

to have their likenesses carved on the walls. At the western slopes of Mt. Aracadz, in the village called Mahmoutjough, a little to the west of the monastery of Harrij and the town of Ardig, we have a very ancient little church, built, in our opinion, no later than the end of the VIth century or the beginning of the VIIth. Inside, above the western door, there is a sculpture representing the Virgin and a man praying (fig. 16); unfortunately the sculpture is damaged, but the praying figure must be the founder of the church. We shall discuss later the representation of the Virgin. On the church of Mren we have interesting sculptures of the Gamsaragan princes (fig. 17; see also Alishan, "Ayrarad", 155) dating in the year 638. In neighboring Georgia, in the town of Khozhorny, on the Holy Cross Church of Mtskheth, we have the sculptured figures of a prince and of a bishop. On the church of Aghtamar there is the Xth century sculpture of Cakig, king Vasbouragan (fig. 18); at Ani the portrait of Cakig I. Bagradouni; at Haghpad those of Simpad Bagradouni and Kourken Bagradouni, etc. Manuel, Lord of the Amadounis, represented on our church is none other than its founder. We shall try to find out his time, thus ascertaining also the time when the church was built.

The family of the Amadounis was one of the most prominent among the Armenian nobility, at least in the IVth and Vth centuries. At the time of Tiridates, the great Christian, Oda Amadouni and Vahan Amadouni are mentioned as having attained to the office of royal steward.¹⁷ In the middle of the IVth century, at the time of the Catholicos Nerses the Great, Garen Amadouni was steward, and at the time of the king Arshag III., Barkev Amadouni and his son Manuel held the same office.¹⁸ In the Vth century the royal steward of the Armenians was Vahan Amadouni, who managed the funeral of St. Mesrob and built a church in his name; he participated in the war of the Vartanank, and in the captivity and the return of the nobles. Dur-

ing his stewardship was held the council of Shahabivan in the year 447.¹⁹ At the time of the rebellion of the Vahanank "Varaztad Shabouh of the tribe of the Amadounik" is mentioned; he separated from those nobles who had taken oath to remain faithful to Christianity, and betrayed their alliance to the Persian governor Adrvushnasb.²⁰ At the end of the Vth century and the beginning of the VIth the chief of the Amadounis was Manken, who was present at the council held by the Catholicos Pappen in the year 505.²¹ There is no further mention of any Amadouni prince until the end of the VIth century, when we find Godid as lord of the Amadounis. A group of nobles, among them Godid, plan to rebel against the Persians, but dissension amongst them frustrates the plan, and together with Mamag Mamigonian and Stephen Siuni, Godid submits to the Persians. Chosroes Abruez by a special edict summons them to the Porte and treacherously has them killed one by one. Godid was killed while on his way "to Murdzin" where he was being sent as ambassador. We cannot determine the exact date of his death, but judging from the course of the history of Sebeos it ought to be set at approximately the year 600, when Simpad Bagradouni begins to play a part as governor of Virgan and as general of the Persians. The appearance of Godid should then be placed between 590 and 600. Accordingly, the subject of our sculpture, namely Manuel, lord of the Amadounis, must have lived between the years 510 and 590.

From the Keerk Tughtotz, another document of the year 552-553 gives very probable basis for determining Manuel's time. A number of nobles also signed the oath of union of the Catholicos Nerses II, some of them using their tribal name and some unfortunately only their patronymics. Among the latter is "Sahag of Manuelian", who can be considered to be the son of

17. Agathangelos, pp. 163, 164.

18. Faustus Byzant, pp. 28, 31, 49, 81.

19. Arsen Ghuldujian, *Ganonakeerk Hayotz* (Canon Book of the Armenians), p. 59.

20. Lazar of Parb, p. 120 (Etchmiadzin edition).

21. Keerk Tughtotz, p. 42.