

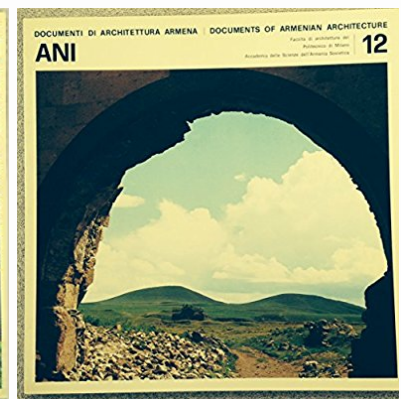
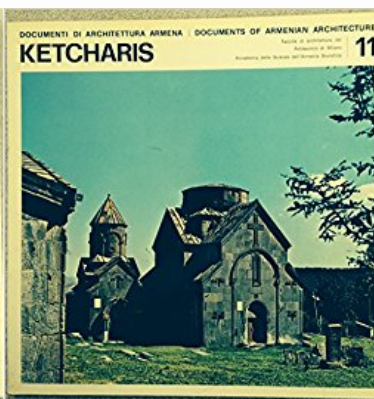
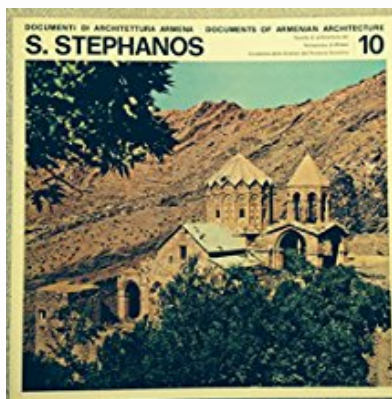
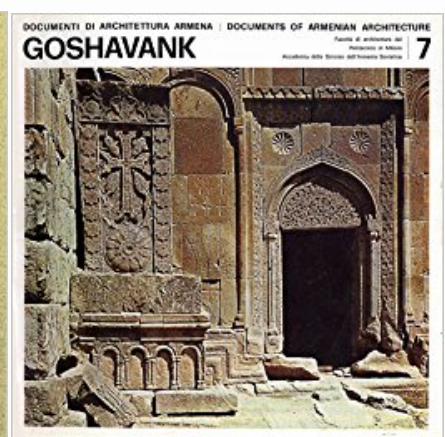
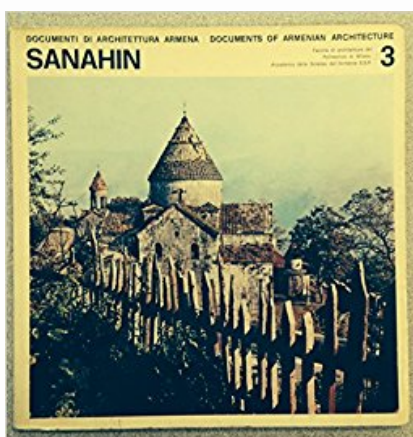
**“ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE IS IN HARMONY WITH NATURE”
- ALPAGO NOVELLO¹**

**(Dedicated to the 85th anniversary of Italian architect,
Art historian, Professor Adriano Alpago Novello)**

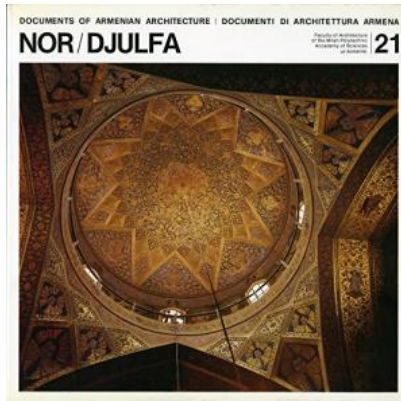


Adriano Alpago Novello (1932-2005)

Italian architect, art historian, Professor Adriano Alpago Novello was born in 1932 in Italy. Novello headed the Italian research expeditions to Soviet Armenia in 1967 and 1969, and then to Western Armenia – Van and Ani in 1970. Since 1968 he had been heading founded by him the Research and Documentation Center of Armenian medieval architecture, in Milan, then, with Hakob and Armen Manukyan brothers created “Documents of Armenian architecture” (“Documenti di architettura Armena”) series (please see below some of them).



¹ An updated edition of the article: ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE IS IN HARMONY WITH NATURE. ALPAGO NOVELLO (<http://hushardzan.am/en/14082/>).



In 1968, with the support of the Armenian community in Milan Alpago Novello organized picture exhibition of medieval Armenian architecture “Armenian Architecture in the 4th -18th centuries”, which was shown in Italy

then in Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, the US, Germany, Switzerland, Lebanon and Iran. On his initiative in various languages were published as numerous studies and articles about the Armenian and Georgian architecture, as well as an impressive series of photographs, architectural drawings, bibliographic materials. The Italian architect’s “views in architecture” are very interesting. Alpago Novello’s views on medieval art are not only a historical phenomenon, but also may be interpreted in terms of the development of modern art. Referring to the Noravank monastery of Vayots-Dzor,



Noravank: Surb Astvatsatsin (St. Holy Mother of God) church (13th-14th cc.)

Novello said that it looks like a detached structure, located in a desolate valley on the southern slopes and is almost merged with the surrounding nature, without losing its majesty and splendor; “ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE IS IN HARMONY WITH NATURE”. There are lots of such cases in Armenian architecture: structure, joining the creation of nature, “natural” architecture makes it more complete and perfect. According to Novello, such examples are also Areni

church (the 14th c.) and Tanahat monastery. It seems that they have been buried in nature, creating a feeling of infinity. Novello paid special attention to the front part of the main entrance of Noravank, considering it as an exceptional panoramic solution’s segment, which is special for architectural school of Vayots Dzor.

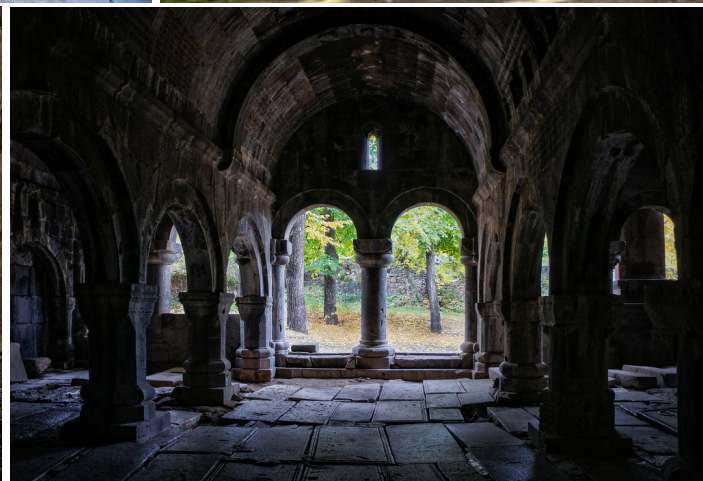
Italian architect expressed particular admiration for the ancient monastery of Sanahin and its harmony with nature. According to him, this crystalline structure is geometrically perfect, it can be viewed as a specific example of Armenian architecture, especially the main structures of the complex are worthy.



Sanahin monastery (the 10th century)

“If it will not be perceived as part of the environment, at once it will lose its charm, becoming a simple sculpture, opposite to architectural accurate calculations and flawless solutions.” According to his opinion, there is no coincidence that the special architectural solutions are similar to the architecture of Italian Renaissance. Ancient architectural solutions of Sanahin monastery are evidence of the “wisdom” of Armenian architecture. Along with the traditional practice here comes a whole new set of architectural

forms, which concentrated on the structures of the monastery complex.



Alpago Novello devoted a considerable part of his life to the publication of monographs on Armenian Christian architecture. “I want to express my gratitude to my friends because they had great role in the creation of these volumes, but not all are alive. Armen Manukian, Armen Zaryan, Harutyun Kasanjyan, Paolo Kuneo. With their help the Armenian culture spread all over the world,” said Novello. Despite the huge amount of published works, he thought that he had not yet completed his “mission to investigate Armenian architecture.”

Indeed, Alpago Novello’s contribution to the spread of the Armenian culture particularly of the Armenian architecture’s fame all over the world is great.