




Dmytro Dymydyuk (Lviv)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5067-5530>

THE RELIEF ON THE DOOR OF THE MSHO ARAKELOTS MONASTERY (1134) AS A SOURCE FOR STUDYING ARMS AND ARMOUR OF MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN WARRIORS¹

The history of swords [weapons] is the history of humanity (R.F. Burton)²

Introduction

The Bagratid Kingdom of Armenia (884/886³–1045/1064⁴) was the first independent Armenian state in the Middle Ages. Having been under the control of the Persians and Umayyad Arabs for centuries, the Royal House of Bagratid was finally able to secure their independence from Arabs at the end of the 9th century. Located at the frontier, between Eastern Roman Empire and the Muslim world, Armenia faced encroachment from both sides, but, on the other hand, adopted the best military solutions from both sides, creating its own military culture.

After the fall of the Bagratid Armenia in the middle of the 11th c., the Armenian territory was under the rule of the Seljuk Turks. One of the Turks' principalities was founded in Western Armenia after the Battle of Manzikert (1071) and called Shah-Armenia (1100–1207)⁵, whose capital city was Ahlat, located on the north-western

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Valery Yotov from Varna Museum (Bulgaria) for his ideas and materials, which enabled me to prepare the present paper. Furthermore, I would like to thank Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation for a travel grant (2018), which allowed me to find necessary books in the libraries of Armenia and helped me to finish this article.

² R. BURTON, *The Book of the Sword. A History of Daggers, Sabers, and Scimitars from Ancient Times to the Modern Day*, New York 2014.

³ Note that due to the inaccuracy of the source base, modern historians (Arsen Shahinian and Cyril Toumanoff) believe that the coronation of the first Bagratid king Ashot I could have taken place between 884 and 886. – А. ШАГИНЯН, *Расформирование арабской провинции Арминийа во второй половине IX века*, ВСПУИ 2, 2009, p. 217–218; С. ТОУМАНОВ, *Caucasia and Byzantium*, Т. 27, 1971, p. 123–128.

⁴ Some of the Armenian medieval chroniclers identified the fall of the Bagratid kingdom not with the Byzantine conquest of the Ani in 1045, but with Seljuks conquest in 1064. – Р. МАТЕВОСЯН, *Падение Багратидского царства по данным армянских историков XI–XIII в.*, ЛՂԳ 10, 1988, p. 64–72.

⁵ R. BEDROSIAN, *Armenia during the Seljuk and Mongol Periods*, [in:] *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, vol. I, ed. R. HOVANNISIAN, New York 1997, p. 241–271.

shore of Lake Van. This Armeno-Turk kingdom promoted religion tolerance⁶ so the Armenians were able to develop their own culture. An example of this is the door from the Msho Arakelots monastery (11th c.), which was installed in 1134, as evidenced by the inscription it bears – *Ի թ. Հ. ՇՁԳ. ԵՄ ՏԲ Թորոսու եւ Գրիգոր եւ Դուկաս ԳՕԴ* [In the year 1134, D. Toros, Grikor, and Ghugas carved this door]⁸. The door of the church was made from walnut wood and ornamented by carvings of different geometrical shapes, images of animals and warriors. The height of the door is 2.02 m and its width is 1.42 m.

Unfortunately, during the Armenian Genocide in 1915, the monastery was partially destroyed by Turkish soldiers and subsequently abandoned. But the door was preserved and transferred by German archaeologists to Bitlis, with a view to later moving it to Berlin⁹. However, in 1916, when Russian troops took control of the region, Armenian historian and archaeologist Smbat Ter-Avetisian found the door in Bitlis and brought it to the Museum of the Armenian Ethnographic Association in Tbilisi. But in the winter of 1921/1922, the door was moved to the newly founded History Museum of Armenia¹⁰ in Yerevan, which rapidly became one of the symbols of Armenian Genocide¹¹.

The aim of the article is to analyse – in the context of Church and art history – the relief in the upper part of the door, where four horsemen and one infantryman with different types of arms and armours are depicted (pic. 1)¹², and to identify various types of weapons and armours thanks to comparisons with the Armenian, Eastern Roman Empire and Muslim sources.

Analysis of historiography and sources

The history of the Msho Arakelots door was researched by many historians¹³, but none of them paid attention to the weapons and armours of the warriors. Moreover, the military history of the Medieval Armenia was not the object of any historical

⁶ S. DADOYAN, *The Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World. Armenian Realpolitik in the Islamic World and Diverging Paradigms Case of Cilicia Eleventh to Fourteenth Centuries*, vol. II, London 2013, p. 146–149.

⁷ Ա. ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ, Կ. ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ, *Հայրենագիտական էտյուդներ*, Երևան 1979, p. 207.

⁸ R. TATOYAN, *Mush – Churches and Monasteries*, <https://www.houshamadyan.org/mapottoman-empire/vilayet-of-bitlis/paghesh/kaza-of-moush/religion/churches.html> [30 VIII 2019].

⁹ Կ. ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ, *Հայրենագիտական...*, p. 206–207.

¹⁰ Կ. ՂԱՖԱԿՐՅԱՆ, *Սովետական Հայաստանի առաջին թանգարանը*, ԼՀԳ 12, 1974, p. 39.

¹¹ *The Door of the Arakelots (Targmanchats) Monastery in Mush*, https://historymuseum.am/en/exhibitions_type/the-door-of-the-arakelots-targmanchats-monastery-in-mush/ [30 IV 2019].

¹² Н. СТЕПАНИАН, А. ЧАКМАКЧЯН, *Декоративное искусство средневековой Армении*, Ленинград 1971, p. 51, pic. 162–163.

¹³ Н. СТЕПАНИАН, *Искусство Армении*, Москва 1989, pic. 111; Н. СТЕПАНИАН, А. ЧАКМАКЧЯН, *Декоративное...*, p. 51, pic. 162–163; Կ. ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ, *Հայրենագիտական...*, p. 207; Կ. ՂԱՖԱԿՐՅԱՆ, *Սովետական...*, p. 37–47; Ա. ՊԱՏԻԿ, *Մշո Առաքելոց վանքի դուռը*, [in:] *Էջմիածին. Պաշտոնական ամսագիր Հայրապետական Աթոռոյ Ս. Էջմիածնի*, vol. I, Էջմիածնի 1952, p. 23–26.

research for a long time. A few years ago, Armenian historian Karine Voskanyan defended a dissertation on the military organization of the Bagratid era¹⁴. Voskanyan partially analysed arms and armours of the Bagratid Armenia, but in her thesis she did not use almost any graphic sources, which leaves many unresolved questions about the form and functions of the weapons of that time.

On the other hand, Byzantine and Muslim arms and armours were researched by many historians (David Nicolle¹⁵, John Haldon¹⁶, Timothy Dawson¹⁷, Ian Heath¹⁸, Shihab Al-Sarraf¹⁹, Piotr Grotowski²⁰, Mamuka Tsurtsumia²¹, Ada Hoffmeyer²²,

¹⁴ Կ. ՈՍԿԱՆՅԱՆ, Հայոց բանակը Բագրատունյաց շրջանում (IX–XI դարեր) (շրապարակված թեկնածուական ատենախոսություն), Երևան 2010.

¹⁵ D. NICOLLE, *The Military Technology of Classical Islam*, vol. I–III [PhD Thesis, Edinburg 1982]; IDEM, *The Armies of Islam 7th–11th Centuries*, Oxford 1982; IDEM, *The Cappella Palatina Ceiling and the Muslim Military Inheritance of Norman Sicily*, GlA 16, 1983, p. 45–145; IDEM, *Saladin and the Saracens*, Oxford 1986; IDEM, *Byzantine and Islamic Arms and Armour: Evidence for Mutual Influence*, GA 4, 1991, p. 299–325; IDEM, *Sassanian Armies. The Iranian Empire, Early 3rd to mid-7th Centuries AD*, Stockport 1996; IDEM, *Armies of the Caliphates (862–1098)*, Oxford 1998; IDEM, *Arms and Armour of the Crusading Era 1050–1350. Western Europe and the Crusader States*, London 1999; IDEM, *Two Swords from the Foundation of Gibraltar*, GlA 22, 2002, p. 147–199; *A Companion to Medieval Arms and Armour*, ed. IDEM, Woodbridge 2002; IDEM, *Byzantine, Western European, Islamic and Central Asian Influence in the Field of Arms and Armour from the Seventh to Fourteenth Century AD*, [in:] *Islamic Crosspollinations. Interactions in the Medieval Middle East*, Cambridge 2007, p. 94–118; IDEM, *Crusader Warfare. Muslims, Mongols and the Struggle against the Crusades*, vol. II, London 2007; IDEM, *Manzikert 1071. Złamanie potęgi Bizancjum*, trans. M. BALICKI, Warszawa 2018.

¹⁶ J. HALDON, *Some Aspects of Byzantine Military Technology from the 6th to the 10th centuries*, BMGS 1, 1975, p. 11–47; IDEM, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World, 565–1204*, London 1999; IDEM, *A Critical Commentary on The Taktika of Leo VI*, Washington 2014; IDEM, *Wojny Bizancjum. Strategia, taktyka, kampanie*, trans. N. RADOMSKI, Poznań 2019.

¹⁷ T. DAWSON, *The Myth of the “Varangian Rhomphaia”: a Cautionary Tale*, VaV 22, 1992, p. 24–26; IDEM, *Banded Lamellar – a Solution*, VaV 23, 1992, p. 16; IDEM, *Kremasmata, Kabadion, Klibanion: Some Aspects of Middle Byzantine Military Equipment Reconsidered*, BMGS 22, 1998, p. 38–50; IDEM, *Klivanion Revisited: an Evolutionary Typology and Catalogue of Middle Byzantine Lamellar*, JRMES 12/13, 2001/2002, p. 89–95; IDEM, *Suntagma Hoplon: The Equipment of Regular Byzantine Troops, c. 950 to c. 1204*, [in:] *A Companion to Medieval...*, p. 81–96; IDEM, *Byzantine Infantryman. Eastern Roman Empire c. 900–1204*, Oxford 2007; IDEM, *Fit for the Task: Equipment Sizes and the Transmission of Military Lore, Sixth to Tenth centuries*, BMGS 32, 2007, p. 1–12; IDEM, *Byzantine Cavalryman c. 900–1204*, Oxford 2009; IDEM, *Armour Never Wearies: Scale and Lamellar Armour in the West, from the Bronze Age to the 19th Century*, Cheltenham 2013.

¹⁸ I. HEATH, *Byzantine Armies 886–1118*, Oxford 1979, p. 48; IDEM, *Armies of the Dark Ages, 600–1066 AD*, Worthing 1980, p. 128.

¹⁹ S. AL-SARRAF, *Close Combat Weapons in the Early Abbasid Period*, [in:] *A Companion to Medieval...*, p. 149–178.

²⁰ P. GROTOWSKI, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints. Tradition and Innovation in Byzantine Iconography (843–1261)*, Leiden 2010 [= MMe, 87].

²¹ M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution of Splint Armour in Georgia and Byzantium: Lamellar and Scale Armour in the 10th–12th Centuries*, Sym 21, 2011, p. 65–99; IDEM, *Medieval Sword and Sabre from the Georgian National Museum*, AMM 11, 2015, p. 159–172; IDEM, *The Mace in Medieval Georgia*, AMM 14, 2018, p. 87–114.

²² A. HOFFMEYER, *Military Equipment in the Byzantine Manuscript of Scylitzes in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid*, GlA 5, 1966, p. 1–160.

Taxiarchis Koliass²³, Georgios Theotokis²⁴, Raffaele D'Amato²⁵, Valery Yotov²⁶, Genady Baranov²⁷ and others). Therefore, the best way to study the military equipment represented on the door is to compare it with the Eastern Roman and Muslim sources because Armenia was for a long time under the influence of these two Empires and accepted many military innovations from both sides.

Unfortunately, the situation with Armenian archaeological and written sources is challenging. Most archaeological artefacts of arms and armours from around the Bagratid era were poorly researched and dated too broadly (9th–13th c.). In the Soviet era, only several historians and archaeologists (Valentina Abrahamyan²⁸, Babken Arakelyan²⁹,

²³ T. KOLIAS, *Byzantinische Waffen. Ein Beitrag zur byzantinischen Waffenkunde von den Anfängen bis zur lateinischen Eroberung*, Wien 1988 [= BV, 17].

²⁴ G. THEOTOKIS, *Military Technology: Production and Use of Weapons*, [in:] *A Companion to the Byzantine Culture of War, ca. 300–1204*, ed. Y. STOURAITIS, Boston 2018, p. 440–473.

²⁵ R. D'AMATO, *The Eastern Romans 330–1461 AD*, Hong Kong 2007; IDEM, *The Varangian Guard 988–1453*, Oxford 2010; IDEM, *The Betrayal: Military Iconography and Archaeology in the Byzantine Paintings of XI–XV Centuries AD Representing the Arrest of Our Lord*, [in:] *Weapons Bring Peace? Warfare in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. L. MAREK, Wrocław 2010, p. 69–95; IDEM, Σιδηροράβδιον, βαρδοῦκιον, ματζούκιον, κορύνη. *The War-mace of Byzantium, 9th–15th c. AD: New Evidence from the Balkans in the Collection of the World Museum of Man, Florida*, AMM 7, 2011, p. 7–48; IDEM, *Byzantine Imperial Guardsmen, 925–1025*, Oxford 2012; IDEM, *Old and New Evidence on the East-Roman Helmets from the 9 to the 12 Centuries*, AMM 11, 2015, p. 27–157.

²⁶ В. ЙОТОВ, *Въоръжението и снаряжението от българското средновековие (VII–XI век)*, Варна 2004; IDEM, *Перекрестье меча из Херсонеса*, АДСВ 39, 2009, p. 251–261; IDEM, *Ранние сабли (VIII–X вв.) на Нижнем Дунае*, [in:] *Культуры Евразийских степей второй половины I тысячелетия н.э.*, Самара 2010, p. 217–225; V. YOTOV, *Byzantine Time Swords (10–11 c.)*, SUC I, 2011, p. 35–45; IDEM, *A New Byzantine Type of Swords (7th–11th Centuries)*, [in:] *Niš and Byzantium*, vol. IX, Niš 2011, p. 113–124; IDEM, *The Kunagota Sword Guard and the Dating of Two Bronze Matrices for Hilt Manufacturing*, [in:] *Die Archäologie der frühen Ungarn*, Mainz 2012, p. 219–226; IDEM, *Byzantine Weaponry and Military Equipment in the Homilies of St Gregory of Nazianzus (Paris, Gr. 510)*, FAH 30, 2017, p. 153–163.

²⁷ Г. БАРАНОВ, *Болгаро-византийское навершие рукояти сабли с территории Северо-Восточного Причерноморья*, МАИАСК 6, 2014, p. 84–93; IDEM, *Новая находка перекрестья и навершия рукояти византийского меча с территории Черкасского района Черкасской области Украины*, МАИАСК 7, 2015, p. 87–105; IDEM, *Находки раннесредневековых сабель «Болгарского типа» в бассейне верхнего и среднего течения Днестра*, МАИАСК 8, 2016, p. 76–92; IDEM, *Византийские (средиземноморские) мечи с перекрестьями с муфтой IX–XI вв.*, МАИАСК 9, 2017, p. 248–283; IDEM, *Византийский меч с территории Украины*, [in:] *Война и оружие. Новые исследования и материалы*, pars 1, Санкт-Петербург 2017, p. 171–177; IDEM, *Перекрестье меча из раскопок византийского Херсона*, ВА 4, 2018, p. 31–42.

²⁸ Վ. ԱՐԵՎԵՅԱՆ, *Միջինադարյան Հայաստանի զինքերի տեսակները*, ՊՊԹ 2, 1949, p. 37–98; IDEM, *Արհեստները Հայաստանում IV–XVIII դդ.*, Երևան 1956.

²⁹ Բ. ԱՌԱՐԵՅԱՆ, *Քաղաքները և արհեստները Հայաստանում IX–XIII դդ.*, Երևան 1958; *Հայ ժողովրդի Պատմություն*, vol. III, ed. Բ. ԱՌԱՐԵՅԱՆ, Երևան 1976, p. 273–277.

Aram Kalantaryan³⁰ and others³¹) published pictures of separate archaeological findings which were located in the History Museum of Armenia. Unfortunately, almost all of these pictures presented the artefacts redrawn in two dimensions only, and were not accompanied by photographs or information about the artefacts' measurements, materials, etc. On the other hand, Armenian written sources are less useful for the study of the material military culture because they give only general information about weapons and armour without a detailed description. Moreover, many unresolved terminological problems concerning the names of the weapons and armours have remained.

However, Armenian figurative sources were researched much better. For example, Armenian miniatures (10th–14th c.) have been thoroughly analysed by some art historians (Tetiana Izmailova³², Dickrana Kouymjian³³, Sirarpie Der Nersessian³⁴ and others). What is more, D. Kouymjian published dozens of photos of Armenian miniatures (10th–14th c.) on the website of the University of Fresno and the University of Hamburg³⁵. Also, no less important are the reliefs on the Cathedral of the Holy Cross on Aghtamar Island (915–921) (pic. 5), where some Biblical characters with arms and armours³⁶ are depicted. Unfortunately,

³⁰ Ա. ՔԱԼԱՆՏԱՐՅԱՆ, *Պաշտպանական սպառազինությունը միջնադարյան հայաստանում*, ԳԱՏ ՀՊ 10, 1965, p. 68–74; IDEM, *Չենքերը V–VIII դարերում (Ըստ Դվինի հնագիտական պեղումների)*, *ՊԲՀ* 4, 1965, p. 241–248; IDEM, *Դվինի նյութական մշակույթը IV–VIII դարերում*, Երեվան 1970; IDEM, *Կենտրոնական թաղամասի պեղումները 1964–1970 թթ*, Երեվան 1976; А. КАЛАНТАРЯНА, *Двин. Город Двин и его раскопки (1981–1985)*, vol. IV, Ереван 2008.

³¹ Կ. ՂԱԲԱՐԱԲՅԱՆ, *Դվին քաղաքը և նրա պեղումները*, Երևան 1952; Ս. ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ, *Անբերդ*, Երևան 1978; Հ. ՊԵՏՐՈՍՅԱՆ, *Գառնին IX–XIV դարերում*, Երևան 1988.

³² T. IZMAILOVA, *L'Iconographie du cycle des fêtes d'un groupe de codex arméniens d'Asie Mineure*, REArm 4, 1967, p. 125–166; Т. ИЗМАЙЛОВА, *Армянская миниатюра XI века*, Ереван 1979.

³³ D. KOUYMIJIAN, *The Evolution of Armenian Gospel Illumination: The Formative Period (9th–11th Centuries)*, [in:] *Armenian and the Bible. Papers Presented to the International Symposium Held at Heidelberg, July 16–19, 1990*, ed. C. BURCHARD, Atlanta 1993, p. 125–142; IDEM, *The Art of the Book: Armenian Medieval Illumination*, [in:] *Armenia. Imprints of a Civilization*, ed. G. ULUHO-GIAN, B.L. ZEKIYAN, V. KARAPETIAN, Milan 2011, p. 89–123; IDEM, *The Melitene Group of Armenian Miniature Painting in the Eleventh Century*, [in:] R.G. HOVANNISIAN, *Armenian Kesaria/Kayseri and Cappadocia*, Costa Mesa 2013, p. 79–115.

³⁴ S. DER NERSESSIAN, *The Date of the Initial Miniatures of the Etchmiadzin Gospel*, EBA 1, 1973, p. 535–538; IDEM, *An Introduction to Armenian Manuscript Illumination, Selections from the Walters Art Gallery*, Baltimore 1974; IDEM, *Armenian Art*, London 1978; IDEM, *L'Evangile du roi Gagik de Kars: Jérusalem No 2556*, REArm 18, 1984, p. 85–107; IDEM, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth Century*, vol. I, Washington 1993.

³⁵ *Index of Armenian Art: Database of Armenian Manuscript Illuminations*, <https://mycms-vs04.rrz.uni-hamburg.de/sfb950/content/IAA/browseColl.xml> [30 IV 2019].

³⁶ J. DAVIES, *Medieval Armenian Art and Architecture. Church of the Holy Cross, Aght'amar*, London 1991; S. DER NERSESSIAN, *Aght'amar. Church of the Holy Cross*, Cambridge 1965; И. ОРБЕЛИ,

very few historians paid special attention to the arms and armours presented on miniatures or reliefs³⁷.

For the first time in Armenian historiography, weapons will not be the subject but the object of research, where – in the context of Church and art history – the issues of armament of medieval Armenian warriors will be analysed in comparison with Eastern Roman and Muslim samples, in an attempt to make this study more relevant³⁸.

Analysis of relief

The relief in the upper part of the door from the Msho Arakelots monastery can be provisionally divided into three parts³⁹: in the left part, there are two heavily armoured horsemen (*azats*)⁴⁰, one of whom is trying to escape, while the other pierces him through with a sword. In the middle of the relief, there is an infantryman with a trumpet and on the right side two light horsemen are presented, one of whom is piercing through a big snake or a dragon with his spear. The height of these figures is approximately 17 cm.

Armenian historian Kamsar Avetisian thought that this relief depicts non-religious, historical scenes⁴¹, but this is not completely true. Let us pay attention to the inscription on the right side of the relief, which K. Avetisian reads as ԱԲԳՈՐԳ [ABGORG]. He thinks that this word was randomly added in later centuries (or that the author made some mistake?)⁴². However, if the word is given an alternative reading of ՄԲ Գ[Կ]ՈՐԳ [SB G[E]ORG], the outcome is “St. George”, which can be accurate because under this description there is a horseman spearing a dragon

Избранные труды, vol. I, Москва 1968; L. JONES, *Between Islam and Byzantium*, Aldershot 2007; IDEM, *The Visual Expression of Power and Piety in Medieval Armenia: The Palace and Palace Church at Aghtamar*, [in:] *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium*, Aldershot 2001, p. 221–241; *The Church of the Holy Cross of Aghtamar*, ed. Z. POGOSSIAN, E. VARDANYAN, Leiden 2019, p. 460.

³⁷ A notable exception is a recent study by English scholars I. Heath and D. Nicolle, who based their visive reconstructions of the medieval Armenian warriors on the Aghtamar reliefs and other sources. See for instance: I. HEATH, *Armies of the Dark...*, figs. 91–92, p. 100–101; D. NICOLLE, *Armies of the Caliphates...*, plate A2, p. 45.

³⁸ Note that some types of weapons or armours depicted are presented schematically. Therefore, only some suggestions as to how to interpret them will be offered.

³⁹ Based on the two inscriptions on the relief (which will be discussed below) and the visual position of the figures, it could be assumed that at least two separate “scenes” were presented on the relief (in the right and left corners). Unfortunately, it cannot be stated with certainty whether the middle part of the relief (“infantryman with a trumpet”) is related to the “scenes” on the left or the right. Therefore, a third part has been posited by this study.

⁴⁰ Armenian *azats* were equivalent to heavy armoured Byzantine cataphracts.

⁴¹ Կ. ԱՎԵՏԻՍԻԱՆ, Հայրենագիտական..., p. 207.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 207–208.

(it is a traditional religious iconography in the Late Roman and Orthodox art)⁴³. Note, for instance, similar depictions of St. George killing the dragon with his spear present in Georgian (pic. 6)⁴⁴ and Armenian art (pic. 7)⁴⁵.

In the left corner of the relief, there is a partial inscription but it is poorly preserved. Four letters are visible: ՏՐԴՏ [TRDT], which could mean ՏՐԴ[Ա]Տ ([TRD[A]T – Tiridates – an Armenian name)⁴⁶. Arakel Patrick suggests that this scene was an episode from the Armenian national epic *Daredevils of Sassoun* (8th–13th c.), in which David, riding on a horse, is pursuing Msra-Melik, but no definitive answer is provided. Patrick also believes that these inscriptions were added later⁴⁷.

Left part of the relief (pic. 2)

Sleeve cross-guard

Here, two men on horseback are visible, one of whom is trying to escape while the other pierces him through with a sword⁴⁸. The sword depicted consists of the edge, grip, pommels, cross-guard and a wide part above the cross-guard, which is called sleeve (pic. 2:1). Bulgarian historian V. Yotov aptly remarked that *the typology of swords is often a typology of the sword-guards*⁴⁹. Indeed, the relief includes a representation of one type of sleeve cross-guard present in Armenian art, which is not unlike the type visible on the interior fresco *Massacre of the Innocents* in the Aghtamar Church⁵⁰.

⁴³ A. Patrick is of the same opinion but he suggests two interpretation of this inscription: “ՍԲ ԳՈՐԳ” [SB G[E]ORG] or “ՍԲ ԹՈՐՈՆ” [SB TORO[S] – Ա. ՊԱՏՐԻԿ, *Մշն...*, p. 23–26; S. Der Nersessian reads the right-hand side inscription as “Theodore” – S. DER NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Art...*, p. 205.

⁴⁴ St. George and St. Theodore slaying dragons. Relief from the Church in Martvili, 7th–8th c. (Georgia). – Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Св. Георги Победоносец. Култ и образ в Православния Изток през средновековието*, Варна 2001, pic. 244. For more information about representations of Saint George in Medieval art, see C. WALTER, *The Origins of the Cult of Saint George*, REB 53, 1995, p. 295–326; IDEM, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, Aldershot 2003, p. 109–144; Г. АТАНАСОВ, *Войнските иконографии, въоръжението и снаряжението на свети Георги през ранното средновековие (V–X в.)*, [in:] *Acta Musei Varnensis*, I, *Оръжие и снаряжение през късната античност и средновековието IV–XV в.*, ed. В. ЙОТОВ, Варна 2002, p. 35–55. Information courtesy of Yanko Hristov.

⁴⁵ *Gospel*, Mekhitarian Library, Ms. 697, f. 4 v.

⁴⁶ Ա. ՊԱՏՐԻԿ, *Մշն...*, p. 207–208.

⁴⁷ Ա. ՊԱՏՐԻԿ, *Մշն...*, p. 23, 25–26.

⁴⁸ S. Der Nersessian thought that this is spear but it is not true – S. DER NERSESSIAN, *Armenian Art...*, p. 205. However, at that time, cavalymen preferred a cut attack rather than a thrust, as it is presented on the relief, because of the difficulty of dealing a thrusting punch while on horseback. Perhaps this is why S. Der Nersessian suggested that the relief depicts a spear.

⁴⁹ V. YOTOV, *A New Byzantine...*, p. 115.

⁵⁰ I have this information courtesy of Dr D'Amato, who, having obtained the authorization from the Turkish government, will soon publish the results of this discovery.

The swords with the sleeve cross-guards are one of the “Byzantine”⁵¹ types of swords which were identified and researched by G. Baranov⁵² and V. Yotov⁵³. These types of cross-guards were popular in the 9th–11th c. in Eastern Europe, Balkan Peninsula and the Middle East⁵⁴.

Sleeve cross-guards were created in order to protect the joint between the edge and the hilt from breaking⁵⁵. According to another theory, the appearance of the sleeve cross-guards was connected with the way of gripping (the so-called “Italian grip”), whereby the index finger was placed on a cross-guard⁵⁶, which allowed more efficient fencing⁵⁷.

Sleeve cross-guards are divided into several types, two of which are relevant for this study, being the most similar to the one presented on the relief of the door of the Msho Arakelots monastery: they are “Galovo” and “Pliska-48”⁵⁸.

Specimens of “Galovo” and “Pliska-48” cross-guards were found in Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine, Syria, Arabian Peninsula, Egypt etc.⁵⁹ (pic. 8–10)⁶⁰. Moreover,

⁵¹ The Romans in the Middle Age, now conventionally referred to as the “Byzantines”, borrowed many types of weapons from neighbouring states, and consequently it is not possible to determine beyond all doubt which types of swords were created by the Byzantines. The term “Byzantine swords” can be used conventionally to indicate a type of sword produced inside the Eastern Roman Empire. The origin of swords with sleeve cross-guards is unknown. – С. КАМБУРОВ, “Арабски” ранносредновековни мечове в днешните български земи”, Ист 25, 3, 2017, p. 271; R. D’AMATO, *Byzantine Imperial...*, p. 5, 43–44.

⁵² Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 248–283, etc.

⁵³ V. YOTOV, *A New Byzantine...*, p. 113–124; IDEM, *Byzantine Time...*, p. 35–46; IDEM, *Въоръжението...*, p. 39–41, etc.

⁵⁴ It needs to be noted that two cross-guards from Syria were displayed in public only once, at an auction, where for some reason they were dated to the 12th–13th c. Their subsequent fortunes are unknown. – Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 255–256.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 251, 265.

⁵⁶ D. NICOLLE, *Byzantine and Islamic...*, p. 305.

⁵⁷ Note that the “Italian grip” existed already in the times of the Sasanid Iran. – K. FARROKH, G. KARAMIAN, K. MAKSYMUK, *A Synopsis of Sasanian Military Organization and Combat Units*, Siedlce–Tehran 2018, p. 35–36, fig. 32–34.

⁵⁸ Unfortunately, it is unclear which of these two types best match the sword depicted on the relief, because they are both similar and the sword on the relief is presented too schematically. I would like to express my gratitude to V. Yotov for useful advice.

⁵⁹ S. AL-SARRAF, *Close Combat...*, pic. XII–40; M. ALEKSIĆ, *Some Typological Features of Byzantine Spatha*, ЗРВИ 47, 2010, p. 121–138; D. RABOVYANOV, *Early Medieval Sword Guards from Bulgaria*, ABu 2, 2011, p. 82; В. ЙОТОВ, *Въоръжението...*, p. 39–41; Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 255–256, 274–280; С. КАМБУРОВ, “Арабски”..., p. 269–270, 276, 285, 289; I. NORMAN, *A Likely Byzantine or Fatimid Sword of the Xth–XIth Centuries*, 2019, <http://iainnorman.com/essays/2019/01/a-likely-byzantine-or-fatimid-sword-of-the-xth-xith-centuries/> [30 IV 2019] (pic. 9–10); Sleeve cross-guard. Unpublished archaeological find from Chernihiv, Ukraine (2018). Finding of grave robbers, https://vk.com/vtoroi_rim?w=wall-71532966_3071%2Fall [30 IV 2019] (pic. 8).

⁶⁰ Most of these sleeve cross-guards were described by the aforementioned historians. Therefore, only the photos of two most recent archaeological finds, which at the moment are little-known in historiography, will be presented here.

they are visible on Eastern Roman miniatures such as the one from the Theodore Gospel (1066) (pic. 11)⁶¹ and the Menologion of Basil II (end of the 10th c.) (pic. 12, 31)⁶².

It is interesting to note that the physical characteristics of the sword with a sleeve cross-guard are known thanks to archaeological discoveries. As regards the swords on pic. 9–10, the overall length of the sword is 83.4 cm (71.2 cm being the size of the blade only). The blade is 6.4 cm wide and 0.51–0.57 cm thick. The hilt is 12.3 cm long, and the cross-guard is 12.9 cm wide and 1.59 cm thick. The sleeve is 3.76 cm wide. The pommel is 3.99 cm wide, 6.06 cm long and 1.39 cm thick. The weight of the sword is approx. 1 kg⁶³.

Thanks to this depiction of a sleeve cross-guard in the Armenian art, it can be assumed that such types of cross-guards existed in Armenia even before (in 10th–11th c., based on the dating of the abovementioned archaeological finds from Eastern Europe and on the Aghtamar Church images). Furthermore, such sleeve cross-guards were likely employed in the subsequent periods (in the 12th c.) and at other locations, including the territory of the South Caucasus region.

Mace with spherical head

The first warrior, who is trying to escape, is holding in his right hand a mace with a spherical head (pic. 2:2)⁶⁴. Maces were used as a heavy weapon by cavalrymen and infantrymen in order to break helmets or heavy armour⁶⁵. The mace consisted of two parts: the mace head (weighing approx. 200–300 g), and a wooden or iron stick (50–60 cm long)⁶⁶.

R. D'Amato believes that these maces were originally imported from India or Persia or had Eastern origins⁶⁷, but soon became popular in Byzantium. Arkadiusz Michalak also wrote that spherical maces (type V according to his typologization) were popular in Eastern Europe as well (Kievan Rus' and the Baltic region)⁶⁸.

⁶¹ *Theodore Gospel*, British Library, Ms. 19352, f. 191.

⁶² *Menologion of Basil II*, Vatican Library, Ms. Vat. gr. 1613, f. 135. Note that under the typology of Byzantine swords suggested by T. Dawson (which was based on the miniatures of Basil's Menologion), the sleeve cross-guard was presented under number 2. – T. DAWSON, *Byzantine Cavalryman...*, p. 5.

⁶³ I. NORMAN, *A Likely...* Other uncovered swords and sleeve cross-guards have similar characteristics. The only difference is that some sleeve cross-guards were broader (13–15 cm). – Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 255–256, 274–280.

⁶⁴ The round head maces could be plain, toothed, spiked or flanged. Presented on the relief is the plain (spherical) type of round head maces. Also, polygonal head maces existed in Armenia.

⁶⁵ D. NICOLLE, *The Military...*, p. 68.

⁶⁶ А. КИРПИЧНИКОВ, *Древнерусское оружие*, vol. II, Москва–Ленинград 1966, p. 53.

⁶⁷ R. D'AMATO, *Σιδηροράβδιον...*, p. 32–33.

⁶⁸ A. MICHALAK, *Wpływy wschodnie czy południowe? Z badań nad pochodzeniem buław średniowiecznych na ziemiach polskich*, БНУЛІІ 571, 2006, p. 57–59, 64. Note that in the most famous

The same types of maces were found in Bulgaria and dated to 10th–11th c. (pic. 13, 14a, 14b)⁶⁹; on miniatures in the Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (879–883) (pic. 15)⁷⁰, Oppianus Cynegetica (11th c.) (pic. 16)⁷¹ and even on Armenian miniatures (10th–11th c.) (pic. 17.1)⁷². Moreover, many depictions of round headed maces dated to 7th–11th c. were found in the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, Iran and Syria)⁷³.

As can be seen, the plain (spherical) type of round head maces was simple in production and popular over a large area in different times⁷⁴, so nothing particular can be said about the origin of spherical maces and no connections established between specimens from Eastern Europe and Byzantium-Armenia, although the decoration of the Bulgarian maces is clearly of Eastern Roman origins⁷⁵. A relatively simple shape of spherical maces can suggest that they were produced in local workshops (by casting or forging)⁷⁶, in different cultural regions, independently of each other⁷⁷. For example, there are similar maces among archaeological finds from the times of Ancient Armenia (pic. 18)⁷⁸.

Armour

Both warriors in the left corner are armoured (pic. 2). Visible on the bodies of the warriors is what seems to be a chain mail, which looks like a sweater with long sleeves. Also, on the chest and lower torso, small iron or bronze rectangular plates

typology of maces from Kyivan Rus and Eastern Europe, suggested by A. Kirpichnikov, there are no maces with spherical heads. – А. КИРПИЧНИКОВ, *Древнерусское оружие...*, pic. 10.

⁶⁹ S. РОРОВ, *The Maces from the Present Bulgarian Lands* (10th–17th c.), Sofia 2015, p. 130–131; В. ЙОТОВ, *Въоръжението...*, cat. 644. Idea courtesy of V. Yotov.

⁷⁰ *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National Library of France, gr. 510, f. 143.

⁷¹ *Oppianus Cynegetica*, Marciana Library, Ms. Gr. Z 479, f. 33 r. – R. D'АМАТО, *Σιδηροράβδιον...*, fig. 17.

⁷² *Melitene Gospel*, Matenadaran, Ms. 3784, f. 9; *Jerusalem Gospel*, Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 3624, f. 9; *Areg Gospel*, Areg village (*in situ*) – D. ΚΟΥΥΜΓΙΑΝ, *The Melitene...*, fig. 20. I am currently working on a separate article about arms and armours on the Armenian miniatures from the 10th–11th c., where this topic will be researched in greater detail. Therefore, in this article, I only present one miniature which features the best example of a spherical mace.

⁷³ S. AL-SARRAF, *Close Combat...*, XII – 48, 49, 50, 54, 57b.

⁷⁴ В. БЕРЕЖИНСЬКИЙ, *Зброя Київської Русі. Булава*, Київ 1998, p. 7.

⁷⁵ M. Tsurtsunia wrote that according to written sources two types of mace were used in Georgia (and in Armenia too): the “lakhti” [ლახტი] (flanged mace) and the “gurz” [გურჯ] (a mace with a rounded head), which had their own types (spiked, knobbed etc.). Both these terms come from the Persian names of this weapon – “lakht” and “gorz”. For more information on the topic, see M. TSURTSUNIA, *The Mace...*, p. 88–91; S. AL-SARRAF, *Close Combat...*, p. 152–160.

⁷⁶ For more information on the production of iron and bronze maces, see A. КИРПИЧНИКОВ, *Древнерусское оружие...*, p. 52.

⁷⁷ М. КОЗАК, *Булава як елемент озброєння Галицького та Волинського князівств у XI–XIV століттях*, [in:] *Проблеми історії війн і військового мистецтва*, ed. Л.В. ВОЙТОВИЧА, Львів 2018, p. 58–59. I would like to express my gratitude to Mykola Kozak for useful advice.

⁷⁸ С. ЕСАЯН, *Оружие и военное дело древней Армении (III–I тыс. до н. э.)*, Ереван 1966, p. 51–56.

laced into horizontal rows are presented. This may be a lamellar armour, which only covered the torso and was worn on the chain mail. It was one of the best types of armour in Byzantium and Arab Caliphate at that time.

In a number of cases, it is rather difficult to tell the difference between lamellar and scale armour, especially when analysing graphic sources⁷⁹. Lamellar armour consists of rectangular plates, linked with one another first in horizontal rows, then vertically by means of thongs passed through holes. No less popular was the scale armour, which was different in that its plates had mainly an oval form and were attached to each other and to the backing of the cloth or leather, in overlapping rows (like fish scale) (pic. 20–21)⁸⁰. The weight of the scale and lamellar armour was almost the same. A complete set of armour 1–1.5 mm thick weighs 14–16 kg. It is 1.5–2 times as heavy as mail⁸¹. Of course, the above-mentioned types of armours were very expensive, so only honoured warriors (called *azats*) could afford them⁸². The disadvantage of the scale armour was that the plates were raised while the rider was on a horse, which made him vulnerable to spear attacks, especially from below.

From the end of the 10th c., craftsmen started using rivets (instead of laces) for fastening plates, which greatly simplified their production and improved the impact resistance of the lamellae⁸³. This fact was mentioned by Armenian historian Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (10th c.)⁸⁴: ...*Subsequently, in 921, king of Egrisi [Abkhazia] gave [king of Armenia] Ashot II [914–928/929] much assistance, and gathered numerous forces with winged steeds, iron-studded armour [in Russian translation: в скрепленных железными гвоздями нагрудниках⁸⁵], and fearful helmets, iron-studded breastplates and strong shields...*⁸⁶ Most often, lamellar plates on the sleeves were much larger than in the region of the torso, because the warrior had to bend and move constantly, and the small size of the plates would not hinder

⁷⁹ M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution...*, p. 65; J. HALDON, *Warfare, State...*, p. 131–134, 220, 223.

⁸⁰ *Gospel № 141/102*, Mekhitarists Library (Venice), fol. 77 r; *Theodore Gospel*, Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 1796, fol. 88.

⁸¹ M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution...*, p. 67, 69–71.

⁸² Some military units were dressed in the clothes of the same colour (e.g. in 988, a unit of Kars king Abas was dressed in “red uniforms”). – *Всеобщая история Асохика*, trans. Н. ЭМИНА, Москва 2011, p. 182.

⁸³ M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution...*, p. 69–71.

⁸⁴ Եւ ասիս զմեծն տուեալ նմաօգնականութիւն եւ զօր քաղով գումարեալ՝ գրեթէ իբրոջապարիկ իւն երիվարօք եւ երկաթակոշ զրահիւք եւ զարիւրեցուցիչ սաղաւարտիւք եւ լանջապանակերկաթազամ տախտակօք կրծից եւ վահանօք ամբօք եւ իղէնս եւ ի զարդս եւ ի տէգս նիզակաց փառեցելովք՝ տայ զայն ամենայն ի ձեռս նորս, զի նորօք հանդերձվիլէժս ի թշնամեացն անցէ – Յովհաննէս Կաթողիկոս Դրասխանակերտցի, *Պատմութիւն Հայցոյ*, № 63, <http://www.digilib.am/am/ՅՈՎՀԱՆՆԷՍԻՄ%20ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ%20ԴՐԱՍԽԱՆԱԿԵՐՏՑԻ/library/178> [15 III 2019].

⁸⁵ ОВАНЕС ДРАСХАНАКЕРТЦИ, *История Армении*, trans. М. ДАРБИНЯН-МЕЛИКЯН, Ереван 1986, p. 217.

⁸⁶ YOVHANNĒS DRASXANAKERTC’I’S, *History of Armenia*, K. MAKSOUDIAN, Atlanta 1987.

his movement (e.g. the *Hovhannis Protospatharius presents the Gospel to the Virgin* miniature in the Adrianople Gospel (1007) (pic. 19)⁸⁷.

Additionally, visible on the riders' arms are some rings, possibly a mail armour, which consisted of small metal rings, linked together in a pattern, to form a mesh. In my opinion, the warriors wore a mail armour under the lamellar armour. A combination of the mail and lamellar armour can be found on Goliath's relief from Aghtamar Island (pic. 5)⁸⁸.

As can be seen, the infantryman and the two horsemen on the right side of the relief are represented without any armour, only in tunics/garments. I believe that the majority of warriors (ordinary soldiers) and militia used popular and cheap leather armour which had less protective properties than metal.

Obviously, only noblemen (*azats*) had good armours (lamellar, scale or mail), but even these were not an ideal protection against arrows, because the latter could hit the little junctions between the plates. For example, when the Seljuk Turks first came to Armenia in 1016, they fought a battle against Vaspurakan king Senekerim Artsruni (1003–1021). Matthew of Edessa (12th c.) described this battle in the following way⁸⁹: *the foreigners [Seljuks] struck and wounded with their arrows many Armenian troops. Now when Shapuh [Armenian commander] saw this, he said to David [son of Senekerim]: "King, turn back from the enemy, because most of our troops have been wounded by arrows. Let us go and prepare [armoured] garments to resist the arrows which we see them fighting with"*⁹⁰.

⁸⁷ *Gospel of Adrianopolis*, Mekhitarists Library, Ms. 887, fol. 8.

⁸⁸ It needs to be noticed that Goliath's lamellar is presented schematically, because the row of lamellar plates and strips of leather (with holes) are presented separately while they should be overlapping. Probably the master would have liked to depict a banded lamellar but did it schematically. In a banded lamellar, the band is clearly visible because the edge of the leather covering the front of the upper plate forms the upper line of the band, and the piece of leather lining in the lower plate creates the lower line of the band. This leather band was placed between the rows, separating the plates and neutralizing the scissors effect caused by their movement, which may cut the thongs – M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution...*, p. 71–74; T. DAWSON, *Banded...*, p. 16. However, R. D'Amato believes that the lamellae in this armour do not overlap but are fixed to the leather side by side. He thinks that the colour is now missing and it cannot be determined if the laces were represented on the surface. The lines are those of the leather band placed between the rows, separating the plates and neutralizing the scissors effect caused by their movement, which may cut the thongs. Goliath's lamellar armour does not have a narrow band of leather placed between the plates but a wide leather band fully lining the plates. Such armour is more flexible horizontally and is easy to make, and it is simplified further by riveting the plates on to the leather (instead of fixing them by means of thongs only). In fact, the four holes in each petal correspond to riveting holes. Idea courtesy of R. D'Amato.

⁸⁹ *Իսկ այլազգիքն ննտաձգութեամբ զբազումս ի զօրացն Հայոց վիրաւորէին խոցելով: Եւ տեսնալ զայն ամենայն Շապուհ՝ ասէր ԳԴԱԿԻՔ. "Դարձիր, թագաւոր, յերեսաց թշնամեացս, վասն զի ի նետիցս վիրաւորեալ եղեն մեծ մասն զօրացս, զնսացուք եւ ընդդէմ պաճ զինուցս, զոր տեսանէմք առ այլազգիսդ, ա՛յլ զգեստ պատրաստեացուք ընդդէմ նետիցդ. – ՄԱՏԹԷՈՍ ՈՒՆԱՅԵՏԻ, Ժամանակագրութիւն, Վաղարշապատ 1898, Մասն առաջին, <http://www.digilib.am/am/ՄԱՏԹԷՈՍ%20ՈՒՆԱՅԵՏԻ/library/684> [30 IV 2019].*

⁹⁰ *Armenia and the Crusades, Ten to Twelfth Centuries. The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, 1.1, № 44–45, trans. A. DOSTOURIAN, Lanham 1993. For more information about Matthew of Edessa's

Stirrups

Each equestrian is represented with stirrups (pic. 2:3), which significantly enhance the rider's stability, facilitating a more effective delivery of missiles (arrows or javelins) from the horseback, lance charges and close-quarter combat with swords, maces, axes, etc.⁹¹ Stirrups were known in the Eastern Roman Empire⁹² and Sassanid Iran⁹³ from 6th–7th c., and in Armenia as well⁹⁴.

The stirrups visible on the relief have a triangular form with oval bows. Similar stirrups are presented in the Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (pic. 22, 33–34)⁹⁵, in Georgian art⁹⁶ and on St. Sargis's relief from The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Aghtamar Island (pic. 23), which, however, are more rounded and more similar to the actual archaeological specimens of the 10th–11th century from Hungary (see below).

V. Yotov created a typology of Hungarian stirrups (10th–11th c.), which were also popular in the Roman Empire and, probably, in Armenia too⁹⁷. Some of them look similar to the stirrups presented on the door of the Msho Arakelots church but, unfortunately, no definitive statements can be made because of the schematic representation of the stirrups on the relief and lack of photographic publications of stirrups found in the territory of Armenia.

Middle part of the relief

Trumpet

In the middle of the relief, there is an infantryman without any weapons and armours but with a military trumpet (pic. 3). It is the first depiction of the trumpet in Armenian art, representing an Eastern Roman *tuba*, which can be compared with the pictures from Madrid Skylitzes (12th c.) (pic. 24)⁹⁸ and the Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (879–883) (pic. 25)⁹⁹.

Moreover, the trumpet was often mentioned in Armenian written sources. For example, Tovma Artsruni (10th c.), describing the battle between Abbasid army

chronicle, see T. ANDREWS, *Matt'eos Urhayec'i and His Chronicle. History as Apocalypse in a Cross-roads of Cultures*, Leiden 2017. Similar information was also found in Sempad the Constable's Chronicle (13th c.) – СМБАТ СПАРАПЕТ, *Летопись*, trans. А. ГАЛСТЯНА, Ереван 1974, p. 15.

⁹¹ K. FARROKH, G. KARAMIAN, K. MAKSYMUK, *A Synopsis...*, p. 56.

⁹² V. YOTOV, *Byzantine Weaponry...*, p. 157–160.

⁹³ K. FARROKH, G. KARAMIAN, K. MAKSYMUK, *A Synopsis...*, p. 57.

⁹⁴ D. NICOLLE, *Sassanian Armies...*, p. 56–57, lett. G.

⁹⁵ *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, f. 409 v, 440 r.

⁹⁶ M. TSURTSUMIA, *The Evolution...*, pic. 7, 11, 14.

⁹⁷ V. YOTOV, *Byzantine Weaponry...*, p. 157–160, fig. 14.

⁹⁸ *Madrid Skylitzes*, National Library of Spain, Ms. Graecus Vit. 26–2, fol. 108 v.

⁹⁹ *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, f. 424 v.

under the command of general Bugha¹⁰⁰ against Vaspurakan's troops ruled by *ishkhan* (king) Ashot Artsruni (approx. 852)¹⁰¹, wrote: *Banners and pennants fluttered, trumpets sounded, lyrs rang, drums buzzed... Everybody shouted, preparing themselves for battle*¹⁰². Just like flags or banners, it was one of the most necessary items in any contemporary army, which helped a general organize the troops and give different orders during the battle¹⁰³.

Right side of the relief

Round shield

In the right corner of the relief, two cavalymen without any armour, instead only dressed in (padded?) tunics (having the shape of a cavalry Iranian coat), are represented. The only defensive weapon which can be seen on this relief is a round shield with a floral ornament (pic. 4).

There are many depictions of round shields with different ornaments in Armenian art. Some of them symbolized the warrior's affiliation to some regiment or clan, or were just an ornament, as in the case of the miniatures from the Taron Gospel (11th c.) (pic. 26)¹⁰⁴, the Vehapar Gospel (10th–11th c.) (pic. 27)¹⁰⁵, the Kars Gospel (1029–1064) (pic. 28)¹⁰⁶ or Goliath's relief from Aghtamar Island¹⁰⁷ (pic. 5). Also, on the miniature from the Tsgrut Gospel (974) (pic. 29)¹⁰⁸, some rings are visible on one of the shields, which could mean that the shield was metal-coated.

On the basis of the depictions in figurative sources, it can be assumed that simple (plain) round shields were the most popular in Armenia. However, convex round shields were also widespread, but they were rarely represented on figurative sources because of the complex nature of painting volumetric figures. For

¹⁰⁰ Despite the fact that it is a description of the Abbasid army, the same armament could have existed in Armenia (also because the Armenian chronicler knows these armaments and armour).

¹⁰¹ *Եւ կամարս ընդ մէջ ածեալ, որօշ եւ վերջաւորս փողփողեալս՝ տաւառնաձայն հնչմամբ զեառնն ղնդեցուցանէին, նշանս կանգնեալ եւ փողը եւ քնարը հնչէին եւ թմբուլքն դափէին* – ԹՈՎԱԴԱՄ ԱՐՇԵՐՈՒՄԵՆ, *Պատմութիւն տանն Արծրունեաց*, ed. Մ. ԴԱՐԲԻՆԻԱՆ-ՄԵԼԻԿՅԱՆ, Երևան 2006, p. 148–149.

¹⁰² ТОВМА АРЦРУНИ И АНОНИМ, *История дома Арцруни*, ed. М. ДАРБИНЯН-МЕЛИКЯН, Ереван 2001, p. 175–176. Similar description is presented on p. 298–299.

¹⁰³ For more information on the subject, see A. BÜCHLER, *Horns and Trumpets in Byzantium: Images and Texts*, HBSJ 12, 1, 2002, p. 23–59.

¹⁰⁴ *Taron Gospel*, Matenadaran Library, Ms. 6201, f. 8.

¹⁰⁵ *Vehapar Gospel*, Matenadaran Library, Ms. 10780, f. 71.

¹⁰⁶ *Kars Gospel*, Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 2556, fol. 127. – S. DER NERSESSIAN, *L'Évangile...*, p. 92–93, fig. 10.

¹⁰⁷ И. ОРБЕЛИ, *Избранные...*, p. 96.

¹⁰⁸ *Tsgrut Gospel* (Tsgrut village, Armenia) (*in situ*), f. 9. – Н. КОТАНДЖЯН, *Цгрутское Евангелие*, Ереван 2006, p. 81.

instance, a miniature called *The resurrection of Christ* (12th c.) (pic. 20)¹⁰⁹ from the Mekhitarists Library (Venice) features convex shields which are represented beside plain round shields. Moreover, on this miniature, a long kite-shaped shield is also depicted, which was generally regarded as a European development for cavalry. However, D. Nicolle thinks that kite-shaped shield may have appeared in the Middle East as an infantry shield even before it was adopted by equestrians in Western Europe and Kievan Rus'¹¹⁰.

Shields could be hanged by long or short leather straps attached to the back. The short strap was used to hold the shield, and the long one to hang it over the shoulder or neck when it was not in use. Perhaps the shield depicted on the relief did not have a handle, usually attached to the forearm, which allowed the rider to use both hands at the same time, providing sufficient protection to the left side of the torso, the region most exposed during melee combat¹¹¹.

Shields were made from wood and sometimes covered with metal plates¹¹² and could have an umbo (a metal boss nailed at the centre of the shield designed to deflect blows and as reinforcement of the shield). According to J. Haldon, in the 9th–10th c., the average diameter of the Byzantine large round shield for infantryman was 75 cm, and for the horseman – 65 cm, together with the umbo¹¹³.

One known mention of the umbo is made in the chronicle of Movses Kaghankatvatsi (7th/10th c.). Describing the battle between Armenian lord Djuansher and his murderer called Varazo in 681 AD, the chronicler wrote: *...Djuansher took out his sword [սուրբ] and attacked Varazo, but the weapon stuck in the golden umbo of the opponent's shield [ել զվահանն վոսկեխնձոր] and the lord could not pull out his sword [զուրբն]...*¹¹⁴

The remains of a wooden shield with an iron umbo and metal framework were found at the site of the Amberd castle (pic. 30)¹¹⁵. Unfortunately, the exact dating of these archaeological features cannot be determined (9th–13th c. (?)), and due to a bad state of preservation, it is difficult to make any informed assumptions about them.

¹⁰⁹ Gospel № 141/102, fol. 77 r.

¹¹⁰ A kite-shaped shield is also depicted on a Fatimid plate (10–11 c.), which was found in Armenia. – D. NICOLLE, *The Armies...*, p. 19, 30.

¹¹¹ M. WOJNOWSKI, *Κατάφρακτοι – ciężkozbrojna jazda Cesarstwa Bizantyjskiego jako kontynuacja antycznych cataphracti i clibanarii*, ZNUJ 132, 2005, p. 10, 19.

¹¹² К. СОРОЧАН, *Продовольство, сировина і реміснична продукція у Візантії IV–IX ст. професійна спеціалізація у виробництві та торгівлі*. дис. на здобуття наук. ступеня канд. іст. наук, Харків 2015, p. 144.

¹¹³ J. HALDON, *Some Aspects...*, p. 19, 33–34.

¹¹⁴ ՄԱՐԿՍԵ ՄԱՐԿԱՆԿԱՏՎԱՏԻ, *Պատմություն Աղտանից աշխարհի*, ed. Բ. ԱՌԱՔԵԼՅԱՆ, Երևան 1983, p. 222–223; МОВСЕС КАЛАНКАТУАЦИ, *История страны Алуанк*, trans. Ш. СМБЯТЯНА, Ереван 1984, p. 117.

¹¹⁵ Ս. ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ, *Ամբերդ...*, pic. 54.

Scabbard with chape

Visible behind the shield is a part of a straight scabbard, which (pic. 4:4) was worn suspended from a sword belt or from the shoulder belt called baldric¹¹⁶. Most commonly, scabbards were made from metal, leather or wood covered with fabric¹¹⁷. At the end of this scabbard, there is a chape in the form of the letter U (pic. 4:5), which was popular in Byzantium¹¹⁸. V. Yotov thinks that this chape looks similar to the metal chapes (10.5 cm long, 5.5 cm wide) unearthed in Bulgaria and dated to the second half of the 11th c.¹¹⁹

Moreover, this form is also depicted on miniatures from the Taron Gospel (pic. 26)¹²⁰, the Tsgrut Gospel (pic. 29)¹²¹ and the Menologion of Basil II (pic. 31)¹²². Thanks to this comparison, it can be theoretically assumed that such metal chapes were in use in the 11th–12th c. in Byzantium and Armenia (and perhaps across a larger area).

Spear or sceptre

The rightmost equestrian is holding a schematically represented stick with a sort of a head, which looks like a spear (pic. 4:6). However, Armenian historian Avetisian Kamsar thought that this horseman is an Armenian lord, an *ishkhan* (իշխան), who is holding a sceptre (իշխանական գավազան – *ishkhan's* sceptre), which was a symbol of power¹²³. The other cavalryman on the left side (St. George) holds only a long spear, with which he attacks the dragon. Although these weapons are presented too schematically, it is clear that the spear of the horseman is a long cavalry spear or a *kontos* (*kontarion*, pic. 6–7, 22–24, 33–34), popular in Armenia and Byzantium between the 7th and the 12th centuries AD¹²⁴, which was about 2.7 m long for cavalrymen¹²⁵ and 4.5 m for infantrymen¹²⁶.

¹¹⁶ S. AL-SARRAF, *Close Combat...*, p. 174; A. HOFFMEYER, *Military...*, p. 92.

¹¹⁷ P. GROTHOWSKI, *Arms...*, p. 345; T. KOLIAS, *Byzantinische...*, p. 148; I. STEPHENSON, *Romano-Byzantine Infantry Equipment*, London 2011, p. 96.

¹¹⁸ Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 258.

¹¹⁹ V. Yotov is preparing an article about these chapes.

¹²⁰ *Taron Gospel*, Matenadaran Library, Ms. 6201, f. 7 v.

¹²¹ *Tsgrut Gospel* (Tsgrut village, Armenia), f. 9. – Н. КОТАНДЖЯН, *Цзгрукское...*, p. 81.

¹²² This type of chape was presented on different miniatures in the *Menologion of Basil II* – 0070, 0094, 0097, 0104, 0121, 0131, 0136, 0139, 0144, 0172, 0181, 0187, 0188, 0195, 0206, 0211, 0216 etc. For more information, see Г. БАРАНОВ, *Византийские...*, p. 258.

¹²³ Շ. ՇԱԽԻՍԵԱՆ, *Հայրենագիտական...*, p. 207.

¹²⁴ Bibliography on the topic: T. KOLIAS, *Byzantinische...*, p. 185–213; P. GROTHOWSKI, *Arms...*, p. 323–327; J. HALDON, *A Critical Commentary...*, p. 172, 186; T. DAWSON, *Fit for the Task...*, p. 7–12; R. D'AMATO, *The Varangian...*, p. 39, etc.

¹²⁵ T. DAWSON, *Byzantine Cavalryman...*, p. 61.

¹²⁶ IDEM, *Byzantine Infantryman...*, p. 27.

The *kontarion* was kept with one hand under an armpit, similarly to the knightly lance in Western Europe. This way of holding the lance was known in Byzantium from the 11th–12th c. It was one of the most effective methods because only one hand was used to hold a heavy *kontarion* and to perform a powerful lance charge while the other hand was used for manoeuvring the horse. Such an attack could only be carried out by keeping the cavalryman steady on his horse by means of stirrups and a raised saddlebow¹²⁷.

Helmet

All the horsemen are represented in helmets or headgears. V. Abramian thinks that these helmets have a conical-hemispherical shape¹²⁸ and, as can be seen, a mail, leather or scale aventail or coif was attached to them in order to protect the neck¹²⁹. R. D'Amato wrote an excellent work on Byzantine helmets in the 9th–12th c., trying to create a detailed typology based on the technology of manufacturing, materials used and forms of helmets: conical, hemispherical, ridge, Phrygian-shaped, pointed, round off piece of banded construction, brimmed, mask-visor, and related headgears like the “skaplion” etc.¹³⁰

Unfortunately, this typology cannot be used effectively in the present study because the helmets depicted on the reliefs are presented too schematically to allow reaching any substantial conclusions. However, based on Armenian figurative sources (10th–12th c.), it can be assumed that in Armenia there existed conical-hemispherical helmets (e.g. Goliath's relief from Aghtamar Island¹³¹, pic. 5) and conical-pointed helmets (Miniature from the Kars Gospel, pic. 28¹³²; Gospel 141 from Mekhitarists Library, pic. 20¹³³; the Theodore Gospel, 12th c., pic. 21)¹³⁴. Also, the chronicle of Matthew of Edessa (13th c.) offers a description of the battle between Armenian lord Vasak and an Ethiop from Daylamites, where the author

¹²⁷ L. PETERSON, *The World of the Troubadours. Medieval Occitan Society, c. 1100–1300*, Cambridge 1998, p. 39; В. Гуцул, *Рицарська мілітарна технологія в Києво-Руській та Польсько-Литовській державах у XIII–XVI ст. інструменти, концепції та практики збройної боротьби. Автореферат дисертації на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата історичних наук*, Київ 2011, p. 13.

¹²⁸ Վ. Աբրահամյան, *Միջինադարյան...*, p. 72, 96.

¹²⁹ Բ. Առաքելյան, *Քաղաքակրթություն...*, p. 143–145.

¹³⁰ R. D'AMATO, *Old...*, p. 27–157.

¹³¹ British historian D. Nicolle thought that Goliath was wearing a metal coif. – D. NICOLLE, *The Military...*, p. 218–220. On the other hand, J. Davies believed that it is a pointed helmet. – J. DAVIES, *Medieval...*, p. 55.

¹³² S. DER NERSESSIAN, *L'Evangile...*, p. 92–93, fig. 10.

¹³³ *Gospel № 141/102*, fol. 77 r; S. DER NERSESSIAN, *Miniature...*, p. 22–23, 26.

¹³⁴ *Theodore Gospel*, Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 1796, fol. 88.

mentioned a ridge helmet¹³⁵: *Vasak with a steel sword struck the crest of his [opponent's] helmet and sliced that brave Qipchak [Ethiop] into two parts*¹³⁶. Theoretically, the helmet presented on the miniature from the Lviv Gospel (1198–1199) (pic. 32)¹³⁷ looks like a ridge (consisting of two parts), derived from the late Roman typology¹³⁸. It is difficult to say anything more about the methods of producing helmets (i.e. whether one, two or more metal pieces were used) because no Armenian helmets from that time have been recovered.

Conclusions

Thanks to a comparative analysis, we proved that medieval figurative sources can be considered an accurate source for studying the medieval military history. Strong evidence for this is the presence of numerous specific military details on the relief studied. Also, this idea can be supported by referring to Armenian written sources (e.g. Stepanos Orbelian, 13th c.). Describing Liparit Orbelian's armour from the battle against Seljuk Turks in 1049, the chronicler mentions almost all types of arms and armours which are presented on relief¹³⁹: *Thus armed, he [Liparit] mounted his Arabian steed. He threw aside his shield with its gold designs and, taking a flexible javelin in his powerful left hand and a broad two-edged steel sword in his right hand, with his formidable axe/mace(?) like a blacksmith's mallet or a rock cutter's sledgehammer hanging at his side. [Liparit] bravely crossed the line of fighters, from one side to the other. His golden breastplate and helmet glittered like the sun*¹⁴⁰.

Thanks to military history, we can learn more about the scenes and motifs presented on miniatures, reliefs etc. and *vice versa* – figurative sources could show us different types of weapons, which can be compared with the ones mentioned or represented in the well-known Byzantine or Muslim sources. This is possible because, located between two civilizations (Byzantium and Muslim), Armenians adopted the best military solutions from both sides, creating their own culture.

¹³⁵ Եւ ի շտապս յնայ Վասակ ի ներքս դիմեաց եւ պողովատ թրովն ի վերայ սաղաւարտին քսեաց եւ յերկուս հերձեաց զխաւիչիկ քաջն, որ եւ մասունք մարմնոյն յերկիր անկանէին. – ՄԱՏԹԵՈՍ ՈՒՌԱՅԵՅԻ, *Ժամանակագրություն...*, p. 4.

¹³⁶ *Armenia and the Crusades...*, 1.1, № 13–14.

¹³⁷ *Lviv Gospel*, National Library of Poland, Rps 8101 IIIS, 63 v.

¹³⁸ R. D'AMATO, *Old...*, p. 86sqq.

¹³⁹ Եւ այնպէս զինեալ զինքրն հեծեալ ի տանիկ երիւխարն, և ընկենոյր զսկենկար վահանն ի թիկունսն, և զնաւն նիզակիկն յահեակ քազունն, և զրայն պողովտիկ շնչիրն երկբերանի ի յաջ ձեռինն և զվաղրն սահգին ի ներքոյ բարձիցն իբր զուռն դարբնաց և կամ զսակր կոցաւոր քարահատաց: Անցեալ ի մէջ ռազմաւոր հանդիսին արշաւէր սիգարով յայսկոյս և յանկոյս. – ՄՏԵՓԱՆՈՍ ՕՐԲԵԼԻԱՆ, *Պատմություն նահանգին Սիսական*, Թիֆլիս 1910, p. 375.

¹⁴⁰ STEP'ANNOS ORBELEAN, *History of the State of Sisakan*, trans. R. BEDROSIAN, Long Branch 2012, p. 195.

I believe that this study offers further research perspectives in terms of a deeper archaeological and graphic analysis of the sources, which will allow a comprehensive reconstruction of the equipment of the Medieval Armenian soldier.

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Abstract. Byzantium's arms and armours were researched by many historians. For that reason, the military history of the medieval Roman Empire enjoyed a dominant position in medieval historiography, with the consequence that very often the military history of small nations (under Roman influences) was written from the perspective of the Eastern Romans historians.

The aim of the paper is to change this perspective and give the subject of the medieval Armenian military the attention it deserves. The idea is to perform an analysis of the relief on the Door of the Msho Arakelots monastery, where four equestrians and one infantryman are depicted, and to compare it with other Armenian, Byzantine and Muslim sources.

In this relief, a spherical mace head and a sword with sleeve cross-guard are represented, suggesting many parallels with East-Roman archaeological and figurative sources. No less important is the depiction of the military trumpet because it is the first image of this object in Armenian art, which can be compared with pictures from the Madrid Skylitzes (13th c.). In addition, the only defensive weapon which is presented in this relief is a round shield with a floral ornament. There are many depictions of round shields in Armenian miniatures and reliefs from 10th–11th c. Moreover, this relief is one of the few where stirrups and the chape of a scabbard are shown. These elements represent an important piece of information because these pictures can be compared with actual archaeological East-Roman artefacts to reconstruct their real look.

The conclusions are that the majority of Armenian weapons bear similarities to Byzantine ones but no less important are the Muslim influences, which have been found in some cases. Located between two civilizations (Byzantium and the Muslim Potentates), Armenians adopted the best solutions of their military technologies, creating their own culture. Moreover, thanks to this comparative analysis, further support will be given to the idea that medieval figurative sources are more or less accurate material for studying medieval military history.

Keywords: Armenia, Bagratids, Msho Arakelots, relief, military history, sleeve cross-guard, Byzantine Empire, Muslim world, weapon, armour.

Dmytro Dymdyuk

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine)

Faculty of History

Department of History of Middle Ages and Byzantine Studies

Universytetska 1 str.

79000, Lviv, Ukraine

dymdyuk_da@ukr.net

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 1. Relief on the door of Msho Arakelots monastery (1134). *Author's photo* [30 IX 2019].



Fig. 2–3. Relief on the door of Msho Arakelots monastery (1134). *Author's photo* [30 IX 2019].



Fig. 4. Relief on the door of Msho Arakelots monastery (1134). *Author's photo* [30 IX 2019].



Fig. 5. Goliath's relief from The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Aghtamar island (915–921, modern Turkey) (in situ). *Author's photo* [20 VIII 2019].



Fig. 6. Relief “St. George and St. Theodore slaying dragons” from the Church in Martvili, 7th–8th c. (Georgia). – Г. АТАНАСОВ, Св. Георги Победоносци. Култ и образ в Православния Изток през средновековието, Варна 2001, рис. 244.



Fig. 7. Fragment of the miniature “*St. Sargius*” (10th c.) – *Gospel*, Mekhitarian Library (Vienna), Ms. 697, f. 4v, <https://mycms-vs04.rrz.uni-hamburg.de/sfb950/content/IAA/browseColl.xml> [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 8. Sleeve cross-guard. Unpublished archaeological find from Chernihiv, Ukraine (2018). Finding of grave robbers, https://vk.com/vtoroi_rim?w=wall-71532966_3071%2Fall [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 9–10. Sleeve cross-guard. Unpublished archaeological find (private collection of Dr. Lee Jones). Territory of origin is unknown. – I. NORMAN, *A Likely Byzantine or Fatimid Sword of the Xth–XIth Centuries*, 2019, <http://iainnorman.com/essays/2019/01/a-likely-byzantine-or-fatimid-sword-of-the-xth-xith-centuries/> [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 11. Miniature “David defeats Goliath” (1066). – *Theodore Gospel*, British library, Ms. 19352, f. 191, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_19352_f207v [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 12. Miniature “The Martyrdom of St. Arethas” (end of 10th c.) where sword with sleeve cross-guard is depicted. – *Menologion of Basil II*, Vatican library, Ms. Vat. gr. 1613, f. 135, https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613 [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 14. (A and B) Iron, spherical mace heads (11th–12th c.). Vatevi Collection, Bulgaria. – S. POPOV, *The maces from the present Bulgarian lands (10th–17th c.)*, Sofia 2015, p. 130–131. Photo courtesy of S. POPOV.

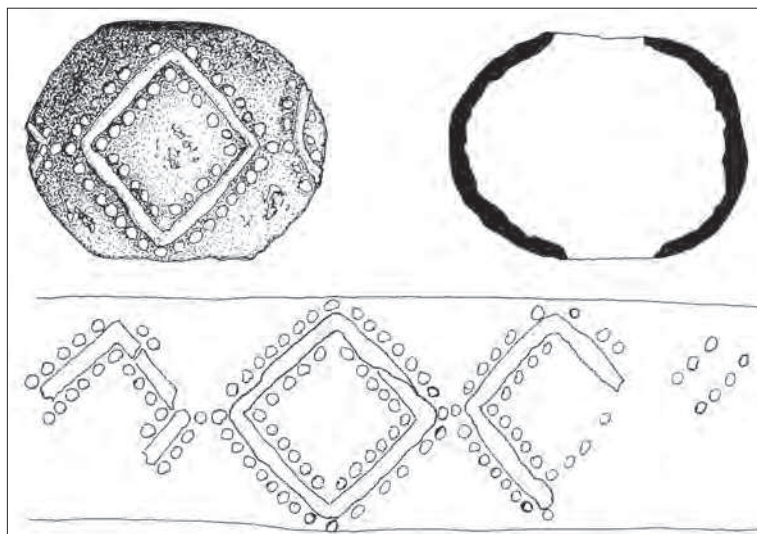


Fig. 13. Spherical mace from Panaguriste with silver decoration (10th–11th c.). – В. Йотов, *Въоръжението и снаряжението от българското средновековие (VII–XI век)*, Варна 2004, cat. 644.



Fig. 15. Miniature “Good Samaritan stripped and beaten by three robbers” (Middle part), (879–883). – *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National library of France, gr. 510, f. 300 (143), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f542.planchecontact> [12 IX 2019].



Fig. 16. Miniature “The power of Eros” (10th c.) – *Oppianus Cynegetica*, Marciana Library, Ms. Gr. Z 479, f. 33r. – R. D’AMATO, Σιδηροράβδιον, βαρδούκιον, ματζούκιον, κορύνη. *The war-mace of Byzantium, 9th–15th c. AD*, AMM VII, 2011, fig. 17.



Fig. 17. Miniature “Judas Kiss” (1057). *Author’s photo* [30 IX 2019].

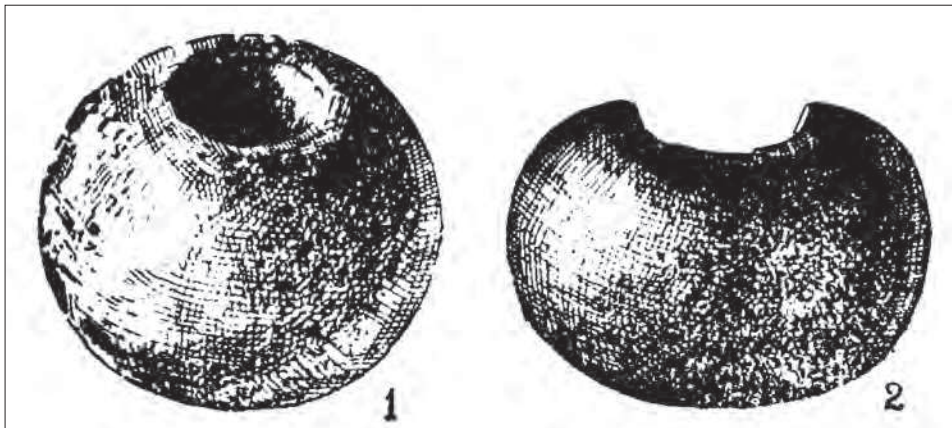


Fig. 18. I. The mace from former Echmiadzin museum (History museum of Armenia); II. The mace from Shengavit (History museum of Armenia) (3–1 millennium BC). – С. Есаян, *Оружие и военное дело древней Армении (III–I тыс. до н. э.)*, Ереван 1966, p. 56.



Fig. 19. Miniature “Hovhannis Protospatharius presents the Gospel to the Virgin” (1007) – *Gospel of Adrianopolis*, Mekhitarists library (Venice), Ms. 887, fol. 8, <https://mycms-vs04.rz.uni-hamburg.de/sfb950/content/IAA/browseColl.xml> [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 20. Miniature “*The resurrection of Christ*” (12th c.). – *Gospel № 141/102*, Mekhitarists library (Venice), fol. 77r. *Author’s photo* [20 VIII 2019].



Fig. 21. Miniature “*The resurrection of Christ*” (12th c.). – C. MARANCI, *The Art of Armenia. An Introduction*, Oxford 2018, fig. 4.3.



Fig. 22. Miniature “Emperor Julian the Apostate arrived to the city Ctesiphon on the Tiger” (Upper part), (879–883) – *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National library of France, gr. 510, f. 830 (409v), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f542.planchecontact> [12 IX 2019].



Fig. 23. St. Sargis’s relief from The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Aghtamar island (915–921, modern Turkey) (in situ). *Author’s photo* [20 VIII 2019].



Fig. 24. Miniature “Tsar Simeon, pursued by the Hungarians, taking shelter in the stronghold of Drustra” (12th c.). – Madrid Skylitzes, National Library of Spain, ms. Graecus Vitr. 26-2, fol. 108v, <http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000022766&page=1> [12 IX 2019].



Fig. 25. Miniature “The fall of Jericho” (Upper part). Joshua (far left) and seven soldiers blowing the horns surround the crumbling walls of the city (879–883). – *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National library of France, gr. 510, f. 860 (424v), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f542.planchecontact> [12 IX 2019].



Fig. 26. Fragment of the miniature “Crucifixion” (11th c.). Author’s photo [30 IX 2019].



Fig. 27. Fragment of the miniature “Judas Kiss” (10th–11th c.). Author’s photo [30 IX 2019].



Fig. 28. Fragment of the miniature “Soldiers” (11th c.). – *Kars Gospel*, Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate, Ms. 2556, fol. 127. – S. DER NERSESSIAN, *L’Evangile du roi Gagik de Kars: Jérusalem No 2556*, REArm 18, 1984, p. 92–93, fig. 10.



Fig. 29. Fragment of the miniature “Myrrhbearers”, where armed Roman soldiers guarding the tomb of Christ (974). – *Tsgrut Gospel*, (*Tsgrut village, Armenia*), f. 9. – Н. КОТАНДЖЯН, *Цгрутское Евангелие*, Ереван 2006, p. 81.

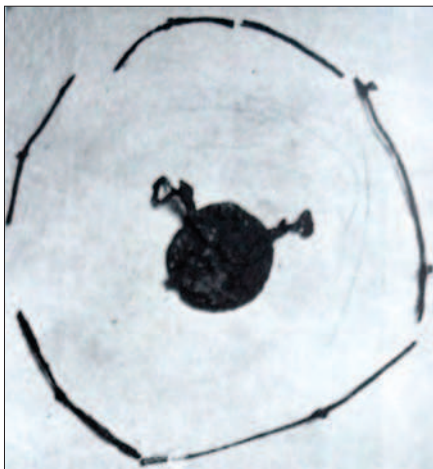


Fig. 30. Remains of the shield from Anberd (7th–13th c.?) – U. ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ, *Անբերդ*, Երևան 1978, fig. 54.



Fig. 31. Fragment of the miniature “St. Athenodorus Martyr” (end of 10th c.). – *Menologion of Basil II*, Vatican library, Ms. Vat. gr. 1613, http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1613/0052?sid=a7590df9b8aca22111c8359533716419 [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 32. Miniature “*The Martyrdom of Cyprian of Carthage*” (1198–1199). – *Lviv Gospel*, National library of Poland, Rps 8101 IIIS, 63v, <https://polona.pl/item/ewangeliaz-ze-skewry,NTU3NzE2OQ/127/#item> [30 IV 2019].



Fig. 33. Miniature “Julian’s death: Julian, pursued by St. Mercuries, falls from his horse” (Lower part) (879–883) – *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National library of France, gr. 510, f. 830 (409v), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f542.planchecontact> [12 IX 2019].



Fig. 34. Miniature “The Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312)” (Middle part), (879–883) – *Homilies of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, National library of France, gr. 510, f. 891 (440r), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84522082/f542.planchecontact> [12 IX 2019].