

Further Armenian Inscriptions from Noravank'

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Numerous inscriptions from Noravank' have been edited in the past, most notably in the third volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Armenicarum*, which was published in 1967.¹ During the recent process of renovation of the church, a number of further inscriptions were uncovered and assembled by Archbishop Abraham Mkrtč'yan, Primate of the Diocese of Siwnik'. Archbishop Abraham is to be commended for his careful preservation of all epigraphic and architectural elements of this famous metropolitan church, as well as for the fine work of restoration. Suren Sałuman published 54 additional inscriptions in an article in 1993.² He does not number the inscriptions in his article, but we have numbered them and refer to them by pages of his article and the assigned sequential number.

During the 1990's we visited the site of Noravank' on a number of occasions. With the encouragement of Archbishop Abraham, the writer and Yoav Loeff photographed inscriptions that had been uncovered or recovered in the course of the renovations. We photographed a total of 53 inscriptions, to which we assigned sequential numbers with the prefix "Noravank'". Noravank' nos 1-3 were published

¹ S.G. Barxudaryan (ed.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Armenicarum*, vol. 3, Erevan: Academy of Sciences, 1967 (in Armenian). The Noravank' inscriptions are found on pp. 209-246, inscs. nos. 677-813.

² S. Sałuman, Նորահայտ վիմագրեր Նորավանքից (Newly Discovered Inscriptions from Noravank'), *Hušarjan Annual* 2 (1993), 91-103.

by the writer and Th.M. van Lint in 1997-98 in the *Revue des études arméniennes*.³ That article was being written at the same time as Sałuman was preparing his work, which only subsequently became available to us.

We have thought it wisest to publish photographs of all the inscriptions we photographed, except for Noravank' 1-3 which we published previously. This is because Barxuduryan did not publish photographs of all the material he collected, and Sałuman published very few photographs, and those of poor quality. However, we only publish the texts of those inscriptions that were not included in the works of Barxudaryan and Sałuman. In the present article, our numbers run from 4-53. Because of certain difficulties in assembling the data, we do not have dimensions for all the inscriptions, but we give dimensions where they are at our disposal: all of them are given in centimetres. Those of the inscriptions that have already been published in other works are listed in the following Table. The inscriptions are all on the site at Noravank', outside the main church buildings. Many of the tombstones are in the ground outside the church of the Mother of God, while others were gathered in a temporary display between the two church buildings. Several inscribed stones were set into the stone perimeter wall of the area and nos. 51-53 are in the wall of the main church, near Noravank 2-3.

There are several types of inscriptions. The first type is on flat tombstones which covered an interment. These are flat, oblong slabs, unlike the round, pillar-shaped tombstones of the contemporary Jewish and Orbelian cemeteries at Eghegis.⁴

³ M.E. Stone and Th. M. van Lint, "Two Unnoticed Armenian Inscriptions from Noravank', *Revue des études arméniennes* 26 (1996-7) 444-450.

⁴ M. E. Stone and D. Amit (2002). "Report on the Survey of a Medieval Jewish Cemetery in Eghegis, Vayots Dzor Region, Armenia." *Journal of Jewish Studies* 53(1): 66-106; *idem*. "The Second and Third Seasons of Research at the Medieval Jewish Cemetery in Eghegis, Vayots Dzor Region, Armenia." *Journal of Jewish Studies*: (in

The inscriptions are written, for the most part, along the length of the tombstone in one or two lines of script. Sometimes they are surrounded by a frame, which is provided in a couple of instances with an indication of a head (see. e.g., inscription no. 14). The Tombstone with Lion (no. 4) is quite unique, with a recumbent lion pictured along the center of the slab, which is surrounded by an inscription in a frame. Inscriptions on such flat tombstones are numbers 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 29, 35, 36, 46 and 54 (22 inscriptions). A second group of inscriptions is found on *xac'k'ars*, stone standing crosses often dedicated as votives or as memorials. They include inscriptions numbers 5, 17, 20, 25, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, 41, 42, 47, 48 and 49 (16 inscriptions). The remaining inscriptions are apparently fragments of wall inscriptions (24, 40, 43, 44, 45, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 55), a plaque of unclear function (28), and architectural elements (31, 38, 39). The dated inscriptions come from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the oldest being no. 45 of 1216 and the latest of 1347 (no. 6). They are all written in Armenian uncial (*erkat'agir*) script. Certain of them are very well executed, while others are in a rather rough hand. These matters, and also the question of the completeness of the stones, will be discussed in the presentation of the various inscriptions.

The titles used of the individuals mentioned are the following:

Hayr (clerical): 8

Hayrapet : 11

K'ahanay : 7, 11, 12, 15

Krawnawor : 15

press); M. E. Stone, "The Orbelian Family Cemetery in Elgis, Vayoc' Jor, Armenia." *JJS Weitenberg FS* eds. T. M. van Lint, J. Dum-Tragut and U. Bläsing (Hebrew University Armenian Series; Leuven, Peeters. (in press).

Paron : 4, 6,

Tēr (clerical) : 1,

Stone	Barxudaryan	Sałuman
4		p. 98, no. 28, fig. 11
6		p. 98, no. 30
14	Vol. 3, pp. 221-22, no. 704	p. 98, no. 29
19		p. 99, no. 31
22		p. 97, no. 27
25	Vol. 3, p. 229, no. 731	
26		p. 93, no. 2, fig. 3
27		p. 92, no. 1, fig. 2
33		p. 93-94, no. 5, fig. 4 ⁵

4. Tombstone with Lion (1331) Sałuman, p. 98, no. 28: see our Figure 1.

Dimensions: overall 166 x 66, letter height 6.5.

5. Xač'k'ar of 1277: Figure 2

1. ԱՅՍ . . . ՍՈՒ ԾԵԱՅՆ ՅԻ ՈՐՈՂՓՐԵՑՆ[
2.]ԽԱՏԵՂԾՔ Ի ՊՉՏԵԱՅՆ ԱՌԱՋԻ Ն
3.]ԱԳՆԵՑԱԻ Ի ՓՐԿՈՒԹԵԱՆ ՄԱՀԵԱՆ ԻԾԽԱՆԻ Թ
4. ՈՒ ԷՔ ԱՐԵԼ ԱՐՔԱԻ ՅԻԾԵՑԷՔ [Ի]
5. ՔՍ ԹՎԻՆ ՉԻՉ

1. This

2. first

3. was [s]et up for salvation of of prince T'

⁵ He has figure 4 as an illustration of inscription no. 4, p. 93, but it actually relates to his inscription no. 5, pp. 93-94.

4. u[....]you of king, remember [to]

5. Christ in this year 726 [= 1277]

Dimensions: written area 62.5 x 21.

The inscription is in the base of a standing stone cross discovered in the course of renovations of the church. The stone is located together with a group of monuments that have been assembled beside a modern building situated between the two churches. The inscription is partly effaced, particularly at the beginning of the lines and it is difficult to read in many places. Our decipherment in general is tentative and many apparent words do not make sense.

The script is uncial, with many ligatures, which compound the difficulty of the poor physical readings. Uncertain decipherments and partially preserved letters have been italicised. The last line, with the date, is clear.

6. Tombstone of 1347 Sałuman, p. 98, no. 20: see our Figure 3

Dimensions: overall 134 x 35

7. Tombstone of 1306: Figure 4A and 4B

1. ՋՄԽԻԹԱՐ ՔԱՀԱՆԱՅՆ ՈՐ

2. ԿԻԱԻՐԵԱ ԿԱՏԱՐԵՑԱԻ ԹՎ

3. ՉԾԵ

1. Mexit'ar *k'ahanay* who

2. died in the middle of his days, in the year

3. 755 (= 1306).

Dimensions of stone 1: overall 180 x 48.5, : written area 66 x 22, written area of stone 2 is 41.5 x 31.

The inscription may be incomplete, since the first word is զմխիթար "Mxit'ar" in the accusative case. So "remember" or the like is missing or else, this being such a

fixed formula, it is implied. There is a fault on the stone, between- Թ and Ա. The inscription is preserved on two separate stones. There is candle-wax on the second stone.

8. Tombstone of 1301: Figure 5

1. ԶՄԱՅՐ ՀԱԻՐ ՆԵՐՍԻՍԻՆ
2. ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ: Ի ԹՎ: ՉԾ:

1. The mother of Father Nersēs,
2. remember. In the year 750 [A.E. = 1301].

Dimensions: overall 163 x 56, written area 99 x 20.

The inscription is skillfully executed, in a handsome script and it is surrounded by a double frame, deeply incised. Note the form of Շ. There is a moderate use of ligatures.

Now the use of *aw* for *ō*. Is հայր ներսէս "Father Nersēs otherwise known?"

9. Undated Fragment: Figure 6

1. ԶԳԵՂ ՅՄ
2. ՈՂՆԻՐ Զ

Dimensions unknown.

This fragment is embedded in the retaining wall behind the Church buildings.

The script is a fairly rudely incised uncial. The readings seem fairly certain, except for the third letter of line 2, which might be *men* or *sa*. A sign seems to follow it, but this may just be an irregularity in the stone. The first word on line 1 might be գեղ "beautiful", preceded by the *nota accusativi*.

10. Tombstone of 1295: Figure 7

1. ԶՄԱՔՐԱՓԱՅԼ ԵՒ ԶԳԵՐԱՓԱ

2. Ռ ՓԻԼԻՍՈՓԱՅՆ ԶԳՐԻԳՈՐ
3. ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ ԱՌ . . Մ: Ի ԹՎԻԱ: ՉԽՌ

1. The magnificent and the glorious
2. philosopher, Grigor
3. Remember. . . : M: In this year 744 [AE = 1295].

Dimensions: external, 170 x 45, written area 117 x 34.

The inscription is written in round uncial letters with few abbreviations and almost no ligatures. The letter shapes are unremarkable. Part of the third line has been lost because the stone has been damaged. The ninth letter could also be Ղ or perhaps Յ. The next letter is *men* with a colon on both sides. Its meaning is unclear. On the whole, the inscription is in a good state of preservation, though there has been some damage to the surface. Wax markings may be observed at the right-hand end. The identity of the "magnificent and glorious philosopher" who died in 1295 remains obscure.⁶

11. Tombstone , undated: Figure 8

1. ԶԵՐՀԱՆԻԿՆԻ ՔԱՀԱՆԱՅՍ ԶՀԱՅՐԱՊԵՏ ԿՐԱԻ
2. ՆԱԻՈՐՆ ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ ԱՂԱԶԵՄ
3. Erhanikni *k'ahanay*, the Abbot, the
4. monk, remember, I beseech.

Dimensions: overall 202 x 69, written area 173 x 30.

The formula is unusual and so is the name Erhaniki.⁷ The script is round uncial regular without abbreviations, or ligatures. No date is given but the morphology of the stone and the script resemble the body of other tombstones. Note the consistent

⁶ CHECK

⁷ CHECK

spelling in *aw* instead of *ō*. The inscription is lightly incised and a crack in the stone has affected the *k'e* in the first line and the *še* in the second. The writing is particularly shallow at the start of the second line and it presents some difficulties of decipherment.

12. Tombstone of 1305 : see Figure 9

1. [Հ]ԱՆԳԻՍՏ ՍՈՒՐԲ ՔԱՀԱՆԱԻՆ
2. [Գ]ՐԻԳՈՐՈՅ Ե: ԹՎ: ՉԾԴ:

1. It is the [t]omb of the holy priest
2. [G]rigor in the year 754 [A.E. = 1305].

Dimensions: overall 159 x 54, written area 128 x 27.

The script of this inscription differs in style that of most. The letters are large and round made with wide, deep incisions. There are triangular *serifs* on the uprights. The tail of the *ho* and of the *ayb* are very elongated. There is one abbreviation and one ligature. Note the case ending of Grigor in the *-o-* declension and that "it is" is written with *է* and not with *է*. The letter *ծ* in the date is written in minuscule.

The stone has a fault in it that caused the lowering of two letters in the upper line. Moreover, the letter *վ* in the word for "year" is lower than the line to accommodate the elongated descender of the *ayb* above it. Large two dot (colon) punctuation marks separate the date from the body of the inscription.

13 Tombstone of 1305: see Figure 10

1. ԹՎ ՉՂԳ ✱ ԱՅՍ Է ՀԱՆԳԻՍՏ
2. ՄԽԻԹԱՐԱ ՅԱՂԱԻԹ[Ս ՅԻՇԵ]ՅԷՔ

1. In the year 793 [AE = 1344]. This is the tomb

2. of Mxit'ar. In your pray[ers remem]ber (i.e., him)

Dimensions: overall 156 x 54, written area 128 x 7.

The inscription is quite elaborate. The stone is divided into two registers longitudinally. On three sides the registers are bordered by double lines. At the left-hand end of the upper register, i.e., at the beginning of the writing, the border of the field is arched and in the arch is an interlaced floral design in relief. The same is true of the left-hand end of the lower register. The date, at the beginning of the inscription, is marked off from the body of the text by a rosette in relief, replacing the conventional dot or double dot. The stone is damaged in the second line and the ԹԱ of the name Mxit'ar is barely visible, while the text put in square brackets is a conjecture, based on the formulaic nature of these inscriptions.

The writing is regular, round uncial. The *men* in the second line is minuscule in form. There is one abbreviation mark and a shortened word, ՀՆՍ for հառգիսս in line 1.

14 Tombstone of 1301 Sałuman, p. 98, no. 29; CIA 3, 221-222, no. 704: see our Figure 11

Dimensions: overall 164 x 56, written area 47 x 30.

15 Tombstone of 1270: see Figure 12

1. ԶՊԱՏՎԵԱԼՆ Ի ՔԱՀԱՆԱՅՍ ԶՄԽԻԹ

2. ԱՐՆ ԿՐԱԻՆԱԻՈՐ ՅԻԾԵՑԷՔ Ի ԹՎ[] ԶԻԹ

1. Remember the honoured among the priests, the monk Mxit'-

2. ar, in the y[ear] 729 [AE = 1270]

Dimensions, overall 200 x 73, written area 156 x 37.

The tombstone is broken at the right-hand end. The writing at the beginning of the second line is largely effaced but can be made out. The script is round uncial, with no remarkable features, except for triangular serifs. There is a case of the shortening of an upright to save space (Ա in line 1). Note the spellings Վ for ՈՒ and ԱԻ for Օ.

16 Tombstone, undated: see Figure 12A

1. ԶԳԵՂԵՑԻԿ ՏՂԱՅՆ
2. ԶՈՎԱՍ ՍՈՒՐԲՆ ՈՐ ԽԵՐՃ ՓՈԽ
3. ԵՑԱԻ ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ ԱՂԱԶԵՄ

1. The beautiful child
2. Ovas, the holy one, who sorrowfully was
3. transferred remember I beg.

Dimensions: not available.

This inscription is in round uncial script. It is well written, on a stone whose short wide shape witnesses that the burial was of a child. There is no date; there is damage to the right-hand end of the stone. There is a frame of three lines around the inscription. There is apparently the shape of a head at the left-hand end, compare Noravank' 14, above. A hole through the right-hand end may have been used for transportation of the stone.⁸ From the style and script, it is clear that this inscription is of the same general period as the other, dated ones, that is the end of the thirteenth or the first part of the fourteenth century. The name Ովաս "Ovas" is not mentioned by ԱՇ'արյան in *HAB*, but he does record Ովի "Ovi" as an abbreviation of Yovhannēs.

⁸ See Stone, "Orbelian", %%

17 Fragment of a Xaç'k'ar, undated: see Figure 14

1. . . ՐԱԳԵՆ ՄԱՅՐ ԻՄ
2. ԵՂՍԱԲԵԹ ԿԱԿՆԵՑԱ
3. Ի ԶԽԱԶՍ ԱՂԱԳՍ
4. ՀԱԻՐ ԻՄՈՂ ԴԱԻԹԻ

1. my mother

2. Ełsabet' set up

3. this cross for the sake of

4. my father Dawit'

Dimensions: not available.

Only the inscription itself survives, surmounted by a small remnant of the cross. The stone is broken at the inscription's beginning, and the first words are not readily to be interpreted. The reading of the first two letters is altogether uncertain. In the second line, the verb is passive in form, but is construed as an active. It is followed by a clearly marked accusative in the third line, not an unusual phenomenon in medieval Armenian. In that line, the initial *yi* of the word յաղազս is omitted. In the fourth line, the final *yi* of իմոյ is omitted, not unusual in medieval orthography of the period. The script is a regular, round *erkat'agir*. No date is given.

18 Tombstone of 1313: see Figure 15

1. ԶԴԵՌԱԲՈՅՍ ՊԱՏԱՆԻ ՆԶ
2. ՈՒՂԻԿՆ ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ Ի ԹՎ : ԶԿԲ :

1. The newly sprung up youth Nz-

2. ułik, remember, in the year 762 [AE = 1313]

Dimensions: external 124 x 45, written area 140 x 42.

The inscription is in uncial script. There are no abbreviations or ligatures. the third and fourth letters of the second line are damaged, but quite legible. The two registers are separated by a double line and around the stone is a border of three parallel lines.

For the name, see %%: the form may be a diminutive. The use of language of plant growth for deceased children is common in this corpus. Compare Noravank' 1. Such eulogistic statements, particularly about children, are to be found elsewhere, see Noravank' 1, Elegis Hebrew %%.

19 Tombstone of 1265: see Figure 16

1. ՊԱՐՈՆ ԱԽԹԱՄԱՐԻՆ Է՛ ՏԱ

2. ՊԱՆՍ ❖ ՉՍԻ

1. Of Paron Axt'amar is this t-

2. omb ❖ 714 [AE = 1265]

Dimensions: overall 188 x 63, written area 140 x 42.

This flat tombstone is skillfully produced. It is broken in two places, but the inscription is still completely legible. Inside a double frame are two registers, with arches at their left-hand ends. In the arches are four leaved rosettes, in relief. A similar design may be observed on Noravank' 13. The two registers are separated by a chain design in relief. The writing, in round uncial script (*erkat'agir*), is deeply incised. The stokes of the letters end in triangular, decorative serifs. There are no abbreviations or ligatures. The date is preceded by a four-dot design and is followed by two dots (a colon). It is written in smaller script than the body of the inscription. Two thirds of the lower register are blank.

20 Xaç'k'ar, undated: see Figure 16

1. ԵՍ ՄԵՓԱ . . Ն[

2. ԽԱԶՍ Ի ՓՈՐԿՈՒԹԵ[ԱՆ]Ս[

3. ԻՄՈ ՊԱՐՈՆ Վ . . ՄԱՐԻ

1. I Mep'a . . . [

2. This cross for the salvat[ion]

3. of my [], Paron V . . mari

Dimensions: written area 57 x 14.

The inscription is written across the bottom of a xač'k'ar. It is badly effaced and only with difficulty can the right-hand end of the lines be read, and that not always securely. The name in the last line is of the person who is commemorated by the inscription. He has the title "Paron". The final letter, *ini*, is probably a genitive ending. The script is round, uncial (*erkat'agir*) decorated with triangular serifs. The name in the first line is only partly preserved and, even then, the reading is most uncertain. No date is to be found.

21 Tombstone of 1316: see Figure 17

ԱՅՍ Է ՀԱՆԳԻՍՍՍ Տ

ՂԱՅԻՆ ԹՎ ԶԿԵ

This is the tomb of

the boy In the year 765 [AE = 1316]

Dimensions: overall 199 x 66, written area 98 x 25.

The inscriptiono is in a fairly unskilled uncial script. The յ and չ are minuscule in shape, but on the line. One *tiwn* is written mirror-image. The date is quite clear. The inscription is written within a double frame and has a schematic representation of a head at the left-hand end. The surface of the stone is badly damaged and much of this damage ante-dated the inscription, as may be inferred from the disposition of the writing.

22 Tombstone of 1338, Sałuman, p. 97, #27: see our Figure 18

Dimensions: overall 143.5 x 42, written area 132 x 31.

23 Tombstone, undated : see Figure 19

ՊԱՐՈՆ ՄԱՀԵՒԱՆԱ Է

It is of Paron Mahevan

Dimensions: overall 143 x 57, written area 116 x 15.

This inscription is in clear round *erkat'agir* script with no abbreviations. The letters are finely executed, deeply incised, with serifs. There is no indication of date, but it bears the same character of the rest of these tombstones. A deeply incised single line forms a frame that runs around the four edges of the stone. The name Mahevan is

%%%%%%

24 Fragment, undated: see Figure 20

1.].վԿԱՅՍ Չ[

2.]ԻՆԵՏԱՐՈՒ[

Dimensions: 28 (wide) x 38 (high)

The inscription is written in an accomplished, rounded uncial script. The incisions are deep and lines and with triangular serifs. There are a number of ligatures and no abbreviations. The first letter, of which only a sublinear line survives, might have been Լ or վ. It is attractive to read the next letter as վ and the word as վկայս "witness(es)". However, we are unable to discern on our photograph the end of the horizontal that would be expected at the left-hand side of this letter. No interpretation can be offered for the inscription, and the second line is quite impenetrable. In despite some superficial similarity, this is not part of the same inscription as nos. 35 and 36 (which might themselves be part of a single inscription). It differs from them both in height and in its having two lines of writing.

25 Xaç'k'ar undated, CIA 3, p. 229, #731: see our Figure 21

Dimensions: overall 42 x 78, written area 50 x 42.

26 Xaç'k'ar, Sałuman, p. 93, #2, fig. 3; see our Figure 22

Dimensions: not available.

27 Xaç'k'ar and Inscription, undated, Sałuman, p. 92, #1, fig. 2: see our Figure 23

Dimensions: written area 64 x 30.

28 Plaque and Inscription, undated: see Figure 25

Frag. 1	Frag. 2	
1. ՎԱՐԴԱԳ	ՈՆՆ ՏՂ[ալ]	
2. ԻՆ ՍՄՊ	ԱՏ ՈՐ[
3. Ի ԲԽ [. . . .	Frag. 3
4. Է ԻՆ[յի]ՇԵՑԷՔ	

- 1. Of the rosy b[o]
- 2. y Smpat who[
- 3.
- 4. re]member

Dimensions: overall length of frags. 1-2 is 80 cm.

The inscription is on a plaque, perhaps a tombstone, that had at its centre two rampant birds. A floral design emerges from the beak of the right-hand bird. The beak of the left-hand bird has flaked off and so we cannot tell whether it too had a floral design. A conch design survives in the three surviving corners. The stone has broken into three pieces and part is missing. The third piece should have been placed rather to the right of the position shown in the photograph, so that the feet of the bird come under the appropriate part of its body, visible on frag. 2. The plaque is bordered by a frame, and the area within the frame has been removed, so as to produce the frame itself, the birds and the conches in quite high relief. The inscription is written on the

excavated background and disposed somewhat irregularly around the birds and conches.

The inscription, which contained four lines, has some gaps and some uncertainties. Thus, most of line 3 is missing, or only the bottom of the letters survive (in fragment 3). No words can be reconstructed. Similarly there is a lacuna in the middle of line 4, which makes the three letters surviving at its start untranslatable.

The last word of line 4, "remember", indicates the funerary function of this plaque or tombstone. It was the tombstone of a child named Smpat, a by-form of Smbat. It is worth noting that this is a common dynastic name of the Orbelian family.

29 Fragmentary Inscription, undated: see Figure 25

1.]ԱՂԱԹԱՌԱՄՆԶ.[

2.]ԹՆ ՅԻՇԵՑ[էք

1.] prayers [

2.] rememb[er

Dimensions: overall 46 x 26, written area 37 x 18.

The photograph contains a fragmentary inscription in uncial script, with some ligatures. No abbreviations are evident, nor is there a date. The first line and the fragmentary first word of the second line remain incomprehensible. Next to this inscription, on the right in another photograph is a fragment which bears a cross. The *nomina sacra* ՅՍ and ՔՍ are visible in the two upper quadrants, while unclear writing in the lower quadrants is probably ՏՐ and ԱԾ, i.e., "Jesus, Christ, Lord, God", the normal inscription in such contexts. This second fragment does not look as if it comes from the same stone as inscription 29.

30 Xaç'k'ar, undated: see Figure 26

1. ՀԱՅՐ ՅՈՎԱՆԷՍ ՅԱՂ

2. ԱԻԹՍ ՅԻՇԵՑ

3. ԷՔ

1. Father Yovanēs in

2. (your) prayers remem-

3. ber

Dimensions: overall 50 x 35, written area 39 x 12.

This appears to be a votive stone. Three large crosses with horned arms, each horn ending in a concave indentation, have been incised side by side. This is not an uncommon pattern for *xačk'ar*, see %%%. The inscription was written subsequently, by a less accomplished hand. The round, uncial letters vary in height, and the first word is smaller less deeply incised, as if it was an afterthought. The spelling Yovanēs is not correct, but is not uncommon.⁹ There are no dates, abbreviations or ligatures.

The spelling *aw* not *ō* may be observed.

31. Fragmentary Inscription, undated: see Figure 27

ԱԾ ՈՂՈՐՄԻ ՎԱՀՐԱՄԱ

God has mercy on Vahram

Dimensions: overall 50 x 32, written area 50 x 5

A fragment of an uncial (*erkat'agir*) inscription on the edge of a curved stone, below which are two finely engraved, horned crosses, one upright and one slanted somewhat to the right. Below the crosses is the letter Ա. This might be a mason's or a builder's mark. The stone was probably an architectural element, compare Ełegis, Orbelian, no. %% and CIA 3, %%. The inscription is not deeply engraved. It is in uncial script, but the letter ծ resembles the minuscule in form. There is one ligature with miniaturization and one abbreviated *nomen sacrum*.

⁹ See Ačaiyan, HAB, %%%.

32. Fragmentary Xaç'k'ar, undated: Figure 28

1.]ԱԿԷ ՀՕՐ ԵՂՕՐ[

2.] . . Է ՊԿ . . Ն[

Dimensions: written area 35 x 14.

This fragmentary inscription on a *xač'k'ar* is difficult to decipher. We might read the latter part of the first line հօրեղ[ը]օր "of father of brother", i.e., of uncle, but this is not certain. Note that the *pen* in the second line is written back to front. Only the tops of the letters in this second line have survived. The script is round uncial *erkat'agir*.

There are no ligatures or abbreviations and no date that we can make out.

33. Xaç'k'ar, undated, Sałuman, p. 93, #4: see our Figure 29

Dimensions: written area 52 x 8.5.

34. Xaç'k'ar, undated: see Figure 30

1. ԶԳՈՐԳ ԶԱԲԼԽԳԻ

2. Ի ՅԱՂԱԻԹՍ ՅԻՇԵԱ

1. Gorg (son of) Ablxgi (??)

2. remember in your prayers

Dimensions: overall 37 (wide), written area 30 x 5.

The inscription is in a round, inexpert uncial script. It is not deeply engraved.

The form of the name Gorg for Gēorg is found quite often. The second word on the first line is a name in the genitive case ??? CHECK ADJARIAN and the third last letter is uncertain. There are marks following the last letter of that line, Ի, but it is by no means certain that they are a letter. This word may be a name. We have read the first letter of the second line as Ի, which would then combine with the initial *yi* of յաղաւթս as the compound preposition Ի յ-. It differs from the other example of this letter, and the physical reading might lead us to Ե, though that yields no sense. The form

յիշեալ "remember" in the singular is unusual in such inscriptions.

35. Tombstone of 1339: see Figure 31

ՋՀԱՅՐԱՊԵՏ ԳԱՀԱՆԱՅ ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ Ի ԹՎԻՆ ԶՁԸ

Remember Hayrapet k'ahana in the year 788 [A.E. = 1339]

Dimensions unavailable.

Round uncial script in a frame formed by two deeply incised lines. It is rather skillfully executed, with abbreviations and ligatures. The stone itself is in two parts, and it seems to us that this is original, and not a secondary break

36. Tombstone of 1285: see Figure 32

1. ԶԳԵՏԿԵՑԻ ՄԱՐԳԱՐԷՆ ՅԻՇԵ[ցէք]

2. Ի ԹՎ: ԶԼԴ

1. Rem[ember] Margarē Getkec'i

2. in the year 734 [A.E. = 1285]

Dimensions: external 192 x 61, written area 154 x 19.5

The inscription is written skilfully in round uncial script within a frame formed of two deeply incised lines. The letters end in serifs, and a number of ligatures may be observed. A colon precedes the date, as in a number of the other inscriptions. The end of the first line, though not on the photograph, is nonetheless certain. Margarē was from Getik in ????. No ecclesiastical title is given for him.

37. Xaç'k'ar of 1252: see Figure 33

1. .

2. Ն Յ

3. ԻՂ ԵՑԷ Ք

4. Ի ՔՍ Թ[ՎԻ]Ն չԱ

1. .

2. N R

3. em emb er

4. to Christ (in the) y[ea]r 701 [AE = 1252]

Dimensions unavailable

The stone is part of a *xač'k'ar*. It seems to have been a simple stone, different from the typical "lacy" stonework so often seen on such stone crosses. What survives in two deeply incised horned crosses between which letters have been written. The unclear letter on line 1 and the first letter of line 2 were presumably the end of a name or an attribute of the person whose memory is invoked. Line 4 is written between two lines the whole width of the stone and it contains the date. If we have correctly restored the word Թ[ՎԻ]Ն "(in the) y[ea]r" then this is a very old monument

38. Inscription, undated: see Figure 34

ՅՈՎ

YOV

Dimensions: overall 20-24 (w) x 30 (h); letter height 23.

This is probably a fragment of the same inscription as no. 38. It is written in a stately, well-executed *erkat'agir*. The three letters could be the beginning of a number of biblical names commencing with Greek ΙΩ, such as Yovhannēs, Yovsēp', etc.

39. Inscription, undated: see Figure 35

Վ

W

Dimensions: overall 10-24 x 28.75; letter height 25.

A single letter, apparently from the same inscription as no. 38. The difference in letter height is to be explained by the fact that this letter has both an ascender and a descender.

40. Inscription, undated: see Figure 36

1. ՅԻՄՀ

2. ԱՓՈՐԱԿՈՅ

Dimensions: overall 29 x 37, written area 29 x 27.

The inscription is deeply incised with triangular serifs at the end of the arms. The script is uncial with some ligatures and no abbreviations. The last letter of line 2 seems to be Յ. This is seems to be the initial part of a wall inscription and is on a square, carefully finished stone. The first line is indented, which probably indicates the start of the inscription.

41. Xač'k'ar: Sałuman, page 93, no. 5, fig. 4: see our Figure 37

Dimensions: written area 62.5 x 19.5, letter height 4 cm.

The square hole cut in the center of the inscription was, presumably, for purposes of transportation and may be compared functionally with similar holes in other Noravank' and Ełegis inscriptions. However, its square form is quite unusual.

42. Xač'k'ar, undated: see Figure 38

1. ԹՎՆ[

2. ԽՉՍ . . .

1. In the year [

2. This cross . . .

Dimensions not available.

This inscription is badly defaced. There is one line of writing across the top. The latter half of the line is completely lost, while only a few letter of the beginning can be made out, without certainty. There is also an inscription at

the bottom of the stone, below the group of three crosses, which are surmounted by an ornate carved, horned cross in the center panel of the stone. One word can be read there.

43. Inscription, undated: see Figure 39

1. ՎԵՍԼԵՂԻՑ

2. ԴԱԻԶԱ . . .

Dimensions unavailable.

The decipherment is uncertain and no words can be made out. The inscription is on a stone, set in the wall behind S. Karapet Church. It is written in round, uncial script with serifs. There seem to be some ligatures. A number of further inscriptions are found in this wall, see nos. 44, 45, 49A, 49B and 49C below. Nos. 44 and 45 seem quite similar, but there are differences between some letters, such as Ե and Ց so it does not appear that they derive from one inscription. Perhaps the last four letters of line 1 can be compared with line 2 of no. 49A.

44. Inscription, undated: see Figure 40

1. ԱՅ ՈՐԴՈՅՆ

2. ՈՒՑԷ

1. . . of the son

3. he will

Dimensions unavailable. The inscription is in the retaining wall behind S. Karapet Church: see no. 43 above. The stone appears to preserve the end of the inscription, since more than half of line 2 is blank. The script is round uncials, with some ligatures, shortening of one down-stroke, and triangular serifs. The reading of line 1 seems fairly secure, and that of line 2 is quite clear. We have interpreted the letters of line 2 as a third person verb ending.

The stone is flat and square and presumably formed part of a wall inscription. The right-hand end has been cut on a slant, presumably due to exigencies of the building of the wall.

45. Inscription, 1226: see Figure 41

1. ԹՎ ՈՂ Ե
2. ՔՍ ԱԾ ՈՂՈ[րմեա
3. ԹԻ

1. In the year 675 [AE = 1226]
2. Christ God have m[ericy
3.

Dimensions unavailable

The stone is, apparently, the right hand end of a *xač'k'ar* and there was at least one further stone, as is clear from the incomplete word "have m[ericy" at the end of line 2. Note enough letters can be deciphered in line 3 to make a whole word. The date is quite clear and this inscription is one of the oldest monuments of this group, being coeval with the building of the church of S. Karapet (1221-1227). GET REFS FOR BUILDING DATES. The script is round, uncials and the preservation is not very good. The stone is embedded in the retaining wall behind the church of St. Karapet.

46. Xač'k'ar of 1222: see Figure 43

1. : ԹՎ՝ՈՂԱ : Ա՛Ժ ԹՎ . [ՅԻ]ԾԵԱՅ
 2. ՄԵՐ ԺՆՈՂՍ . . Ն ԱՄԵՆ
1. In the year 671 [AE = 1222] 11 year. Remember
 2. our parents . . . Amen,

Dimensions: written area 50 x 10.5

This is the oldest monument in this group, dating from 1222. It raises a considerable number of problems of decipherment. The writing is clear uncial script but it is obscured, apparently by lichen, at a number of points. The date is preceded by a single dot and followed by two dots. The rest of line 1 is difficult. If the second letter after the date is read as ժ then we seem to have the number "11" (also suggested by the dot between the two letters), surmounted by a *patiw* abbreviation mark. This is followed by the two letters ԹՎ which might be taken to mean "in the year, date", in turn followed by a partly illegible word which we tentatively reconstruct as ՅԻՇԵԱՅ "remember". This does not make much sense. However, in the second line, the fourth letter, which is the same ժ, seems to be an error of Ծ, and that word should be read as ծնոյս "parents" followed by a short word ending in Ն and then "Amen". Even if our decipherment is somewhat tentative, the chief interest of this inscription inheres in its date. The inscription is at the base of a *xač'k'ar*, and above it, in relief, is a horned cross. In the right-hand lower quadrant of the relief cross is another horned cross, simply incised on the background, and its horns are marked by drilled holes, similar to those used as word dividers in the inscription.

47. *Xač'k'ar* of 1222: see Figure 44

1. ԵՍ ՍՏԵՓԱՆՈՍ ԲՂՆ[
2. ԿԱՆԳՆԵՑԻ ԶԽԱԶՍ
3. ԲԱՐԵԽԱԻՍ ՀՈԳՈՅ
4. . . Ն ԻԲ(?)Յ ՊՐՆ ՍԻ
5. ՈՆ[

1. I Step'aqnos . . . [
2. set up this cross
3. as an intercessor for (the) soul

4. Paron Si-

5. on

The inscription is at the base of a *xač'k'ar*. The end of the lines are not in the photograph and, of lines 3-5 are obscured by an adjacent piece of stone. The script is quite rough, but on the whole deeply incised with emphasized serifs at the end of the strokes. The beginning of the fourth line is difficult to decipher, but the end is clear enough. There is no indication of date, but a couple of features may be observed. The script is round *erkat'agir*; we find ω not o ; and there is an aberrant spelling of կազմեցի for կազգեցի . The inscription yields no historical information except for the name Paron Sion.

48. *Xač'k'ar* of 1339: see Figure 45

ԹՎ 299

In the year 788 [AE = 1339]

Dimensions unavailable.

One word occurs at the foot of each decorative panel on the two sides of this *xač'k'ar*. The date is in relief, in uncial letters with ornamentation.

49. *Xač'k'ar* of 1222: see Figure 46

Figure 46 shows three inscription fragments on adjoining stones in the retaining wall behind S. Karapet church.

49A rightmost inscription

1. ՄՂՈՐ . Ա

2. ԵՂԵՑ

3. ՇՈՒՐ

Dimensions unavailable.

The inscription is in round uncial script, and the inscription is partly defaced due to damage to the surface. Moreover, this stone is only part of the

inscription, perhaps the beginning, if any weight is given to the enlarged *men* with which the first line commences. Nothing meaningful can be made out of the preserved letters. Uncertain readings are the second and last letters of the first line and most of the third line. The height of the letters in 49A differs from that in 49B and 49C.

49B next to 49A

1. ԱՈՐՂԻԹ
2. ԱՆՆԷՍ .
3. Խ ԹԱԹ Ա
4. ՆԵԼՁԱՆ

1.].[
2.]annēs .[
3.]. T'at' .[
4.].[

Dimensions unavailable.

Fragment of an inscription, inserted in the retaining wall alongside 49A. The letters are deeply incised uncials, with some damage towards the beginning of the second and their lines. The second line is most of the name Yovhannēs, and the middle of the third line might be the name T'at'. Nothing can be made of the rest.

49C below 49B

- 1.
- 2.

TO SCAN AT HOME AND REWORK

50. Inscription, undated: see Figure 47

ԱԾ ՈՂՈՐՄԻ . . ՈՆ

God has mercy

Dimensions unavailable.

Inscription in the outer wall of S. Astuacacnin Church, above Noravank' 2-3.

It is in a fairly good (but not professional) uncial script. Following the end of the first word the surface of the stone is camaged, and then the two letters *nŭ* may be observed, perhaps in a different script.

51. Inscription, undated: see Figure 47

1. ՅԻՇԵԱ Ի ՔՐԻՍՏՈՅ ԱՍՏՈՒԱՅ ԶՀՈԳԻ Զ . [

2. ՔԱՀԱՆԱԻ ԵՒ ՈՂ[ոբմեա]

1. Remember to Ch[ris]t G[o]d the soul . . [

2. of the priest and ha[ve mercy]

This inscription is engraved below no. 50. It is written in a very skilful round uncial script, characterized by many ligatures and abbreviated *nomina sacra*. In line 1, there were more letters following the last legible letter, but the surface of the stone has flaked badly. Presumably a proper name went into the lacuna so formed. The last two letters are taken as a shortened form of some derivative of *ողորմիմ* "to have mercy". Our reconstruction is totally hypothetical.

Inscription 51, undated fragments: see Figure 47

On the photograph a small *ե* may be seen preceding the present inscription, at the middle place between the two lines. In a lighter script two further letters, perhaps *իշ* can be seem preceding thus, much more lightly engraved. Roughly below the word "soul" are four small signs, part of the work of a further hand. A *u* is surmounted by a sign that might be a *patiw* and followed by *ի* and then, even smaller and raised, a *թ*. The deeply engraved horned cross below the inscription is presumably part of it.

Inscription 52, Tombstone of 1271: see Figure 47

1. ՋՏ.ՆՏՐԵԱԼ ԵՒ ՔԱՀԱՆԱՅՍ ՋՆԱՐԴ

2. ԵՂԵԳԵՑԻ ՅԻՇԵՑԷՔ Ի ՋԻ ՉԻ

1. this priest Nard

2. of Eġegis remember. In the year 720 [AE = 1271]

Dimensions: written area including interlinear decoration 135 x 50, letter height 12.5

The inscription is written in two lines along a tombstone. It is broken and defaced at the beginning of line 1 and a crack causes difficulties of decipherment at the latter end of this line. The photograph, unfortunately, cuts off the last part of each line. The letters are not deeply incised, or the stone has worn down. The readings of line 1 are problematic. Two letters on the left side of the major crack are partially preserved. We read them as ՋՆ, though other readings are possible. The following word is clear enough, but it is probably incomplete and its meaning escapes us. Following this word, and preceding քահանայս is what appears to be a ligature of ԵԻ. The rest is clear: Nard *k'ahanay* was apparently from Eġegis. The date is quite clear. The inscription is in a tall, rounded uncial script. There are ligatures.

Between the two lines of writing are two ruled lines, between which there are designs of crenellated rectangles.