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### KUTAISI FORTRESS INNER BASILICA

In the area of the acropolis of the ancient city of Kutaisi we have several cult constructions of the early Christian period among which most impressive is the basilica of the Inner Fortress that our team of archeologists discovered under the floor of 13<sup>th</sup> century *darbazuli* church. The new discovery belongs to the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> c. A.D. according to the architectural design it is classified as of minor size three nave basilica types with semi-circular protruded apses. Originally the basilica had not had the separate rooms for *Samkvetlo* and the priesthood. It was attached to building after rebuilding works in the 8<sup>th</sup> c. The Fundaments of columns present two pair sets dividing the naves; the third pair of columns is smaller and supports the meeting points of apses (for the transfer of sail...). Walls are laid up with low flat and elaborated facets of all four sides quartered and polished stones. The remaining parts emphasize high level of architecture and the meticulous taste of the builder. Out of the four cult constructions that we have discovered of late the inner Fortress basilica is the second in order.

Presumably the tearing down of basilica could take place in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> c, when the Byzantines defeated Persians and the latter were leaving Egris. Its rebuilding and renovating works should have been carried out during the mid of the 8<sup>th</sup> century together with the constructing of the brick palace with the citadel.

In the 13<sup>th</sup> c. New *darbazi* type Saint George's church replaced the old one, which then served as a royal court church.