Achtung!

Attention!
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Jost Gippert, Frankfurt 2012
Jost Gippert

New Manuscript Finds in St. Catherine’s Monastery

Part I

It is well known that St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mt. Sinai hosts the largest collection of Georgian manuscripts outside Georgia. The catalogues compiled by Al. Tsagareli, N.Ja. Marr, Iv. Javakhishvili, G. Garitte, and El. Metreveli, C. Chankievi, L. Khevsuriani, L. Jghamaia, and R. Gvaramia comprise all in all 108 items of which 12 have dis-
appeared\textsuperscript{7} and 7 have been removed to other locations.\textsuperscript{8} To the remaining 89 items, which may now be called the “Old Collection”, an even larger amount of Georgian manuscripts was added in 1975 when in the course of reconstruction work undertaken after a fire in the north eastern part of the monastery grounds, the remnants of far more than 1000 further codexes were found in the debris.\textsuperscript{9} Among them, about 150 manuscripts have been determined to be Georgian, and the catalogue prepared by Z. Aleksidze, M. Shanidze, L. Khevsuriani and M. Kavtaria\textsuperscript{10} gives a clear picture of the “New Collection” they constitute. The most important finds in the “New Collection” are the palimpsest manuscripts (Sin. georg.) N 13 and N 55\textsuperscript{11} which contain, in their lower layer, the first and only manuscript remains of the Caucasian Albanians; these palimpsests have been the object of an

\textsuperscript{7} Nos. 40, 66, 92, and 93 in Tsagareli’s and nos. 23, 24, 27, 28, 45, 48, 55, and 84 in Garitte’s listing.

\textsuperscript{8} Nos. 2, 9, 29, 31, and 69 are found in the University Library of Graz / Austria as part of the bequest of Hugo Schuchardt; no. 72 is in Tbilisi and no. 81, in Detroit.

\textsuperscript{9} For the discovery cf. Ιερά Μονή καί Αρχιεπισκοπή Σινά, Τά νέα ευρήματα τού Σινά (Αθήνα, 1998), pp. 8-24 and 25-49.

\textsuperscript{10} Z. Aleksidze (ზ. ალექსიძე), M. Shanidze (მ. შანიძე), L. Khevsuriani (ლ. ხევსურიანი) and M. Kavtaria (მ. ქავთარია), Κατάλογος γεωργιανών χειρογράφων ευρεθέντων κατά τό 1975 είς τήν ιεράν μονήν τού θεοβαδίστον όρους Σινά Αγίας Αικατερίνης / Κατάλογος γεωργιανών χειρογράφων ευρεθέντων κατά τό 1975 είς τήν ιεράν μονήν τού θεοβαδίστον όρους Σινά Αγίας Αικατερίνης / Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts discovered in 1975 at St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai (Αθήνα / Αθήνα / Athens, 2005).

\textsuperscript{11} In accordance with the practice proposed in the Catalogue, pp. 361-362, numbers of the New Collection are marked with an N preceding, and numbers of the Old Collection, with an O, in the following treatise.
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international project since 2003, and the edition resulting from it has only just been published. Some further important finds may briefly be mentioned here: N 89, a fragment consisting of two folios which pertain to the famous “Sinai polycephalion” ( Mt Sinai polycephalion, G 32-57-33), filling the gap between folios. 84v and 85r of that codex (i.e. where the parts denominated G 32 and G 57 meet); N 71 (8 folios), a palimpsest containing an index of Evangelical lections for the weeks between Easter and Pentecost compiled and written down by Ioane Zosime; N 48 and N 50, two manuscripts containing parts of the Georgian chronicle Gqmeva qarTisa; and several fragments of hymnaries of the idagari type (N 2, N 5, N 19, N 97 etc.). Apart from the 142 items listed in the Catalogue (99 parchment codices, 33 paper manuscripts, 10 scrolls), the New Collection comprises a large number of unidentified fragments which the compilers of the Catalogue were not yet able to classify and describe.

12 The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of Mt. Sinai, edited by J. Gippert, W. Schulze, Z. Aleksidze and J.-P. Mahé (Turnhout, 2008) (Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevi, Series ibero-caucasica, 2). In the edition, the structure of the (upper) Georgian layer has been thoroughly investigated by the present author, thus correcting several assumptions as printed in the Catalogue; the suggestion that N 13 and N 55 represent one Georgian codex has been confirmed beyond doubt.


14 Cf. the Catalogue, pp. 136-137 / 297-298 / 424-425; different from the information given there, the underwriting is not Coptic but Palestinian Aramaic; the script used is similar to that appearing in the fly-leaves of the Sinai polycephalion (O 32-57-33), for which cf. A. Smith-Lewis, Catalogue of the Syriac Mss. in the Convent of S. Catherine on Mount Sinai (London, 1894) (Studia Sinaitica, 1), pp. 118-120.


16 Cf. the Catalogue, pp. 43-44 / 240-241 / 368-369.

17 The number of unidentified fragments is given as “c. 1800” in the Catalogue (p. 45/242/371); ca. 150 Georgian fragments were available to the researchers in May 2009 (cf. below).
During a research trip to the monastery undertaken in May, 2009, in connection with the international project “Critical Edition of the Old Georgian Versions of Matthew’s and Mark’s Gospels – Catalogue of the Manuscripts Containing the Old Georgian Translation of the Gospels”, a group of scholars consisting of M. Shanidze, S. Sarjveladze, D. Tvaltvadze, B. Outtier and the present author had the opportunity to study the Georgian manuscripts of Mt. Sinai in detail. In the following pages, I shall summarise a few of the findings, with special emphasis on the fragments that have not been identified so far and the methods applicable for their identification.

Many parts of the New Collection, and especially the fragments, which are at present kept in cardboard slipcases in the monastery library, have been preserved in a very bad state caused by the fire that led to their discovery in 1975. This is not only true for their size which is reduced to less than 10×10cm in most cases, leaving but a few lines or words visible, but also for their surface which shows all kinds of damages that result from being burnt or singed; cf. Figures 1 and 2 (Fragments A and B) showing such damage.

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18 Project kindly supported by INTAS, Brussels, under ref.no. 05-1000008-8026.
19 The members of the group are extremely grateful to the monastery librarian, Father Justin, for the kind support he provided during their stay.
20 Hereafter, capital letters are used for easy reference to individual fragments; there is no cataloguing function implied.
The first step in analysing a given fragment will always consist in identifying the text passages it contains. It is clear that a certain number of characters must be discernible for this purpose; on the basis of the huge database of digitized Old Georgian texts that has been made available in the TITUS and ARMAZI projects, even a small number of characters may suffice for this. Cp., e.g., Fragm. C displayed in Figures 3a and b which can easily be identified as containing verses from the 4th chapter of the Gospel of Luke (4,41 and 4,43-44), with their internal order clearly determining the recto and the verso of the fragment.

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22 Lk. 4:41 is the only text passage in the TITUS database matching a search for ...ყუად and არს and ქრისტჱ within a context of maximally twenty words; the query can be carried out with the following URL string: http://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/database/titusinx/titusinx.asp?LXLANG=517&LXWORD=*q2500uad2600ars2600krist2500e3D00&LCPL=1&TCPL=1&C=H&T=0&LMT=100&K=20&MM=1.
The identification of a text passage is not enough to identify a manuscript fragment though. Text passages from Gospel texts may pertain to Gospel manuscripts, but also to lectionaries of various kinds, and they may even represent mere quotations in homiletic, hagiographic, or other texts. In the given case, the latter option is less likely as we seem to have not single verses here but a continuous text which extends over several verses of the same Gospel chapter; this would be surprising in a quotation context. The decision whether we have a Gospel manuscript or a lectionary here is less easy to arrive at. For this purpose we have to take several further criteria into account.

First, lectionary manuscripts have typical features such as, e.g., titles indicating lections to be read or indications of the date and place of a lection reading. This can easily be seen in another set of fragments found in the New Collection; cf. Fragm. D (Figures 4a and b), a badly damaged scrap on which just the indication of the month (οποια) has been preserved, written in red ink as usual in many lectionaries (cf. below as to this fragment). On Fragm. C, no such indication is discernible.

Second, the text passages as present in lectionaries may differ from those contained in Gospel manuscripts. This is certainly true for many of the Old Georgian lectionaries in comparison with the redactions of the Gospel tradition proper. In the case of Fragm. C, the amount of text available is by no means sufficient to decide this question.

Third, it was but a restricted set of Gospel passages that were read as lections, which implies that certain passages are less likely to be found in a lectionary. In the period of Old Georgian, there were two lectionary traditions available, viz. the so-called Jerusalem rite commonly regarded as archaic, and the later Byzantine rite. Among the Sinai manuscripts, those written in Asomtavruli script usually belong to the Jerusalem tradition while the Byzantine rite is represented by younger Nuskhuri manuscripts such as the paper codex N 14p of the New Collection. As a matter of fact, the text passage we find on Fragm. Cr (Lk. 4:41) is not contained as such in any Old Georgian lectionary of the Jerusalem type, while the Byzantine rite has a matching passage on the Monday of the 19th week after Pente-

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23 Cf. the Catalogue, p. 636 for a facsimile of fol. 3r of N 14p, showing lections for the Wednesday and Thursday of the Easter week (Jo. 1,47-51; 3,1-4).
cost (Lk. 4:37-44). This cannot be taken as a sufficient argument for attributing Fragm. C to a lectionary of the Byzantine rite, however, all the more since it is written in Asomtavruli letters. If we consider that the index of Evangelical lections compiled by Ioane Zosime prescribes the reading of Lk. 4:31-41 for the 3rd Sunday and of Lk. 4:42-5,11 for the 4th Sunday after Epiphany,24 the latter information being matched by the Latal lectionary,25 we may well assume that the fragment in question might represent the same tradition.

Different from the “internal”, i.e., text-based criteria mentioned so far, another type of argumentation is related to “external” characteristics such as the handwriting and the measures which may admit of attributing a given fragment to a codex that has been classified. In this context, “measures” can hardly mean anything but the distance between lines and the size of characters, given that tiny fragments such as C cannot tell anything about the size and the number of lines of the original they derive from. As to the handwriting of Fragm. C, the few letters that are discernible are hardly enough to prove its descendence from one of the known codexes of the New (or Old) Collection. The same is true for the measure, given that only two lines have been preserved. We do arrive at a reasonable argument, however, if we try to calculate the amount of lines the text passage must have comprised originally. Provided that the text flew continuously from Lk. 4:41 to 44, the actual amount of text can hardly have comprised more than 12 lines, with an average of 17 characters per line or, rather, column (cf. Tab. 1 which displays the corresponding reconstruction of the text). While the latter feature, together with the handwriting, would match the outline of the 10th century “Jerusalem” lectionary contained in the New Collection as N 11,26 the number of lines clearly contra-


25 Cf. M. Tarchnischvili, *Le grand lectionnaire de l’église de Jérusalem*, [édition], t. II (Louvain, 1960), p. 74 note (no. 1426Bd); for the preceding Sunday, the same lectionary notes only Lk. 31-37 (cf. ib., no. 1426Bc).

26 Cf. the *Catalogue*, p. 519 for a facsimile of fol. 2r of N 11.
dicts this as the two-column manuscript N 11 has 30 lines per page. The difference would be hard to account for, even if we assumed a title to have been inserted between 4:41 and 4:43. The question whether Fragm. C can be grouped together with N 11 must thus remain open.

With other fragments of this type, prospects are better. This is true, e.g., for Fragm. E, a very badly damaged scrap again (cf. Figures 5a and b). Here, the black ink has totally disappeared but the Asomtavruli characters have remained discernible against the stained background. In the upper lines, the words იგი მიცემს მე and ვალს ვითარკა can be made out, which is sufficient for identifying the text passage as Mk. 14:20-21. Again the fragment might derive from both a Gospel manuscript and a lectionary. In the given case, the passage in question is well attested as a lection of the “Jerusalem” rite, forming part of the reading of Mk. 14,12-26 prescribed for Maundy Thursday in the Kala lectionary and Sin. O 36. 27 This is confirmed by the other side of the same fragment, which exhibits the same type of lection title written in red ink as in Fragm. D (cf. Fig. 5b), here indicating Good Friday (ჰადისა აღბარიანი); if Mk. 14:20-21 is correctly associated with Maundy Thursday, the sequence of recto and verso is thus established again.

Different from the recto, Fragm. Ev shows but faint traces of the text passage following the lection title. What we can make out easily is a large initial δ, again written in red ink, in the line below. This does not suffice for an identification of the lection; however, the three letters preceding the lection title, also in red ink but of minor size, are decisive here (cf. the enlarged picture displayed in Fig. 6): if they are correctly read as ქით, the alphanumeric notation of 319, this must be the Ammonian section number of a Gospel passage, and the only Gospel passage that can be meant here is Mt. 27:3 which does begin with δ: ἰδοὺ ὁ Ἰησοῦς... As a matter of fact, the sequence of the letters ჰი indicating the abbreviated conjunction ጽ(ითარ)ი seems to be discernible in the middle of the same line. Indeed, a lection extending from Mt. 27:3-56 is part of the services for Good Friday in the lectionaries of the Jerusalem type.28

If we further consider the outer appearance of the characters discernible in Fragm. E, we may suppose that this fragment, as well as Fragm. D and a few others with similar features, was part of ms. N 10, a lectionary of the Jerusalem type attributed to the 9th century; cf. Fig. 7 which exhibits fol. 1v of N 10, showing Lk. 19:35-38 and Jo. 12:12-13 as parts of the

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28 Cf. M. Tarchnischvili, Lectionnaire [édition], t. I, p. 127 (no. 686); the indication of the section number ქით = 139 for the given passage in the Paris lectionary is odd.
second and third lections for the Monday of the Holy Week. As a matter of fact, the eight fols. of N 10 that have been preserved as such all contain lections for the Holy Week, and fol. 4r, which contains Mt. 27:7-14, may well be the continuation of what we have in Fragm. Ev.

Whether Fragm. D belongs to the same lectionary remains uncertain, for if it does, the original must have extended much beyond the time of Easter as Fragm. D indicates a date of ㋊ sophomore. Possibly we have the 18th January here if the first word of the line below the title is ㋊ sophomore (with ㋊ sophomore discernible) and this denotes ㋊ sophomore ㋊ sophomore ㋊ sophomore ㋊ sophomore as in the Paris and Latal lectionaries.\(^{29}\) This would match one further piece, Fragm. F (cf. Figures 8a and b), which clearly exhibits a title of January, too, with the word ㋊ sophomore (㋊ sophomore discernible) and an initial ⁑ following. This might mean the 29th January which has a lection from St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians (6,14-18) in the Jerusalem rite, here announced as ضاء حكمة بولس الايطالي ическое ティー or the like;\(^{30}\) note that this is the only January lection from St. Paul’s Epistles that begins with ⁑ (Hashtable).


\(^{30}\) The Paris Lectionary has only ضاء حكمة بولس الايطالي 朳卺 to be read in January.
Both fragments D and F may as well pertain to N 11, the Asomtavruli lectionary manuscript allegedly of the 10th century mentioned above, which consists of 7 folios plus three minor fragments. This manuscript must have covered quite large a part of the ecclesiastical year as the entries preserved comprise the Saturday of the Meat Fare Week (6rv: 1.Cor. 15:41-57; 1.Thess. 4:13-18; Lk. 20:27), Good Friday (1rv: Is. 52:14-53:12; Heb. 2:11-15; 2rv: Jo. 19:34-38; Is. 57:1-4; Is. 59:15-19; Lam.Jer. 3:52-
66), Holy Saturday (3rv: Ez. 37:11-14; 1.Cor. 15:1-11; Mt. 28:1-4), Bright Tuesday and Wednesday (4rv: Lk. 24:11-12; Act. 2:22-28; Act. 2:30-41), various feasts (5rv: Gen. 2:15-25; Is. 61:10; Heb. 12:28-13:6; Mt. 19:1-12; Jo. 2:1), and the 17th-25th May (on a folio represented by the three fragments 8, 9, and 10, cf. Fig. 9: Lk. 21:28-35; Mt. 23:24-24,1).

On one more damaged folio (7rv), N 11 contains a larger sequence of text passages from Jeremy, comprising Jer. 14:7-9; 15:20-21; 31:23; and 16:19, most probably part of a collection of “Litanies from Jeremy” as contained in the Paris lectionary.31 At least one part of the missing column of this folio has now been detected among the unidentified fragments, viz. Fragm. G displayed in Figures 10a and b. The two faces of this scrap clearly exhibit the text of Jer. 14:19-21 and 15:17-18, exactly matching the gaps of N 11; cf. Fig. 11 showing the recto rearranged.

31 Cf. Tarchnischvili, Lectionnaire [édition], t. II (Louvain, 1960), pp. 95-96 (nos. 1589-1590). Of the lection preceding Jer. 14:7, only the last words have remained: ომელმივეცმამათათქნთასამკჳრდებელად; in the given context, they may represent Jer. 7:7 rather than Jos. 1:2, Bar. 2:21, or Ez. 36:28 which have a similar wording.
There is at least one more fragment that seems likely to pertain to N 11, even though its case is less clear. This is Fragm. H displayed in Figs. 12a and b. On one of its sides, we have a lection title in red ink again, obviously indicating a text passage from Genesis (？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？」？”\n

Fig. 9 (N 11, 8v + 9v + 10v)
certainty, at least four verses matching this within Genesis (9:22: ... 

32 Thus in the Paris Lectionary (cf. ქ. დანელია, ბ. შავიშვილი, ჭართული ლექციონარის პარიზული ხელნაწერი, ტ. I/1 (თბილისი, 1987), P 45v; lection of the Thursday of the first week of Lent, cf. M. Tarchnischvili, Lectionnaire [édition], t. I, p. 55, no. 343); the Mcxeta Bible has მათ instead of გამოსრულმან instead of გამოვიდა გარე.

33 Thus the Mcxeta Bible; the Paris Lectionary (cf. ქ. დანელია, ბ. შავიშვილი, ჭართული ლექციონარის პარიზული ხელნაწერი, ტ. I, p. 110, no. 619) has მათ instead of თჳსთა.

34 Thus the Oshki Bible; the Paris Lectionary has მათ instead of თჳსთა (cf. ქ. დანელია, ბ. შავიშვილი, ჭართული ლექციონარის პარიზული ხელნაწერი, P 89v; lection of the Wednesday of the third week of Lent, cf. M. Tarchnischvili, Lectionnaire [édition], t. I, p. 70, no. 418); the Mcxeta Bible omits თჳსთა.
well be taken into account (... აქალმახა ასლო ახალმელებმ აცალათა, ალხოლ სული). If we consider the outer appearance of N 11, which has an average of 17 letters per line per column, only Gen. 9:22 and 19:14 seem to remain valid candidates for what we find in Fragm. H; and indeed, both these passages are attested in the Jerusalem type lectionaries (read on the Thursday of the first week of Lent and on Maundy Thursday, resp.). However, the characters following later on in the fragment (...ვმა... აღ ა... ხორმი... თქვენს არ აქალმახა აცალათა, ალხოლ შემოწმება, ალხოლ შემოწმება ან...) only match with Gen. 37:23-24, which continues განმარტებით მალი ბიბლია, ან განმარტება, ალხოლ შემოწმება, ალხოლ შემოწმება ან... We thus arrive at about 13 characters per line, which seems too few for N 11. Instead, the fragment is much more likely to pertain to yet another lectionary manuscript of the New Collection, viz. N 88, which may have been written by the same hand as N 11 but differs in its measures, showing only 22 lines per column with an average of 13 characters. And indeed, one of the two folios of N 88 that have been preserved contains just the passage in question (Gen. 37:23-31), with the beginning of the lection missing; cf. Fig. 13 which shows how Fragm. Hr fits into the remnants of fol. 2r of N 88. In the same way, the verso of the fragment, Hv, can be inserted into the remainder of fol. 2v of N 88 (cf. Fig. 14), thus admitting of a tentative reconstruction of the text which has been burnt off (cf. Tab. 2). And given this identification, we may finally suppose that the indication of the date, of which only მარჯონი = ახლოსბის has survived, stands for ბუმაფილამ მარჯონი here as the lection in question is read on a Thursday (of the third week of Lent) according to the Jerusalem rite.

35 Cf. notes 32 and 33 above.
36 Thus the M.cxeta Bible; the Oshki Bible and the Paris Lectionary have იანაშ ერთმანეთში instead.
37 Thus the Paris Lectionary; the Oshki and M.cxeta Bibles have იფერო მარჯონი instead.
38 Thus the Oshki Bible and the Paris Lectionary; the M.cxeta Bible has იმარჯონი instead.
39 Cf. the Catalogue, p. 609 for a facsimile of fol. 1v of N 88 which has been preserved in its entirety.
Fig. 11 (N 11, 7r re-joined with Fragm. Gr)

Fig. 12a (Fragm. Hr)  

Fig. 12b (Fragm. Hv)
Fig. 13 (N 88, 2r + Fragm. Hr)

Fig. 14 (N 88, 2v + Fragm. Hv)
**Tab. 1: Text of Fragm. C restored**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ႣႠႢႠጀႥႨႣႠႫႭႥႨႣႠ除非 Cemsa oDk&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ ႣႠႢႠጀႥႨႣ Rohingy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ ႣႠႢႠጀႥႨႣ 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ ႣႠႢႠጀႥႨႣ 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ  proportio 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ  proportio 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ  proportio 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ႣႠႫႨႤႰ  proportio 檄 檄 檄 檄</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
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**Tab. 2: Sin. georg. N 88, fol. 2 + Fragm. H**

**recto**

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*Gen. <συ> εὑρέθαι ἐν Ἁγίᾳ σῷῃ <συ>
New Manuscript Finds in St. Catherine’s Monastery

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Jost Gippert

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