur l'Iconographie de l'évangile*, p. 87, pl. 34).

79 See TAPESTRY: end of the fifteenth century: Central Rhine, Tapestry, s. 1500. detail, Lower Rhine (SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, v. I, pl. 127, 129).

80 HOVSEPIAN, *A Manuscript Gospel*, pp. 47–48.

81 *Idem*, fig. 3.

82 HOVSEPIAN, *The Khalbakians or the Proshians*, v. 1, p. 122, fig. 42.

sit facing each other, holding out their hands to the manger.<sup>83</sup> The shepherds overlook from above. One of them announces the good news by playing the flute (Mat. MS 316, 6303). Interestingly, the painter gave Joseph and Mary on the same visual level (usually Joseph is depicted below her). A typical Armenian example is within a gospel from Syunik', illustrated by the painter Momik in Gladzor in 1302 (Mat. MS 6792, f. 2r).

It is worth noting that on occasion, Mary is depicted without a halo. Art critic Lilit Zak'aryan links the absence of her halo with Nestorian ideology,<sup>84</sup> which rejects Virgin-worship. If this is in fact the case, it might explain Mary's total absence from ascension and Pentecost scenes, which is typical of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Syrian-Nestorian iconography (present in manuscripts prepared in Mosul). In contrast, worship of the Virgin found a comfortable place in the Armenian schools of miniature painting, first in Vaspurakan, where she is always nimbed.

Regarding Nestorianism,<sup>85</sup> it should be noted that this sect made waves in Armenia from the fifth onward. Even at the height of this Christian movement, Armenian authority Nershapuh Artsruni, fought against it, expelling Nestorian preachers from Armenia.<sup>86</sup> Further, the Armenian Church officially anathematized Nestorianism. Despite this, one cannot rule out that remnants of Nestorianism remained. Up to the eighth century, echoes of Nestorianism were more readily present in Aġank' and Syunik' than in other Armenian regions. Ter-Minasian writes, "...After the Council of Dvin in 554, the power of Nestorianism and Chalcedonianism did not only still exist in Armenia, but in Syunik'-they took firm root and even threatened the unity of the Armenian Church..."<sup>87</sup> "A similar alarming situation has arisen over Nestorianism in the land of Aġank'..."<sup>88</sup> Movses Kalankatvats'i also testifies to the prevalence of Nestorianism in Aġank'. Moreover, the spiritual leader of Aġank', Nerses, belonged to this direction and sought to establish it within the diocese. Nerses' intention, of course, did not materialize, as the Armenian catholicos Elia Archishets'i (703-717) anathematized Nerses.<sup>89</sup>

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83 Mary's straight-sitting position on a chair comes from the ancient times: the Rabbula Gospels completed in 586 (LEROY, *Les manuscrits Syriques a Peintures*, fig. 1, table 23), early Christian silk fabrics from the Vatican's Macro museum (GRABAR, *Christian Iconography*, p. 99, ill. 249), here also, Joseph sits in front of Mary, then on the ivory box of the second half of the fifth century kept in Italy, (SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, v. I, pl. 149), in the "Nativity" scene of the mosaic of the Martorana Church (1143-1151) in Palermo (TALBOT RICE, *Art of the Byzantine Era*, p. 165, ill. 151). In Armenian manuscripts Mary's sitting image is found in the gospel of 974 produced in Tshurut' and Mat. MS 6201 (1038), as well as several manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

84 ZAK'ARIAN, *History of the Miniature Painting of Vaspurakan*, p. 59.

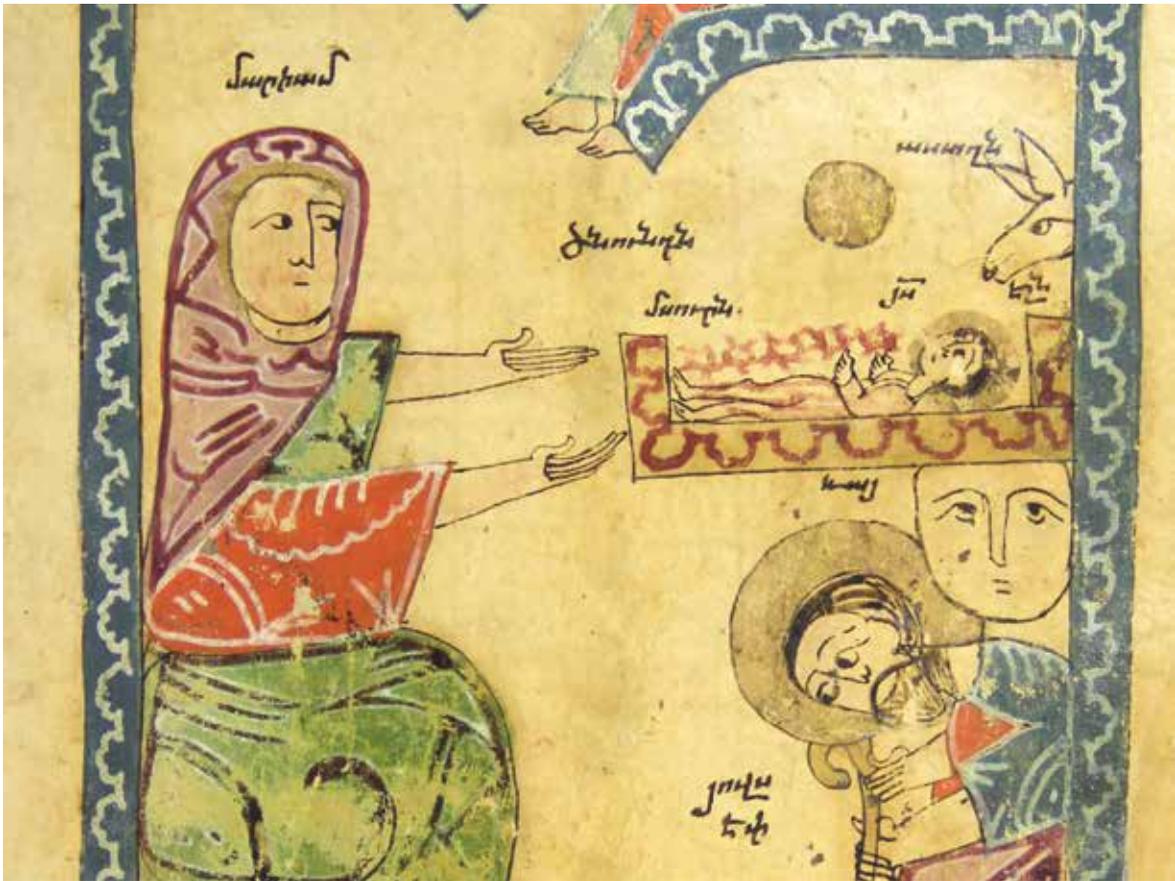
85 TER-MINASIAN, *Nestorianism in Armenia*.

86 *Idem*, p. 194. See also TER-MINASIAN, *Historical and Philological Researches*, pp. 330-393.

87 *Idem*, p. 225.

88 *Ibid.*

89 TER-MINASIAN, *Nestorianism in Armenia*, p. 242.



Nativity (detail), Gospel,  
14<sup>th</sup> century,  
Mat. MS 316, f. 3r

The nativity scene in Mat. MS 316, MS 4820, and MS 6319 are painted with remarkable detail. Just below the cradle, a large, mask-like female face is painted. The inscription reveals that this is Eve. Her presence in this scene suggests that the revelation and sacrifice of Jesus could atone for the sin that had been inflicted on the human race by Eve.<sup>90</sup> This idea is also emphasized in a Greek gospel (MS 543) kept in the National Library of Paris. Here, under a scene of the nativity,

<sup>90</sup> See ZARBHANALIAN, *Museum of Ancient and Modern Literature*, v. 2, p. 38. In the Latin apocryphal books, while looking for a midwife, Joseph meets Absalom and another woman, Salome, and not Eve. (POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, p. 79). In the scene of the "Adoration of the Magi" of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus now in the Vatican collection, Adam and Eve are depicted as a hint of the idea of atonement for sin. One sees the same also in the sarcophagus of Stilicho in Sant'Ambrogio in Milan (KONDAKOV, *History of Byzantine Art and Iconography*, p. 116).

the sin of Adam and Eve is illustrated, wherein Eve convinces Adam to eat the forbidden fruit.<sup>91</sup> This trend in illustration is an expression of the thematic parallelism between the Old and New Testaments.

In the nativities of Mat. MS 4820 and MS 6319, the seraphim and cherubim, called to glorify the will and essence of God, are remarkably rendered. The Magi that bring gifts for the child are young and barefaced, suggesting that the prototype called upon was quite old.<sup>92</sup>

The scene of Christ's presentation at the Temple is painted inside an ornate, triangular domed temple. Partridges are perched atop the two outer sloping facets of the dome, rising to the cross on the top of the dome. According to the artist's note, they symbolize the apostles. Inside the pillared temple stand Mary, the Christ child, and the Simeon the Elder. In Mat. MS 316 and MS 6319, Christ is depicted in his mother's arms, about to be handed off to Simeon. In Mat. MS 4820, Mary sits before the altar on the right, facing Simeon is on the left. From the center of the altar, Jesus stretches his arms out to Simeon. Zak'aryan L. writes, "...The baby Jesus goes independently from Mary to the old man Simeon, the first time this iconography has been expressed in Armenian art."<sup>93</sup> One can agree with Zak'aryan L., but it seems to us that there is also "technical" nuance to the image. This appears, however, to be an artistic choice, done to achieve symmetry within the composition. The separation of Christ from the Virgin adheres to the architectural form of the temple. If two figures were placed inside one of the arches, the general harmony of the composition would be disturbed, an example of this unbalance is seen in Mat. MS 6319. In Mat. MS 4820, the Christ child is not walking, but simply stretches out to Simeon.<sup>94</sup>

The painter Hovhannes did not shy away from depicting Jesus standing, independent of his mother's help, likely attributing this to the miraculous nature of the child.

The Massacre of the Innocents, a scene present in early Christian monuments,<sup>95</sup> has various pictorial interpretations. In our manuscripts, King Herod sits at the top, holding a sword in his hand, symbolizing the impending bloodshed. In front of his eyes, soldiers slaughter innocent children. Below, mothers mourn.

A noteworthy scene from Christ's childhood, the flight into Egypt, is found exclusively in Mat. MS 6319 (f. 3r). This iconography is not executed in every miniature school; for example,

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91 POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, p. 60.

92 See SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, fig. 246.

93 ZAK'ARIAN L. *History of the Miniature Painting of Vaspurakan*, p. 45.

94 There are several other examples of this iconography. For instance, in the scene of the presentation at the Temple of a miniature kept in Garegin Hovsep'ian's archive, Jesus stands on a table, though Mary holds his hand. In a miniature depicting the Virgin Mary and the Child of an Armenian gospel copied in 966, the baby Jesus stands in front of Mary instead of being in her arms (see DER-NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Manuscripts*, N 537, fig. 3). In a Bulgarian painting, too, the baby Jesus is simply standing between Joseph and Mary (TSEHLINGIZOU, *Christliche Kunst in Bulgarien*, pl. 150).

95 See LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, p. 49.

it never appears in manuscripts from Vaspurakan from the 13th to 16th century. This image is unique. Joseph, on foot, leads the way. Mary follows, with the Christ child in her arms. In medieval Christian iconography, the flight into Egypt generally follows an unchanging iconography: Mary holds the baby, led on an ass by Joseph.<sup>96</sup> In rare cases, the baby is carried on Joseph's shoulders, and Mary rides on either an ass, or a horse.<sup>97</sup> It is important to keep in mind that text of the gospel does not specify how Mary and Jesus arrived to Egypt.

In a tenth-century relief on a Giborium (pyx) considered to be a work of the German school of Metz, Mary is also depicted walking with the baby in her arms.<sup>98</sup> Scholars consider this a rare archaic example. We can speculate that a late-thirteenth century Armenian painter used an ancient model for his painting.

One of the less popular scenes is the finding of the Temple (Luke 2: 46–47), which is combined here with an episode of the mother of the sons of Zebedee. This is a rare case in Armenian medieval miniature painting (Mat. MS 6319, f. 4r). At the top, under a wide arch, stands a young Jesus. On the left, one sees Joseph with his arms outstretched, and on the right, stand Jacob and John. The painter inscribed the image with, “Mother of the sons of Zebedee”.

The earliest examples of Jesus preaching have been preserved in Armenian manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. MS 888/859 (Mekhitarist Congregation, Venice) holds an image of the baby Jesus. He is depicted in the foreground, flanked on either side by Mary and Joseph. On the left are three priests.<sup>99</sup> The figures seem to be compressed in this elaborate and highly populated composition; the figures hardly fit into the frame.<sup>100</sup>

We see a similar composition in an Armenian gospel from 1262 (MS 539) housed in the Walters Art Museum (USA).<sup>101</sup> Latin and Greek examples also share this composition.<sup>102</sup>

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96 The fresco of Surb Hakob (Saint James) Cathedral (Vaspurakan) depicting Mary on an ass is noteworthy.

97 A more typical example is the miniature of the Menologion of Basil II (979–986), where both Mary and the child are on a donkey (LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, p. 72). In the Palatine Chapel of Palermo, Mary is on a horse or a donkey, and the baby Jesus is on the shoulders of the walking Joseph. (LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, fig. 227). The oldest ones are found in the church of Maximianus in Ravenna (11th century), on the ivory cover of the Gospel of Etchmiadzin (6th–7th centuries), in Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice (12th–13th centuries) (POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, p. 45, fig. 34, 35), etc. In some cases the baby Jesus walks next to his mother and father while fleeing to Egypt (SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art.*, fig. 337).

98 SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, fig. 317.

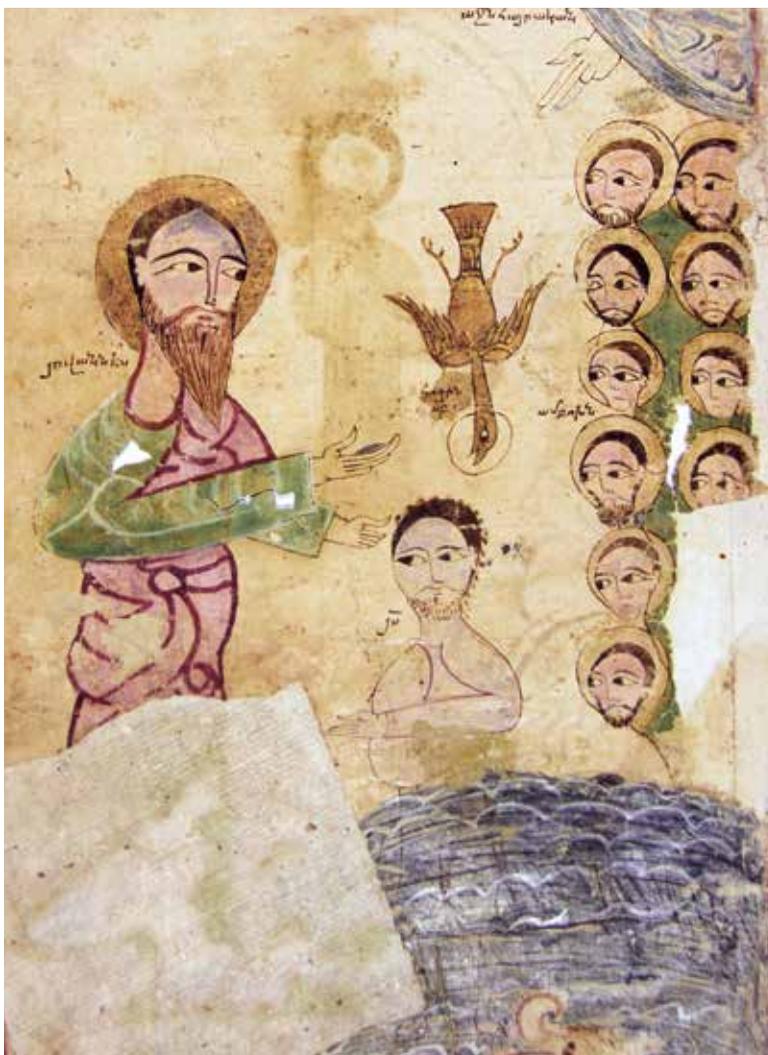
99 Although the authors of the album date the manuscript to the eleventh century, in our opinion, it dates back to the twelfth or thirteenth century (See our review for the Armenian Miniature Painting, *Manuscripts of the Mekhitarist Congregation*, vol. 1, Venice, 1966, “*Historical-Philological Journal*”, N 3, 1966, pp. 264–269.

100 Armenian Miniature Painting, *Manuscripts of the Mekhitarist Congregation*, vol. 1, fig. 54.

101 DER-NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Manuscripts*, pl. 115.

102 SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, fig. 65, 339–343.

Baptism, Gospel, 14<sup>th</sup> century,  
Mat. MS 6319, f. 5r



Mat. MS 4820 and MS 6319's baptism scenes show a groups of people standing on a river bank.<sup>103</sup> The disciples of John the Baptist stand behind him. The dove descends, holding a small jar of anointing oil in its beak. In Mat. MS 6303, the crowd is not pictured. The two disciples stand on the shore, with the angels above. The giant dragon in the river twists its body, attracting attention.

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<sup>103</sup> The most typical of the early examples of the presence of a large group of people at the "Baptism" scene is an eleventh-century manuscript of Gregory of Nazianzus (National Library of France, MS 543). Moreover, this group of people standing on the bank of the river entered the iconography from the tenth-eleventh centuries (POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, p. 188).

Jesus stretches out his hands—an echo of ancient iconography, which Izmaylova discusses in connection with Mat. MS 283 (1033).<sup>104</sup> Similar to the gospel of 1033, here too, Jesus is depicted without a halo, whereas John the Baptist, his disciples, the angels, and even the crowd are all nimbed. According to Izmaylova, the artist wanted to emphasize the human nature of Jesus Christ.<sup>105</sup> Her assumption may be correct,<sup>106</sup> however, the reason for painting all other figures with halos is unclear. Let us turn to Jesus. We might consider it possible that before his baptism, wherein he was anointed with oil, Jesus was not yet confirmed to be the son of God. It is revealed during the baptism (when the Holy Spirit and the right hand of God descend): “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). It is known that the ritual of baptism is symbolized as a birth for eternal life,<sup>107</sup> therefore, after his baptism, Jesus is depicted with a nimbus.

The entry into Jerusalem is commonly found in manuscripts. Although there are slight differences in the composition and depiction of figures, a general scheme is observed: Jesus rides a donkey at the top of the composition, and a large group of disciples and greeters are below.

The miniature of Mat. MS 6303 has a more regular layout: to the left of a beautiful palm tree appears Jesus with his disciples. A group greets him to the right. In Mat. MS 6303 and MS 4820, the donkey is depicted with a foal. This is not an innovation, as this addition also appears in T'oros Taronats'i's gospel of 1323 (Mat. MS 6289).

Scenes of the raising of Lazarus share a similar composition. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, proving his omnipotence. The miracle is witnessed by the disciples of Jesus, the sisters Mary and Martha, and representatives of the people. Surprisingly, the young man destroying the tomb, typically found in manuscripts painted in Vaspurakan, is not found here. In Mat. MS 6319, Lazarus is depicted lying motionless in the tomb, eyes open. In the other three manuscripts, the miracle of his resurrection is in progress. In Mat. MS 316, Lazarus raises his head and holds out his hand. In Mat. MS 4820 and MS 6303, one sees two tombs depicted atop each other. The upper holds the brother of Mary and Martha. An inscription indicated that the lower tomb holds Lazarus.

Our painters loved to paint the episode of the wise and foolish virgins, from the parable of the ten virgins. In each manuscript, this scene has a unique composition. In Mat. 6319, the wise and foolish virgins share a page with a scene of the sin of Adam and Eve. Here, they appear to wait for Jesus, who stands under the tree of wisdom.<sup>108</sup> This scene was extensively

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104 IZMAYLOVA, *Traditions of the Echmiadzin Gospels*, pp. 204–15.

105 *Idem*, p. 213. She thinks that some Armenian scriptoria were under the Syrian–Nestorian influence.

106 In Byzantine and Latin manuscripts too, Jesus is sometimes pictured without a nimbus in the “Baptism” scene. See SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, v. 1, fig. 366, fig. 367, fig. 368.

107 See POKROVSKY, *The Gospel in the Monuments of Iconography*, p. 163.

108 The artist combined this episode with the scene of Eve and Adam's sin: probably, the ancestor Adam

interpreted in Mat. MS 4820. In a wide, ornate frame—which seems to be an integral part of the image, expressing the idea of the chamber—the virgins are arranged in four groups. Christ, the bridegroom, is situated in the upper left-hand corner of the composition, separated by a frame. The painter inscribed the image, according to episode's narrative.

Images of the sin of Adam and Eve stand out for their original iconography. In Mat. MS 4820 and MS 316, Adam and Eve stand or sit clothes by the tree of wisdom, uncommon in medieval art. Zak'arian suggests that this iconographic solution was related to apocryphal texts.<sup>109</sup> Those who illustrated these manuscripts, were well aware of the apocryphal books of the Bible, and "...sought to convey as clearly as possible the profound philosophical idea of the mentioned parable."<sup>110</sup> In terms of this assumption, the illustration of this scene in Mat. MS 6319 is very remarkable. Eve is depicted naked, that is, "naked from the divine light," as she has tasted the forbidden fruit. Adam, who is clothed, still "covered with divine light." It is also noteworthy that Eve's naked body is grotesquely rendered, clear the painter had no experience in painting naked bodies.

Indeed, Eve's naked body is distorted here—her legs are animalesque, while her head is painted masterfully. It is possible that artists painted bodies wearing clothes to avoid painting naked, anatomically correct bodies.<sup>111</sup> In this respect, the gospel of "Okhu", which recently entered the collection of the Matenadaran (MS 10809), is remarkable. Here, in the original sin scene, both figures are naked, and the artist's caption reads, "they tasted the fruit and became naked from the light."

In other manuscripts, attempts were made to shield the nakedness of the couple. For example, in a thirteenth-century Arabic manuscript illustrated in Spain, Adam and Eve wear mantles, however their initial nakedness is obvious. The mantle was later added by another painter, most likely conditioned by his beliefs.<sup>112</sup> Adam and Eve are also depicted clothed on a seventeenth-century ceramic tile from Kutina, or Kutahya. It is noteworthy that on the tile, Adam wears a local, national costume—a yellow belt, an eastern fur hat,

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embodies also Jesus, or Jesus has not yet come. In the scene of "The Sin of Adam and Eve" found in a Latin manuscript, the Tree of Life, with an image of Jesus on it, is depicted behind Adam (SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, fig. 29).

109 ZAK'ARIAN, *From the History of Vaspurakan Miniature*, pp. 54-55. See *Museum of Ancient and Modern Literature, The Apocryphal New Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 309-310.

110 ZAK'ARIAN, *From the History of Vaspurakan Miniature*, p. 55.

111 The scene of the crucifixion of Mat. MS 316 can be mentioned here, where naked bodies are depicted absolutely unsuccessfully. When we compare it with other illustrations, we get the impression that it is painted by another artist. The same is observed in the crucifixion of Mat. MS 6303. It should also be noted that in the frescoes of the Palatine Chapel in Palermo, in the scene depicting the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve are in furry clothes (PAVLOVSKY, *Painting of the Palatine Chapel in Palermo*, p. 80, fig. 12). Sirarpie Der Nersessian notes that the Old Testament scenes depicted in the Sicilian churches are based on some Eastern Christian prototypes (*Armenian Medieval Art*, pp. 109-110).

112 CRUBE, *The World of Islam*, pl. 35.

etc.<sup>113</sup> However, our manuscripts differ fundamentally in their interpretations from the abovementioned examples.

The miniature depicting the scene of the “Last Supper” is unique (Mat. MS 316, 6319). At the top left of the composition, Jesus sits, surrounded by apostles, only one of which is nimbed. We have not seen such an iconographic solution to this scene before. In Mat. MS 316, in the lower right corner, Judas is pictured apart from the group of apostles. As the painter described, “Judas took his piece of bread and left.” There is an interesting detail in Mat. MS 6319: a woman (caption reads Mary) is depicted begging at the feet of Jesus. To the right of it, one sees a basin, symbolic of the washing of the Christ’s feet.<sup>114</sup>

In Mat. MS 6303’s feet washing scene, there is a beautiful, ornate frame, which references the idea of supper as a table.<sup>115</sup> It was common in Armenian miniature painting to present the two episodes together, consecutively.

Loomis L. writes that the round tables in these miniatures are reproductions of short-legged tables of Asian origin.<sup>116</sup> He compared the tables to those painted in Syriac miniatures.<sup>117</sup>

One of the earliest examples of a circular table appears in the Rabbula Gospels (dated to 586). Here, all of the apostles are present, however their bodies are scattered around the table.<sup>118</sup> A table painted in a gospel (British Museum, MS 7169, 12th–13th century) is also representative of this type. Here, the apostles are again pictured from above.<sup>119</sup> Round tables also appear in Latin manuscripts as early as 850.<sup>120</sup>

If we look at the external similarities, it would be right to remember the works of T’oros Taronats’i, an artist who lived and worked in Syunik’. In his version of the Last Supper, painted within an illuminated Bible in 1308 (Mat. MS 206, f. 491v), he painted an oval table. Jesus appears on the left, and around the table we see the heads of the apostles. Apparently,

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113 CARSWELL and DOWSETT, Kutahya, pl. 1–3.

114 Such examples are found also in Mat. MS 9841 (1452, painter: Mkrtych’), where the scenes of the “Last Supper” and “Washing of the Feet” are combined. The same is found in Mat. MS 5783 (1588). There are such examples also in the European monuments (SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, fig. 96, etc.).

115 In Mat. MS 6365 (Berdadzor 1447), a circular table with fish and other dishes is depicted at the bottom of the basin of the washing of the feet. In Mat. MS 5783 (1583 Mokr’), the table of the last supper is depicted near the feet of Peter, as if the apostles should sit around the table after the washing of the feet. Even in the frescoes of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross on Aht’amar Island, due to local religious traditions, the “Last Supper” was replaced by the scene of the “Anointing of Jesus” in Bethany, which in turn included the “Washing of the Feet” scene (DER-NERSESSIAN, *Aghtamar*, p. 108).

116 See ZAK’ARIAN, *From the History of Vaspurakan Miniature*, p. 51 [LOOMIS, *The Table of the Last Supper*, p. 25].

117 *Ibid.*

118 LEROY, *Les Manuscrits syriaques a peintures*.

119 *Idem*, pl. 119, fig. 1.

120 SCHILLER, *Iconography of Christian Art*, p. 11, fig. 74.

in the cultural environment of Syunik' and Arts'akh, such iconography of the Last Supper had a common prototype.

As for the halo-less Mary in Mat. MS 6319, the tradition of depicting the scenes together is reminiscent of the episode preceding the Last Supper, which took place in Bethlehem, six days before Easter, when Mary Magdalene anointed Jesus' feet with oil.<sup>121</sup> Unfortunately, in this miniature, Jesus' feet and some of the lower part of Mary's hands are distorted. However, they can be completed mentally based on the text, as well as by referencing other similar illustrations. For instance, in the Last Summer mosaic in the church in Monreale (Sicily) (1180–1190), Mary again fell at the feet of Jesus. Near the pair, we see a vial of anointing oil.<sup>122</sup> For an early example of this iconography, one should note Gregory of Nazianzus' manuscript (880–886), stored at the National Library of France.<sup>123</sup>

Subtle, symbolic interpretations, achieved by analyzing captions or the pairings of certain scenes, stem from the structural nature of medieval art. In Armenian miniature painting, this tendency is prevalent. For example, in Mat. MS 316, the entire surface of the last supper's table is covered with a floral cross. This symbolizes the idea of betrayal and sacrifice.<sup>124</sup> It is noteworthy that Durnovo L. once drew our attention to the fact that in Kuys Sandukht Chapel (Holy Virgin Sandukht) in T'alın, there is a stone resembling the circular table of miniatures with a floral cross carved on it.<sup>125</sup> This stone has long served as a sacrificial altar for locals to the region, on which animals were slaughtered. As we see, the decorative idea of sacrifice is present in both miniature painting and in monumental material culture.<sup>126</sup>

In Mat. MS 316, the scene of the betrayal of Christ is combined with the scene of the trial before Pilate. Perhaps not accidentally, the image of Pilate is given in the central part, and Jesus is depicted on the right.

The scene of the crucifixion also shares common features across these manuscripts. Adam's head appears at the base of the cross. On either side of the cross are the crucified robbers and soldiers who pierced Jesus' side and mockingly offered him a vinegar-soaked sponge. An interesting difference is that in Mat. MS 316, we see the heads of three women below the base of the cross. These three women are mentioned in the gospel (Mark 15:40–41). Surprisingly, the mourning Virgin Mary and young John the Baptists are not depicted.

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121 Gospel of John, 12:1–3.

122 TALBOT RICE, *Art of the Byzantine Era*, p. 169–170, pl. 154.

123 LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, vol. 2, pl. 47.

124 HAKOBYAN, *Peculiarities of Gospel Iconography in Vaspurakan*, pp. 52–58.

125 *Armenian Cross Stones*, p. 26.

126 In connection with the last supper, Lilit Zak'arian also came to a pro-Vaspurakan conclusion, while, apart from the manuscript of Hovsian Berkrets'i, this episode is not pictured in other manuscripts of the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries of Vaspurakan. It would be right to look for their approximate correlation in Syunik', particularly in T'oros Taronats'i's manuscripts.

Burial of Jesus, Resurrection,  
The Three Marys, Harrowing  
of Hell, Gospel, 14<sup>th</sup> century,  
Mat. MS 6319, f. 7v



The scene of the resurrection is complex and multi-thematic, and is typical of combining consecutive episodes of the life of Christ. As there are two scenes in Mat. MS 316—the resurrection and Christ’s meeting with the anointed women—Mat. MS 6303 pairs the scenes of Christ’s burial and the harrowing of hell. Joseph and Nicodemus take the body of Jesus, wrapped in a linen cloth, to the tomb, and Jesus destroys hell with a cross staff. In Mat. MS 6319, one sees the dead and those guarding the tomb in front of Jesus holding a cross in his hand. Only the word “death,” inscribed by the

painter, has been preserved. In fact, this miniature presents four consecutive episodes: the burial, resurrection, anointing and harrowing of hell. The artist included explanatory inscriptions for each figure.<sup>127</sup>

The angel, sitting on the tomb with outstretched wings, blows a trumpet announcing the resurrection of Christ. This remarkable scene has correlations with the manuscripts from the Tat'ev-Syunik' region.<sup>128</sup>

Another noteworthy detail is the small cross in the hand of Jesus walking towards women, which, as the artist explained, symbolizes the harrowing of hell.<sup>129</sup>

In the ascension, Jesus rises to heaven with the help of four angels. In Mat. MS 316 and MS 6303, Jesus stands erect inside the U-shaped mandorla. In Mat. MS 6319, he sits cross-legged inside a circular mandorla with his arms folded across his chest. Interestingly, the Virgin Mary is not depicted in these two manuscripts.

The last thematic image is the scene of the Pentecost, which is found only in Mat. MS 316. Above, instead of Jesus, one sees the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. Also here, the Virgin is not pictured.<sup>130</sup>

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127 Mat. MS 6305, MS 10525 (painter: Sargis), etc. See POPOVA, *The Miniature Painting of Novgorod*, pp. 105-139.

128 Mat. MS 6503.

129 Zak'arian rightly noted that in Mat. MS 6303, there are three interconnected episodes (the burial, the resurrection, and the harrowing of hell), which express one general idea - Christ's victory over death and hell, and the salvation of mankind (ZAK'ARIAN, *From the History of Vaspurakan Miniature*, p. 53). These scenes were always depicted separately in the manuscripts of Vaspurakan.

130 According to Kirpichnikov, the presence of the Virgin in the scene of the "Pentecost" comes from the traditions of Western iconography (KIRPICHNIKOV, *The Descent of the Holy Spirit*, v. 15. It seems to us that this view is completely wrong due to the fact that the author was not sufficiently familiar with the peculiarities of early Eastern (albeit Armenian) iconography.

## EVANGELISTS, CANON TABLES, AND TITLE PAGES

Except for those found in Mat. MS 4820 and MS 6319, the portraits of the Evangelists and their title pages have been preserved on the following folios: Mat. MS 316: Matthew - 13v-14r, Mark - 83v-84r, Luke - 129v-130r, John with Prochorus - 198v-199r; Mat. 6303: Matthew - 11v-12r, Mark - 108v-109r, Luke - 169v-170r, John with Prochorus - 269v-270r; Mat. MS 4023: Matthew - missing, Mark: 188v-189r, Luke - 300v-301r, John with Prochorus - 492v-493r.

In Mat. MS 316, MS 6303, and MS 4023, the Evangelists are depicted sitting on wooden chairs. The entire composition is presented within a wide, ornate frame.

In all manuscripts, the Evangelist John is pictured standing, his gaze and outstretched hand are pointed to the Father's right hand depicted in the upper right corner. John dictates to his disciple Prochorus, a young, beardless man. These Evangelist portraits are closely linked to iconography coming out of Syunik'.<sup>131</sup>

The same should be said about the title pages: they are reminiscent of thirteenth-fourteenth-century painting from Syunik' and Cilicia. Only Mat. MS 4820 can be considered an exception, though, in this one, the image of the Virgin Mary with a child depicted in the center of the headpiece of Luke's title page is tightly linked to the manuscripts from Syunik'. For example, we can mention a fourteenth-century gospel illuminated by T'oros Taronats'i kept in the library of the Hartford Seminary (USA), where Luke's title page is decorated in nearly the same way.<sup>132</sup> The half-canon table and Mary's ornate chair are also similar. In Taronats'i's manuscript, there are angels on both sides of the Virgin, while in the gospel, one sees beautiful bouquets of flowers.

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<sup>131</sup> HAKOBYAN, *Miniature Painting of Vaspurakan*, p. 46.

<sup>132</sup> In T'oros Taronats'i's gospel of 1223 (Mat. MS 6289), the Virgin Mary is shown breastfeeding the baby. This scene is also found in MS 278 (13th century), kept in the library of the Mekhitarist Congregation (DERNERSESSIAN, *Etudes Buzantines*, pl. 389), and in Esai Nch'ets'i's Bible (Mat. MS 206).

Title Page of the Gospel  
of Luke, 14<sup>th</sup> century,  
Mat. MS 4023, f. 151r



In Mat. MS 4023, Luke's title page has a unique decoration; the upper part of the page is occupied by a large headpiece, inside of which, in a circle with oval facets, is the image of the seated Virgin and child. It is similar to the Hodegetria painted by T'oros Taronats'i.<sup>133</sup> Finding framed thematic images in the image programs of title pages and headpieces is reminiscent of Greco-Latin manuscript painting.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>133</sup> HOVSEPIAN, *The Kalbakians or the Proshians*, v. 2, p. 234, fig. 216.

<sup>134</sup> DER-NERSESSIAN, *Etudes Byzantines*, p. 33, fig. 132; PELEKANDIS, CHRISTIOU, TSIOMIS, KADAS, *The Treasures of Mount Athos*, fig. 420, 421, etc. The corresponding page of a gospel copied in 1448 at Aljots'

In Mat. MS 6303, the Virgin is depicted in Matthew's title page (f. 12r). The headpieces of the other three title pages are filled with beautiful trefoils.

Matthew's title page in Mat. MS 316 is remarkable: inside the headpiece, two human portraits, symbolic of Matthew, are depicted inside of each of the five woven frames against a gold background. John's title page (f. 199r) consists of eighteen symmetrical latticed ornaments with elongated woven cycles inside. Unlike the title pages of other manuscripts, here the initial letters occupy almost all free space.<sup>135</sup>

The ten tables of concordance are framed between the eight columns, preceded by the two-page letter of Eusebius. During the restorations of these manuscripts, the layout of pages, as well as miniatures, was disrupted, some pages are missing too, such as the eight canon in Mat. MS 316, the ninth and tenth canons, and the first part of Eusebius' letter in Mat. MS 4023, and the first, sixth, and ninth canons in Mat. MS 6303. In Mat. MS 4820, the artist shuffled the order of the canons.<sup>136</sup>

The canon tables are framed, leaving subtle impression of a "chamber" (especially in Mat. MS 316, MS 6303, and MS 4023). The wide and ornate supporting columns of the headpieces are topped with human- or bird-headed capitals. Predators, sometimes in pairs, face each other, sometimes separately, and are pictured on the headpieces (one does not find images of predators on the headpieces of the fourteenth-fifteenth-century miniatures of Vaspurakan). Inside and around the headpieces, simple geometric and floral motifs are used, which are small and neat, evenly arranged, and painted with eye-catching soft colors. They are also reminiscent of versions popular in other schools of Armenian miniature painting such as Cilicia and Syunik', though the cube-shaped ornaments of Mat. MS 4820 are somewhat similar to the decorative forms of manuscripts from Vaspurakan.

Of the presented group, one notices a unique selection of thematic images, which do not adhere to the rules adopted by any Armenian miniature school.<sup>137</sup>

From the Christological cycle among scenes of Jesus' childhood, appear separate passages from the parables.<sup>138</sup> In particular, the following scenes are depicted: the flight into Egypt,

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Monastery has correlations with this image (ALISHAN, *Ayrarat*, p. 352, fig. 45).

<sup>135</sup> Also in this case, one can draw some parallels with the manuscripts of T'oros Taronats'i.

<sup>136</sup> In the last four canon tables of Mat. MS 4820 (ff. 11v-12r, 13v-14r), it is only written "Canon Ten", while these pages also contain the seventh, eighth, and ninth canons.

<sup>137</sup> The scene of Jesus Christ on the throne of glory, which became almost obligatory in the manuscripts of Vaspurakan, as well as Old Testament scenes, such as the sacrifice of Abraham, the transfiguration, the wedding at Cana, or the series depicting the miracles - healing of the sick, Christ raises the widow's son from the dead, Peter's doubt, as well as the distribution of loaves, the communion, the coronation of the virgin, etc. are missing in these manuscripts. Secular motifs, so typical of the miniature painting of Vaspurakan, or portraits of scribes, painters, and commissioners are not seen as well (see HAKOBYAN, *A group of Manuscripts of the Arts'akh-Utik' School*, "Banber Matenadarani", N 14-ԱԼԷ).

<sup>138</sup> They somehow differ from the Vaspurakan school, where the episodes of the nativity, the revelation, the

the finding of the temple, the wise and foolish virgins, Adam and Eve under the tree of knowledge, the last supper, etc.

It is difficult to find another group of Armenian manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that contains such a unique thematic series of illustrations. If it is necessary to look for correlations with the manuscripts of Arts'akh and Utik',<sup>139</sup> then that search should be done first within the cultural centers immediately adjacent to it. In this regard, we should, first remember the Gospel of Khoranashat of 1224 (Mat. MS 4823) and Vakht'ang-Tangik's Gospel (Mat. MS 378), which show close stylistic similarities. The latter reveals ancient painting traditions that come from the art of Eastern Christianity, such as the tendency toward decorativism, schematic nature of movements, conditional interpretation of forms, etc. Mat. MS 5569, a gospel, is of special importance (13th-14th centuries). Here, the general ways of illustration of Eusebius' letter, canon tables, and title pages (in wide ornate frames), as well as the typical color palette (light green, blue, and pink) indicate that it has a close stylistic connection with the above-mentioned manuscripts. Those separate elements—beautiful initial letters, delicate calligraphy, and ornaments—create a wonderful, unified image. Such illustrations of canon tables are not found in the manuscripts of other Armenian schools of miniature painting, especially in Vaspurakan.

The similarities between monumental material culture (frescoes, sculptures, and architectural ornaments) in the same region are of special importance. In one or two surviving frescoes from the Monastery of Dadi or Khuda, the image of Christ is reminiscent of familiar types of the abovementioned manuscripts. Stylistic parallels can be drawn with the frescoes of the historic Kirants' Church in Utik' (13th century), which is still abandoned.

From Gandzasar Monastery, we can mention the reliefs depicting Virgin and child and the crucifixion.

The crucifixion on the central entrance of Nor Varagavank' is also close the illustrations of these manuscripts (Mat. MS 316, MS 4820).

Unlike the other centers of Armenian miniature painting, the manuscripts of this group are closely related to the decoration of regional architectural structures. The best evidence is found on a handful of reliefs of Surb Nshan Church at Varagavank', which bears similarities to the illustrations of Mat. MS 4820, which survives from the same monastery. The stylized leaf ornaments of the vertical frames of the southern window of the church, with motifs

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miracles and the ideas of salvation related to them are emphasized.

<sup>139</sup> There is this misconception that those slightly primitive, graphic miniatures, the colophons of which are missing, should be attributed to the Vaspurakan school. Such an approach artificially narrows the scope of understanding the diversified nature of Armenian miniature painting. Recent studies have shown that such illustrations with their primitive explanations were also common in other centers and schools of miniature painting, for instance, in Syunik' (Mat. MS 6292, MS 1293, MS 2930, MS 1315, etc.), in Nakhijevan (Mat. MS 3722, MS 1304), Upper Hayk' (Mat. MS 1379, MS 1334), Arts'akh, Gelark'unik', and elsewhere.

resembling a lotus flower, are almost repeated in the illustrations of the aforementioned manuscript, especially in the scene of the wise and foolish virgins. The motifs of half-leaves in the baptism scene are identical with the reliefs of one of the exterior altars of the church. The motifs of lotus are found both in the horizontal frames of the window of the church and the manuscript's illustrations depicting the scenes of massacre of the innocents and the presentation at the temple.

The tradition of depicting wide, ornate frames, and more generally, this decorative style, is typical of the illustrated manuscripts and architectural monuments of Syunik' and Arts'akh. For example, the background of Mat. MS 7482 (Tat'ev) is covered with various ornaments. The triangular ornaments and stylized leaf motifs of Mat. MS 6303, MS 4820, and MS 316 are found in the abovementioned manuscript from Tat'ev.

Comparisons can also be drawn between the manuscripts and the thirteenth-fifteenth-century images of tombstones of Khach'en, *khach'k'ars* from Arts'akh and Syunik', as well as various other works of decorative applied art.

These are the iconographic and pictorial features within the gospel set. These manuscripts, together with other monuments and material culture, complement and give a general idea of the historical Arts'akh-Utik' school of miniature painting.

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The abovementioned manuscripts were copied and illuminated by different scribes and painters. Even if we accept that Mat. MS 316 and MS 4023, which share many similarities, were produced in a studio of one master (where there were also students), the possibility of a large scriptorium is not high, although it cannot be entirely ruled out. These manuscripts might have been copied in large scriptorium (for example, in the monasteries of Khamshi, Qaramurat, or Havaptuk), or in various small studios, related to each other.

According to the similarities shared by the surviving manuscripts, we can assume that three or four painters were likely working in an established scriptorium.

The pages containing miniatures are bound at the start of their respective manuscripts, before the canon tables, seem to act as a unique pictorial introduction to the text of the gospels. This ancient method also served those who were not literate and were thus able to acquaint themselves with the Lord's ideas and stories through these illustrations.<sup>140</sup> The miniatures painted in Arts'akh have unique compositions, known for their wide frames. In this decorative-flat pictorial area, a rich system of images and ornaments are combined with functional integrity. Issues of perspective and space, if not ignored, are inadvertently assimilated into this complex stylistic system, united in the expression of the artists' ideological meaning. The role of the viewer is very important here; the viewer must be

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<sup>140</sup> See LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, p. 18.

“equipped” with certain knowledge, able to “decipher” not only the “subtextual” nature of perspective and space, but also a unique system of images, sometimes distortions, mentally filling in the details of the narratives and events. In connection with the Novgorodian icons, Smirnova noted that “in such cases, the participation of the viewer is assumed by all masters as a mandatory, important, decisive component that reveals the artistic structure. The internal content of the image or composition is revealed only in case of such mutual contact.”<sup>141</sup> Saltikov A. also noted that, “It is known that the medieval reader or viewer attached great importance to the narrative.” They considered themselves a participant in those sanctified actions that were performed in front of their eyes in a “real” way.<sup>142</sup>

In such a case, the viewer’s imagination regulates, complements, “puts in place” the missing detail, and even “creates” an illusion of a three-dimensional environment. On the one hand, the latter relies, on Christian symbols, and on the rich forms of folk art and its decorative expressions. In both cases, the artists feel free of the “regular” compositions of classical art, symmetrical forms, plastic movements, and subtle transitions in color. The main thing for them is the content of the theme, its ideological meaning.

In the miniatures we examined, the characters seem to be constrained, heavy and slow, always painted gesturing with the same, angular movements. The slow and uneven drawing lacks the rhythm that is so characteristic of the miniatures of Vaspurakan. Identical faces and outstretched arms give the impression that the figures are petrified. The relationship of complete local color fragments to a graphic method dominate here, contributing to the decorativeness of the page, as in Mat. MS 4820. In some cases, the arrangement and relationship of figures and subjects are regulated not only for ideological purposes but also due to this decorativeness.

The figures, additional objects and structures, symmetrical free spaces, organically connected ornaments, and wide, ornate frames are reminiscent of the national traditions of carpet weaving. Perhaps these features come from ancient, folk art traditions. In this regard, it is also worth remembering Lazarev’s words about decorative motifs, which “especially attracted Armenian painters, because their focus was not on the human image, but on the ornament, where they were unsurpassed masters.”<sup>143</sup>

No matter how much the expression of the psychological state of the characters is out of the artist’s interest (or possibilities), nevertheless, the complex relationships, and even the similar but tense faces, give a certain mood to the image. Moreover, such decorative detail of the characters and additional objects rendered in small proportions with the combination of flat forms and calm, bright colors creates even an “intimate and soulful” shade cast over the whole image program.

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141 SMIRNOVA, *Painting of Veliky Novgorod* p. 141.

142 SALTIKOV, *On Spatial Relationship...*, pp. 405-406.

143 LAZAREV, *History of Byzantine Painting*, p. 98.

Let us recall the scene of the annunciation of the Virgin in Mat. MS 316. Here the characters move with ethereal lightness and gentleness, creating a fabulous illusion. The viewer is filled with a sense of joy and solemnity in Mat. MS 4820's nativity, where the moment of mysterious expectation is emphasized.

The presentation at the temple, entry into Jerusalem, and others can also be mentioned in this context. In one manuscript we find a gentle, soulful atmosphere, in another – dramatic accents or sharp contrast, as in Mat. MS 316's Last Supper. Twelve heads, arranged around the round table, look at Jesus through their golden halos. These disembodied heads with strained gazes not only make the viewer feel the bodies are lacking, but also enhance that impression, giving the image an inner movement and emotional resonance. The news of the impending betrayal affected them; they feel horror, bewilderment.

The main focus is on the faces, whose tense gazes, according to Lazarev, embody the conceptual spirit of Eastern Christianity to the fullest extent.<sup>144</sup> Ignoring the common iconography where Judas is among the apostles, the painter isolated the traitor from the rest of the group. In this case, the main axis of this episode is emphasized: the traitor is isolated while the teacher and his disciples are united.

The massacre of the innocents is also remarkable. Herod and the soldiers slaughter innocent children, and the figures of mothers are only outlined. They are represented here as a symbol of grief.

The attractiveness of our examined miniatures is largely due to the eye-catching color scheme of the complementary light hues, which is one of the foundations of the stylistic system of miniatures. In Mat. MS 316, MS 6303, and MS 4023, we see saturated, and even slightly deaf colors. The abundance of white reduces the sharpness of an applied color and sometimes reviles tension. It seems that the images are wrapped in a transparent silver-pink veil, under which emerald green, blue, gilded orange and purple colors shine gracefully.

Mat. MS 6303 has a relatively soft and gentle color scheme. With the general reddish-brown, turquoise, and pink shades, the blue areas exude a certain sonority.

The faces are depicted in watercolor light tones, or in manners reminiscent of the technique of tempera.

In Mat. MS 316, the softness of the miniatures of the previous manuscript seems to be slightly lost. The dark brown and white lines outline the colored parts of the bodies, enhancing their decorative nature.

Human figures and architectural-decorative ornaments are indeed united due to the unity of interpretation and the balance of colors. However, the impression of the grandeur of the ensemble is lost. Sometimes even dramatic moments are expressed in a moderate way,

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<sup>144</sup> Idem, p. 219.

covered with a gilded eye-catching glow. Regarding stylistic-technical peculiarities, one should draw parallels between the miniatures that decorate the gospels of Vakht'ang Khach'ents'i and Khoranashat. They are expressed both in the use of certain painting tricks and in the presence of the shared aesthetic ideas and ideals of the painter, and bear the stamp of purely local traditions of the time. In all cases, the figures are calm and deep, ascetically inspired (such as the ascension in the Gospel of Vakht'ang Khach'ents'i, the evangelists in the Gospel of Khoranashat, the evangelists and thematic images in Mat. MS 316, MS 4023, MS 6303). They are interpreted on the principle of flatness. The conventional nature of their movements, the generalizing contours, and the generally flexible line with the combination of juicy color layers leave the impression of a decorative, velvety carpet. The facial expressions are more "naked", which contribute to the creation of pure, eastern images. It is known that generalized body forms with accentuated and concise facial expressions greatly enhance expressiveness. Moreover, the concise outlines and these easy perceptual forms, along with the juicy colors and generalized drawings, create a full-dimensional illusion on the paper's clean surface.

Compared to Mat. MS 6303, MS 316, and MS 4023, the colors of MS 4820 are cleaner and brighter. The forms are made with short and linear emphasis, and are characterized by simplicity and directness, which intensifies the content and immediately inspires the ideological meaning to the viewer.

What is remarkable about Mat. MS 6319 is the maximum brevity. In its decoration, anchored in the simple but wise worldview of the people, the language of conventionality and symbolism is widely used. The scene of the flight into Egypt is especially impressive. Against a pure background, Joseph and Mary are depicted holding the baby; they flee from Herod's order for the massacre. There is no detail expressing the environment in the image, and that silence evokes emotional and soulful feelings in the viewer. Faces are especially impressive. There is something familiar, expressive, and very national in those simple, sometimes seemingly rough facial features. It attracts the viewer's attention, and under that impression, the heavy and rough forms of the bodies become brittle, light, and pleasant.

In national art, between the individual schools, there has always been a commonality, a general national description. However, throughout various historical periods, some schools, under the political domination of foreigners, bore noticeable influence of their culture.

No school, or art, for that matter, is safe from such influences and correlations. However, among all the schools of Armenian miniature painting, it seems that the northern regions of Armenia-Syunik', Sevan Basin, Arts'akh and Utik'- have preserved their national characteristics most of all.

## THE MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE OF ARTS'AKH IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The miniature painting of Arts'akh continued to develop in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. Manuscripts survived from these periods. Below, two manuscripts copied in the seventeenth century are presented, the miniatures of which show new tendencies which distinguish them from the works of a previous centuries, and confirm the beginning of new creative wave.

The seventeenth century was a significant period for Armenian culture, not only in fine arts, but also in the field of literature, architecture, and music. Perceptions of modern times gradually pushed scholastic-hermit expressions into the background.

Although Armenia continued to be divided between two powerful empires, Ottoman Turkey and Safavid Iran, remaining in a difficult socio-economic situation, the Renaissance, a European cultural movement, found an echo in the Armenian environment. This national important phenomenon was mainly conditioned by the factor of human relations. The Armenian colonies in Europe, which were immersed in a culturally changing atmosphere, were nevertheless closely connected with the motherland. It was a national phenomenon: the new and fresh were transferred to Armenia. Moreover, many artists moved to Armenia, bringing with them Europe's "new breath".

The art of Armenian manuscripts of the seventeenth century is quite interesting. Without ignoring the traditional, national features, the painters "dressed" miniatures with a veil of freshness of the era. This phenomenon found its unique manifestation in Arts'akh.

We single out two illuminated manuscripts produced in Arts'akh from the collection of the Matenadaran,<sup>145</sup> which give a general idea of the seventeenth-century miniature painting from the region. The first of them is a gospel, illuminated in Gandzak in 1675 by the painter Grigor (Mat. MS 8965), (fig. 65–82). His manuscripts, all kept in the Matenadaran, cover a period of twenty-one years, from 1655 to his death in 1676. In addition to painting, Grigor was also a scribe and a bookbinder. The commissioner of this gospel was Ignatios of Gandzasar. Many prominent figures of the time ordered the priest Grigor to prepare manuscripts. In 1655, Catholicos Petros also ordered him to copy a gospel.

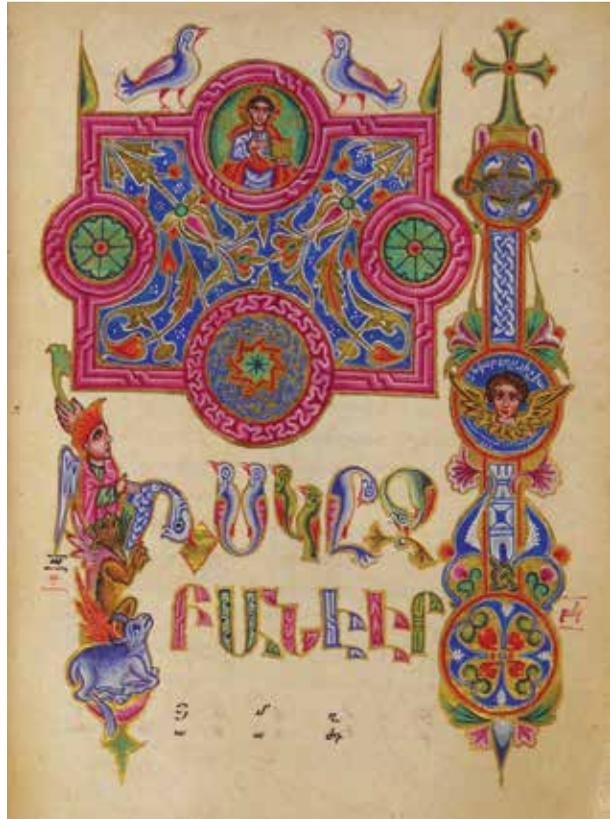
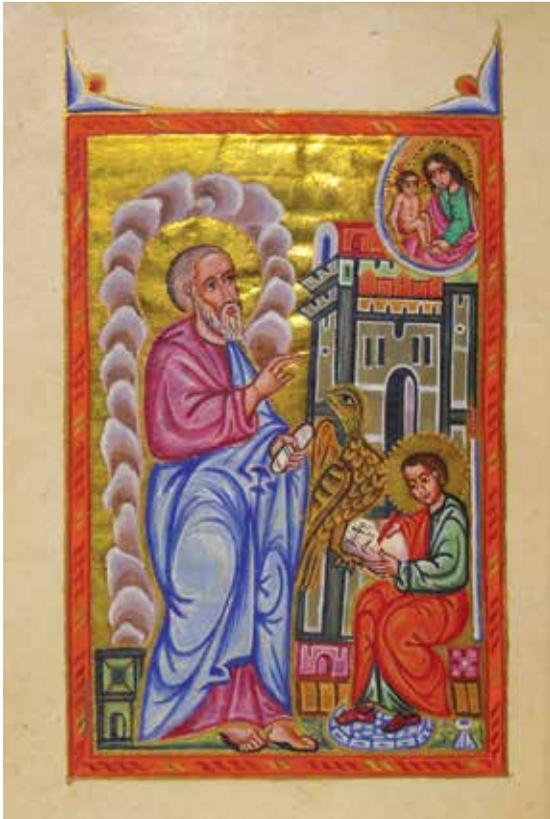
Our selected manuscript has fifteen thematic images: the annunciation, the nativity, the presentation at the temple, the baptism, the raising of Lazarus, the entry into Jerusalem, the washing of the feet, the betrayal, the crucifixion, the descent from the cross, the harrowing of hell, the resurrection, the pentecost, the second coming, and the last judgement.

In contrast to the miniature painting of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, in the works of the seventeenth-century masters of Arts'akh, we see general elements and features of Cilician iconography, with partial, local-Arts'akhian edits. In addition to the compositional structure, it is also reflected in the depiction of the environment, various elements, and architectural structure. In the images depicting the Evangelists or thematic scenes, even in the crucifixion, we see beautiful multi-story architectural, European-style buildings, typically found in Cilician manuscripts.

One of the remarkable images of the Evangelists is that of John. He stands inside a beautiful ornate cloud, looking up at the top right corner. Mother of God is in an oval frame

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145 Gospel, 1655, Gandzak, scribe: Avetis, Mat. MS 3196; Hymnal, 1656, K'arahat Village, (K'uch'ak), scribe: Grigor, Mat. MS 10044; Book of Liturgy, 1665, Gandzak, scribe: Grigor, Mat. MS 9448; Gospel, 1667, Gandzak, scribe: Sargis, Mat. MS 6771; Gospel, 1657, Gandzak, Mat. MS 6873; Gospel, 1675, Gandzak, K'arahat Village, Mat. MS 8965; Gospel, 1676, scribes: Grigor, Barsef, Mat. MS 5636; Gospel, 1676, Mat. MS 7232, etc.



John the Evangelist and Title  
Page of the Gospel of John,  
Gospel, artist: Grigor, 1675,  
Karahat (near Gandzak),  
Mat. MS 8965, f. 285v-286r

with the Christ child. The headpiece of the title page is unique. Large ornamental circles are placed on the four sides of the quadrangle, with the baby Jesus in the upper circle. There is no iconographic novelty in thematic scenes: the artist simply finds ways to make the illustrations as spectacular as possible (for example, the baptism, the washing of the feet, and the resurrection). In the crucifixion, the painter expressively depicts the mourning women and the crucified Jesus. It is noteworthy that the head of Jesus reminds us of one of his earliest known examples. The majestic impression of the image is favored by the dark blue sky with shining bright stars.

The scene of the betrayal is presented with lively gestures. The viewer's attention is drawn to Judas, who hides behind soldiers and shows his teacher with his hand outstretched.

Grigor, surely, does not have the high skill of Cilician painters, but there is a moment of tension in his seemingly

“rough” forms, a bursting vein that “clings” the viewer to the image.

Grigor is skilled in his painting style; there is no defect even in the details, everything is complete in the portraits of Evangelists and other images.

The folds of the clothes are intended to express the movement of the body, and in some cases even create a voluminous illusion. The latter is more visible in the case of naked parts of the body, for example in the scenes of the crucifixion, washing of Christ's feet, and the baptism. The viewer is amazed by the skill of Grigor and many Armenian painters in general by their ability to convey moods such as admiration, surprise, and sadness to ordinary faces with just a few simple lines.

Grigor's color palette is bright; there are shades of red, harmonious relations of bright blue and apricot-colors.

The second outstanding manuscript is a gospel illuminated in 1684 by the priest Barseł in Dadivank' (Mat. MS 7232), (fig. 83-94). This manuscript was completed also by the efforts of the priest Grigor and Barseł's brother, Deacon Lazar.

In addition to the illustrations of the evangelists and canon tables, this manuscript contains a rich series of thematic images, however, unlike the abovementioned gospel of the priest Grigor, Barseł chose another form of artistic decoration. He situated the thematic images next to the corresponding texts. This method of illustration is found in Armenian miniature schools, such as those of Cilicia, Gladzor, Crimea, etc. It makes the reader's work easier: where there is an episode of evangelical history, there is a corresponding miniature.

This way of arranging the images frees the artist from the complexities of following iconographic rules.

At the bottom of f. 147r, Christ happens upon his sleeping disciples. He stretches his arms in astonishment. In another miniature, poor Lazarus is cradled by Abraham, a completely new visual solution to this narrative.

The scene of the resurrection is unique and laconic, fully adapted to the original text. On the left, a group of apostles stares in amazement and horror at a nude Christ, who approaches them. Christ gestures in return.

Barseł, of course, was not as skilled as his teacher Grigor, although his images of the evangelists are masterfully painted (likely due to Grigor's intervention). The miniatures of Mat. MS 7232 are inferior to those painted by Grigor, however, Barseł's free-thinking and impressive forms attract the viewer.

In conclusion, remarkably illustrated manuscripts of the seventeenth century complement the medieval heritage of miniature painting from Arts'akh and Utik'. It should be noted that this topic requires further, in-depth study.





ALBUM



The Virgin Mary and Child, Archangel Gabriel and Two Evangelists Gospel,  
artist: Unknown Painter, 1212, Ms 378, f. 5r



Canon Table Gospel, artist: T'oros, 1212, Ms 378, f. 1v



Title Page of the Gospel of Matthew Gospel,  
artist: T'oros, 1212, Ms 378, f. 11r



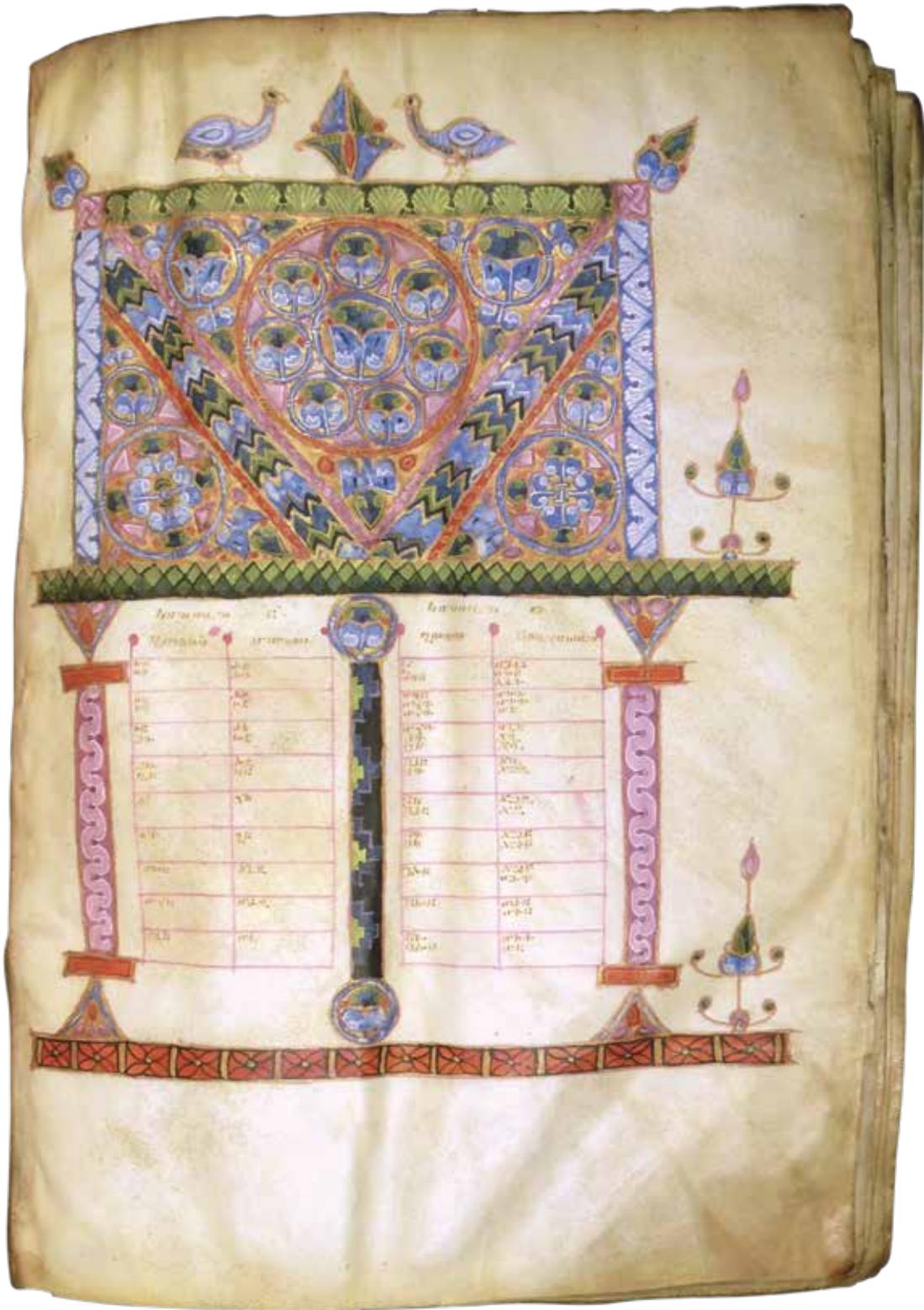
Title Page of the Gospel of Mark Gospel,  
artist: T'oros, 1212, Ms 378, f. 104r



Title Page of the Gospel of John Gospel,  
artist: T'oros, 1212, Ms 378, f. 259r



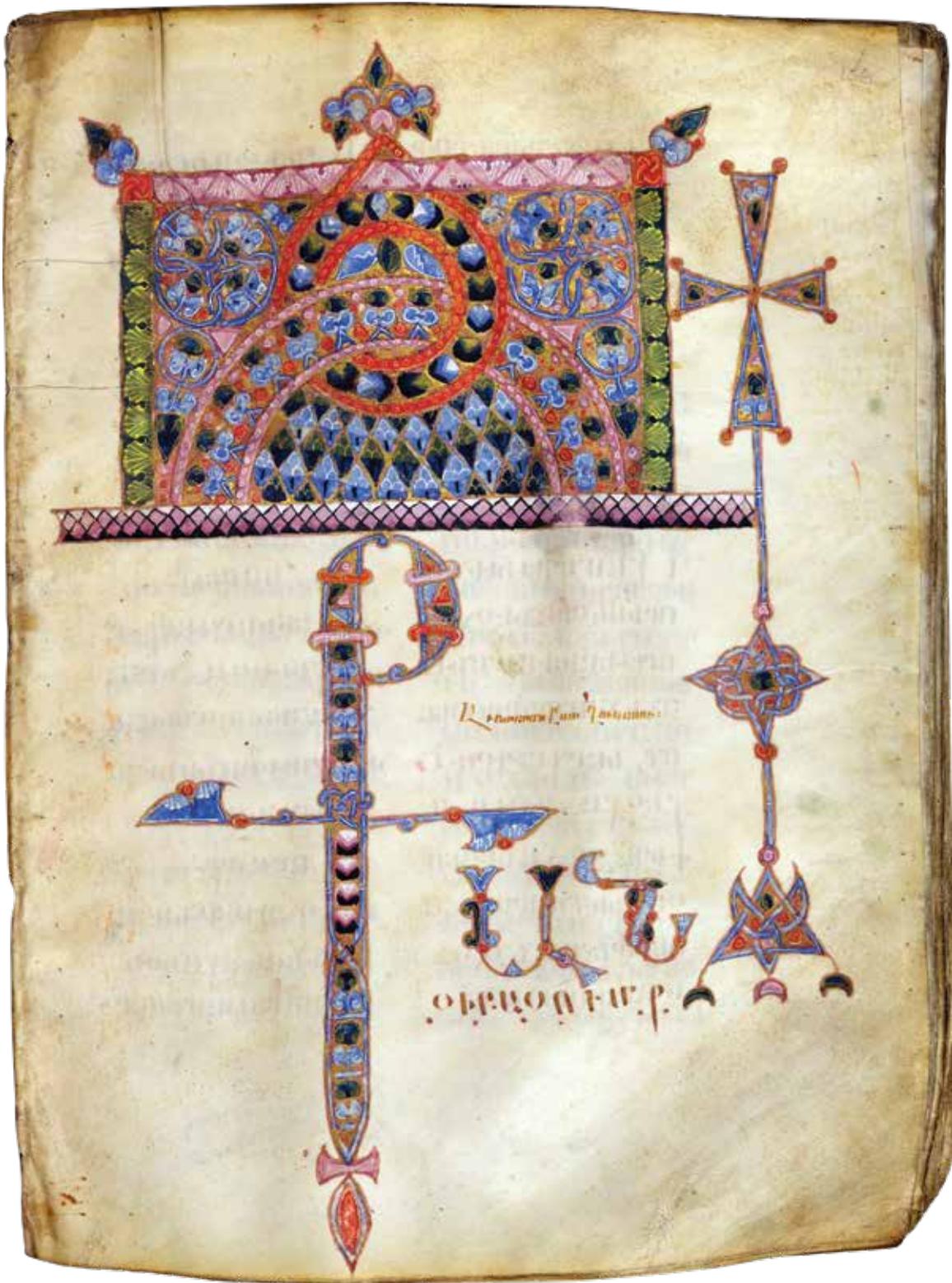
Canon Table, Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 6r



Canon Table, Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 8r



Luke the Evangelist, Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 155v



Title Page of the Gospel of Luke  
Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 156r



John the Evangelist and Prochorus  
Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 247v



Title Page of the Gospel of John  
Gospel of Khoranashat, 1224, Ms 4823, f. 248r



Christ in Majesty  
Relic of the New Testament, 13th century, Ms 155, f. 10v



Prince Vakht'ang (Hasan-Jalal's grandson)  
Relic of the New Testament, 13th century, Ms 155, f. 106v



Paul the Apostle  
Relic of the New Testament, 13th century, Ms 155, f. 114r



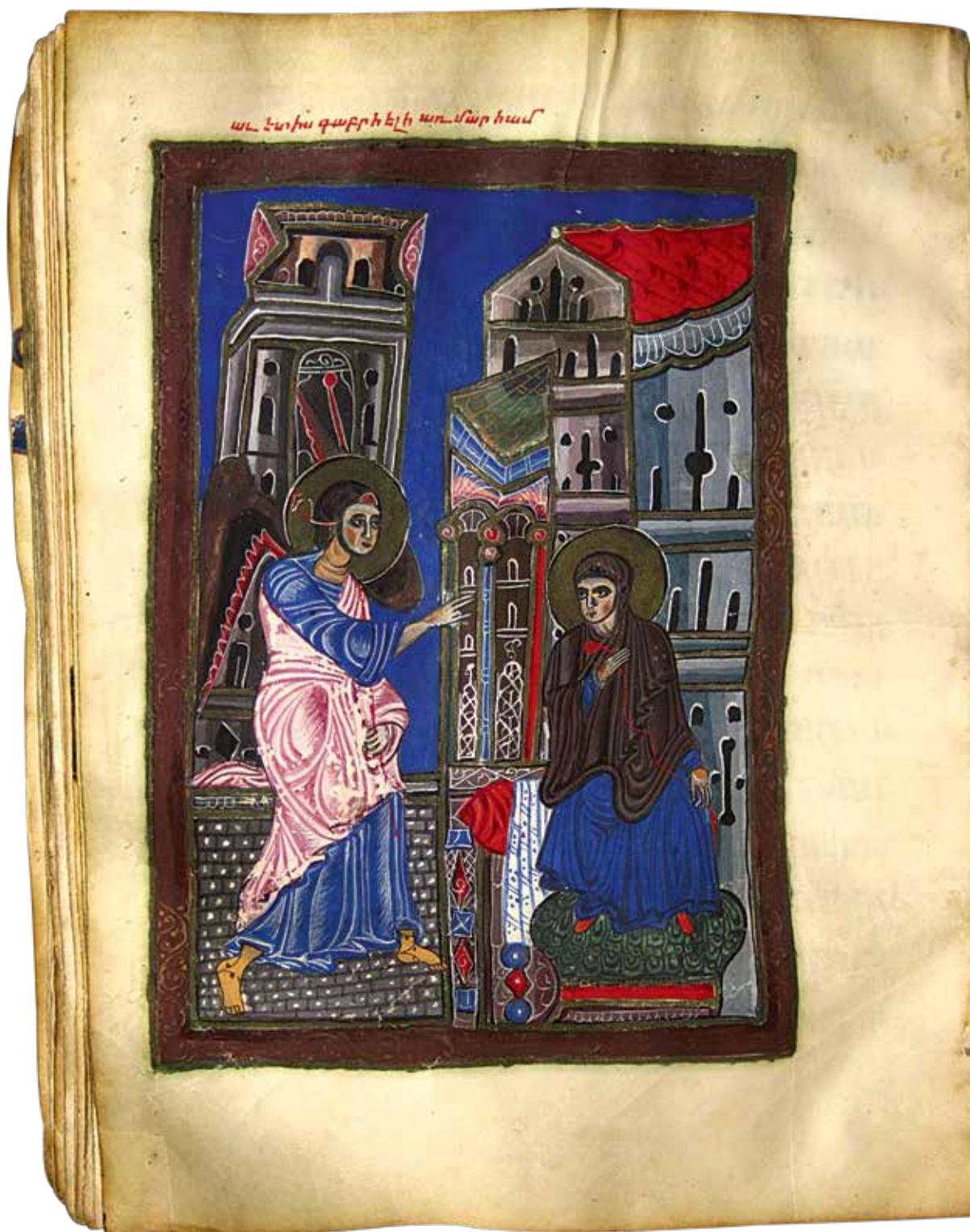
Matthew the Evangelist and Title Page  
Gospel, 1279, Ms 5669, ff.1v-2r



Matthew the Evangelist, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 11v



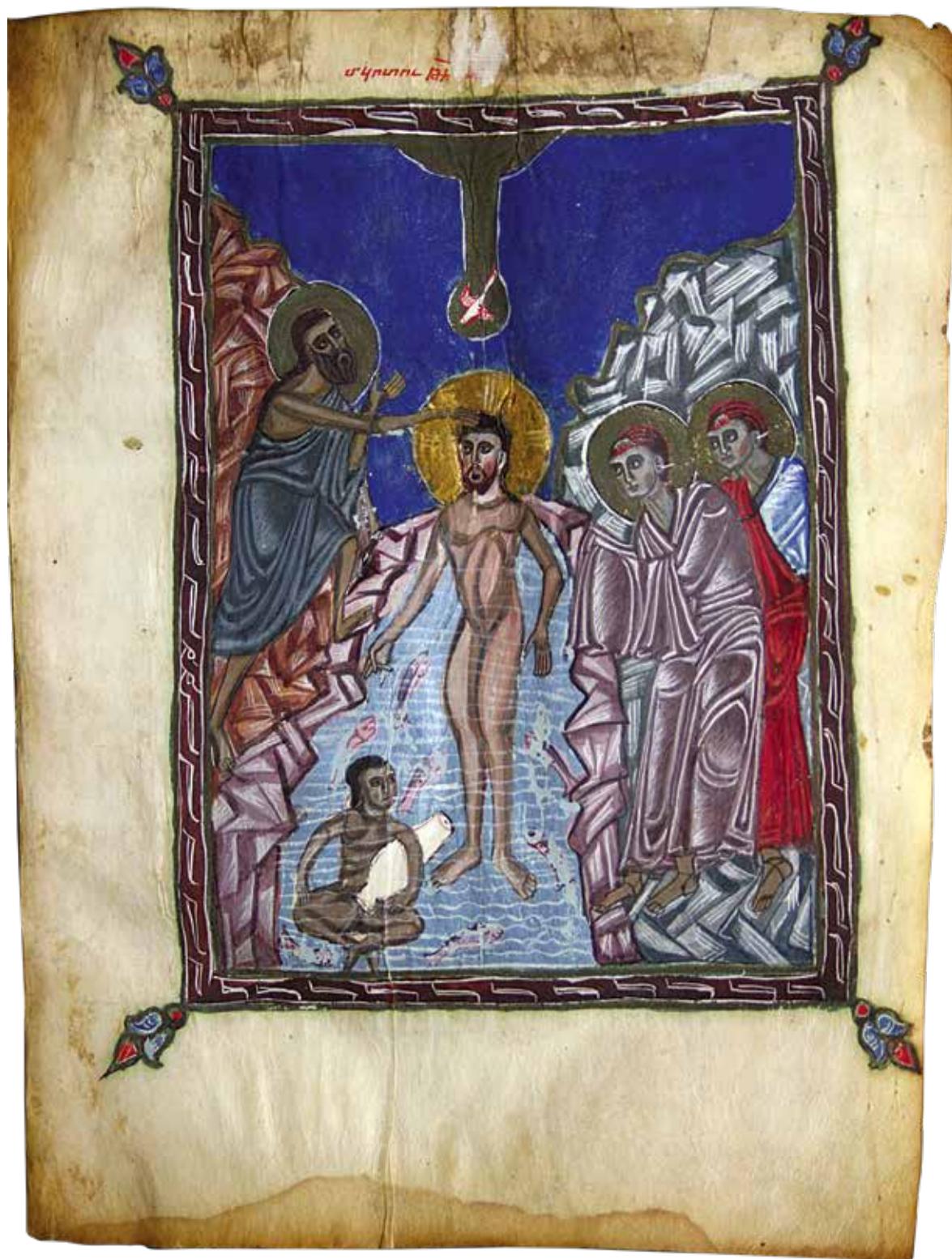
John the Evangelist and Prochorus, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 295v



Annunciation, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 188v



Nativity, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 15r



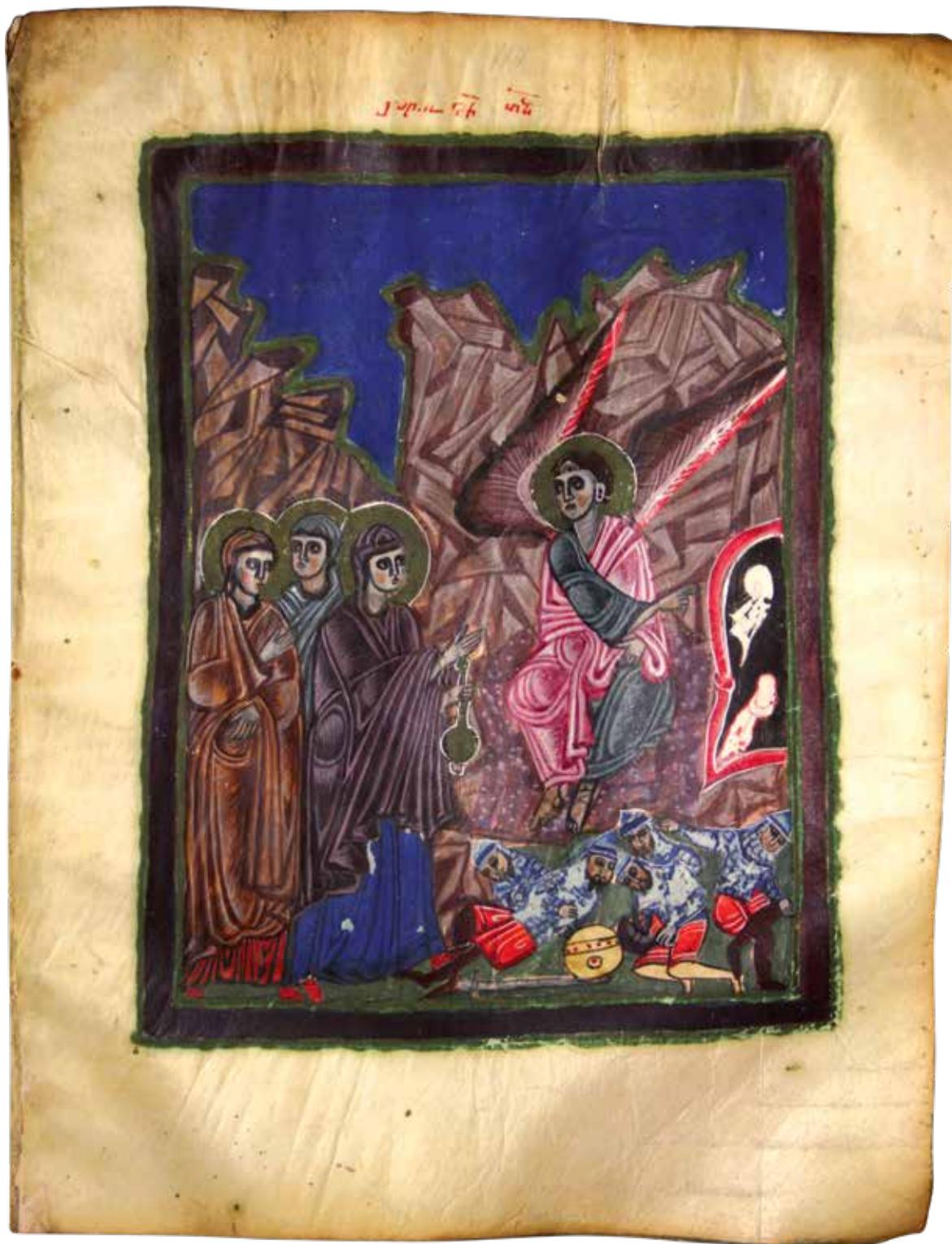
Baptism, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 20r



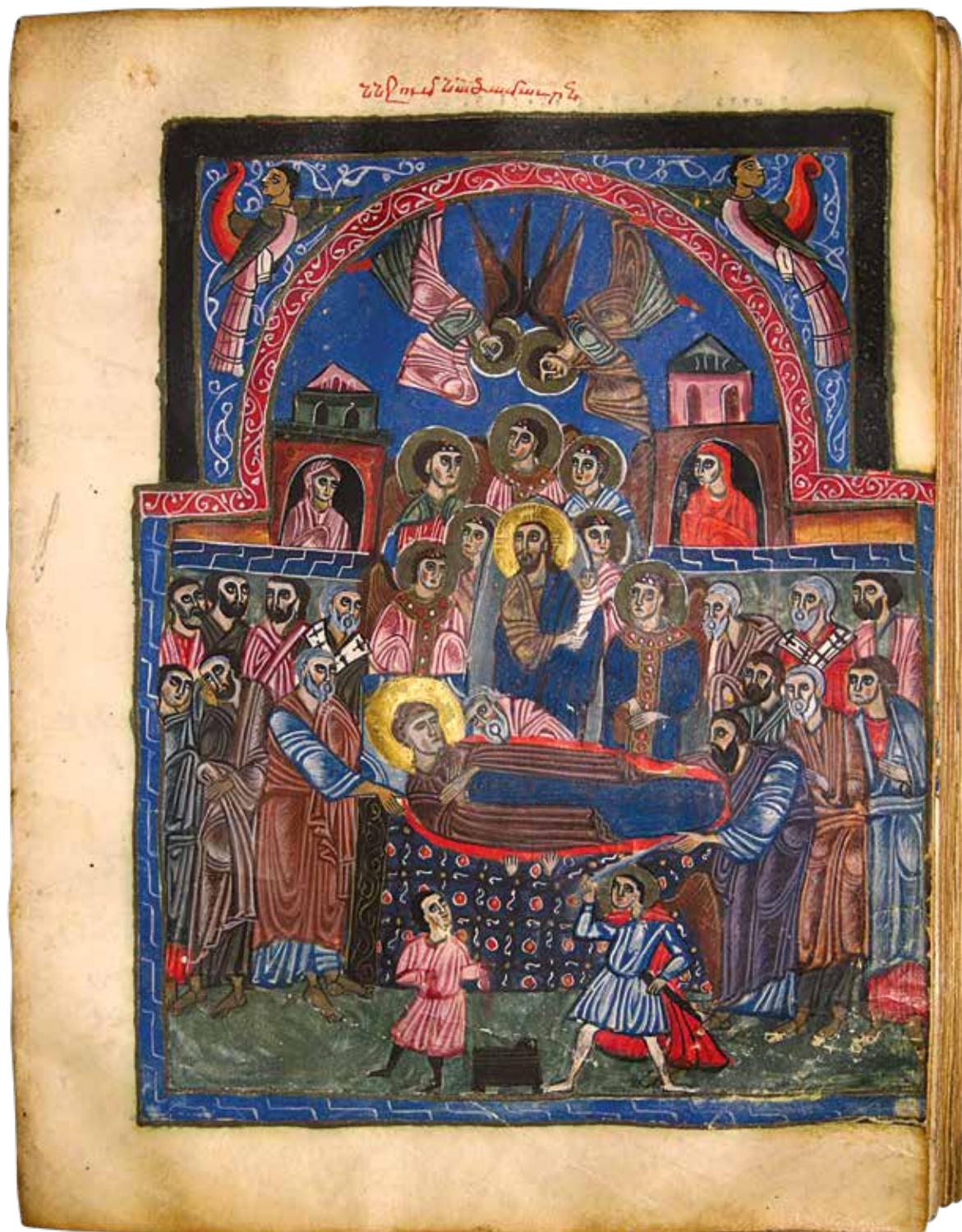
Last Supper, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 170r



Harrowing of Hell, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 184r



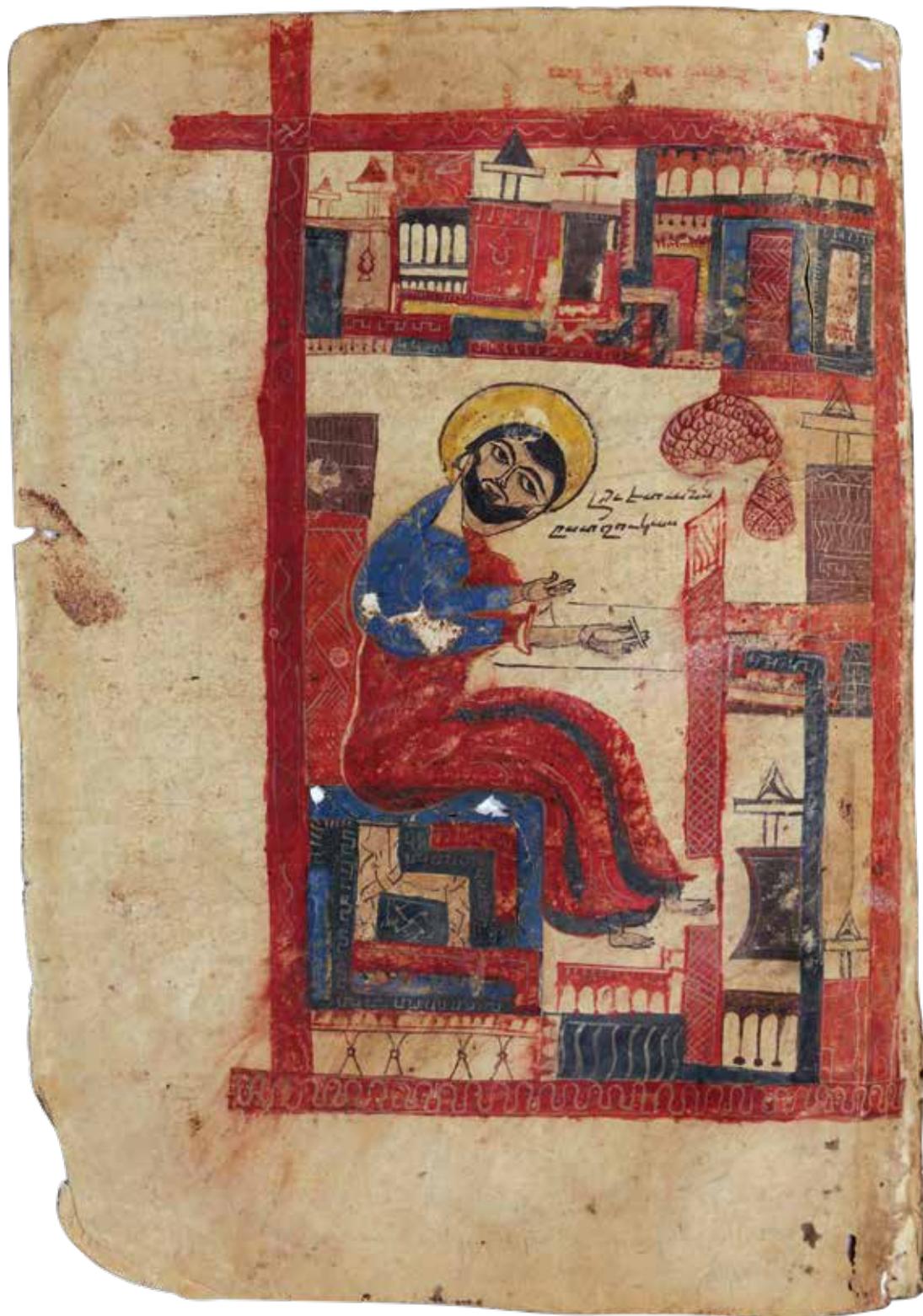
Resurrection, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 114r



Dormition of the Mother of God, T'argmanch'ats' Gospel  
Artist: Grigor (illustrated in 1305-1311), Ms 2743, f. 294r



Mark the Evangelist, Gospel, artist: T'oma, 1326  
Land of Khach'en, Jerusalem, Ms 1794, f. 106v



Luke the Evangelist, Gospel, artist: T'oma, 1326  
Land of Khach'en, Jerusalem, Ms 1794, f. 176v



John the Evangelist, Gospel, artist: T'oma, 1326  
Land of Khach'en, Jerusalem, Ms 1794, f. 290v



Annunciation, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6303, f. 7r



Washing of the Feet, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6303, f. 3r



Betrayal, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6303, f. 3v



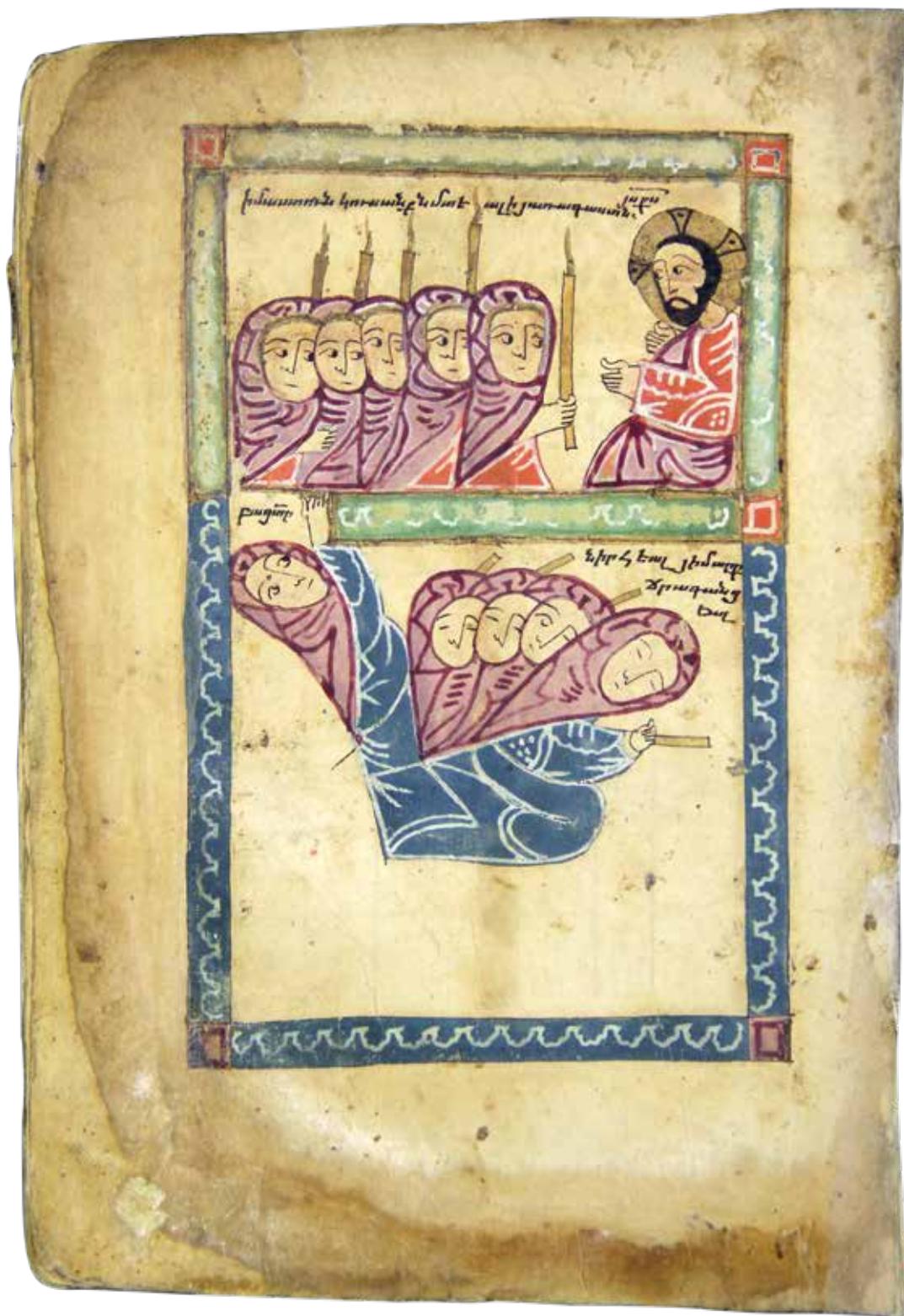
Annunciation, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 2v



Nativity, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 3r



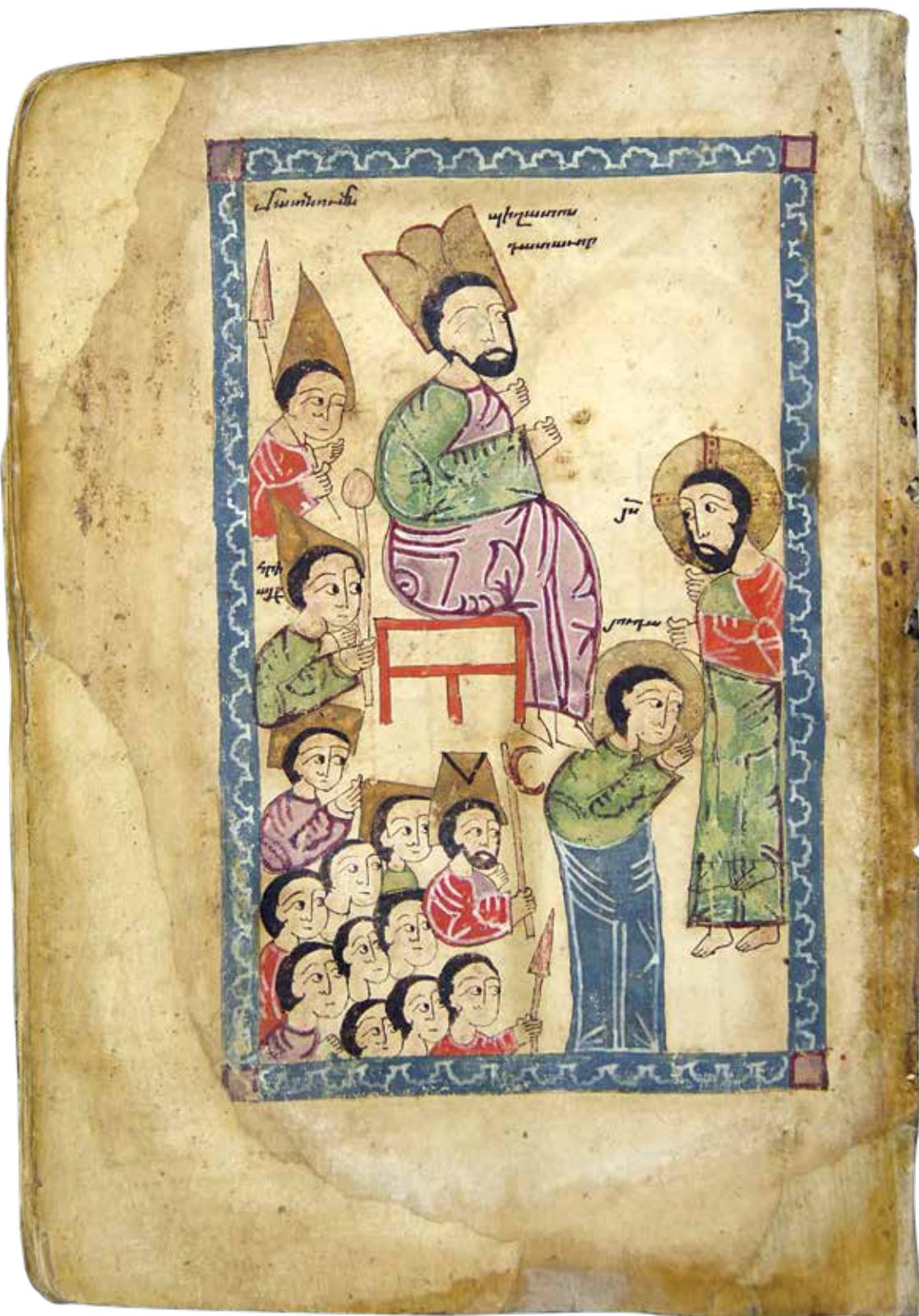
Presentation in the Temple, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 4v



Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 6



Adam and Eve, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 7r



Pilate's Court, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 10v



Last Supper, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 11r



Title Page of the Gospel of Matthew, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 316, f. 14r



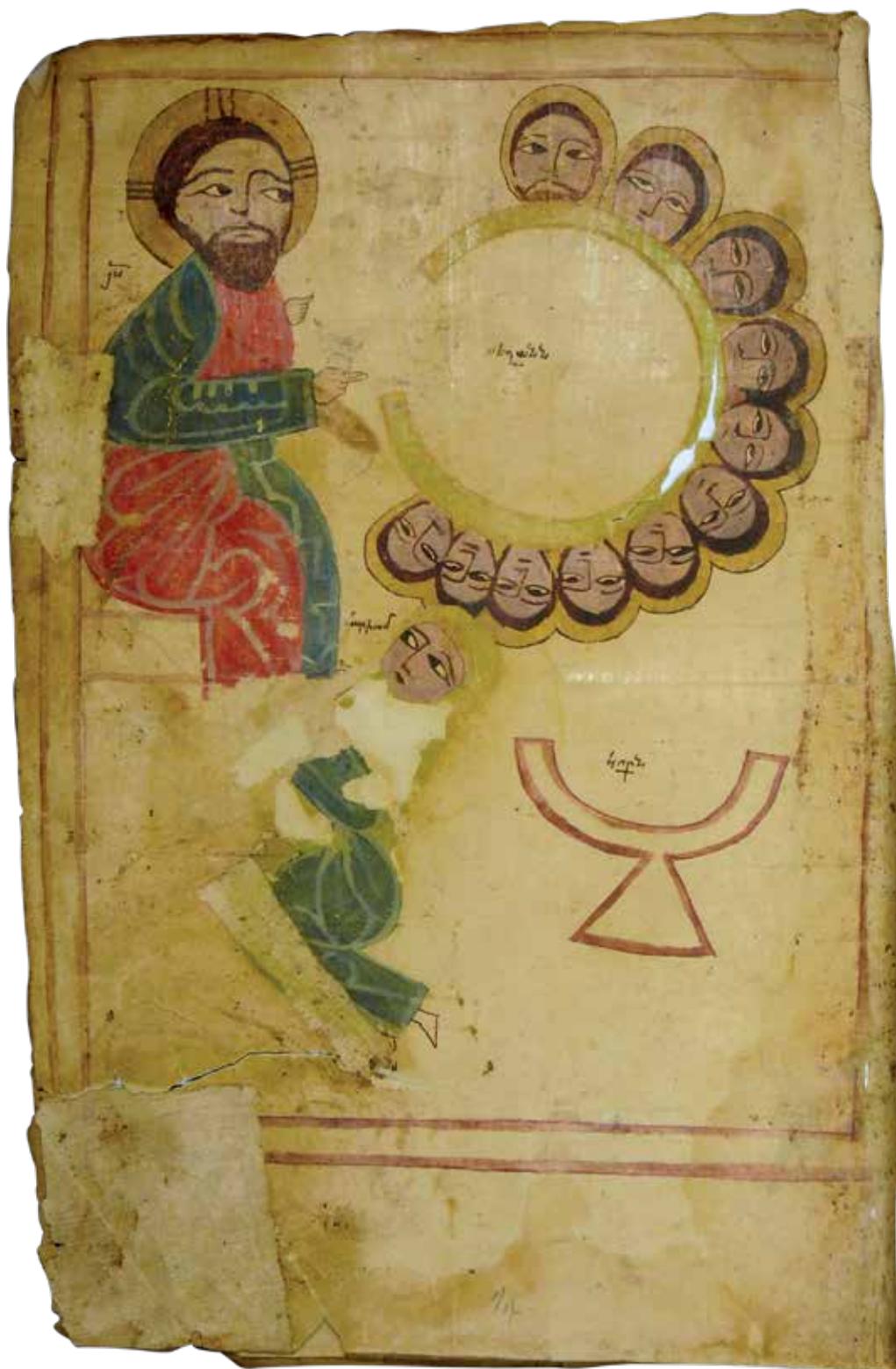
Nativity, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6319, f. 5r



Flight into Egypt, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6319, f. 3r



Finding in the Temple, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6319, f. 4r



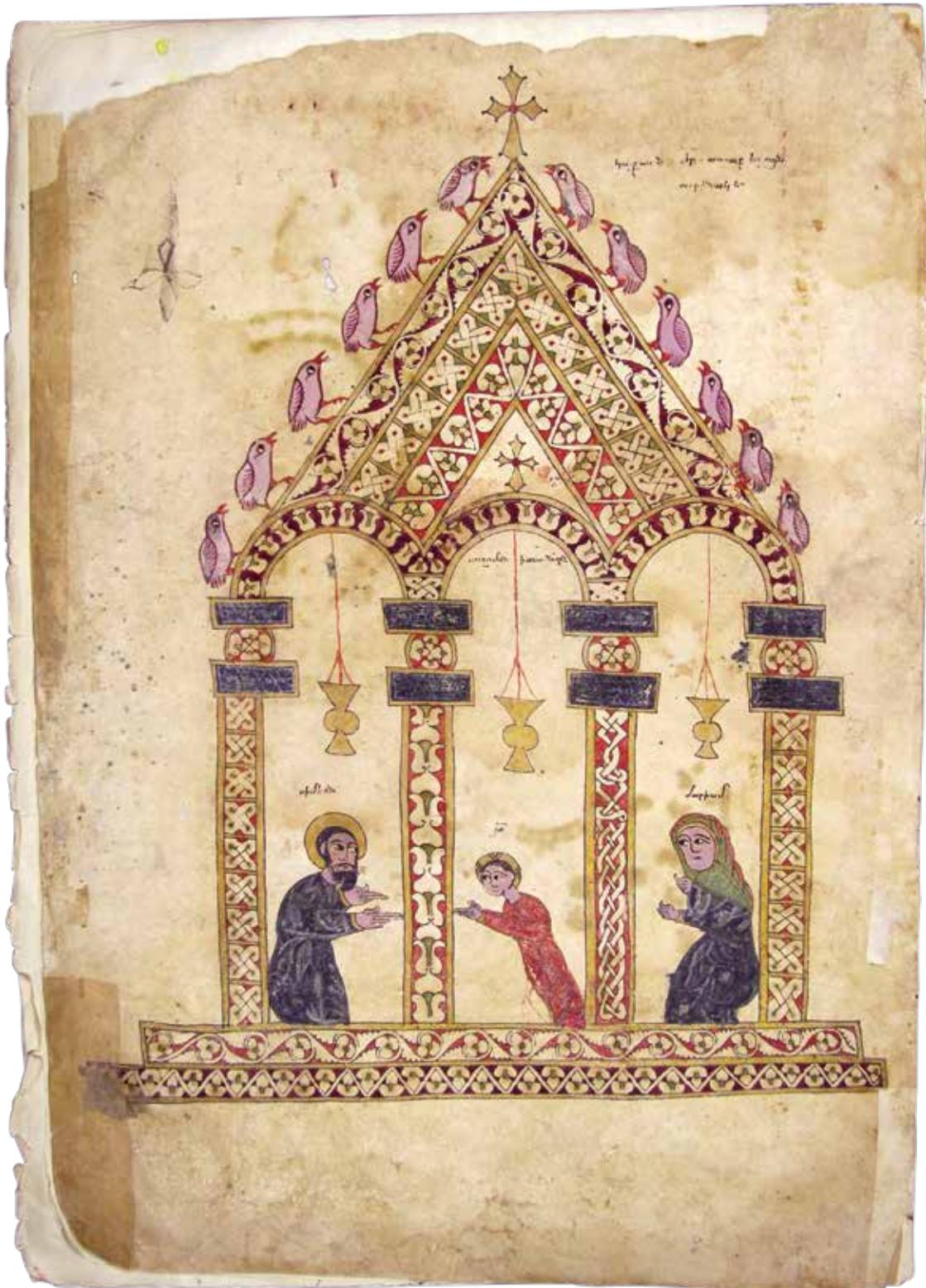
Last Supper, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6319, f. 1(IV)



Ascension, Gospel, 14th century, Ms 6319, f. 7r



Nativity, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 1r



Presentation in the Temple, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. iv



Baptism, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 2v



Raising of Lazarus, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 3r



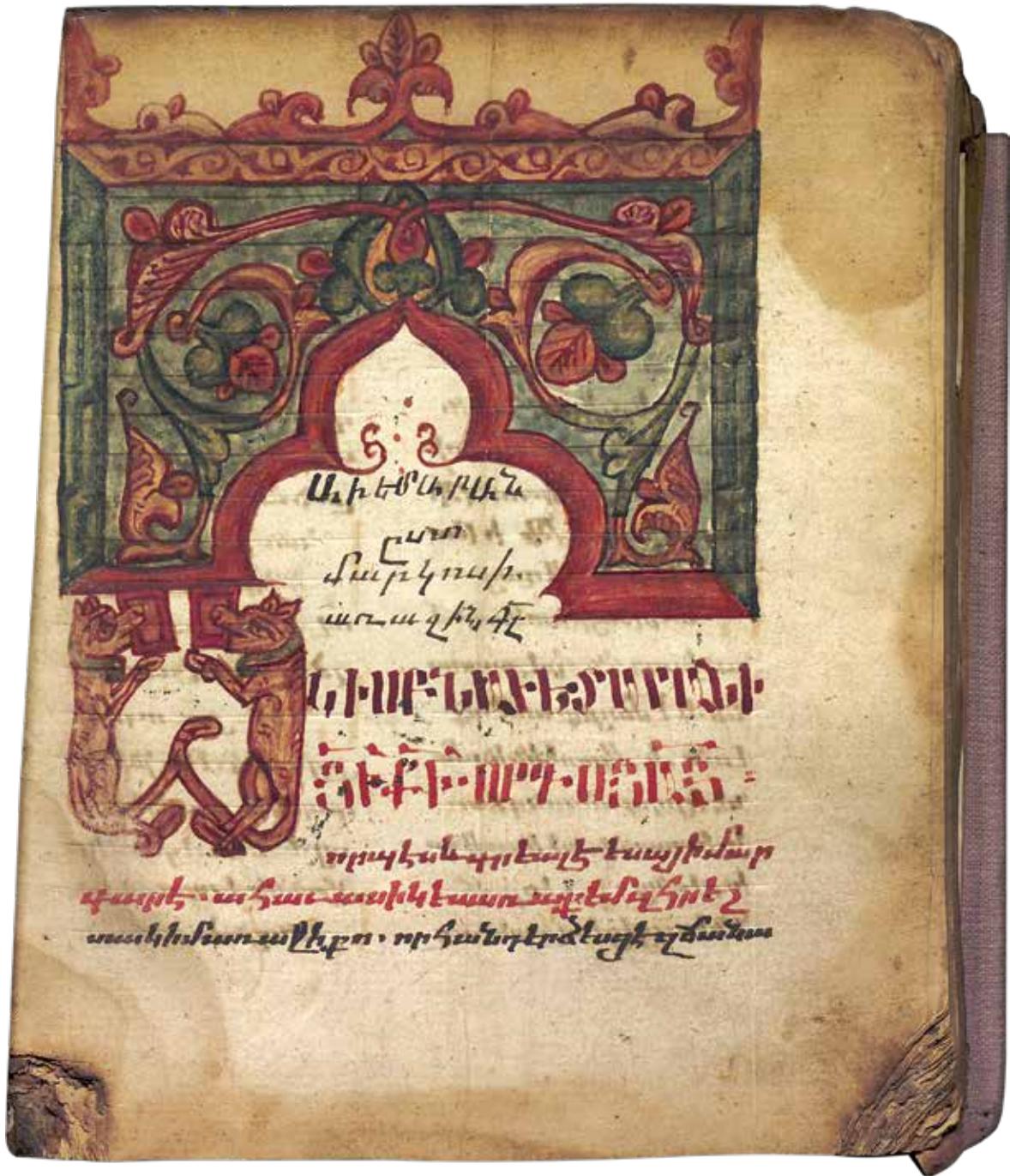
Entry into Jerusalem, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 3v



Adam and Eve, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 4r



Title Page of the Gospel of Luke, Gospel, 15th century, Ms. 4820, f. 160r



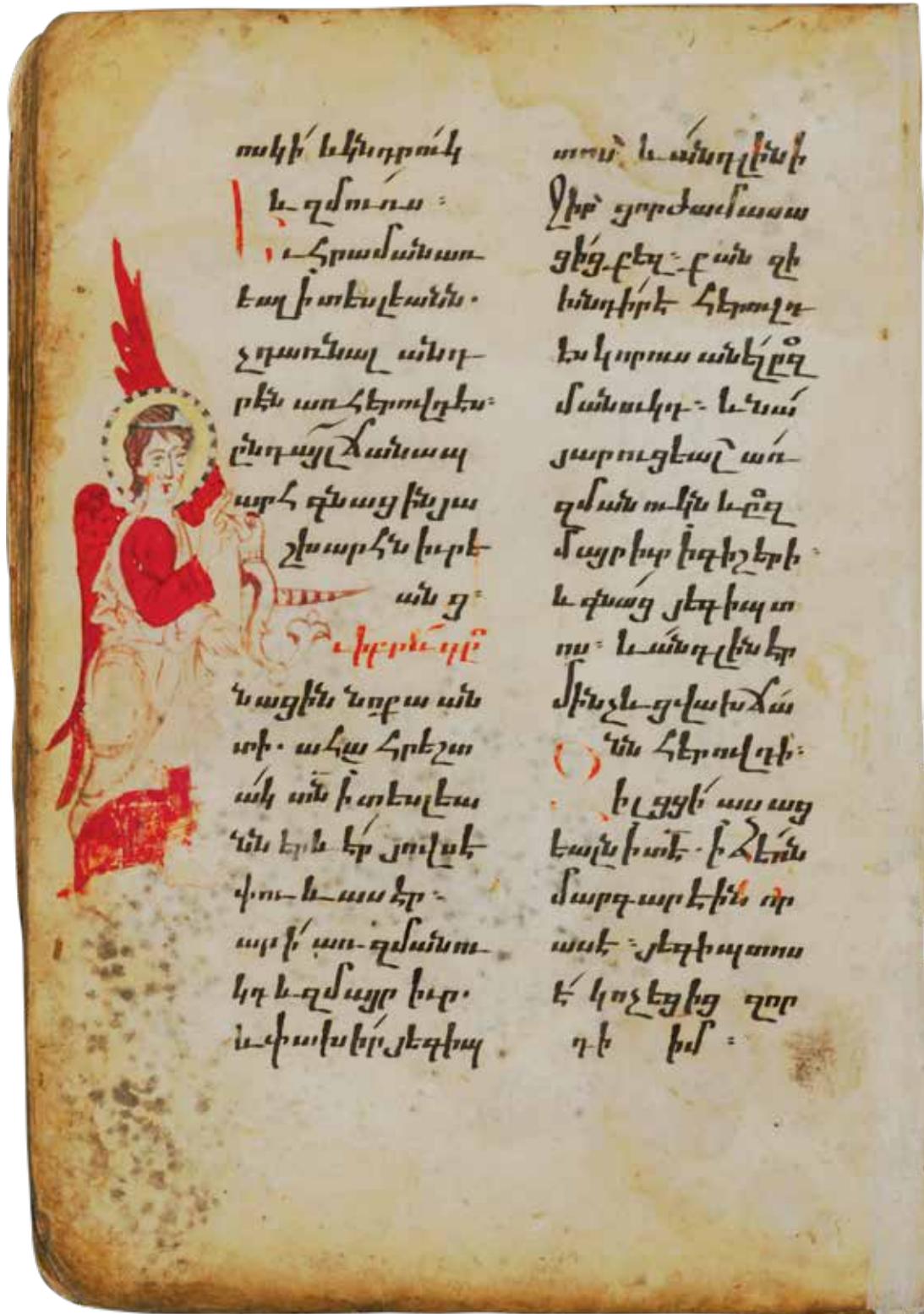
Title Page of the Gospel of Mark  
Gospel, 1422, Halartsin, scribe: Sargis Partavets'i, artist: Hovhannes, Ms 8423, f. 17r



Title Page of the Gospel of John  
Gospel, 1422, Halartsin, scribe: Sargis Partavets'i, artist: Hovhannes, Ms 8423, f. 121r



Title Page of the Gospel of Matthew  
Gospel, 1446, Lelan, artist: Step'anos, Ms 3992, f. 10r



Angel (illustrated in 1476), Gospel, 1446  
Vomavans Monastery, artist: Zak'aria, Ms 9792, f. 5v



Matthew the Evangelist, Gospel, 15th century, Tsar  
artist: T'uma Syunets'i, Ms 8124, f. 1v



Title Page of the Gospel of Matthew  
Gospel, 15th century, Tsar, artist: T'uma Syunets'i, Ms 8124, f. 2r



Mark the Evangelist, Gospel, 1551, Gandzasar, Ms 6513, f. 83v



John the Evangelist and Prochorus, Gospel, 1551, Gandzasar, Ms 6513, f. 221v



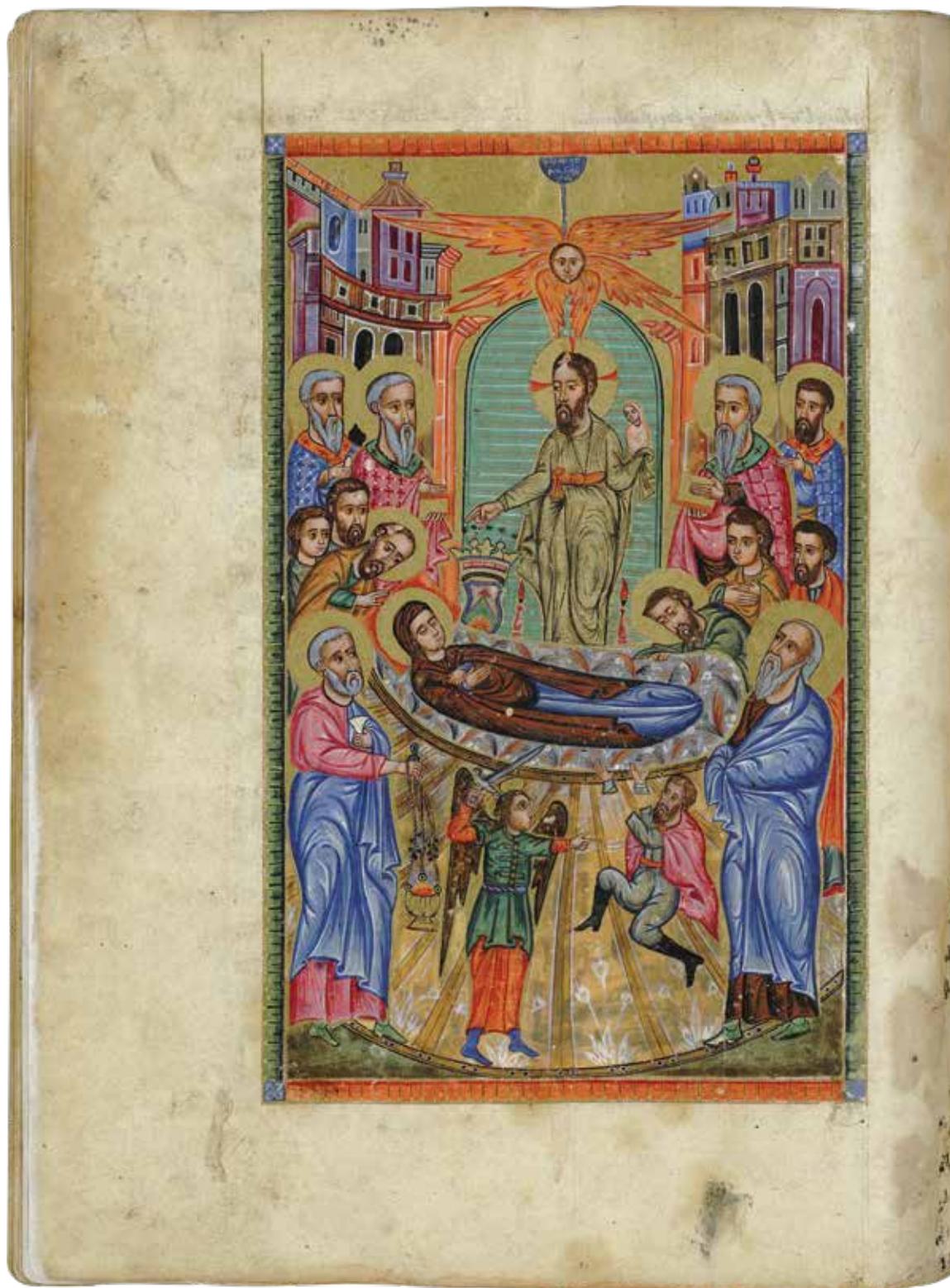
Title Page, *Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion]  
1561, Monastery of Elishe the Apostle, Ms 6282, f. 5r



Christ with the Commissioner of the Manuscript and the painter Grigor  
Church Calendar, 1662, K'arahat (near Gandzak), Ms 10743, f. 3v



Title Page, *Chashots'* [Lectionary], 1665, Charek' Monastery  
artist: Grigor, Ms 986, f. 224r



Dormition of the Mother of God  
*Chashots'* [Lectionary], 1665, Charek' Monastery, artist: Grigor, Ms 986, f. 421v



Eusebius' Letter to Carpianus, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), Ms 8965, f. 17v



Eusebius' Letter to Carpianus, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), Ms 8965, f. 18r



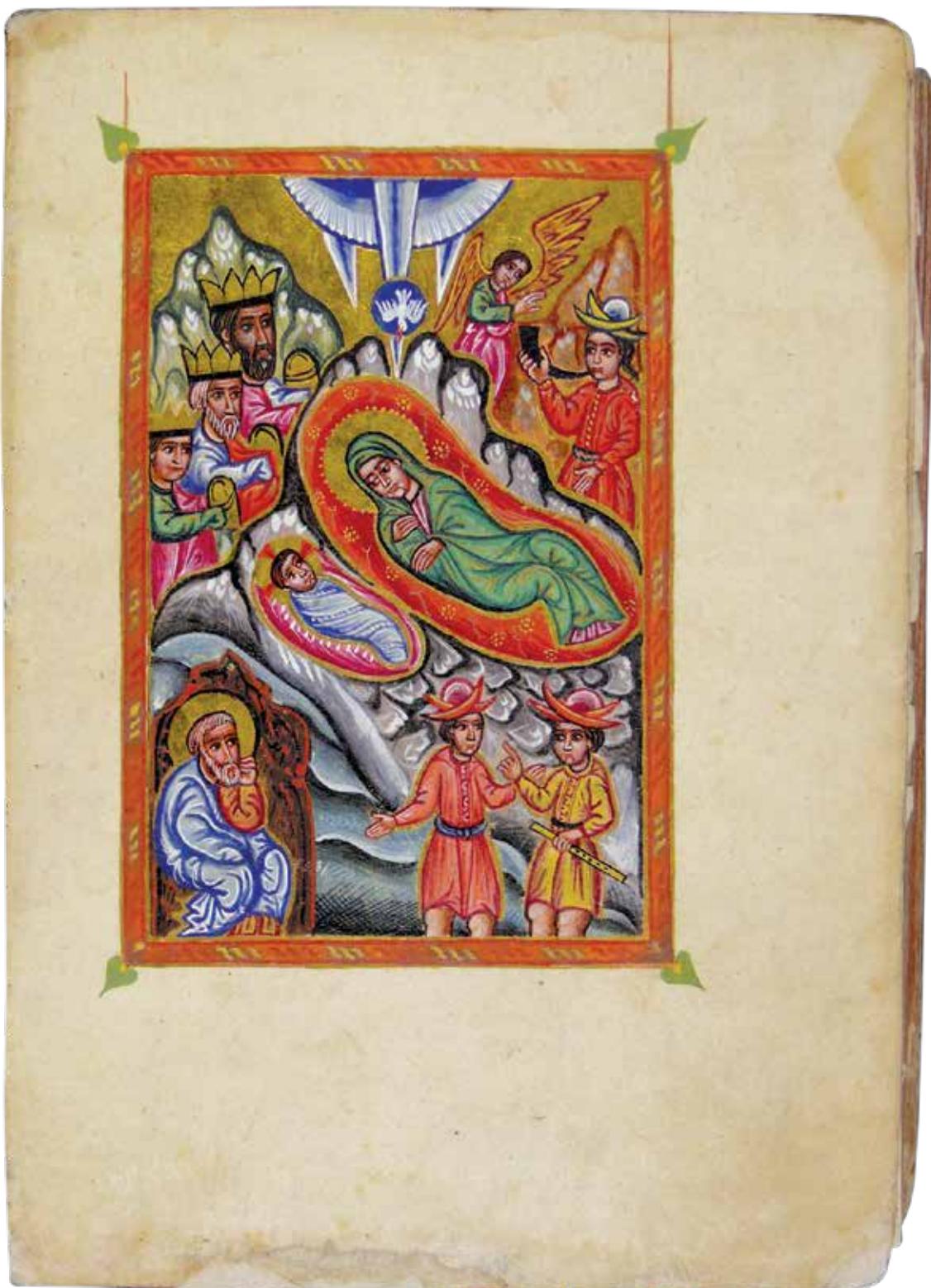
Canon Table, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 19v



Canon Table, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 20r



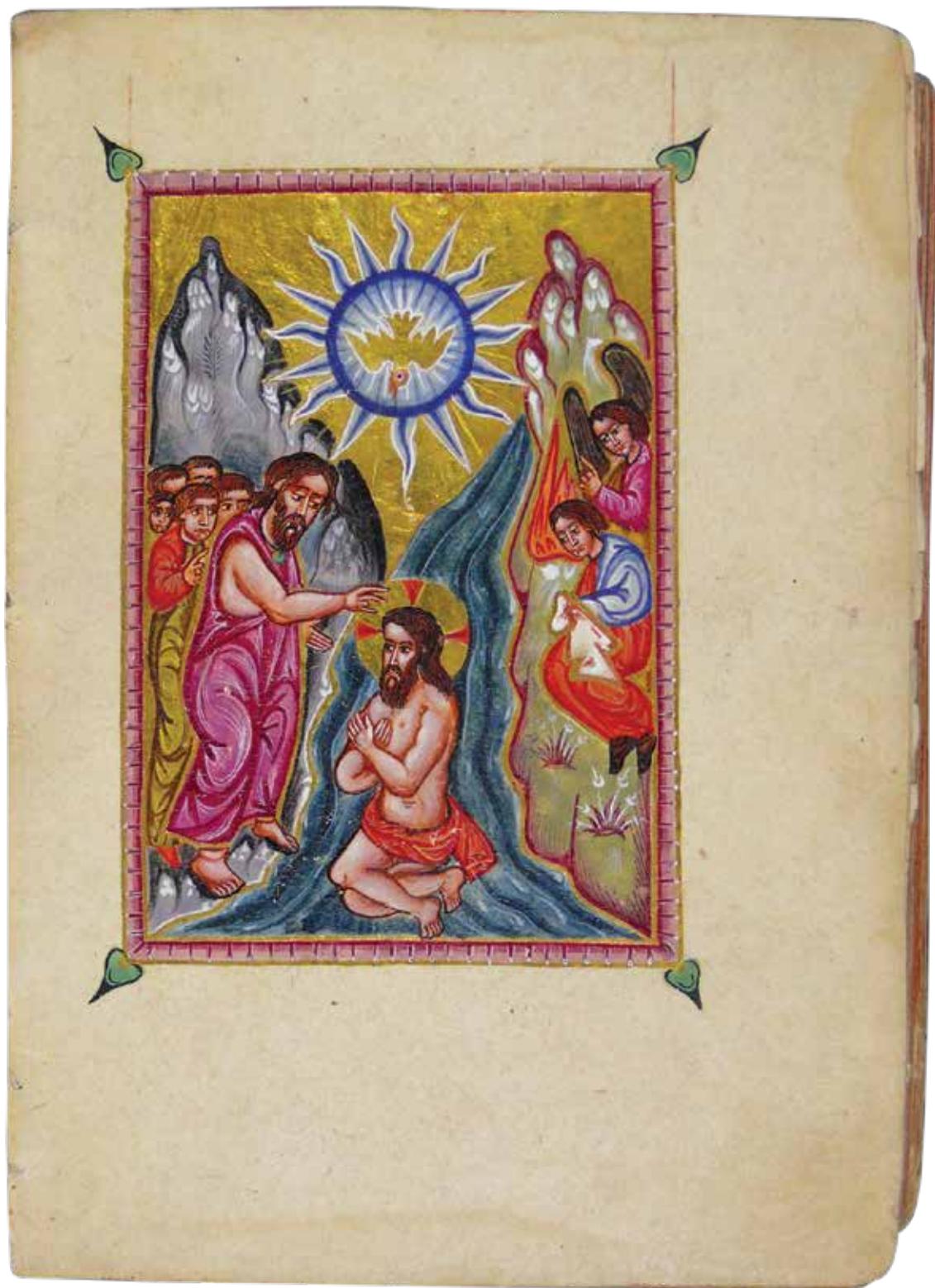
Annunciation, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. iv



Nativity, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 2r



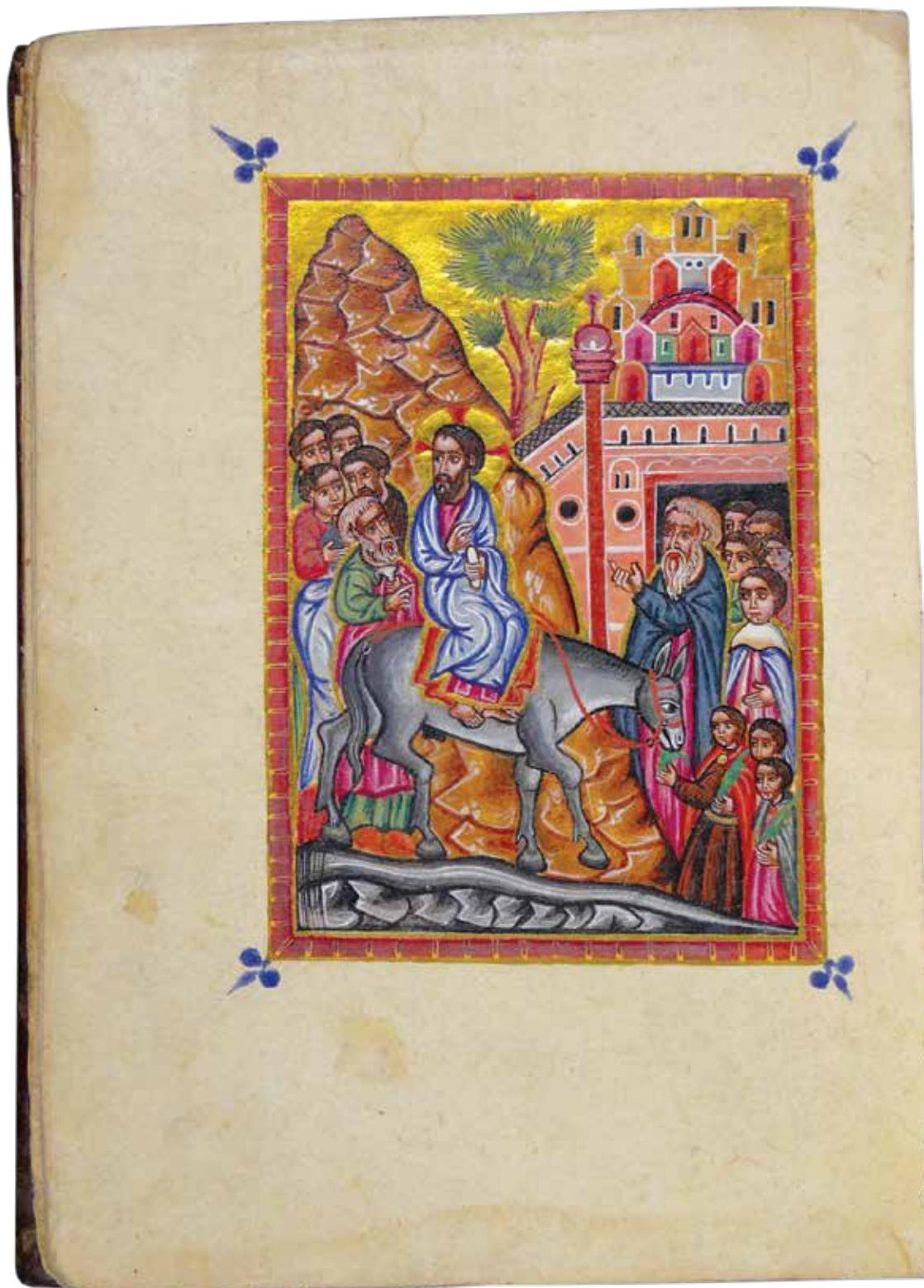
Presentation in the Temple, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak)  
artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 3v



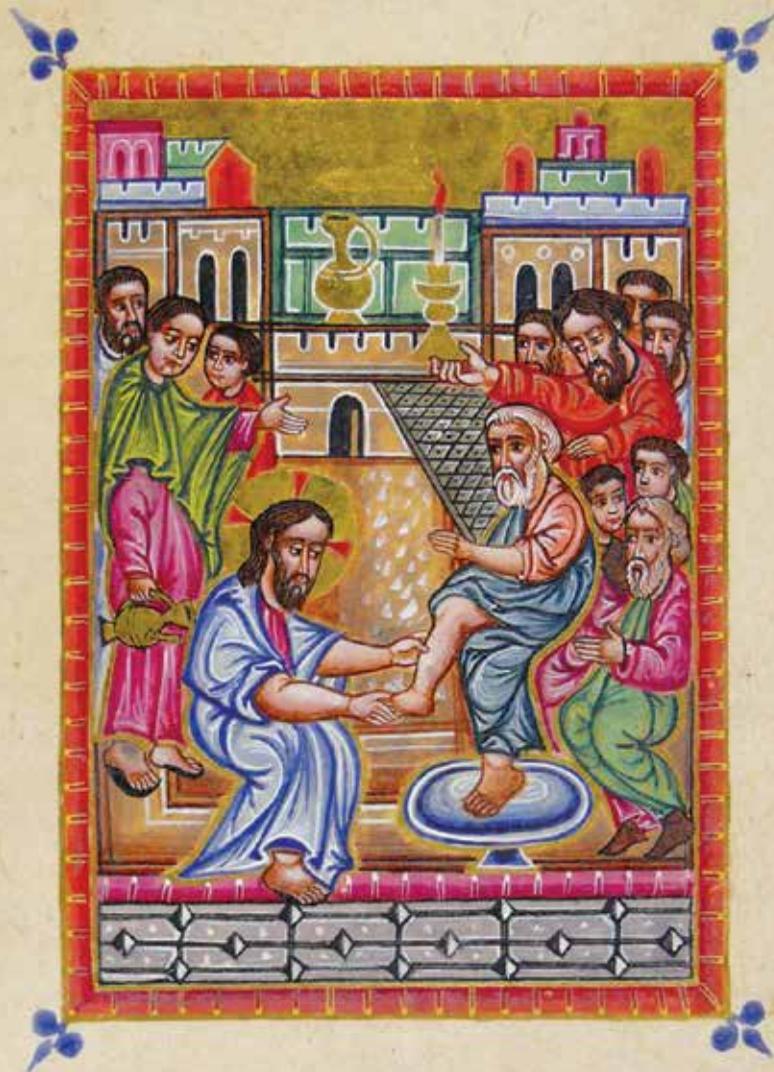
Baptism, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8065, f. 4r



Raising of Lazarus, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 5r



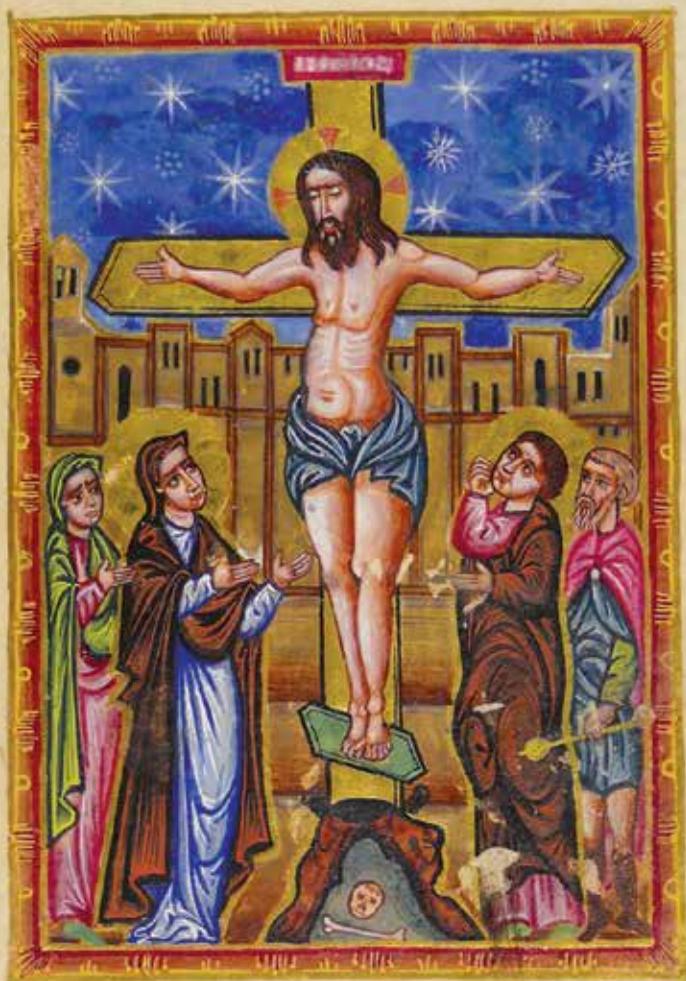
Entry into Jerusalem, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak)  
artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 6v



Washing of the Feet, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 7r



Betrayal, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8065, f. 8v



Crucifixion, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 9r



Descent from the Cross, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak)  
artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 10v



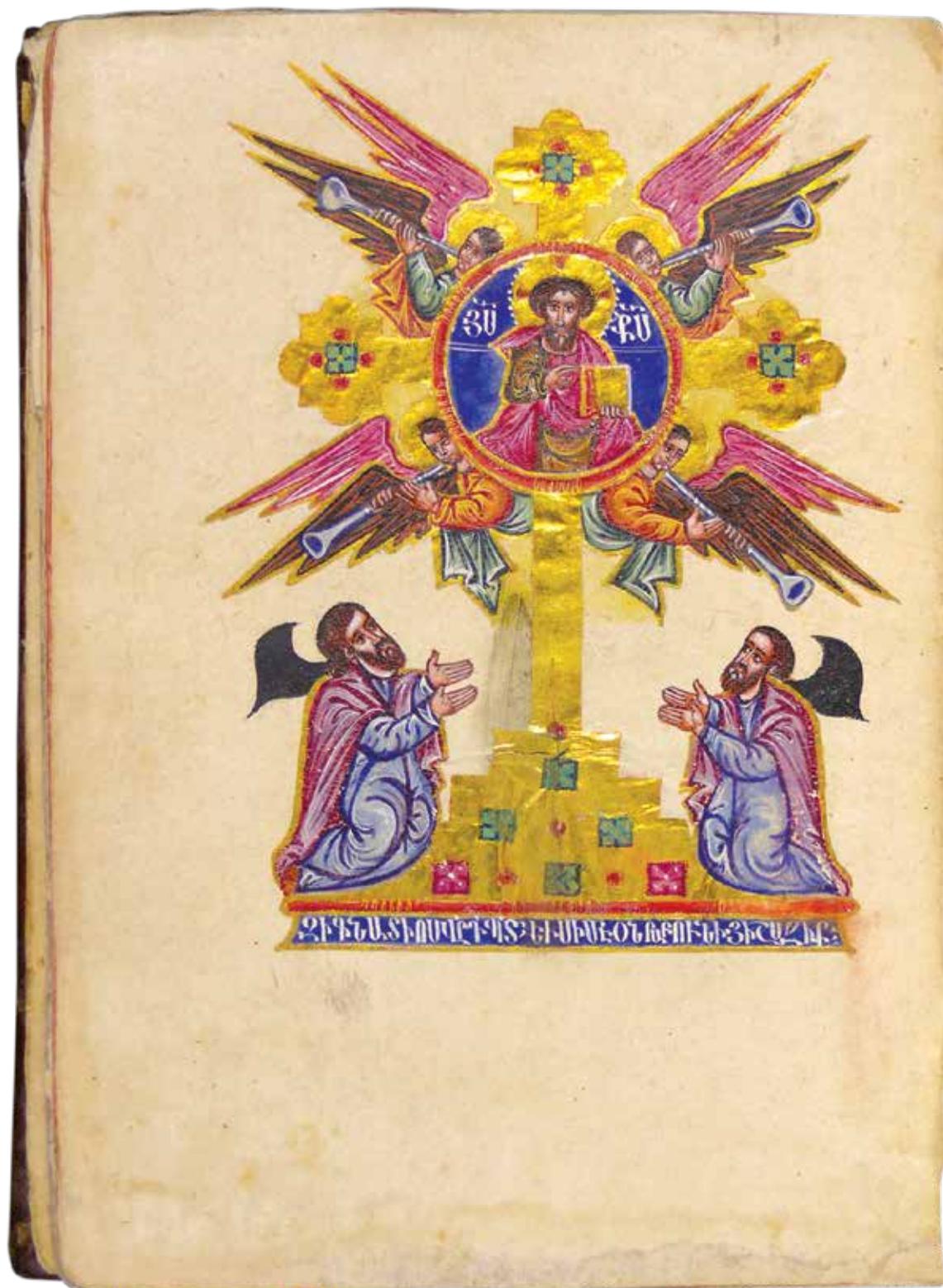
Harrowing of Hell, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 11r



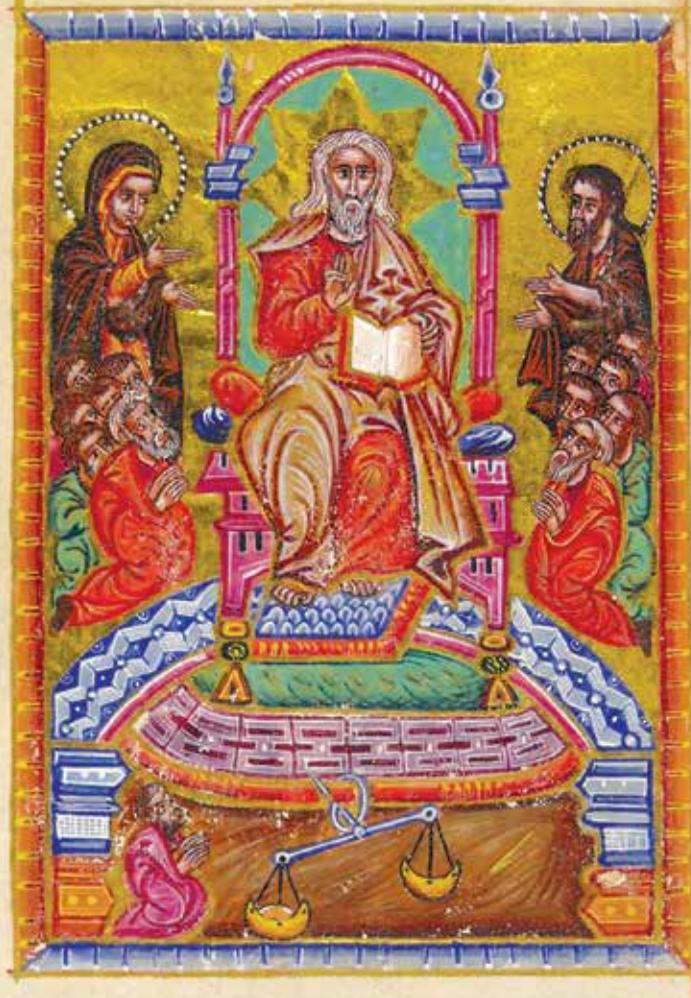
Ascension, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 12v



Pentecost, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 13r



The Second Coming, Ignatius *Vardapet* and Chief Teacher Simeon, Gospel, 1675  
K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 14v

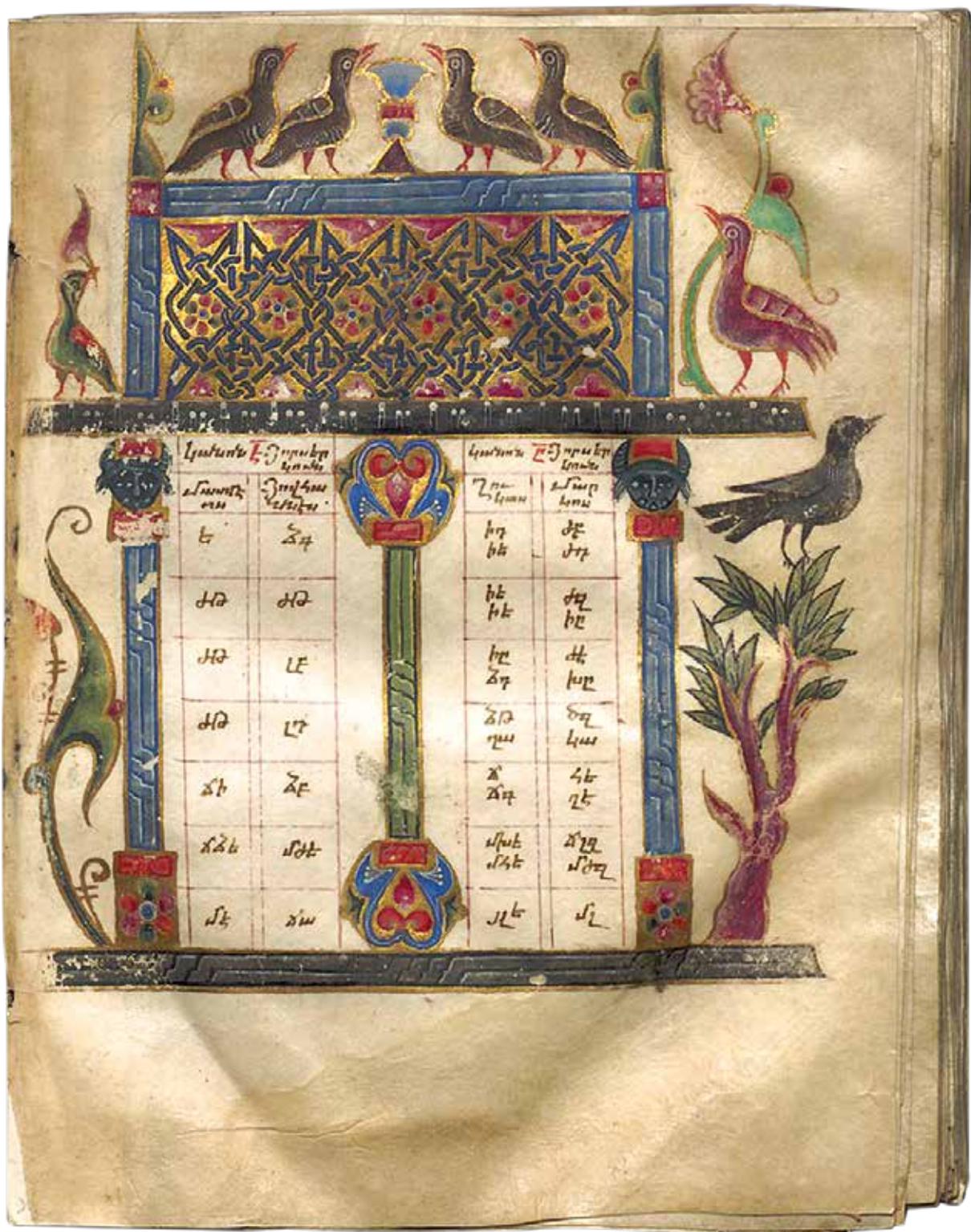


Intercession and Last Judgment, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 15r



Genealogy of Jesus, Gospel, 1675, K'arahat (near Gandzak), artist: Grigor, Ms 8965, f. 31r





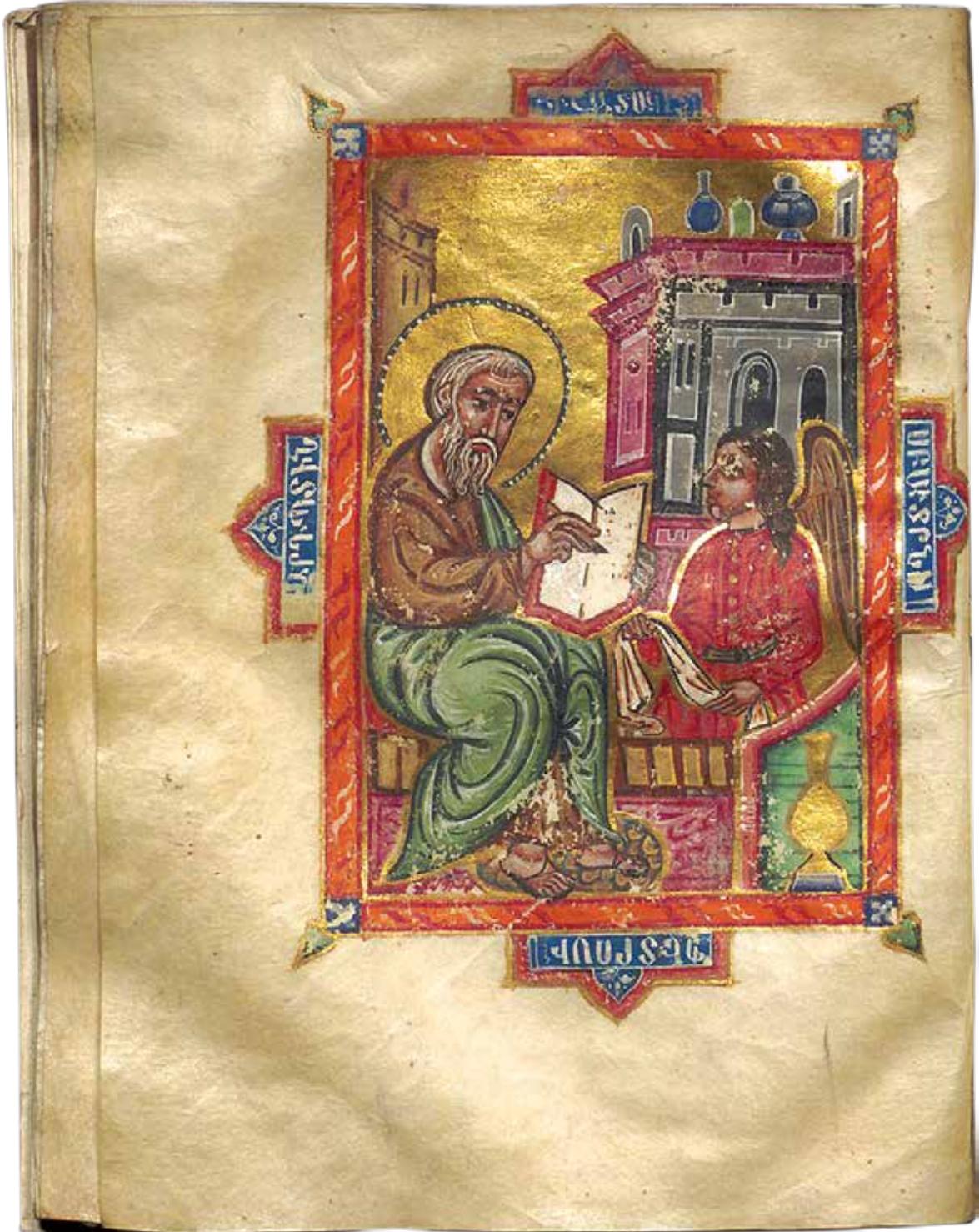
Canon Table, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsef, Ms 7232, f. 9r



Canon Table, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barseł, Ms 7232, f. 10v



Canon Table, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsef, Ms 7232, f. 11r



Matthew the Evangelist, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsel, Ms 7232, f. 14v



Title Page of the Gospel of Matthew Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsel, Ms 7232, f. 15r



John the Evangelist and Prochorus, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank'  
artist: Barsel, Ms 7232, f. 248v



Title Page of the Gospel of John, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barseł, Ms 7232, f. 249r



Annunciation to Joseph, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barseł, Ms 7232, f. 19r



լուսաւորեցան է  
րեւիք նորա իբրև  
զարեգանիս . կանոց  
երձք նորա եղև սր  
պիտակ իբրև զլոյս :  
Եւ զայն երևե-  
ցան նոցա միւլ

մէս և եղև որ խօ  
սէին ընդ նմա :  
առաւելանիկա  
պետրոս և առ է  
ց յս . սրբ բարան  
քէ մեզ առա լինել  
և թէ կամիս արաս



Feeding the Multitude, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsel, Ms 7232, f. 191v



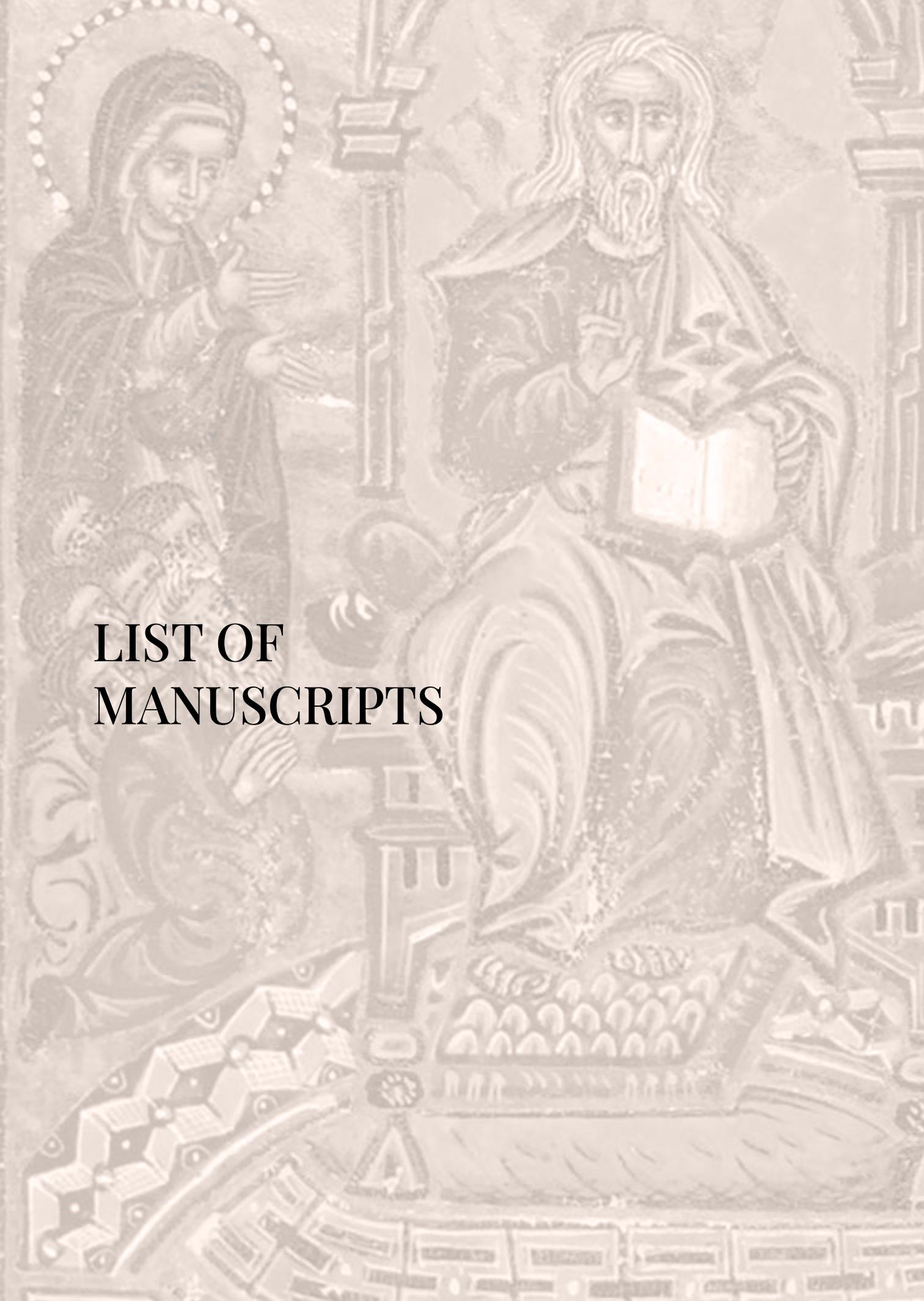
Ascension, Gospel, 1684, Dadivank', artist: Barsel, Ms 7232, f. 249r



John the Evangelist and Prochorus, Gospel, 1680s, artists: Barseł, Lazar, Ms 3994, f. 229v



Title Page of the Gospel of John, Gospel, 168os, artists: Barsel, Lazar, Ms 3994, f. 231r



**LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS**



## MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE SCRIPTORIA OF ARTS‘AKH AND UTIK‘

Below is a list of manuscripts copied and/or preserved in Arts‘akh and Utik‘ scriptoria. The list includes: the contents of each manuscript, the location and date of copying, the names of scribes, artists and recipients, and where each manuscript is housed today.

### MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN GANDZASAR

Gospel, 13th century,  
scribe and artist: T‘oros,  
recipient: Vakh‘ang-Tangik and Khorishah  
(Mat. MS 378)

Miscellany, 1417,  
scribe: Matt‘eos Monozon,  
recipient: priest Manuel (Mat. MS 8689)

Gregory of Tatev, Book of Questions, 1420,  
scribe: Rstakes,  
recipient: Fr Sargis (Mat. MS 4004)

Gospel, 1551,  
scribe: monk Hayrapet,  
recipient: priest Lazar (Mat. MS 6513)

Miscellany, 1576,  
scribe: Karapet, artist: At‘anas,  
recipient: Catholicos Hovhannes  
(Mat. MS 1923)

Gospel, 1632,  
scribe: unknown  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1655,  
artist: priest Grigor  
(illuminated, Mat. MS 3196)

Missal, 1657,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Grigor,  
recipient: Catholicos Petros  
(Jerusalem, MS 2273)

Miscellany, 1659,  
scribe and recipient: Hovhannes Apahunets‘i  
(Mat. MS 2277)

Movses Kalankatvats‘i, History of the Land of  
Ahuank‘, 1664,  
scribe: Simon,  
recipient: Archbishop Barsel (Mat. MS 2561)

Miscellany, 1654-1667,  
location of copying: Caffa (A), Gandzasar(B),  
scribe: monk Mkrtych‘ (Mat. MS 8504)

Miscellany, 1713,  
scribe: elder priest Hakob  
(current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1760,  
scribe and recipient: *vardapet* Davit‘  
T‘iflisets‘i (Mat. MS 38)

*Mashtots‘* [Ritual Book], 1766,  
scribe: Abraham Shak‘ets‘i,  
recipient: Catholicos Hovhannes (Mat. MS 3971)

The Lowcode, 1778,  
scribe: unknown (A),  
Catholicos Hovhannes (B) (Mat. MS 3497)

Esai Hasan-Jalalian,  
Epigraphic inscriptions, 1822,  
scribe: Hovhannes Łrimets‘i,  
recipient: Catholicos Ep‘rem (Mat. MS 9923)

## MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN GANDZASAR

Gospel, 13th century,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Grigor and Vardan (B),  
artists: Abas, Ignatios, Hovsep' (Chicago, MS 949)

Gospel, 13th century,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Daniel,  
recipient: T'aman (Mat. MS 4185)

Gospel, 13th century,  
donator: At'abak  
(current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1303,  
location of copying: Nrnonits' Monastery,  
scribes: priest T'adeos, *vardapet* Mkhit'ar,  
recipient: *vardapet* Hovhannes (Mat. MS 3606)

Colophon of a gospel, 1314,  
location of copying: Gladzor,  
scribe: Polos,  
recipient: Tarsayich Orbelian (Mat. MS 9150)

Miscellany, 1351-1352,  
location of copying: Surlat,  
scribe: priest Grigor (Mat. MS 2825)

Gregory of Tatev, Book of Questions, 1387,  
location of copying: Shahaponk' Fortress,  
scribe: Gregory of Tatev (Mat. MS 3616)

Sargis Shnorhali,  
Commentary on the Catholic Epistles,  
14th century,  
location of copying, Urnkar,  
scribe: Martiros,  
recipient: Fr Grigor (Mat. MS 3780)

Miscellany, 1406,  
location of copying: Tat'ev,  
scribe: Simon Banaser [the Philologist]  
(Mat. MS 4411)

Treasury, 1431,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Manuel (Mat. MS 3555)

Gospel, 1477,  
location of copying: Alt'amar,  
scribe and recipient: Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 16th century,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Fr Malak'ia,  
artist: Grigor Malezkerets'i,  
recipient: priest Vrt'anes (Mat. MS 7767)

Miscellany, 15th century,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: At'anes and monk Salat'el,  
recipient: Catholicos Hovhannes (Mat. MS 3140)

Gospel, 1599,  
location of copying: Vaspurakan, Avants' Village,  
scribe: Karapet,  
artist: Zak'aria Avants'I (Mat. MS 5794)

Gospel, 1652,  
location of copying: Varanda District,  
Lizner Village,  
scribe: elder priests Arak'el and Petros  
(Mat. MS 4176)

Gregory of Tatev,  
Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, 1655,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(Mat. MS 4055)

Gospel, 1656,  
location of copying: Aspahan,  
scribe: elder priest Gaspar,  
recipient: Khojymal (A), Minas (B)  
(Mat. MS 2399)

Dionysius the Areopagite, Writings, 1664,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Barsel (Mat. MS 3829)

Miscellany, 1665-1669,  
location of copying: Astapat,  
scribe: priest Nerses, elder priest Grigor,  
recipient: Mariam and monk Mik'ayel  
(Mat. MS 3468)

Petrus de Aragonia, Book of Virtues, 1673, 1680,  
location of copying: Shenher (A), scribe: Else (A),  
recipient: *vardapet* Movses (Mat. MS 4048)

Miscellany, before 1689,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(Tabriz, MS 22)

Prayer Book, 1690,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Aristakes (Mat. MS 2449)

## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS

Gevorg Skevrats'I, Lutsmunk'  
[Interpretation] of Narek, 17th century,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(Mat. MS 4383)

Ritual Book of Ordination, 17th century,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(Mat. MS 4051)

Miscellany, 17th century,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(Mat. MS 3696)

Mat. Fragment 869

Mat. Fragment 1017

## MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN SURB HAKOB MONASTERY

Gospel, 1383,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(bound, current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1577,  
scribe: monk Salat'el,  
artist: Zak'aria Avants'i,  
recipient: Archbishop Simeon (Mat. MS 5507)

Book of Theoretical Philosophy, 18th century,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i (Mat. MS 2828)

Book of Theoretical Philosophy, 1816,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i and his student  
(Mat. MS 2525)

Book of Theoretical Philosophy, 1835,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i,  
recipient: Archbishop Barsel (Mat. MS 3619)

Book of Theoretical Philosophy, 1835,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i,  
recipient: Archbishop Barsel (Mat. MS 2990)

Book of Theoretical Philosophy, 19th century,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i (Mat. MS 4038)

Armenian Grammar, 19th century,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i (Mat. MS 3620)

Armenian Grammar, 1839,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i (Mat. MS 2563)

John Chrysostom,  
Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, 1817,  
scribe: Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i (Mat. MS 3618)

## MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN SURB HAKOB MONASTERY

Gospel, 1241,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
donator: Grigor, son of Smbat  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1297,  
location of copying: Elegik',  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipient: priest Grigor (Mat. MS 7482)

## KHANDZK' VILLAGE

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1560,  
scribe: monk Hovhannes (Mat. MS 9872)

Gospel, 1560,  
scribe: monk Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1566,  
scribe: elder priest Arstakes (Mat. MS 3427)

Gospel, 1569,  
scribe: Hovhannes (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1571,  
scribe: Hovhannes (current location: unknown)

## HAVAPTUK MONASTERY

Gospel 1232,  
location of copying: Getik Monastery,  
scribe: Step'anos,  
recipient: Vaneni (current location: unknown)

## KOSHIK ANAPAT

Gospel,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
donator: Prosh, son of Prince Vasak, 1244  
(current location: unknown)

LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS

Tonapatchar [Book of Feasts],  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
donator: Prosh, son of Prince Vasak, 1244  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1493,  
scribe: Sargis (current location: unknown)

**SURB GEVORG MONASTERY OF  
PTUK**

Gospel, 1490,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1760,  
scribe: monk Hovhannes (Mat. MS 8508)

**KHANATSAKH VILLAGE**

Gospel, 1693,  
scribe: priest Ep'rem,  
recipient: Mahp'ari Khat'un (Mat. MS 7840)

*Chashots'* [Lectionary],  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Gomorants' Monastery,  
scribe: P'ilipos (formerly kept in Khanatsakh,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Drazark,  
recipient: Manuel the Philosopher  
(formerly kept in Khanatsakh,  
current location: unknown)

**ARAJADZOR VILLAGE**

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Bishop Vardan,  
artist: Bishop Hordan,  
recipient: priest Shmavon  
(current location: unknown)

Bible,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Khosrov,  
recipient: Melk'isedek, Hovhannes, Meliten  
(current location: unknown)

**MANUSCRIPTS COPIED IN OTHER  
PLACES OF LOWER KHACH'EN**

Gospel, 1279,  
scribe: Vardan,  
recipient: Vakht'ang, son of Umek (Mat. MS 5669)

Relic of the New Testament,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Vardan,  
recipient: Vakht'ang, son of Umek (Mat. MS 155)

Gospel, 1326,  
location of copying: Khach'en,  
Barimardkan Anapat,  
scribe: T'uma,  
recipient: priest Vanakan (Jerusalem, MS 1794)

Gregory of Tat'ev, Book of Questions,  
15th century,  
location of copying: Khach'en,  
scribe: Matt'eos,  
recipient: Fr Hovhannes (Mat. MS 801)

**HAT'ERK'**

The Lawcode, 1184,  
location of copying: Dasno Anapat (A),  
Hat'erk' (B),  
scribe: Mkhit'ar Gosh,  
recipients: Vakht'ang and Arzukhat'un  
(Venice, MS 993)

**MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN  
KHADAVANK'**

Gospel, 1225,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Dop' (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1232, Khadavank' (B), scribe: Tirats'u,  
artist: Grigor (A), Grigor Arts'akhets'i (B),  
recipients: Hovhannes (A),  
Grigor Dop'ian and Asp'a (B) (Mat. MS 2743)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN  
KHADAVANK'**

Gospel, 10th century,  
location of copying: around Lake Van,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipients: Manik and Tadeos Antikians (B),  
Catholicos Vazen I (C, 1978) (Mat. MS 10780)

## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS

Gospel, 1166,  
location of copying: Hromkla,  
scribe: Kozma,  
recipient: Bishop Arak'el Antstunya (A),  
Grigor Dop'ian (B) (Mat. MS 7347)

Hovhan Odznets'i, Sak's Jošovots' u Elen i Hays,  
year and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Grigor Dop'ian (B)  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1211,  
location of copying: Halbat,  
scribe: Hakob, artist: Margare,  
recipient: Sargis (B) (Mat. MS 6288)

Book of Feasts, 1227,  
location of copying: Avag Monastery in Erzinka,  
scribe: Nerses,  
recipient: *vardapet* Vardan (A),  
Grigor Dop'ian (B) (Mat. MS 6196)

Book of Feasts, 1227,  
location of copying: Avag Monastery in Erzinka,  
scribe: Nerses,  
recipient: Turk' (A), Grigor Dop'ian (B)  
(Mat. MS 3779)

Gospel, 1230,  
location of copying: Theodopolis,  
scribe: Grigor,  
recipient: Grigor Dop'ian (B)  
(Venice, Mat. MS 129)

## MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN DADIVANK'

Hovhannesik Tsarets'i, Chronicle, 1334 (A),  
17th century (B),  
scribe: elder priest: Grigor (A),  
Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B),  
recipient: Archbishop Elia (A),  
Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B) (Mat. MS 2776)

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Olverdz,  
scribe: priest Ep'rem,  
artist: Barsel,  
recipient: *vardapet* Petros  
(illuminated, Mat. MS 7232)

Gospel, 1694,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1699,  
scribe: *vardapet* T'ovma (Mat. MS 8505)

## MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN DADIVANK'

Vardan Arevelts'i [Vardan the Easterner],  
Commentary on the Pentateuch, 1381,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: priest Sargis,  
recipient: Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B)  
(Mat. MS 1136)

Gospel, 1411,  
location of copying: Aprakunyats' Monastery,  
scribe: Matt'eos Julayets'i,  
recipient: Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B)  
(Mat. MS 2519)

Miscellany, 1451,  
location of copying: Sevan,  
scribe: monk Daniel,  
recipient: Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B)  
(Mat. MS 1301)

Gregory of Tatev, Book of Questions,  
15th century,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: elder priest Petros,  
recipient: Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B)  
(Jerusalem, MS 2208)

Vardan Arevelts'i [Vardan the Easterner],  
Song of Songs, 1588,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Hovhannesik Tsarets'i (B)  
(current location: unknown)

## TSAR VILLAGE

Gospel, 1387,  
scribe: *vardapet* Sargis  
(current location: unknown)

## K'ARVACHAR VILLAGE

Gregory of Tatev,  
Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, 1402,  
scribe: T'uma Syunets'i,  
recipient: priest Hunan (Mat. MS 3578)

Gospel, 1456,  
scribe and artist: T'uma Syunets'i (Mat. MS 8124)

## SURB ASTVATSATSIN OF GETAMEJ

*Chashots'* [Lectionary], 1411,  
scribe: T'ovma (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1456,  
scribe: T'ovma,  
recipient: priest Vrt'anes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1661,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
recipient: Khanum (Mat. MS 11204)

## APAHEN VILLAGE

Hymnal, 1652,  
scribe and artist: Movses Gorisets'i  
(Mat. MS 1626)

## SOS VILLAGE

Gospel, 1653,  
scribe: Martiros Khntsorekts'i,  
artist: elder priest Movses,  
recipient: Fr T'adeos (Mat. MS 3647)

## DASHTAK VILLAGE

Gospel, 1663,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Esayi,  
recipient: Simeon (Mat. MS 4053)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1673,  
scribe: elder priest Esayi,  
recipient: Fr Barsel (Mat. MS 3601)

## KUSANATS' ANAPAT

Gregory of Tatev, Book of Sermons, 1684,  
scribe: Varvare,  
artist: Barsel,  
recipient: chief teacher Petros (Mat. MS 2067)

## GTCH'AVANK'

Gospel, 1428,  
scribe: Bishop Manuel,  
recipient: monk Melk'iset'  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1428,  
scribe: Bishop Manuel,  
recipient: Bishop Alek'sianos (B)  
(formerly kept in Gtch'avank', Mat. MS 8211)

Gospel, 1464,  
location of copying: Ereran Monastery  
in Vayots' Dzor (A),  
Gtch'avank' (B),  
scribe: Malak'ia,  
recipients: Murat and Dilshat (A),  
Bishop Alek'sianos (B) (Mat. MS 3701)

Gospel, 1477,  
location of copying: Vomavans Anapat (A),  
Gtch'avank' (B),  
scribe: Zak'aria,  
recipient: Bishop Alek'sianos (B)  
(formerly kept in Gtch'avank', Mat. MS 9792)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1575,  
scribe: Petros,  
recipient: Bek (Mat. MS 6834)

Gospel, 1668,  
recipient: priest Matt'eos  
(current location: unknown)

History of Arts'akh, 1858–1868,  
scribe: Arak'el Kostaniants' (Mat. MS 7822)

History of Arts'akh, 1870–1880,  
scribe: Arak'el Kostaniants' (Mat. MS 7823)

History of Gtch'avank', 1884,  
scribe: Arak'el Kostaniants' (Mat. MS 3966)

Miscellany, 1886–1888,  
scribe: Arak'el Kostaniants' (Mat. MS 3881)

## TAK' VILLAGE

Gospel, 1563,  
scribe: Deacon Nasip,  
recipient: elder priest Hovhannes (Mat. MS 7571)

## KHANDZADZOR VILLAGE

Gospel, 1604,  
scribe: priest Martiros,  
recipient: Melik' Sujum  
(current location: unknown)

### T'ALASER VILLAGE

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1631,  
scribe: Baldasar,  
recipient: Shahavar (Mat. MS 3580)

Gospel, 1635,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1638,  
scribe: elder priest Kirakos,  
recipient: Fr Hovhannes (Mat. MS 5380)

Gospel, 17th century,  
scribes: elder priest: Kirakos and Melk'iset'  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in T'alaser,  
current location: unknown)

### P'ARAJANATS' VILLAGE

Gospel, 1574,  
scribe: monk Abraham (New Julfa MS 88)

### SHAKHKAKH VILLAGE

Gospel, 1673,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1584,  
scribe: monk Abraham,  
recipient: elder priest Hovhannes  
(Bzommar MS 20)

### TOĻ SETTLEMENT

Bible,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Ani,  
scribe: Bishop Hovhannes,  
recipient: chief teacher Simeon  
(formerly kept in ToĻ, current location: unknown)

### VARANDA

On the origin of the family of  
Melik'-Shahnazariants',  
scribe: Mik'ayel Bek Lalabekian-Melik'-  
Shahnazariants' (Mat. MS 7429)

### AVETARANTOS' SETTLEMENT

*Mashtots'* [Lectionary], 1641,  
scribe: Gayane,  
recipient: Janum (Mat. MS 2404)

Gospel, 1650,  
location of copying: T'alavart,  
scribe: Katarine,  
artist: Gayane,  
recipient: priest Sargis  
(illuminated, Vienna MS 931)

Gospel, 1659,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Grigor,  
recipient: Elia  
(formerly kept in Avetaranots',  
current location: New York)

Grigor Tserents', *Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion],  
1667,  
scribe: Khosrov,  
recipient: Hrip'sime (Mat. MS 7421)

Gospel, 1671,  
scribe: Gayane (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1671,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1672,  
location of copying: Van, scribe: Vardan,  
artist: Grigor Vanets'i,  
donator: Nanagyul  
(formerly kept in Avetaranots', Mat. MS 9032)

### TALAVARD VILLAGE

Gospel, 1650,  
scribe: Katarine,  
artist: Gayane,  
recipient: priest Sargis (Vienna MS 931)

### UPPER TALAVARD VILLAGE

Arak'el Syunets'i, Adamagirk', 1717,  
scribe: unknown (Mat. MS 3888)

### LIZNER VILLAGE

Gospel, 1652,  
scribes: elder priest Arak'el and Polos  
(Mat. MS 4176)

### KHNUSHINAK VILLAGE

Gospel, 1672,  
location of copying: Van,  
scribe: Vardan,  
artist: Grigor Vanets'i  
(formerly kept in Khnushinak, Mat. MS 9032)

*Mashtots'* [Lectionary],  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown,  
donator: Anastas Ter-Mkrтч'ian  
(current location: unknown)

### CHARTAR VILLAGE OF ŁUL

Gospel,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Hovhannes  
(formerly kept in Chartar,  
current location: unknown)

### ASHAN VILLAGE

*Chashots'* [Lectionary], 1749,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Balu (B)  
(formerly kept in Ashan,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel (formerly kept in Ashan,  
current location: unknown)

### ŁZŁALA VILLAGE

Gospel, 1623,  
location of copying: Aleppo,  
scribe: Avetik'  
(formerly kept in Łzłala,  
current location: unknown)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1671,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

### SHUSH VILLAGE

Gospel, 1428,  
scribe: Bishop Manuel,  
recipient: Bishop Alek'sianos (B) (Mat. MS 8211)

Gospel, 1575,  
scribe: priest Hovhannes,  
recipient: elder priest Grigor (B) (Mat. MS 4375)

### VOMAVANS ANAPAT

Gospel, 1477,  
location of copying: Vomavans Anapat (A),  
Gтч'avank' (B),  
scribe: Zak'aria,  
recipient: Bishop Alek'sianos (B) (Mat. MS 9792)

### T'ALLAR SETTLEMENT

Gospel, 1565,  
location of copying: Yerits' Mankants' Monastery  
[Monastery of the Three Children],  
scribe and artist: At'anas,  
recipients: Rstakes and K'arimshim  
(formerly kept in T'allar, Mat. MS 2928)

Hymnal, 1665,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
recipient: Mirza (B) (formerly kept in T'allar, Mat.  
MS 2464)

Gospel, 1776,  
location of copying: Lor,  
scribe: Deacon Aristakes,  
recipient: Fr Vrdanes  
(formerly kept in T'allar,  
current location: unknown)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1834,  
scribe: priest Gaspar  
(current location: unknown)

### AZOKH VILLAGE

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: priest Sargis (current location: unknown)

### KHACH'MACH' VILLAGE

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Bishop Alek'sandr,  
recipient: priest T'adeos  
(current location: unknown)

## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS

Psalms,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Khach'mach',  
current location: unknown)

Psalms,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Khach'mach',  
current location: unknown)

### SARUSHEN VILLAGE

Gospel, 1182,  
scribe: Rstakes, Vrdanes, Step'anos,  
artist: Hakob (current location: unknown)

### KĀARTSI VILLAGE

Gospel, 1477,  
location of copying: Alt'amar,  
scribe: Hovhannes  
(formerly kept in KĀartsi,  
current location: unknown)

### MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN SHUSHI

Miscellany, 1791-1792,  
scribe: Mik'ayel Astapatets'i (Mat. MS 7428)

Miscellany, 1822,  
scribe: Mesrovb T'aliadiants' (Mat. MS 8212)

Miscellany, 1828 (Mat. MS 3351)

History of the Holy Writings, 1828,  
scribe and translator: Harut'yun Davt'ian  
Julahets'i (Mat. MS 9275)

Miscellany, 1831,  
scribe: Grigor Ter-Avagian Nakhijevants'I  
(Mat. MS 2835)

Rijinald Palestin, 1833 (Mat. MS 3690)

Miscellany, 1840,  
scribe: Movses (Mat. MS 10166)

Prayer Book, before 1841,  
scribe: Movses,  
recipient: *Mahtesi* Hakob (Mat. MS 10160)

Polos Nersisian, Grammar, 1842,  
scribe: the author (Polos Nersisian)  
(Mat. MS 9688)

Harut'yun Alamdarians',  
Russian-Armenian Brief Dictionary, 1846,  
scribe: Hovhannes Makhmuriants'  
(Mat. MS 10106)

Quran, 1848,  
scribe: Mnats'akan Hovhannisian-Harut'yunian  
(Mat. MS 2968)

Movses Kalankatvats'i, History of the Land of  
AĀuank', 1848,  
scribe: Nerses Ter-Barselian Abobiants'  
Odznets'i (Mat. MS 8035)

Harut'yun Melk'oniants',  
Sacred History of the Old and New Testaments,  
1851,  
scribe: the author (Harut'yun Melk'oniants')  
(Mat. MS 9133)

Harut'yun Melk'oniants', Armenian Grammar,  
1851,  
scribe: the author (Harut'yun Melk'oniants')  
(Mat. MS 9132)

Dictionary of the Armenian Language,  
before 1852,  
scribe: Nahapet Hovhannisian (Mat. MS 9349)

Miscellany, 1804-1856,  
location of copying: Cappadocia, Shushi,  
Constantinople,  
scribe: Grigor Kostandnupolsets'i,  
Hovsep' Arts'akhets'i, Hovhanens T'agvorian,  
Abel Mkhit'arian Grigor Shak'archian,  
recipient: *vardapet* Matt'eos, Baldasar Jalalian,  
T'adeos Mihrdatents', Dat'eos (Mat. MS 2622)

Miscellany, before 1863 (Mat. MS 3869)

Miscellany, 1868,  
scribe: Andreas Musaelian Shushets'i  
(Mat. MS 10107)

Hovsep' P'inach'iants', Lyre of the Heart, 1883,  
scribe: the author (Hovsep' P'inach'iants')  
(Mat. MS 3038)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN SHUSHI  
ŁAZANCH'ETS'OTS' HOLY SAVIOR  
CATHEDRAL**

Gospel, 1420,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1460,  
location of copying: Van, scribe: Vardan  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1461, location of copying: Van,  
scribe: Vardan, recipient: Mułal Khat'un  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1656,  
location of copying: Constantinople,  
scribe: Łazar, recipient: Łukas  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1658,  
location of copying: Kaffa,  
scribe: Nikolayos (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Khach'mach',  
scribe: Bishop Alek'sandr,  
recipient: priest T'adeos  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Monastery of Hermon,  
scribe and artist: Esayi (Mat. MS 9431)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying, scribe: unknown  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

**AGULETS'OTS' SURB ASTVATSATSIN  
(HOLY MOTHER OF GOD) CHURCH**

Gospel, 1308,  
location of copying: Aspinska,  
scribe: Łazar, artist: Tserun  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1641,  
location of copying and scribe: unknown,  
restored at Ch'arek' Monastery  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1645,  
location of copying: T'ovuz, scribe: Esayi,  
recipient: Sarukhan (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1680,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Barseł  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 17th century,  
location of copying: T'alaser,  
scribes: elder priest Kirakos and Melk'iset'  
(current location: unknown)

**MELRETS'OTS' SURB ASTVATSATSIN  
(HOLY MOTHER OF GOD) CHURCH**

Gospel, 1414,  
location of copying: Ktuts' Anapat,  
scribe: priest Hovsep'  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1473,  
location of copying: Mokk', P'asavank' Village,  
scribe: Israyel (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1778,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Fr Mesrop (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copyin: unknown,  
scribe: monk Hovhannes,  
recipient: Mariam (current location: unknown)

### SURB HOVHANNES CHURCH OF NOR T'AL

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Kits' Village,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

### KUSANATS' ANAPAT (MONASTERY OF THE HOLY VIRGIN) IN SHUSHI

Gospel, 1485,  
location of copying: Salnanapat,  
scribe: Mkrtych,  
recipient: Varvare (B)  
(formerly kept in Kusanats' Anapat,  
current location: unknown)

### MONASTERY OF YELISHE THE APOSTLE

Gospel, 1534,  
location of copying: Sanahin,  
scribe: Terunakan, artist: At'anas  
(illuminated, 1551, Mat. MS 217)

Gospel, 1554,  
location of copying: Shulaver,  
artist: unknown  
(illuminated, 1555, current location: unknown)

*Haysmavurk'*, 1559,  
scribe and artist: At'anas,  
recipient: Bishop Karapet (Mat. MS 4477)

*Haysmavurk'* [Lectionary], 1561,  
scribes: priest Margara and Bishop Elia  
Berkrats'i,  
artist: At'anas,  
recipient: chief teacher Lukas (Mat. MS 6282)

Gospel, 1667,  
location of copying: Kaffa,  
scribe: Nikolayos,  
recipient: Zanduli (formerly kept in the  
Monastery of Yelische the Apostle, Baku MS 8315)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1681,  
scribe: Aharon Mayekats'i,  
recipient: priest Hakob (Mat. MS 8125)

Gospel, 1682,  
scribe: priest Hovsep,  
recipient: Mariam (current location: unknown)

Book of Sermons, 1787,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
donator: Grigor,  
recipient: Fr Simon (formerly kept in the  
Monastery of Yelische the Apostle,  
current location: unknown)

### YERITS' MANKANTS' (THE THREE CHILDREN) MONASTERY

Gospel, 1565,  
scribe and artist: At'anas,  
recipients: Rstakes and K'arimshim  
(Mat. MS 2928)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1589,  
scribe: elder priest: Polos,  
artist: Bishop Meltinets'i,  
recipient: *vardapet* Hakob  
(illuminated, 1592, Mat. MS 1505)

Nerses Lambronats'I, Miscellany, 1619,  
scribe: Esayi (Tabriz MS 5)

Girk' Pitoyits', 1661,  
scribe: Ignatios (Mat. MS 3446)

Gospel, 1725,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
donator: Allahverdi Panazurts'i  
(formerly kept in Yerits'  
Mankants' Monastery,  
current location: unknown)

Ritual Book of Ordination, 1760,  
scribe: Abraham Shak'ets'i,  
recipient: Catholicos Nerses (Mat. MS 1078)

### INNMAS ANAPAT

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1641,  
location of copying: Avetaranots' Settlement,  
scribe: Gayane,  
recipient: Janum  
(formerly kept in Innmas Anapat, Mat. MS 2404)

## MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN GULISTAN

Gospel, 1681,  
scribe and artist: Esayi (Mat. MS 4228)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1686,  
scribe and artist: Esayi (Mat. MS 10472)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1689,  
scribe: Davit,  
recipient: priest Esayi (Mat. MS 9043)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1692,  
scribe: Davit,  
recipient: priest Melik'set' (Mat. MS 1032)

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Grigor (current location: unknown)

## MOKHRAT'AL VILLAGE

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 16th century,  
scribe: Sargis,  
recipient: Grigor (Mat. MS 1338)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Mokhrat'al, Mat. MS 11204)

## METSSHEN VILLAGE

Gospel, 909,  
location of copying: Constantinople,  
scribe: T'ut'ayel,  
artist: Ignatios Horomests'i (B),  
recipient: Ashot Sparapet (A)  
(formerly kept in Metsshen, Mat. MS 6202)

## T'ALISH VILLAGE

Gospel, 10th–11th century,  
scribe: Step'anos,  
artists: Hovhannes Sandlavanets'i, Sargis (B)  
(formerly kept in T'alish, Mat. MS 10099)

## MALAVUZ VILLAGE

*Mashtots'* [Lectionary], 1575,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: monk Hovhannes,  
recipient: Grigor  
(formerly kept in Malavuz,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying, scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Shaḥupar (B)  
(formerly kept in Malavuz,  
current location: unknown)

## KHRKHAP'OR VILLAGE

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipients: Melk'um and Apres (B)  
(current location: unknown)

## ERK'AZ VILLAGE

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Erk'az,  
current location: unknown)

Teachings of Plutarch  
(formerly kept in Erk'az,  
current location: unknown)

Handbook of Dreams  
(formerly kept in Erk'az,  
current location: unknown)

Dictionary  
(formerly kept in Erk'az,  
current location: unknown)

Dictionary  
(formerly kept in Erk'az,  
current location: unknown)

### VERINSHEN VILLAGE

Gospel, 1493,  
location of copying: Koshik Anapat,  
scribe: Sargis  
(formerly kept in Vernishen,  
current location: unknown)

### NERK'INSHEN VILLAGE

Gospel, 1678,  
location of copying: Lor,  
scribe: Abraham (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying, scribe: unknown,  
recipients: Hovhannes and Hovasap' (B)  
(current location: unknown)

### MONASTERY OF NOR (NEW) GETIK

Commentary on Jeremiah, 1188,  
location of copying: Hin (Old) Getik,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar Gosh  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 12th–13th centuries,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Prince Davit' (New Julfa MS 710)

An Epistle to the Georgians about the Orthodoxy,  
13<sup>th</sup> century,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar Gosh  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 13th century,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribes: Sargis, Step'anos,  
recipient: Prince Sadun (Dublin MS 551)

Gospel, 1232,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Step'anos,  
recipient: Vaneni (current location: unknown)

Brief History of the Period from Saint Gregory to  
the Present,  
written by *vardapet* Kirakos at the Renowned  
Monastery of Getik, 1241,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Kirakos Gandzakets'i  
(current location: unknown)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1253,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Kirakos Gandzakets'i  
(current location: unknown)

Miscellandy, 1273,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar (Jerusalem MS 1288)

Gospel, 13th century,  
location of copying: Nor Getik,  
scribe: Mkhit'arich',  
recipient: priest Grigor (Mat. MS 2814)

Miscellany, 13th century,  
location of copying: Goshavank',  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipient: chief teacher Kirakos (Mat. MS 3931)

Miscellany, 15th century,  
location of copying: Goshavank',  
scribe and artist: Lazar (Mat. MS 3653)

### HALARTSIN MONASTERY

Gospel, 1284,  
location of copying: Halartsin,  
scribe: Astvatsatur,  
recipient: priest Grigor (Jerusalem MS 2905)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1296,  
location of copying: Barjanj,  
scribe: Deacon Anania,  
recipient: Deacon Ishkhan,  
bookbinder: Deacon Sargis, Halartsin, 1429  
(Mat. MS 1028)

Gospel, 1422,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Bishop Sargis Partavets'i (A),  
Hovhannes (B),  
recipient: Bishop Sargis Partavets'i,  
artist: Bishop Sargis Partavets'i (A),  
Hovhannes (B),  
bookbinder: Hovhannes, Halartsin, 1624  
(Mat. MS 8423)

Gospel, 1511,  
location of copying: Sot',  
scribe: Grigor,  
recipient: priest Manuel,  
artist and bookbinder: *vardapet* Hovhannes,  
Halartsin, 1627  
(Mat. MS 10162)

## MORO DZORO MONASTERY

Gospel, 1431,  
location of copying: Amid,  
scribe: Grigor, artist: Abraham (Mat. MS 6430)

Gospel, 16th century,  
location of copying, scribe: unknown,  
recipient: *mahtesi* Gulibat' (Mat. MS 3975)

Gospel, 1322,  
location of copying: Aivanadzor Monastery  
in Van,  
scribe: Hakob, recipient: Movses  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1778,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Bishop Grigor Ashtarakets'i,  
recipient: Melik'khat'un  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

## DELDZUT MONASTERY

Miscellany, 1280,  
location of copying: Deldzut,  
scribes: priests Avetis and Gevorg,  
recipient: priest Gevorg (Mat. MS 5254)

Tonapatchar [Book of Feasts], 1280,  
location: Deldzut,  
scribes: Grigor and Shmavon,  
recipient: Sargis (Mat. MS 5197)

Gospel, 1042,  
location of copying: Vordir in Basen (A),  
Deldzut (B),  
scribe: Sargis,  
recipient: priest Sarkavag (A), Hovhannes (B)  
(Mat. MS 6384)

## MANUSCRIPTS OF KHORANASHAT

Miscellany, 1223,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Step'anos Altamarts'i (Mat. MS 2101)

Gospel, 1224,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe and artist: unknown,  
recipient: Vaneni (Mat. MS 4823)

Miscellany, 1252,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: priest Grigor,  
recipient: priest Step'anos (Mat. MS 2273)

Vanakan *Vardapet*, Questions and Answers, 1255,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: priest Grigor,  
recipients: T'ade and Hayrapet (Mat. MS 6106)

Miscellany, 13th century,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Sargis,  
recipient: chief teacher Mkhit'ar (Mat. MS 5452)

Gregory of Narek, Book of Lamentation, 1283,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Martiros (Mat. MS 1563)

Gospel, 1503,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Bishop Hunan,  
artist: Bishop Step'anos (Mat. MS 5601)

Gospel, 1620,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: elder priest Hakob (Mat. MS 6669)

Psalms, Book of Hours, 1631,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi, recipient: Khach'atur  
(Venice, Mat. MS 59)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1637,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi (Mat. MS 8941)

Gospel, 1639,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi,  
recipient: T'uma (current location: unknown)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1640,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi (Mat. MS 3998)

Book of Hours, 1642,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi,  
recipient: T'amur (Mat. MS 8882)

Miscellany, 1657,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: Esayi,  
recipient: priest Astvatsatur (Mat. MS 2116)

LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1674,  
location of copying: Khoranashat,  
scribe: priest Avetis (Mat. MS 3536)

Vanakan *Vardapet*, Questions and Answers  
(Jerusalem MS 1288)

Vanakan *Vardapet*,  
Concerning on the Beginning of the New Year  
(Mat. MS 5561)

Commentary on the Book of Job  
(Jerusalem MS 68)

Comparison between the Old and New  
Testaments (Jerusalem MS 587)

Jerusalem MS 173

Jerusalem MS 617  
Jerusalem MS 773

Vanakan *Vardapet* (current location: unknown)

Kirakos Gandzakets'i, History of the Armenians,  
ch. 50

**ANAPAT OR NOR (NEW)  
VARAGAVANK'**

Gospel, 1505,  
location of copying: Surb Karapet Monastery  
in Glak,  
scribe: monk Martiros  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1586,  
location of copying: Dvnik,  
scribe: Nerses (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1633,  
location of copying: Verin (Upper) Zakam,  
Shak'arbek Village,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

**VERIN (UPPER) ZAKAM**

Gospel, 1571,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar,  
recipient: Eva and Voskan (Mat. MS 6759)

Gospel, 1674,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 17th century,  
scribe: priest Grigor (Mat. MS 7299)

**KHOROTIK MONASTERY**

Gospel, 1490,  
location of copying: Surb Astvatsatsin of  
Khorotik Monastery,  
scribe: monk Alek'sandr,  
recipients: Khontk'ar and Lariipsha  
(Mat. MS 8135)

**LARAMURAT VILLAGE**

Gospel, 10th century,  
location of copying: around Lake Van,  
scribe and artist: unknown,  
recipient: Sargis (A, XV), Alabab (B, 1609),  
Catholicos Vazgen I (C, 1978) (Mat. MS 10780)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1610,  
location of copying: Laramurat,  
scribe: Bishop Davit' Gelamets'i,  
recipient: Alabab (Mat. MS 3812)

Gospel, 1674,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(formerly kept in Laramurat,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1679,  
location of copying: Laramurat,  
scribe: Avetis K'amalets'i (Mat. MS 6705)

*Mashtots'* Dzerats' [Ritual Book], 1682,  
location of copying: Laramurat,  
scribe: elder priest Lukas (Mat. MS 5868)

Gospel, 1659,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Grigor,  
recipient: Elia (formerly kept in Laramurat,  
New York)

### SHAK'ARBEEK VILLAGE

Gospel, 1633,  
location of copying: Shak'arbek,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

### SULTANETS'IK' VILLAGE

Gospel, 1647,  
location of copying: Sultanets'ik',  
scribe: Mkhitar,  
recipient: Tsatur (Mat. MS 223)

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Sultanets'ik',  
scribe: Mkhitar,  
recipients: Eva and Voskan (Mat. MS 6759)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1678,  
location of copying: Sultanets'ik',  
scribe: Mkhitar,  
recipient: Bishop T'at'eos (Mat. MS 968)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1709,  
location of copying: Sultanets'ik',  
scribe: Vardan,  
recipient: Sargis (Mat. MS 3813)

Miscellany, 1844,  
location of copying: Sultanets'ik',  
scribe: Grigor Loru-Mekik'ian (Mat. MS 7501)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1633,  
location of copying: New Julfa,  
scribes: Hayrapet, Astvatsatur, and Gaspar,  
artist: Martiros,  
recipients: Erdam (A, 1633), Catholicos P'ilippos  
(B, 1636)  
(Mat. MS 1503)

*Sharaknots'*, 16th century,  
location of copying: New Julfa,  
scribes: priest Ep'rem, Grigor,  
recipient: Erdam (A, 1633),  
Catholicos P'ilippos (B, 1636) (Mat. MS 7222)

### MELIK'ZATA VILLAGE

Gospel, 1652,  
location of copying: Melik'zata,  
scribe: priest Hakob (current location: unknown)

### SARDARI T'ALA

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1703,  
location of copying: Sardari T'ala,  
scribe: elder priest Aristakes,  
recipients: Esayi and Voskan (Mat. MS 9088)

### P'ARISOS MONASTERY

Gospel, 1657,  
scribe: monk Hakob (current location: unknown)

### GARNAKER VILLAGE

Book of Sermons,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Book of Sermons,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

### BARSUM VILLAGE

Gospel, 1579,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: elder priest Hakob  
(formerly kept in Barsum,  
current location: unknown)

### LULAL VILLAGE

Gospel, 1306,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: priest Simeon  
(formerly kept in Lulal,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1669,  
location of copying: Herts'hankis,  
scribe: Hovhannes  
(formerly kept in Lulal,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel, date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Hermon Monastery,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Lulal,  
current location: unknown)

LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS

Gospel, 1669,  
location of copying: Herts'hankis,  
scribe: Hovhannes  
(formerly kept in Lulal,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown  
(formerly kept in Lulal,  
current location: unknown)

### PAPACHAN VILLAGE

Hymnal, 1655,  
location of copying: Papachan, Khavunis,  
scribe: priest Avetis (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1659,  
location of copying: Papachan,  
scribe: priest Avetis,  
recipient: Hakhum Pasakerts'i (Mat. MS 3542)

Gospel, 1661,  
location of copying: Papachan,  
scribe and artist: Avetis (Mat. MS 7687)

Gospel, 1661,  
location of copying: Papachan,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1662,  
location of copying: Papachan,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes (Mat. MS 337)

Gospel, 1674,  
location of copying: Verin (Upper) Zakam,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Hymnal, 1668,  
location of copying: Papachan,  
scribe and artist: Avetis (Mat. MS 8549)

### MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN GANDZAK (ELIZAVETPOL)

Canon Law, 12th century,  
location of copying: Gandzak,  
scribe: Davit' Alavkaordi,  
recipient: priest Ark'ayut'yun  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1351, 1604,  
scribe: unknown,  
location of copying: Cilicia (A), Gandzak (B),  
scribe: Kirakos (Mat. MS 2745)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1515,  
scribe: monk Alegsanos,  
recipient: Fr Barsel (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1639,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
recipients: priests Grigor and Anania  
(Mat. MS 7980)

Miscellany, 1682,  
location of copying: Gandzak,  
scribe: Hovhannes (Mat. MS 8967)

Gospel (Armeno-Persian), 1779,  
location of copying: Gandzak,  
scribe: Mik'ayel Astapatets'i (Mat. MS 3044)

Medical, 1783,  
location of copying: Gandzak,  
scribe: Mik'ayel Astapatets'i (Mat. MS 6234)

Miscellany, 1881-1882,  
location of copying: Gandzak,  
scribe: *mahtesi* Mkrtych' Alachanian-Isahakian  
(Mat. MS 9770)

Treasury, 1436,  
location of copying: Krtsanis,  
scribe: Hovhannes Gandzakets'i (Mat. MS 4117)

Prayer Book, 1777,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol,  
scribe: unknown (Vienna MS 1193)

Hymnal, 17th-18th centuries,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol,  
scribe: unknown (Venice MS 587)

Protocol of Correspondence..., 1730-1789,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol (Vienna MS 1306)

Gospel, 1783, 1791,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol,  
scribes: Hovhannes, Khach'atur (Vienna MS 1211)

LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS

Prayer Book, 1812,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol (Vienna MS 1210)

Miscellany, 1812–1825,  
location of copying: Elizavetpol,  
scribe: Sargis Arustamian (Mat. MS 8083)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN GANDZAK**

Gospel, 11th century,  
location of copying: Sandlkavank';  
scribe and artist: Hovhannes Sandlkavanets'i  
(Mat. MS 7736)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN SURB  
HOVHANNES CHURCH IN GANDZAK**

Gospel, 1183,  
location of copying: Drazark,  
recipient: Hovsep' (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1283,  
location of copying: Skevra,  
scribe: Step'anos,  
recipient: Queen Keran (Mat. MS 6764)

Gospel, 1295,  
location of copying: Drazark,  
scribe: T'oros and Hovan,  
recipient: Hovsep' (Mat. MS 6290)

Gospel, 1505,  
location of copying, scribe: unknown,  
saved and donated by Elen's son  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1555,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Mkrtich' (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1632,  
location of copying: Gandzasar  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1660,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe and artist: priest Step'anos,  
donator: Hakob (Vienna MS 1053)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: T'uma (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1663,  
location of copying: Tsar,  
scribe: elder priest Esayi,  
recipient: Simeon (Mat. MS 4053)

Gospel, 1666,  
location of copying: All Savior Church in  
Malaznaberd,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
artist: Grigor, recipient: Hakob (Mat. MS 11060)

Gospel, 1678,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: priest Lukas,  
recipient: Amirkhan (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1724,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown, saved and donated by Esayi  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1745,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
saved and donated by Panazurts'i Allahverdi  
(current location: unknown)

**SURB LUSAVORICH' (ST. GREGORY  
THE ILLUMINATOR) CHURCH IN  
GANDZAK**

Gospel, 1668,  
location of copying: Harts'hankist,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipient: Amirkhan (Mat. MS 10966)

**SURB ASTVATSATSIN' (HOLY  
MOTHER OF GOD) CHURCH IN  
GANDZAK**

Gospel, 1322,  
location of copying: Peshgen,  
scribe: Vardan (current location: unknown)

**GARNAKER VILLAGE**

Book of Sermons,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Book of Sermons,  
date and location of copying:  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Hovsep' Balenats'i  
(current location: unknown)

### TSALKOTS' MONASTERY

Gospel, 1466,  
location of copying: Elivard,  
scribe: monk Matt'eos,  
illuminated in 1467 by Azaria,  
recipient: Matt'eos (New Julfa MS 60)

### GARDMANADZOR

*Mashtots'* [Lectionary], 1515,  
location of copying: Gardmanadzor,  
scribe: monk Alegsanos,  
recipient: priest Barsel  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1639,  
location of copying: Ganj Gorge,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
recipient: Grigor (Mat. MS 7980)

Gospel, 1763,  
location of copying: Ganj Gorge,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1460, Eludzor Village,  
scribe: priest Matt'eos,  
bookbinder: Davit' Shatakhets'i, 1617  
(Mat. MS 6316)

Gospel, 1351, Cilicia,  
scribe: unknown,  
restorer: Davit' Shatakhets'i, 1619 (Mat. MS 2745)

### K'ARATAK

Gospel, 1669,  
location of copying: K'aratak,  
scribe: elder priest Sargis,  
recipient: Mirum (Mat. MS 3856)

Gospel, 1763,  
scribe: Hovhannes (current location: unknown)

### HAMTIVNA

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Hamtivna,  
Pandalion Monastery,  
scribe: priest Azaria (A), priest Lazar (B),  
artist: Lazar (Mat. MS 3541)

### SHATAKH VILLAGE

Miscellany, 1621,  
location of copying: Shatakh,  
scribe: priest Vostanes (Mat. MS 728)

Miscellany, 1634,  
location of copying: Shatakh,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
recipient: Amir (current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1636, 1687,  
location of copying: Shatakh,  
scribes: elder priest Hovhannes, Barsel,  
recipients: Melik' Simavon (A),  
Melik' Hakhnazar (B) (Mat. MS 713)

Gospel, 1661,  
location of copying: Shatakh,  
scribe: Nazar, recipient: Khach'atur  
(Mat. MS 5072)

Miscellany, 1524, 1644,  
location of copying: Mak'enyats' Monastery (A),  
Shatakh (B),  
scribes: Alek'sanos (A), elder priest Davit' (B),  
recipient: Jilavkhan (Mat. MS 8196)

Miscellany, 1644,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
recipient: priest Grigor (Mat. MS 10882)

### MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN DASTIP'YUR VILLAGE

Gospel, 1671-1673,  
location of copying: Dastap'yur,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Sargis,  
recipient: Earamish (Mat. MS 6746)

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1673-1674,  
location of copying: Dastap'yur,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Sargis  
(Mat. MS 3576)

LIST OF  
MANUSCRIPTS

Gospel,  
date of copying: unknown,  
location of copying: Dastap'yur,  
scribe and artist: elder priest Sargis,  
recipient: Vardan (Vienna MS 914)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN ABLAH  
VILLAGE**

Gospel, 1374,  
location of copying:  
scribe: unknown,  
saved and donated by Ohanes Lalabek  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1463,  
location of copying: Van,  
scribes: Nikolayos, Catholicos P'ilipos  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipients: Muratch'e (A), Hovhannes (B, 1448)  
(current location: unknown)

**SHAMK'OR ANAPAT**

Pauline Epistles, 1635,  
location of copying: Shamk'or Anapat,  
scribe: Sargis (Mat. MS 3944)

Missal, 1651,  
location of copying: Shamk'or Anapat,  
scribe and artist: priest Grigor,  
recipient: teacher Sargis  
(current location: unknown)

**SRSRUT VILLAGE**

*Mashtots'* [Ritual Book], 1656,  
location of copying: Srsrut,  
scribe and artist: priest Avetis,  
recipient: priest Nerses  
(current location: unknown)

**SURB ASTVATSATSIN (HOLY  
MOTHER OF GOD) IN LELAN**

Gospel, 1446,  
location of copying: Lelan,  
scribe and artist: monk Step'anos,  
recipient: P'ilippos Kech'arats'i (Mat. MS 3992)

Gospel, 1445-1467,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 1650,  
scribe and artist: Esayi,  
recipient: elder priest Esayi (Vienna MS 875)

**BERDATAK VILLAGE**

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Berdatak,  
scribe and artist: Hovhannes (Mat. MS 6645)

Prayer Book, 1717,  
location of copying: Berdatak,  
scribe: Sargis, recipient: Mkhit'ar (Mat. MS 1574)

Prayer Book, 1721,  
location of copying: Berdatak,  
scribe: Sargis,  
recipient: Arak'el Dandzutets'i (Mat. MS 7008)

**MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN NOR (NEW)  
P'IP' SETTLEMENT**

Gospel, 1486,  
location of copying: Otsop,  
scribe: At'anas (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1605,  
location of copying: Artamet,  
scribe: elder priest Karapet,  
artist: priest Atom,  
recipient: Guliar (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

**GETABAK VILLAGE**

Hovhan Mayragomets'i, Khrat Varuts'  
(Admonitions on Conduct), 7th century,  
location of copying: Getabak,  
scribe: Hovhan Mayragomets'i  
(current location: unknown)

## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS

Hovhan Mayragomets'i,  
Havatarimat (Roots of Faiths), 7th century,  
location of copying: Getabak,  
scribe: Hovhan Mayragomets'i  
(current location: unknown)

Hovhan Mayragomets'i, Noyemak, 7th century,  
location of copying: Getabak,  
scribe: Hovhan Mayragomets'i  
(current location: unknown)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion], 1659,  
location of copying: Getabak,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipients: Alek'san and Mik'ayel (Mat. MS 4559)

### DASNO ANAPAT

The Lawcode, 1184,  
location of copying: Dasno Anapat,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar Gosh,  
recipients: Vakh'tang and Arzukhat'un  
(Venice MS 993)

Petros Matat'ian, Literature, 1865–1867,  
scribe: Petros Matat'ian (Mat. MS 7655)

### MANUSCRIPTS PRODUCED IN T'ARGMANCH'ATS' MONASTERY

T'eodoros Shirakuni,  
Review on Narekatsi's Odes, 1870–1872,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 2847)

T'eodoros Shirakuni,  
Passage of Vahan Mamikonian, 1873,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 3093)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Nuagaran Bareildz,  
v. 1, 1874,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 3346)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Nuagaran Bareildz,  
v. 2, 1876,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 3550)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Nuagaran Bareildz,  
v. 3, 1876,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 3549)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Christian Doctrine, 1876,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 2938)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, New Armenian Lyre, 1876,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 3150)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Armenian Guitar,  
1877–1878,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 2737)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, Musical Instrument,  
v. 4, 1890,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 2827)

T'eodoros Shirakuni, New Armenian Lyre, 1891,  
scribe: T'eodoros Shirakuni (Mat. MS 2740)

### MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN T'ARGMANCH'ATS' MONASTERY

Gospel, 6th century,  
location of copying:  
scribe: unknown, "Vehamor Gospel"?  
(Mat. MS 10680)?

Gospel, 1232,  
scribe: Tirats'u,  
artist: Grigor (A), Grigor Arts'akhets'i (B),  
recipients: Hovhannes (A),  
Grigor Dop'ian and Asp'a (B) (Mat. MS 2743)

Gospel, 1652,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Grigor Byurakants'i,  
recipient: Sarkhosh Vardenists'i  
(current location: unknown)

Miscellany, 17th century,  
location of copying:  
scribe: unknown (Mat. MS 3076)?

Treasury,  
date and location of copying:  
scribe: unknown,  
bookbinder: Bishop Hovhannes, 1583  
(current location: unknown)

### CH'AREK' MONASTERY

Gospel, 1579,  
scribe: Arak'el (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1637,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Arak'el (current location: unknown)

Hymnal, 1655,  
scribe: Avetis (current location: unknown)

*Chashots'* (Lectionary), 1665,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: chief teacher Sargis (Mat. MS 986)

Letter of Blessing, 1699,  
location of copying: Ch'arek' Monastery,  
scribe: *vardapet* Nerses (British Museum)

Book of Catholicoi, 1704,  
location of copying: Ch'arek' Monastery,  
scribe: *vardapet* Nerses  
(current location: unknown)

Nerses Lambronats'i,  
Commentary on the Eucharist, 1619,  
location of copying: Getat'al,  
scribe: Lukas,  
recipients: Bishop Sargis and priest Lazar  
priest (A),  
Davit' Shamk'orets'i (B) (Mat. MS 6334)

Miscellany, 1635,  
location of copying: Shinuhayr,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipients: *vardapet* Aristakes,  
priests Hakob and Barseł (A),  
Davit' Shamk'orets'i (B) (Mat. MS 2608)

Martyrology of Andreas Aguletsi, 1617–1620,  
location of copying: Ch'arek' Monastery?  
Scribe: Davit' Shamk'orets'i  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
restored at: Ch'arek' Monastery,  
restorer: Sargis, 1641  
(current location: unknown)

## K'ARAHAT

Gospel, 1655,  
location of copying: Gandzasar, K'arahat,  
scribe: Avetis,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipients: chief teacher Lukas,  
Catholicos Petros Khandzkets'i (Mat. MS 3196)

Gospel, 1657,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Mirza (Mat. MS 6873)

Missal, 1657,  
location of copying: Gandzasar? K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Catholicos Petros Khandzkets'i  
(Jerusalem MS 2273)

Gospel, 1659,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipients: Eħia (A), Arsen and Arman  
P'ushmans (B) (New York)

Calendar, 1662,  
location of copying: Gandzasar? K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Catholicos Petros Khandzkets'i  
(Mat. MS 10743)

Hymnal, 1663,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Sandukht (Mat. MS 10044)

Book of Hours, 1665,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor (Mat. MS 9448)

*Chashots'* [Lectionary], 1665,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: chief teacher Sargis (Mat. MS 986)

Gospel, 1666,  
location of copying: All Savior Monastery in  
Malaznaberd,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
artist: Grigor, recipient: Hakob (Mat. MS 11060)

Gospel, 1668,  
location of copying: All Savior Monastery in  
Malaznaberd,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Hakob (Mat. MS 10966)

Gospel, 1667,  
location of copying: Gullar,  
scribe: elder priest Sargis,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Tarch'in (Mat. MS 6771)

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Olverdz,  
scribe: priest Ep'rem, artist: Barseł,  
recipient: *vardapet* Petros (Mat. MS 7232)

## LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS

Gospel, 1675,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Grigor,  
recipient: vardapet Ignatios of Gandzasar  
(Mat. MS 8965)

Gospel, 1676,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe: Barseł, artists: Grigor (A), Barseł (B),  
recipient: priest Movses (Mat. MS 5636)

Nerses Lambronats'i,  
Commentary on Psalms, 1682,  
location of copying: Shamakh,  
scribes: Barseł and Lazar,  
artist: Barseł,  
recipient: *vardapet* Vlas (Mat. MS 2613)

Gospel, 1683,  
location of copying: Herts'hankist,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
artist: Barseł and Lazar,  
recipient: priest Nazar (Mat. MS 3994)

Gregory of Tatev, Book of Sermons, 1684,  
location of copying: Dadivank',  
scribe: Varvare,  
artists: Barseł and Lazar,  
recipient: chief teacher Petros (Mat. MS 2067)

Gospel, 1691,  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribes: Hovhannes (A), Lazar (B),  
artist: Lazar (Mat. MS 10660)

*Haysmavurk'* [Synaxarion],  
location of copying: K'arahat,  
scribe and artist: Lazar,  
recipient: Lalarbek (Venice MS 402)

### GULLAR VILLAGE

Gospel, 1667,  
scribe: elder priest Sargis,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Tarch'in (Mat. MS 6771)

### HERTS'HANKIS VILLAGE

Gospel, 1221,  
location of copying: Tarson,  
scribe: Grigor (formerly kept in Herts'hankis,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1666,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipient: Hakob (Mat. MS 11060)

Gospel, 1668,  
scribe and artist: Hovhannes,  
artist: Grigor,  
recipient: khoja P'arsadan (Mat. MS 10966)

Gospel, 1669,  
scribe: Hovhannes (formerly kept in Lulal Village  
of P'arisos,  
current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1683,  
scribe: priest Hovhannes,  
artists: Barseł, Lazar,  
recipient: priest Nazar, melik' Hakhnazar  
(Mat. MS 3994)

Gospel, 1691,  
scribe: elder priest Hovhannes,  
artist: Lazar (Mat. MS 10660)

### MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN VOSKANAPAT VILLAGE

Gospel, 1463,  
location of copying: P'asavank' Monastery,  
scribe: Israyel (current location: unknown)

Bible, 1669,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: elder priest Sargis,  
recipient: Mirum  
(formerly kept in Voskanapat, Mat. MS 3856)

Gospel,  
location of copying: Drazark,  
scribe: T'oros,  
recipient: Step'anos Tarsayich (B)  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
donator: *khaja* Pati (current location: unknown)

### HOROMASHAN VILLAGE

Acts of the Apostles, 1635,  
scribe: Sargis (current location: unknown)

### MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN AVAG SURB NSHAN CHAPEL IN GETASHEN VILLAGE

Gospel, 1211,  
location of copying: Halbat,  
illuminated at Bekhents' Monastery in Ani,  
scribe: Hakob,  
artist: Margare,  
recipient: Sargis (B) (Mat. MS 6288)

Gospel, 1295,  
location of copying: Drazark,  
scribes: T'oros and Yohan,  
artist: Yohan (Mat. MS 6290)

Gospel, 1667,  
location of copying: Kaffa,  
scribe: Nikolayos,  
recipient: Zanluli (Baku MS 8315)

Gospel, 1671-1673,  
location of copying: Dastip'yur,  
scribe: elder priest Sargis (Mat. MS 6746)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying,  
scribe and artist: unknown,  
recipients: monk Petants' Hovhannes and  
Brants' Sargis (B),  
Sargis (C), priest Aristakes (D),  
bookbinder: Melik'sedek (B),  
T'uma (C) (Mat. MS 6303)

Fragment from a Treasury, 1626,  
location of copying: Dadivank' (B),  
scribe: elder priest Vardan (B),  
last recipient: Bishop Grigor  
(Mat. Fragment 848)

### MANUSCRIPTS KEPT IN METS BANANTS' VILLAGE

Gospel, 7th century,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Catholicos Vazgen I (B, 1975),  
restorer: elder priest Hovhannes Shatakhet's'i  
(Mat. MS 10680)

Gospel, 1451,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Hovsep',  
recipient: elder priest Hovhan (Mat. MS 6424)

Gospel, 1455,  
location of copying: Halbat,  
scribe: monk Grigor,  
recipients: Amirbek and Elkhat'un  
(Mat. MS 6683)

Gospel, 1461,  
location of copying: Urts,  
scribe: Khach'atur,  
artist: Grigor Tsarets'i,  
recipient: priest Nerses (Mat. MS 6367)

Gospel, 1524,  
location of copying: Mak'enyats' Monastery,  
scribe: monk Alegsanos (Mat. MS 8196)

Gospel, 1585,  
location of copying: Mets Anapat in Tat'ev,  
scribe: Bishop Hovhannes (Mat. MS 6339)

Gospel, 1652,  
location of copying: Melik'zata,  
scribe: priest Hakob (A), Alajan and Sargis (B),  
recipients: elder priest Kirakos (A),  
Melik' Ovanes (B)  
(current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1670,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Avetik',  
artist and bookbinder: Alamal Julayets'i  
(Mat. MS 6560)

Gospel, 1671,  
location of copying: Upper Zakam,  
scribe: Mkhit'ar,  
recipients: Eva and Voskan (Mat. MS 6759)

Gospel, before 1679,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Papachan (Mat. MS 6432)

Gospel, 1679,  
location of copying: Harants' Anapat,  
scribe: Avetis K'amalets'i (Mat. MS 6705)

Gospel, 17th century,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: elder priest Astvatsatur (Mat. MS 6667)

Gospel, 17th century,  
location of copying,  
scribe: unknown,  
bookbinder: Mkhit'ar (Mat. MS 6427)

### KALANKATUYK'

History of the Land of Aluank', 7th century (A),  
10th century (B),  
location of copying: Kalankatuyk' (A),  
Daskhuran (B),  
scribe: Movses Kalankatvats'i (A),  
Movses Daskhurants'i (B),  
recipients: the Mihranians  
(current location: unknown)

### MANUSCRIPTS FROM SHAMAKHI AND SURROUNDING VILLAGES

Gospel, 1296,  
location of copying: Alitu Anapat,  
scribe: priest Mkhit'ar (Mat. MS 7353)

Gospel, 1483,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Khunk (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1490,  
location of copying: Sanahin,  
scribe: *vardapet* Aristakes  
(current location: unknown)

Treasury, 15th century,  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Grigor (Mat. MS 4011)

Hymnal, 15th century,  
location of copying:  
scribe: unknown (Mat. MS 3220)

Miscellany, 15th century,  
location of copying:  
scribe: unknown (Mat. MS 3827)

Prayer Book, 1636,  
scribe: Abraham,  
recipient: Vohanes Shak'ets'i  
(Jerusalem MS 2417)

Gospel, 1644,  
location of copying: New Julfa,  
scribe and artist: Step'anos (Mat. MS 6665)

Miscellany, 1654,  
scribe: Elisabet,  
recipient: *vardapet* Elia (Jerusalem MS 2426)

Gospel, 1654,  
location of copying: Kaffa,  
scribe: Nikolayos (Mat. MS 9798)

Gospel, 1665,  
location of copying: P'araka,  
scribe: unknown (current location: unknown)

Gospel, 1666,  
location of copying: Tiflis,  
scribe and artist: Barsel (Mat. MS 6414)

Miscellany, 1683,  
location of copying: Shatik Monastery,  
scribe and artist: Hakob Julayets'i (Mat. MS 3947)

Gospel (Armeno-Persian), 1717-1720,  
scribe and translator: Hak'im Babijan  
(Mat. MS 8492)

Simeon Garnets'i, Commentary on Proklus, 1723,  
location of copying: Sebastia,  
scribe: Minas, recipient: Fr Galust (Mat. MS 2573)

Miscellany, 1742,  
scribe: Martiros (Mat. MS 8361)

Prayer Book, 1765,  
scribe: unknown,  
recipient: Anton (Mat. MS 9729)

Simeon Garnets'i,  
Commentary on Proklus, 1803,  
scribe: *vardapet* Mik'ayel (Mat. MS 4013)

Missal, 1825,  
scribe: unknown (Mat. MS 2941)

Petros Matat'ian, Literature, 1865-1867,  
scribe: Petros Matat'ian (Mat. MS 7657)

Songbook,  
scribe: Seyid Shamakhets'i (Mat. MS 9562)

Songbook,  
scribe: Seyid Shamakhets'i (Mat. MS 10005)

Christianos' Journey, 1844,  
scribe: Arak'el Bich'arayov,  
recipient: Georg Geokjeants' (Mat. MS 8499)

Arak'el Syunets'i, Meknut'yun Sahmanats',  
location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Hovhannes,  
recipient: Minas Khakhtets'i (Mat. MS 3329)

Gospel,  
date and location of copying: unknown,  
scribe: Abet' (current location: unknown)

# B

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# MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE OF ARTS'AKH AND UTIK'

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