

sculpture, the shape of the garments and the details of the folds, peculiar to Syro-Mesopotamian art, are clearly visible. On each side of the chair rise up two beautiful palmettes, a simpler and better example of which is seen on a capital (Fig. 59). To the right of Mary's head can be noticed a round wheel, symbol of eternity, while the decoration of the abacus consists of the ornament in the form of an ear of corn which we have met before and shall meet again, characteristic of Sasanian art. Fragment **e** in the same picture must be part of a pedestale, judging from the cavity at the top. The carvings of the face represent plants; the upper band is decorated with three equal-armed crosses set in circles formed by double lines like the sculptures of Otsoun, Prtatzor, Khozhorni and Armenian basilicas, and which we shall often see later on. Fragment **f** is simply the upper part of a sepulchral stele. The cross rests on a medallion, decorated with the ear-of-corn motif and framing a rosette. Above the cross is another smaller cross, with arms of equal length, enclosed in a circle. Grape clusters hang from the top and lateral arms of the central cross; their surfaces are covered with intersecting diagonal lines, which we have already seen. This form of cross-stone becomes the current type for similar memorials, of the later periods, wide-spread throughout Armenia, highly developed and offering a variety of designs. These monuments are a direct result of the belief of the Armenian church which in contrast to the worship of pictures, attached particular significance to the worship of the cross. (*)

The fragments **g**, **h**, **i**, **j** (Fig. 58, 59) are the most interesting and characteristic in shape and ornamentation. They are our earliest examples of Syro-Mesopotamian art, with a Greek spirit, and are not duplicated in Armenian architecture and on the sepulchral steles of the later periods. The first fragment, a capital obviously belonging to a building (Fig 58) displays on its

* See our "Havoots Tarri Amenapergichu", Jerusalem 1937, 41, 51, and continue.

two sides (the only ones to have been photographed) a lily between palmettes, and an equal-armed cross, also between acanthuses or palmettes, and has a rosette at the intersection of the arms. This is often repeated in Sasanian and Armenian art of this period; also the decoration of the abacus in the form of ears of corn. The lily and the manner of representing the acanthus may be compared to the capital No. 100, 7343 in the museum of Cairo. The lily and the scepter cross appear with a somewhat different form on capital **h**, shown on the right (Fig. 58). The lily with leaves occurs again on the stele of Gharachalar on the southern slopes of Mount Aracadz (Fig. 60). The two sides on the ninth fragment (**i**) seen on the photograph, represent the scene of the Annunciation, unfortunately in a badly damaged condition. The tenth (**j**) piece is probably the base of a stele; the stele itself must have been circular judging from the slight remains above the base. The shape of the base consisting of two rectangular blocks set one above the other, and the ornaments, namely the radiating rosette; the frame of alternately reversed triangles; the wave-like decorations, and the vertical lines, all indicate the same artistic trend. By their form, these capitals recall those of Prtatzor, the prototypes of Byzantine capitals (Fi. 61, 62, 63). The diversity and antiquity of these capitals and their obvious similarity to the Byzantine furnish tangible proof of the interrelation existing between Armenian and Byzantine art. Moreover, they give support to Strzygowski's theory that they may be of Syro-Egyptian origin; but we should add perhaps of Armenian origin, since the same artistic trend is noticeable in Syria, Egypt, and Armenia (*). These Armenian capitals are comparable to those of Bawit, which Crum regards as Byzantine, while Strzygowski thinks they are older, of the 4th-5th centuries. They are particularly close to the capital, No. 7344, while No. 7345 is similar to Zevartnotz.

* Strzygowski, Die Koptische Kunst, page 69.