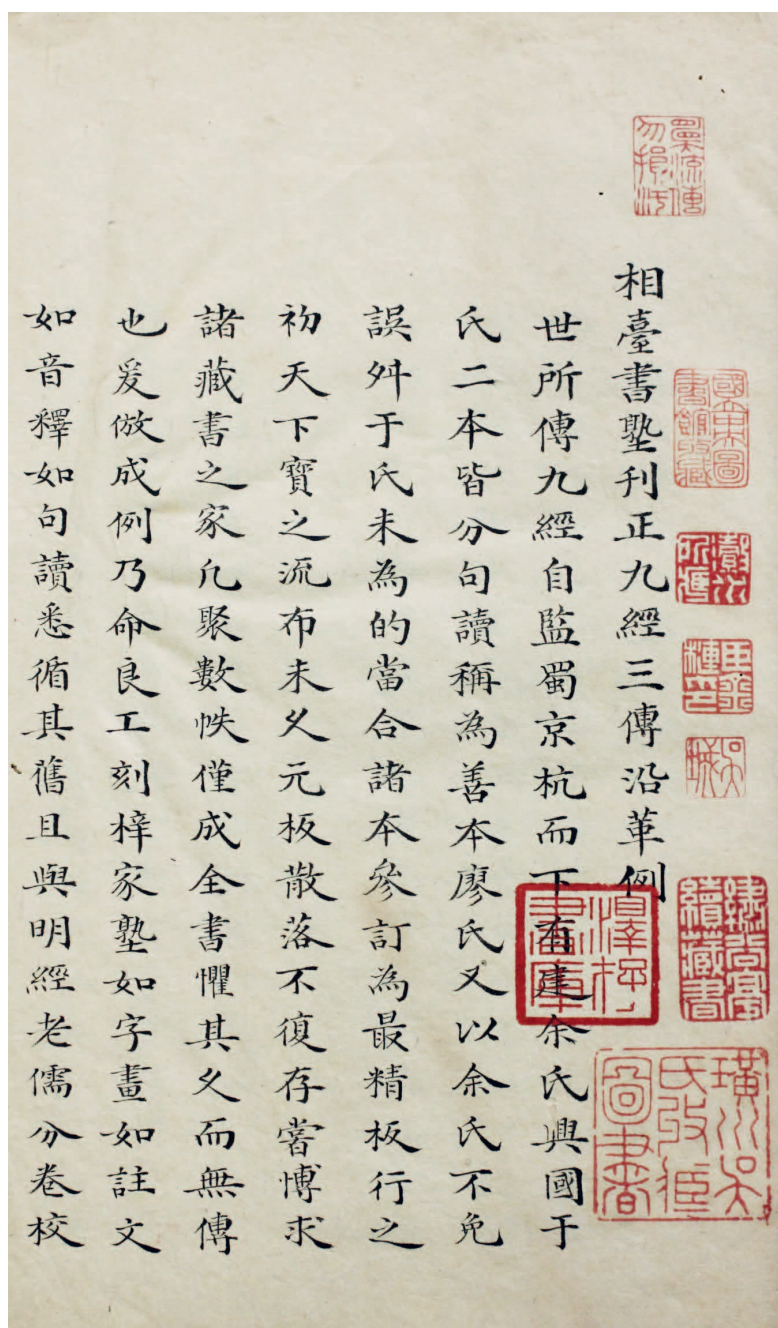


# manuscript cultures

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# CONTENTS

## ARTICLES

- 2 | The Library at the East Indian Buddhist Monastery Vikramaśīla: an Attempt to Identify its Himalayan Remains  
by Martin Delhey
- 25 | Introduction to the History, Use and Function of Chinese Book Collectors' Seals  
by Max Fölster
- 53 | The Manuscript Collection of Abbot Sathu Nyai Khamchan at the Monastery of Vat Saen Sukharam  
(Luang Prabang, Laos)  
by Bounleuth Sengsoulin
- 75 | Audience Certificates in Arabic Manuscripts – the Genre and a Case Study  
by Tilman Seidensticker
- 92 | On the Threshold between Legend and History: the Afterlife of a Mackenzie Manuscript  
by Eva Wilden
- 99 | The Secondary Life of Old Georgian Manuscripts  
by Jost Gippert
- 138 | Some Preliminary Observations on the Afterlife of Notre Dame Fragments  
by Eva M. Maschke
- 157 | Identifying Codicological Sub-units in Bamboo Manuscripts: Verso Lines Revisited  
by Thies Staack
- 187 | Material Technology and Science in Manuscripts of Persian Mystical Literature  
by Mandana Barkeshli
- 215 | Contributors
- 216 | Announcement

## Article

# The Secondary Life of Old Georgian Manuscripts\*

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## Abstract

This article deals with two aspects of the secondary ‘life’ of Old Georgian manuscripts, namely a) their ‘wandering’ between the (autochthonous and allochthonous) centres of manuscript production and storage, and b) their reutilisation for personal blessings, rogations and prayers, and also for less ‘immanent’ purposes such as prescriptions, contracts and writing exercises added by later readers, users or owners. The various types of reuse are exemplified with reference to codices from Georgia and elsewhere.

## 1. Introduction

Amongst the manuscript traditions of the Christian Near East, that of the Georgians is one of the richest, extending from about the fifth to the nineteenth century CE and comprising approximately 75,000 surviving leaves. The role played by the production of manuscripts in the spiritual and intellectual life of the Georgian people can easily be inferred from the various forms of secondary use to which many of the codices were subjected. This is true for a large number of them that can be shown to have been the object of relocation, being moved from the place where they were originally conceived to one or several other places where they were worked upon, sometimes long before they were stored in modern depositories such as the Korneli Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi. Another type of secondary use can be seen in the various functions to which many codices were subjected, aside from being merely read and copied. On the following pages, these two main types of secondary use will be illustrated by a series of examples, which should by no means be regarded as exhaustive.

## 2. Georgian manuscripts in motion

In comparison with the small region south of the Caucasus main ridge that is inhabited by speakers of the Georgian language today, Georgian manuscripts originated in a much broader area in the Christian East from the early

beginnings of Georgian literacy on. By the end of the first millennium of the Christian era, Georgian monks had long been established in Jerusalem and on Mt Sinai, and with the foundation of the Georgian monasteries on Mt Athos and in the Rhodopes, further centres of erudition evolved in what may be termed the Georgian diaspora of the Middle Ages. However, none of the ‘allochthonous’ centres remained isolated. Instead, we can be sure there were close ties not only between neighbouring centres, but also across longer distances (cf. map on next page, which details the most important centres of Georgian manuscript production and the most obvious ties between them).<sup>1</sup> This is clearly demonstrated by both explicit and implicit evidence to be found in ‘wandering’ manuscripts, that is, colophons and marginal notes<sup>2</sup> on the one hand and textual and layout features on the other.

### 2.1

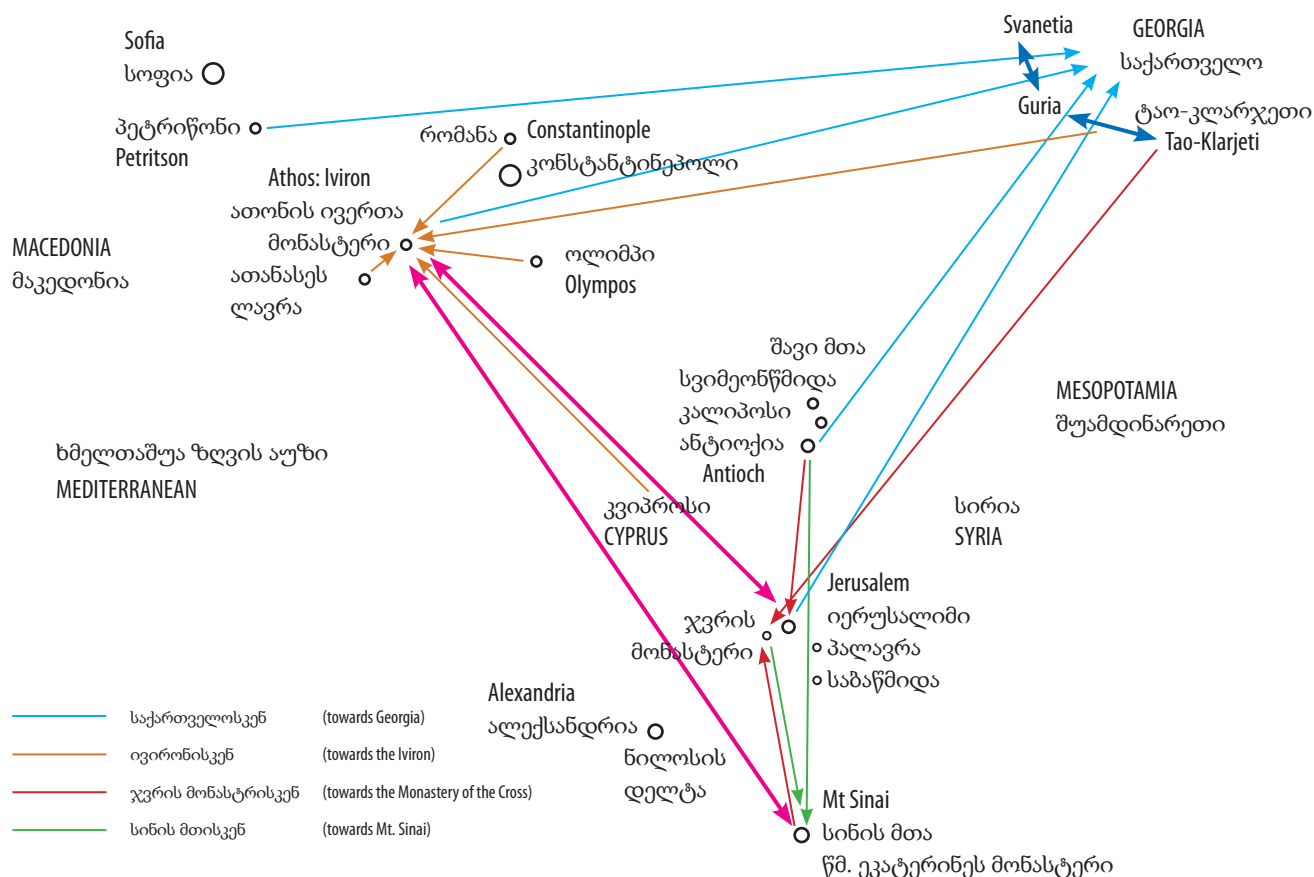
A famous example of a manuscript taken from one centre to another is the *Sinai mravaltavi*,<sup>3</sup> a homiliary codex from the second half of the ninth century, which is preserved in St Catherine’s Monastery. Having become disintegrated over the course of time, the separate parts

\* This article is based on my lectures given at the workshops *Manuscripts in Motion* and *The Second(ary) Life of Manuscripts* held at the Sonderforschungsbereich 950 ‘Manuscript Cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe’, University of Hamburg, financed by the German Research Foundation, and within the scope of the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), on 17 November 2012 and 11 July 2013.

<sup>1</sup> This figure is an extended version of the map published in Karanadze et al. 2010, 6. Aside from the English place names, additional information shown includes the ties linking Mt Athos to Jerusalem and Mt Sinai, and the links between Tao-Klarjeti, Guria and Svanetia, all dealt with below.

<sup>2</sup> In contrast to other (secondary) notes (usually) applied to the margins, I treat scribes’, owners’, donors’, binders’ and restorers’ notes that refer (explicitly or implicitly) to the manuscript itself or the text(s) contained within it as colophons.

<sup>3</sup> See Gippert (forthcoming) with reference to the term *mravaltavi*, lit. ‘multi-headed’.



Map: Centres of Old Georgian manuscript production and their ties.

of the *mravaltavi* are catalogued under four signatures today (Sin. georg. 32, 57, 33, and N 89). The codex is peculiar not only because it is the oldest dated Georgian manuscript we know of to date, but also because it contains two verbose colophons written by its scribe, a certain Amona, son of Vaxtang Mozarguli. According to the first of these colophons (written in the same majuscule hand as the main text), the codex was produced in the Great Laura of St Sabbas near Jerusalem on behalf of Makari Leteteli, son of Giorgi Grzeli and maternal cousin of the scribe, under patriarch Theodosius (862–878) ‘in the year 6468 after Creation and in the chronicon 84’, which suggests the period from September 863 to August 864 CE as the date of its execution.<sup>4</sup> The second colophon, which is written in minuscule, but is undoubtedly by the same scribe, informs us that the codex was ‘devoted’ to Mt Sinai, ‘the most holy of all, for the remembrance and benefit of ourselves and our souls’, i.e. the donor (together with a ‘brother in spirit’ of his, Pimen Kaxa)

and the scribe. The transfer of the codex to St Catherine’s Monastery, then, must have occurred before the year 982. This is clear from another colophon added ‘in the year 6585 ... after Creation and in the chronicon 201’, i.e. between September 980 and August 981 CE, by the most prominent Georgian conventual of St Catherine’s, Iovane Zosime, who undertook the third (!) binding of the codex on site. For convenience’s sake, the relevant passages of the three colophons are provided in table 1 together with an English translation (cf. also figs. 1 and 2).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In the transcripts, abbreviations and punctuation marks are employed according to modern usage. Capital letters are used to represent enlarged initials within both majuscule and minuscule contexts. See Gippert (forthcoming) for information on the lines added below the end of the first colophon, which read: ‘*l(o)cv(a) q(a)vt : amona mčxreklisatws c(o)-dvilisa p(ria)d č(mida)no*’ [‘Pray for Amona the scribe, the very sinful one, Saints!’] and the dating following them in the form of an extra line (‘*zā čeli SĒ*’, i.e. ‘upper (?) year 208’). I assume that the rogation was written by Amona himself with the dating being added later (in 987–8 CE; by Iovane Zosime?). — Unless otherwise indicated, the photographs reproduced in this article were all taken by the author.

<sup>4</sup> See Gippert (forthcoming) on the Old Georgian system of reckoning time.

Table 1: Donor's, scribe's and binder's colophons of the *Sinai mravaltavi*.First colophon, majuscules, initial part, fol. 273<sup>va-b</sup>

*Çqalobita mamisayta da zisayta da sulisa çmidisayta ...  
 Da madlita çmidisa adgomisa saplavisa uplisa çuenisa  
 iesu kristēsisayta  
 da meoxebita qovelta çinaçarmeçquelta, mocikulta, maxarebelta ...  
 Me, maḡari leteteli, zē giorgi grzelisay, codvili priad, ḡirs mḡo  
 ḡmertman šesakmed çmidisa amis çignisa mravaltavis  
 tana-šeçevnita zmis çuenisa sulierad pimen ḡaxisayta  
 da qelt-çerita dedis zmisçulisa čemisa amona vaxtang  
 mozargulisa zisayta  
 saqsenebelad sulta čuentatws da sulta mšobelta čuentatws da  
 qovelta gardacvalebulta twsta čuentatws...*

By the charity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit ...  
 and the mercy of the Holy Resurrection from the grave of Our Lord  
 Jesus Christ  
 and with the support of all prophets, apostles, evangelists ...  
 I, **Maḡari Leteteli, son of Giorgi Grzeli, a very sinful (man),**  
 was considered worthy by God to create this holy *mravaltavi* book  
 with the help of my brother in spirit, Pimen Ḳaxa,  
 and by the handwriting of my mother's brother's son, Amona,  
 the son of Vaxtang Mozarguli,  
 as a memento of our souls and the souls of our parents and of  
 (the souls of) all our deceased...

First colophon, majuscules, final part, fol. 274<sup>a</sup>

*Daiçera ese çigni ieruselems, lavrasa didsa çmidisa da neḡarisa  
 mamisa čuenisa sabayssa dḡeta ḡmrtis moḡuarisa tevdoti  
 paḡreakisata da saba-çmidas paḡiosnisa da sanaḡrelisa  
 solomon mamasaxlisasata.*

*Da daiçera çmiday ese çigni dasabamitgan çelta: XWYE*

*Kroniḡoni iḡo: PḊ:*

**This book was written in Jerusalem, in the big Laura of our  
 Holy and Blessed Father Sabbas,** in the days of the God-loving  
 patriarch, Theodosius, and the venerable and blissful abbot of  
 St Sabbas' (Laura), Solomon.

And this holy book was written in the year 6468 after Creation.

The chronicon was 84.

Second colophon, minuscules, initial part, fol. 274<sup>b</sup>

*Da me, ḡlaxaḡman maḡari, ševçire çmiday ese mravaltavi  
 çmidat-çmidasa mtasa sinas saqsenebelad da sargebelad  
 tavta čuenta da sulta čuentatws.*

*da amas šina ars šemḡobay çeliçdisa dḡesasçaula qovelatay,  
 tkumuli çmidata mozḡuartay.*

*Moec, upalo, povnad çqalobay šeni ...*

And I, poor **Maḡari,** have devoted this holy *mravaltavi* to  
**Mt Sinai,** the most holy of all, for the remembrance and  
 benefit of ourselves and our souls.

And in it is the adornment of all feast days of the year (as)  
 preached by the holy leaders.

Grant, Lord, to find your compassion ...

Third colophon, minuscules, initial part, fol. 274<sup>v</sup>

*Ḳ(wrielei)S(o)N saxelita ḡmrtisayta*

*Šimosas mesamed çmiday ese çigni mravaltavi tqavita zroxisayta  
 sina-çmidas*

*qelita iovane priad codvilisa zosimesita dḡeta oden boroḡad  
 moxucebulobisa čemisata,*

*Brzanebita da priad mošçraped moḡuaçebita mikael da mikael  
 paḡiosanta mḡdeltayta,*

*Dasabamitganta çelta kartulad: XPPḂEsa da kroniḡonsa:*

*ŠAsa ...*

*Kyrie eleison!* In the name of God!

This holy *mravaltavi* book was bound for the third time in cowskin  
**on Holy (Mt) Sinai**

by the hand of Iovane Zosime, a very sinful (man),<sup>6</sup> in the days of  
 my being badly aged,

by order and under very zealous instigation of Michael and  
 Michael, the venerable priests,

in the year 6585 after Creation, Georgian style, and in the  
 chronicon 201 ...

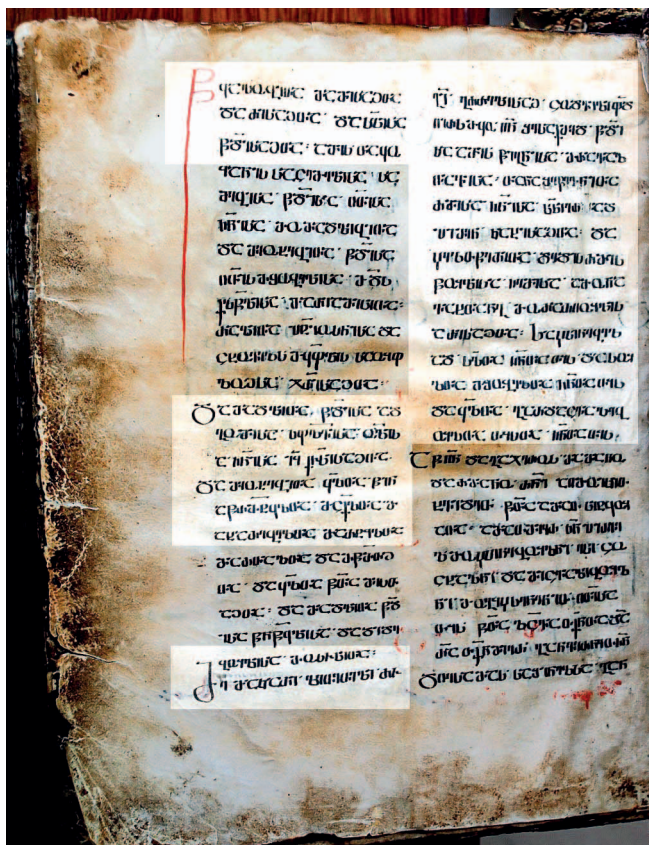


Fig. 1: Cod. Sin. georg. 32-57-33, fol. 273<sup>v</sup> and 274<sup>r</sup> (quoted parts of colophons 1 and 2 highlighted).

## 2.2

Whilst the transfer of the *mravaltavi* from Jerusalem to Mt Sinai was intentional and planned from the start,<sup>7</sup> many other manuscripts of the same age were subjected to unforeseen relocation from their place of origin to other sites. A well-known example of this is the famous Gospel codex of Adiši in Svanetia, which, according to the scribe's colophon appended to the right-hand column of fol. 378<sup>r</sup>, was written by him, a certain Mikael, in the chronicon 117, i.e. between September 896 and August 897 CE.<sup>8</sup> Cf. the reproduction of the column in question<sup>9</sup> together with its transliteration<sup>10</sup> in fig. 3 and the restored text in table 2.<sup>11</sup>

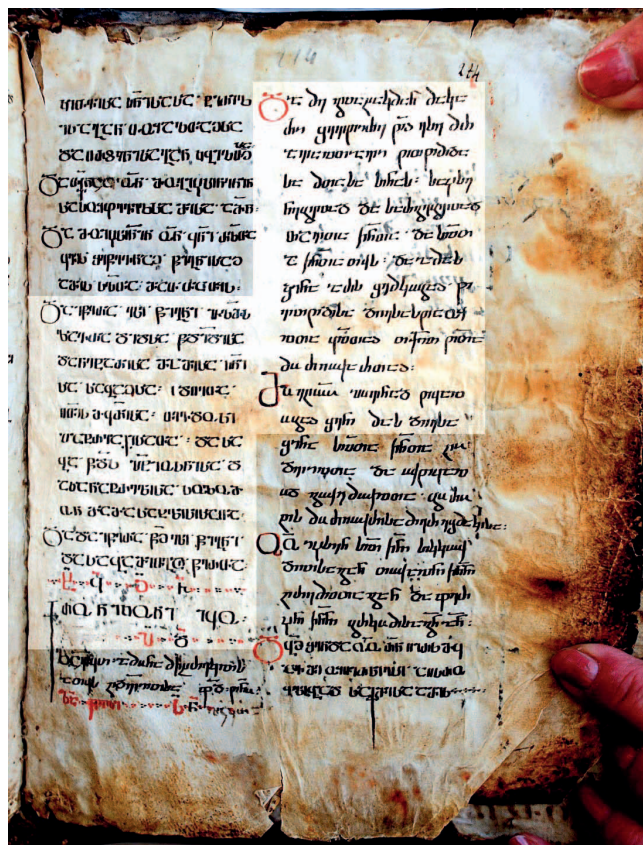
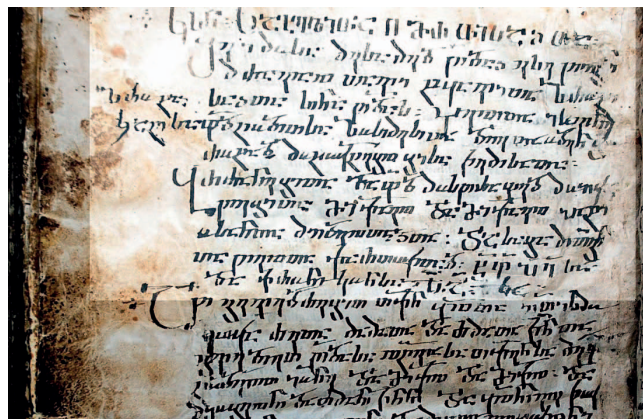


Fig. 2: Cod. Sin. georg. 32-57-33, fol. 274<sup>v</sup> (upper half; quoted parts of colophon 3 highlighted).



<sup>6</sup> As is visible in fig. 2, Iovane Zosime added two words (over two lines) to the left margin, viz. *xroxa* and *kacisa*. Taking them together as a coherent gloss, they might mean something like 'the cow of man', which would remain incomprehensible even if it referred to the 'cowskin' mentioned in the text. I therefore consider the phrase *kacisa* ('of [a] man') to relate to the following words, *prad codvilisa* ('very sinful'), and *xroxa* ('cow' – mod. Georgian 'xroxa') to have been added before the ending *sayta* for *xroxi* of the line above, which was probably barely legible even in Iovane Zosime's time. It is true that we would also expect to read *xroxi* in this case, but Iovane Zosime was anything but an accurate scribe.

<sup>7</sup> There is no indication that the second colophon (in minuscules) was added much later than the first (in majuscules). Why should the scribe have left a column for it as neatly as he did (fol. 274<sup>b</sup>) if it was not meant to be inserted immediately after the first colophon had been finished?

<sup>8</sup> See Gippert (forthcoming) for an earlier account of this codex and its history.

<sup>9</sup> Image taken from the facsimile edition by Taqaišvili 1916, pl. 198. Another reproduction can be found in Saržvelaze et al. 2003, opp. 433.

<sup>10</sup> In the narrow transliterations, any abbreviations and characters used numerically are marked by overbars. Uncertain readings are enclosed in square brackets and restorations of lost elements in angle brackets.

<sup>11</sup> Unlike Ekvtime Taqaišvili, who provided a first transcript of the colophons in his facsimile edition of the *Adiši Gospels* (Taqaišvili 1916, 11–14), but in

<Dačera č̄y ese čigni>

<dasabamitg̃n čē>

lta : x̄[p̄]<a : kr̄k̄>

nsa : rīz̄ : šob[i]<tg̃n>

ōisa č̄nisa īw k̄si[t]

čelta : : : čā : k̄e [m]<e>

owpeo šegwčqalen [č̄]<n>

ertobit ān :

Mčera amisi mikae[l]

locvasa momiq[s]<en>

et da šemindvet s[i]

owcbe čemi :

Da mmoselica mika<el>

diaḡoni momiqse[n]<et>

č̄sa locvasa tk̄n[s]<a>

ōi mparvel gwe<kmn>

[en] q̄lta er[t]<obit ān>

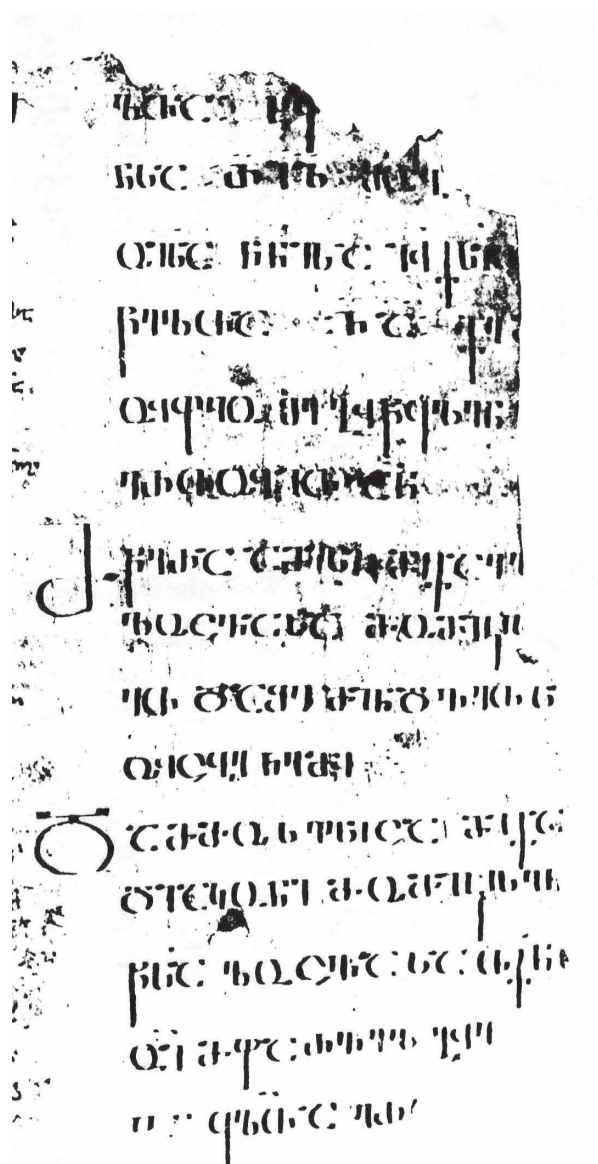


Fig. 3 : Scribe's colophon of the *Adiši Gospels*, fol. 387<sup>b</sup>, with transliteration.

Table 2: Restored and translated text of the scribe's colophon of the *Adiši Gospels*.

*Daičera čmiday ese čigni*

*dasabamitgan čelta xp̄a kroniḡonsa rīz̄*

*šobitgan upliša čuenisa iesu krišt̄sit čelta čā*

*krišt̄e meupeo šegwčqalen čuen ertobit amen :*

*Mčera[li]<sup>12</sup> amisi mikael locvasa momiqsenet*

*da šemindvet siucbe čemi :*

*Da mmoselica mikael diaḡoni*

*momiqsenet čmidasa locvasa tkuensa*

*upali mparvel-gwekmnen qovelta ertobit amen*

This holy book was written

in the year 6501 after Creation, in the chronicon 117,

(and) in the year 1001 after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ, Lord, have mercy upon us all. Amen!

Remember the writer of this, Michael, in (your) prayer

and forgive me my inattentiveness.

And the binder, too, Michael the deacon,

remember in your holy prayer.

May the Lord protect us all. Amen!

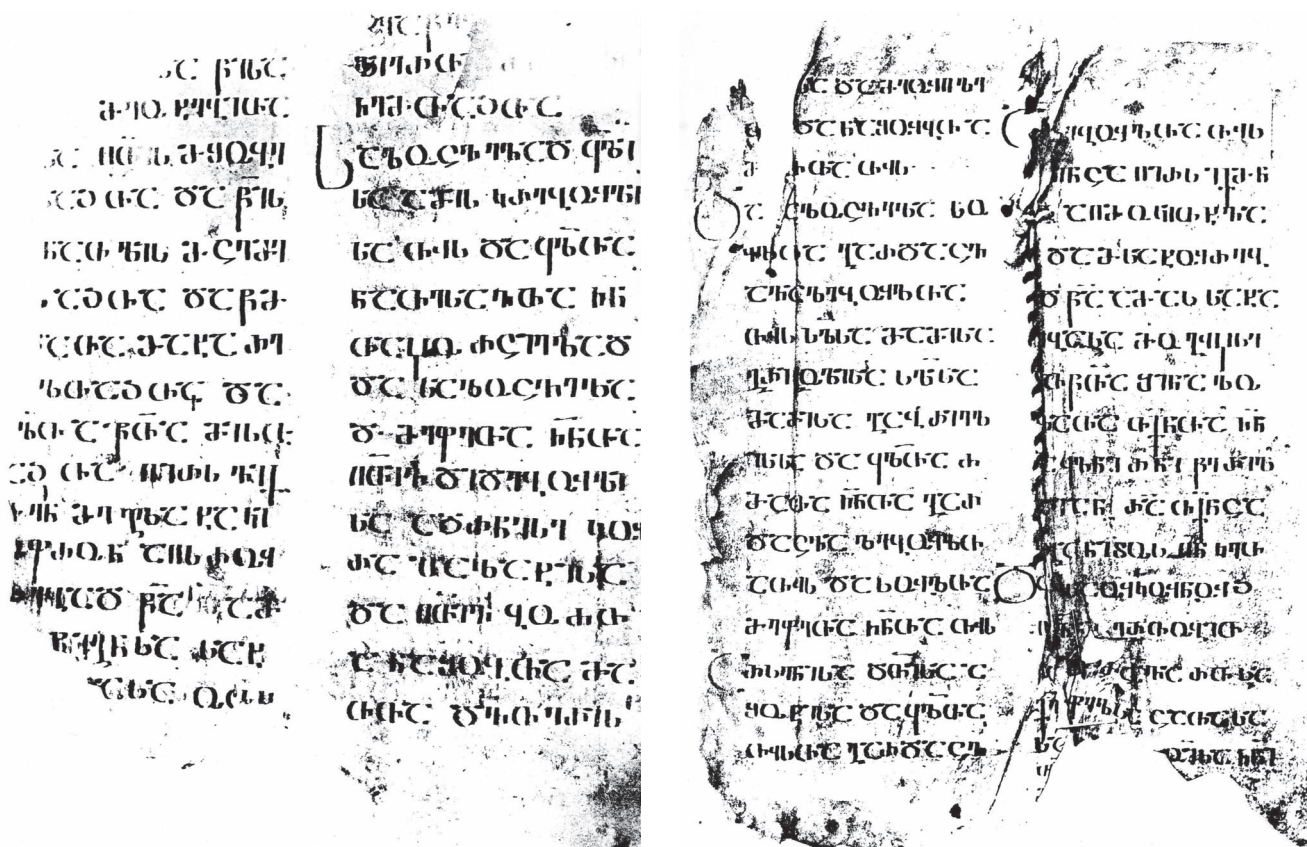


Fig. 4: *Adiši Gospels*, Sopron's colophon, fol. 387<sup>v</sup> and 388<sup>r</sup>.

### 2.2.1

One problematical aspect of this colophon is the date: the year 1001 *post Christum natum* is given here, which does not accord with the ‘chronicon’ calculation that would suggest 896–7 CE. The dating ‘after Creation’ does not help, since only the first element of the number in question ( $*xpa = 6501$ ),  $\bar{x} = 6000$  is readable with any certainty. Ekvtime Taqaišvili, who was the first person to consider this inconsistency, strongly argued in favour of accepting the earlier date. His main thrust of argumentation was that calculating dates based on the birth of Christ was extremely unusual in ancient Georgia and that it may therefore have been a miscalculation on the part of the scribe – a point that does seem to be well founded.<sup>13</sup> Taqaišvili further hinted at a second colophon written by

the same hand and in the same layout, which covers the two subsequent pages of the codex (387<sup>v</sup>–388<sup>r</sup>; cf. fig. 4). Similarly to the donor’s colophon of the *Sinai mravaltavi*, this colophon, also written in the first person, concerns the person who ‘executed’ the codex, that is, a certain Sopron. In addition, it mentions several contemporary dignitaries such as King Adarnase *curopalates* and his son, Davit *eristavi*, as well as two deceased fathers, named Grigol and Gabriel, all of them being easily identifiable in Georgian history during the period between 850 and 950 CE. For the sake of convenience, the essential parts of the second colophon have been transcribed and translated and are presented in table 3.<sup>14</sup>

accordance with the reconstruction by Silogava 1986, 47, I assume two lines to have been lost at the top of page 387, taking into account the length of the text of Mk. 14.37 that must be restored above the left-hand column of the page (387<sup>v</sup>, cf. below), with *çigni* (‘book’) instead of Silogava’s *otxtavi* (‘Tetraevangelion’) matching the existing space.

<sup>12</sup> The form *mçera*, as it occurs in the manuscript, is ungrammatical and must be a *lapsus calami* for *mçerali* (‘scribe’).

<sup>13</sup> Taqaišvili 1916, 13–14; cf. 2.4.2 below as to later usage. The difference

suggested, (1001–897 =) 104 years, should be seen within the context of the discrepancy in dating between the Georgian and the Byzantine eras, which consisted of 96 years; see Gippert (forthcoming) on the subject of this discrepancy, erroneously reduced to 94 years in Iovane Zosime’s *Praise of the Georgian Language*. The difference in dating remains unexplained thus far, as does the question as to whether it was arrived at by calculating on the basis of years *ante* or *post Christum natum*.

<sup>14</sup> In the transcripts, square brackets indicate the reinsertion of elements in lacunae. A more comprehensive – although not complete – reconstruction has been provided by Silogava 1986, 47–48.

Table 3: Restored and translated text of the compiler's colophon of the *Adiši Gospels*.

First column (fol. 387 <sup>a</sup> )	
... <i>meoxebita [çmidi]sa ġmrtis mšobe[li]sayta da çmidis[a ioane] natlis mceme[li]sayta da çm[id]ata maxare[be]ltayta da [qove]lta çmidata mistayta ġirs vikmen me glaxaķi [s]opron aġsrulebad çmidasa am[as] çignsa sax[areb]asa otx[tavsa] ..</i>	... with the help of the holy Theotokos and St John the Baptist and the holy Evangelists and all his saints, <b>I, poor Sopron, have become worthy to accomplish this holy four-chapter Gospel book ...</b>
Second column (fol. 387 <sup>b</sup> )	
... <i>[moġ]uaçe[bita su]lierta [zmata] čemtayta Salocvelad qovlisa amis krebulisatws da qovelta natesavta čuenta qorcielad da salocvelad mepeta čuenta ġmrtiv didebulisa adrnese kuraġalaġisa da ġmrtiv bozta našobta matta davit eris[tavisa]...</i>	... with the support of my spiritual brothers, to pray for all this congregation and all our carnal relatives, and to pray <b>for our kings, Adarnase the curopalates, exalted by God, and his children, gifted by God, Davit the eristavi ...</b>
Third column (fol. 388 <sup>a</sup> )	
... <i>da meuġlet[a] da našobta m[a]ttatws. Da [s]alocvela(d) sulta gardacvalebultatws sulisa mamisa grigolisa sulisa mamisa gabrielissa da qovelta zmata čuenta gardacvalebultatws da sulta mepeta čuentatws Arsenisa davitisa ašoġisa da qovelta twsta gardacv[al]ebultatws.</i>	... and their wives and children, and to pray for the souls of the deceased, <b>the soul of father Grigol, the soul of father Gabriel, and for (the souls of) all our deceased brothers, and for the souls of our kings Arseni, Davit, Ašoġ and all their deceased.</b>
Fourth column (fol. 388 <sup>b</sup> )	
<i>A[ç v]inca ġirs ikmn[et] aġmokitxva[d] da msaxureb[a]d çmidasa amas saxa[re]basa mogwqse[ne]t çmidata šina lo[c]vata tkuenta ...</i>	Now, whoever (of you) may become worthy enough to read and do service (with) these holy Gospels, remember us in your holy prayers...

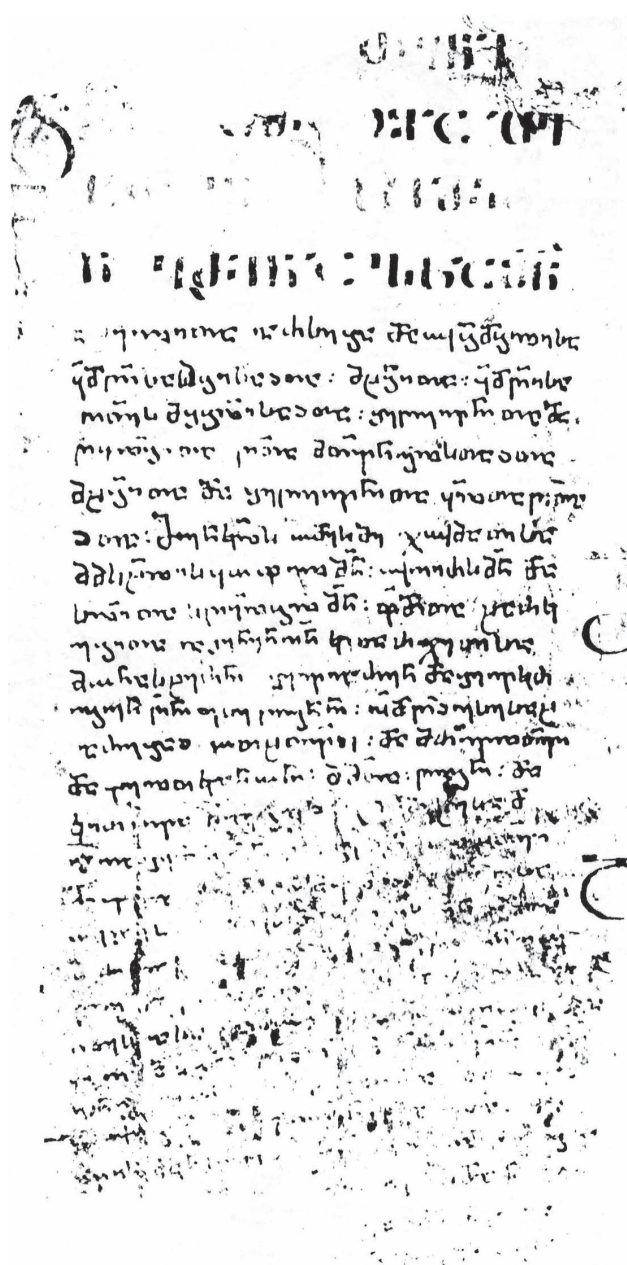
## 2.2.2

The other problem with the information contained in the two colophons is that they do not indicate the place where the codex was created. In this connection, it is especially the names of royalty mentioned in the colophons that are revealing. According to Taġaišvili, the contemporary king is identical to Adarnase, son of Davit *curopalates*, who mounted the Georgian throne in 888 CE, was acknowledged as *curopalates* by the Byzantine government in 891 CE and ruled until 923 CE, before being succeeded by his son, Davit. The deceased kings mentioned in the colophons then are Davit, Adarnase's father, who ruled from 876 to 881 CE, and his younger brother Ašoġ, who died in 885 CE; only the bearer of the third name, Arseni, has thus far remained unidentified (but may possibly represent the second son of Bagrať I, the father of Davit *curopalates* and Ašoġ, who is also named Adarnase

in historical sources).<sup>15</sup> All of these identifications lead us to the Georgian province of Tao-Ķlarġeti, situated in present-day Eastern Turkey, which was the hereditary land of the dynasty of Bagrať I (the so-called 'Tao-Ķlarġetian Bagratids'). This view is further supported by the fact that the compiler of the codex, Sopron, and the two other clerics who figure in the colophon can be placed in the same province, that is, as priors of the monastery of Šaťberdi, beginning with Grigol of Xanġta, who founded the monastery under Bagrať I, and ending with Sopron himself, who is mentioned as its renewer in Grigol's vita (by Giorgi Merčule).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Except for the latter proposal, see Taġaišvili 1916, 17.

<sup>16</sup> Abulaġe 1964, 294, l. 5–6, '*didi sopron, sanaťreli mamay, šaťberdisa eķlesiisa ganaxlebit aġmašenebeli da uķunisamde ġwrgwni misi*' ('the great Sopron, the blissful father, the builder [and] renewer of the church of Šaťberdi and its crown in eternity'). See Taġaišvili 1916, 16–17 for further details.



<da povna igini>

<mzina>reni

D[a hrko]wa þe

tres simeo

n gzinavsa šn

*Saxelita arseba daubdbliša  
qđ čisa smbisayta : mxbīta : qđ čisa  
gtis mšblisayta : šečevnita da  
čqlbīta čta mīvnglstayta  
mxbīta da šečevnita qlta čta  
yta : Me nkls odesme žumatisa  
mmsxlis qopilmn : ugrismn da  
slta sčqlblmn : pđita xark  
ebita ašenēn gn klaržetisa  
monašterni ševiareni da ševkr  
iben čni ese čignni : pđ čy ese sax  
arebay otxtvi : da mrvltvi  
da qelt kanoni : mmta čigni : da  
kitxva migebay : Owmešesad  
agašenēn gn šatberdi : ese otxtvi  
da qelt kanoni da mmta čigni matsa  
eklesiāsa ...*

Fig. 5: Ničkolaos' colophon (fol. 387<sup>r</sup>).

### 2.2.3

The assumption that the codex was compiled in the monastery of Šatberdi is corroborated beyond doubt by a third colophon that was inserted into the empty part of the column underneath the end of the Gospel text on fol. 386<sup>ra</sup><sup>17</sup> and preceding the scribe's colophon. Despite its position, it is clear from both its writing style (in slovenly minuscules, cf. fig. 5) and its contents that it must have been

added later. It details the collection, by a certain Ničkolaos, of the *Tetraevangelion* (book containing the text of the four Gospels) together with some other codices at Šatberdi. The list of items assembled comprises, besides the *otxtavi* ('Tetraevangelion') itself, a lectionary (*qelt-kanoni*) and other 'books' as well as a *mravaltavi* that is not further specified. There is good reason to believe that the latter codex is the so-called *Udabno mravaltavi* (nowadays ms. A-1109 at the National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi), which was detected in (and named after) the monastery of Udabno in Guria in South-west Georgia.<sup>18</sup> This and the fact that Ničkolaos was a

<sup>17</sup> The Gospel verse above is Mark 14:37, part of the passage from Mark 14:33–37, duplicated in a slightly different wording, following the Gospel of John on fol. 386<sup>r</sup>. The introductory line ('šovasa mas aḡsamaglebelisasa : evangeliē markozis tavisa') ('In the portico of the Ascension: from the Gospel of Mark') indicates that this text version was taken from a Jerusalem-type lectionary; cf. the so-called 'Paris lectionary' (Tarchnischvili 1959, 116–7), which has the lection of Mark 14:33–40 on Maundy Thursday (no. 650), prescribing to proceed to the *locum ascensionis* (aḡsamaglebelad) before (no. 645).

<sup>18</sup> See Taqaišvili 1916, 12–13, and Šanize / Čumburize 1994, 5 and 9–10. See Gippert (forthcoming, 2.3) for more information on the *Udabno mravaltavi*.

Table 4: Niķolaos' colophon, restored text and English translation.

*Saxelita arseba daubadebelisa qovlad čmidisa samebisayta :  
 meoxebita qovlad čmidisa ġmrtis mšobelisayta :  
 šečevnita da čqalobita čmidata mtavarangelostayta  
 meoxebita da šečevnita qovelta čmidatayta :  
 Me niķolaos odesme žumatisa mamasaxlis-čopilman uġirsman da  
 sulita sačqalobelman:  
 priadita xarķebita – ašen en ġmertman – **ķlarķetisa monaķterni**  
 ševiaren da ševķriben čmidani ese čignni:  
 pırvelad čmiday ese saxarebay otxtavi :  
 da mravaltavi da qeltķanoni  
 m(a)m(a)ta čigni da ķitxva-migebay :  
 Umetesad aġaşenen ġmertman šaķberdi :  
 ese otxtavi da qeltķanoni da mamata čigni matsa  
 eklesiasa ...*

In the name of the all-holy Trinity, substance unborn,  
 with the help of the all-holy Theotokos,  
 with the support and mercy of the holy archangels,  
 with the help and support of all saints:  
 I, Niķolaos, formerly the abbot of (the monastery of) Žumati,  
 unworthy and pitiful with (my) soul,  
 with much endeavour I have visited the **monasteries of Ķlarķeti**  
 – may God build (them) up – and collected these books:  
 first, this holy Tetraevangelion,  
 and a *mravaltavi* and a lectionary,  
 a book of the fathers and a questions-and-answers (book).  
 May God build up Šaķberdi above all!  
 This Tetraevangelion and the lectionary and the fathers' book, in  
 their church ...

former abbot of Žumati, another monastery of Guria, leads one to the assumption that the illegible parts of the colophon deal with the transfer of the codices to the latter region.<sup>19</sup>

#### 2.2.4

What remains unresolved, then, is the question as to when the removal from Šaķberdi to Guria took place and when, how and by whom the Gospel codex was transported to the mountain area of Svanetia. If Taqaišvili was right in assuming that Niķolaos undertook his expedition to Ķlarķeti in the second half of the sixteenth century, there was not much time remaining for the Tetraevangelion to have reached Adiři, where it was found by the Svanetian scholar Besarion Niķaraķe sometime before the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>20</sup> There are, indeed, two later notes in the codex that mention the name of Adiři (on fol. 312<sup>r</sup>, between Jn. 3.32 and 4.2, and on fols. 345<sup>v</sup>–346<sup>r</sup>, under Jn. 10.41); these, however, are undated (cf. the transcripts provided in figures 6a and b), so that the question must remain unresolved.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The first five lines pertain to the Gospel text of Mark 14:37. For parts that are illegible today, the transcript provided here is based upon Taqaišvili 1916, 11.

<sup>20</sup> See Taqaišvili 1916, 7 and 12. As to B. Niķaraķe, see Gippert 1986, 206–7.

<sup>21</sup> Silogava 1986, 49 proposes (obviously on palaeographic grounds) a dating sometime during the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries for the first note and the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries for the second note; furthermore, he determines the script of Niķolaos's colophon to be a 'straight *nusxuri* of the eleventh century' ('XI ს-ის სწორი ნუსხური').

#### 2.3

Another Georgian manuscript from Mt Sinai likely to have originated in Jerusalem, namely Cod. Sin. georg. 16, a Gospel codex written in *nusxuri* minuscule, is testament to a particular type of 'wandering'.<sup>22</sup> The main colophon of the codex has now been lost, but it was transcribed by A. Cagareli in his catalogue of the Georgian manuscripts of St Catherine's monastery in 1888<sup>23</sup>. According to this transcript, the codex was executed in 992 CE (chronicon 212) by Gabriel 'the amiable' (*saquareli*) in the Monastery of the Holy Cross.<sup>24</sup> As a matter of fact, Gabriel does figure in other notes in the codex, too, specifically on fol. 94<sup>v</sup> at the end of St Matthew's Gospel and on fol. 243<sup>v</sup> at the end of St Luke's Gospel. However, he was obviously not the scribe who penned most of the text, given the sharp difference in the handwriting discernible in the former note. Instead, it is obvious that the main text of the Gospels as well as the additional indices contained in the manuscript were written by a 'decanus of the Cross' (*ķuarisa*

<sup>22</sup> These and other manuscripts from Mt Sinai were inspected by the author and several colleagues (M. Shanidze, S. Sarjeladze, D. Tvaltvadze, B. Outtier) during a research trip to the monastery undertaken in May 2009 in connection with the international project entitled '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 project kindly supported by INTAS, Brussels, ref. no. 05-1000008-8026). The members of the group are extremely grateful to the monastery librarian, Father Justin, for the kind support he provided during their stay.

<sup>23</sup> The last folio (fol. 332) containing the colophon must have disappeared before 1902, since I. Žavaxiřvili was unable to consult it during his visit to Mt Sinai; see his catalogue (Žavaxiřvili 1947, 38).

<sup>24</sup> Cagareli 1888b, 198–9, no. 7; reproduced in Garitte 1956, 53.

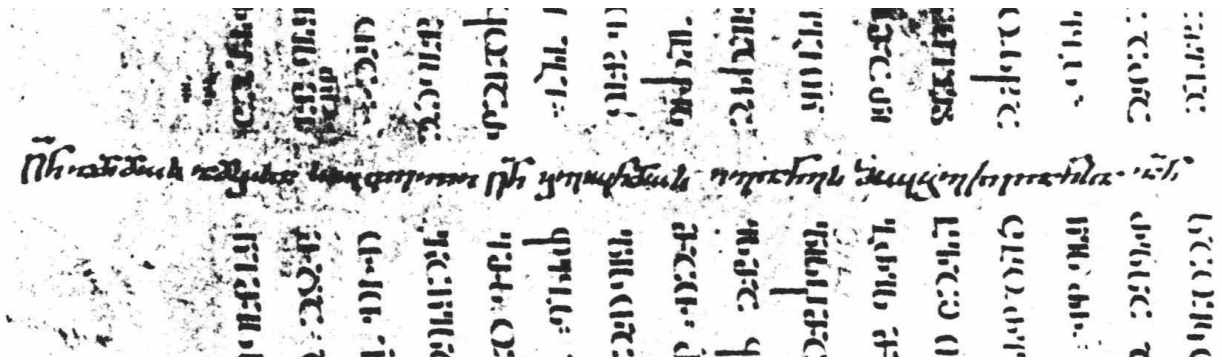


Fig. 6a: *Adiši Gospels*, Ivane Mubečviani's note on fol. 312r.

*Ġ(mertma)n adidos ad(i)šisa supeli Ġ(mertma)n šeundos ivanes mubečviansa. a(me)n.*

God exalt the village of Adiši! God pardon Ivane Mubečviani! Amen!

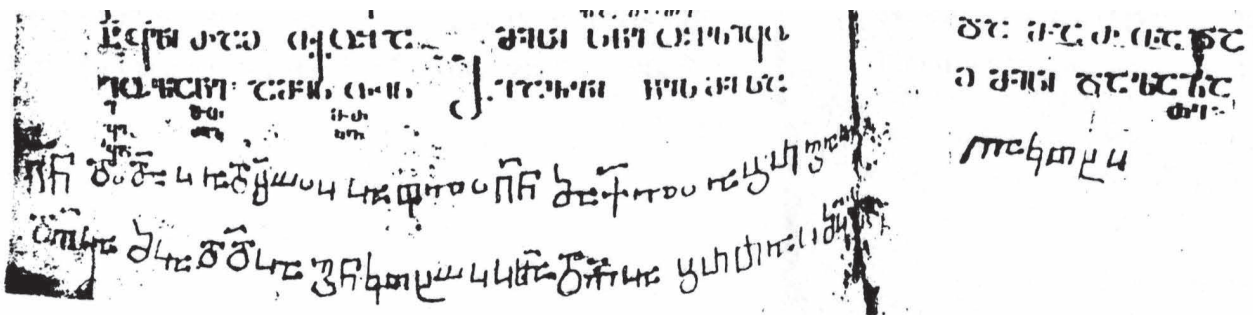


Fig. 6b: Note on fols. 345v-346r.<sup>26</sup>

*Ġn dydas adšoys saply Ġn makly abrgan[s]*

*gaktxs*

*dġsa msa dġsa gnġtxossā dġsa brzanbs[a]*

*Ġmertman adidos adišis sopeli. Ġmertman mikael abregians*

*ġmertma akurtxos!*

*dġesa mas didisa ganġitxuisasa, dġesa brzanebisa*

God exalt the village of Adiši! God bless Mikail Abregiani

on the day of the big judgement, on the day of the command.

*deġanozi*) named Daniel, whose name appears alongside Gabriel's in the main colophon and the two notes mentioned above, and also in several other short notes, each written in the same hand as the text to which they pertain.<sup>25</sup>

### 2.3.1

Be that as it may, the present codex is unusual in that its first quires – containing the text of St Matthew's Gospel – were obviously corrected in a second hand, the original text having been erased earlier, at least in parts. A clear example can be seen on fol. 8v where the wording of Matt. 2:2, 'Where is he who was born king of the Jews?', was changed to read *sada*

*ars r(omel)i-igi išva meupe ho(w)riatay*,<sup>27</sup> with the relative clause *romeli-igi išva* ('he who was born') replacing the participial clause *axladšobili igi* ('the newly born one' – cf. fig. 7; the erased text has remained visible in part). Comparing other witnesses to the Old Georgian Gospels, it becomes clear at once that this difference stems from a controversy about different recensions, the erased wording representing the text of the 'Protovulgate', which prevailed in the ninth and tenth centuries, whilst the 'new' text is that of the later 'Vulgate' redaction, worked out by George the Hagiorite on Mt Athos in the early eleventh century (Athonite Vulgate); cf. table 5, where the versions in question are contrasted with the Greek text, which has the participle *τεχθείς* in the position in question.

<sup>25</sup> See Žavaxišvili 1947, 38, and Garitte 1956, 51–2 for the full list; cf. 2.6 below for further details.

<sup>26</sup> Because of its idiosyncratic spelling, the text of this note is provided with both a transliteration and a (tentative) transcription.

<sup>27</sup> Here, and in the following transcripts, restorations of abbreviations are marked by parentheses.

Table 5: Two recensions of Matt. 2:2 represented in Sin. georg. 16, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>.

<b>Sin.georg. 16, original text</b>	<i>sada ars axladšobili igi meupe huriatay</i>
Protovulgate (D,F,G)	<i>sada ars axladšobili igi meupē huriatay</i>
<b>Sin.georg. 16, corrected text</b>	<i>sada ars romeli igi išva meupe huriatay</i>
Athonite Vulgate (H,I,K; B,R,P)	<i>sada ars romeli igi išva meupe huriatay</i>
<b>Greek</b>	Ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ <b>τεχθεὶς</b> βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων

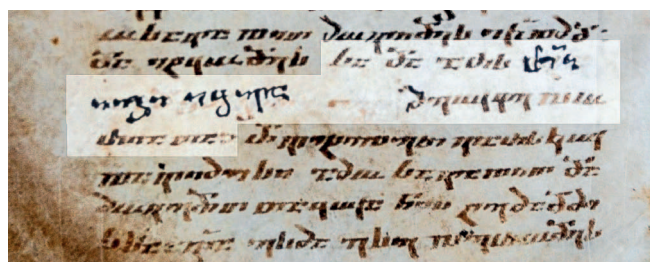
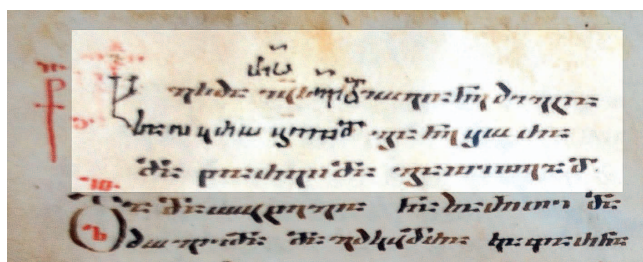
## 2.3.2

However, things are not that simple. In some cases, the overwritten text does not agree with the Athonite Vulgate, but instead with the Protovulgate itself. This is true for Matt. 4:12 on fol. 13<sup>v</sup>, for example. Here, the corrector's text runs: *x(olo) esma r(a)y i(eso)ws v(itarme)d iovane mieca sapqrobil(e)d ganešora da čarvida galilead* ('But when Jesus heard that John had been thrown into prison, he withdrew and went away to Galilee'), with *x(olo)* ('but') replacing erased *v(itarc)a* ('as') (in red ink), *v(itarme)d* ('that') replacing erased *r(amet)u* ('id.'), *r(a)y* ('as') added above the line, and *sapqrobil(e)d* ('into prison') covering an erasure of the same length, with no traces of the erased wording remaining (cf. fig. 8). The resulting text is clearly that of the Athonite Vulgate again, with the exception of *sapqrobiled* ('into prison'), which does not appear in this redaction. Instead, *sapqrobiled* is part of the Protovulgate wording, as are the erased words *v(itarc)a* and *r(amet)u*;

the closest witness of this redaction, the Palestine Gospels (G), reads: *uitarca esma i(eso)ws, r(amet)u iovane mieca sapqrobiled ganešora da čarvida galilead* ('When Jesus heard that John had been thrown into prison, he withdrew and went away to Galilee'). What, then, did the corrector replace by *sapqrobiled* at the position specified, if not the same word? Compare table 6, which contrasts the relevant versions with the Greek text again. It proves that there is, indeed, no other candidate available for restoring the erasure, even though *sapqrobiled* has no explicit equivalent in the Greek version. Note that two other Sinai Gospel manuscripts, R = Sin. georg. 15 (from 975 CE) and P = Sin. georg. 30 (tenth century), show an intermediate text with the conjunctions of the Protovulgate, but without *sapqrobiled*, while the latter word does occur in the oldest redaction, represented in the Adiši and Opiza Gospels (C, from 897, cf. above, and A, from 913).

Table 6: Recensions of Matt. 4:12 represented in Sin. georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>.

<b>Sin.georg. 16, original text</b>	<i>v(itarc)a esma i(eso)ws r(amet)u iovane mieca *sapqrobiled ganešora da čarvida...</i>
Protovulgate (F,G)	<i>uitarca esma iesus rametu iovanē mieca sapqrobiled ganešora da čarvida...</i>
(D)	<i>uitarca esma iesus rametu iovane sapqrobiled mieca ganešora da čarvida...</i>
Intermediate (R,P)	<i>uitarca esma iesus rametu iovane mieca ganešora da čarvida...</i>
<b>Sin.georg. 16, corrected text</b>	<i>x(olo) esma ray i(eso)ws v(itarme)d iovane mieca sapqrobiled ganešora da čarvida...</i>
Ath. Vulgate (H,I,K)	<i>xolo esma ray iesus vitarmed mieca ganešora da čarvida...</i>
Adiši (C)	<i>[x(olo)] esma ray ukue iesus rametu iovane sapqrobiled mieca čarvida...</i>
Opiza (A)	<i>esma ray ukue iesus rametu iovane sapqrobiled mieca ganešora da čarvida...</i>
<b>Greek</b>	Ἀκούσας δὲ ὅτι Ἰωάννης παρεδόθη ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν.

Fig. 7: Sin.georg. 16, fol. 8<sup>v</sup>, excerpt, with Matt. 2:2 highlighted.Fig. 8: Sin.georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>, excerpt, with Matt. 4:12 highlighted.

## 2.3.3

A similar case is encountered in the next verse (Matt. 4:13). Here, the corrected text comprises the phrase *zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo* ('by the seashore') and the article-like pronominal form *m(a)t* ('those'), both again inserted into erasures of the same length, thus resulting in the text *movida daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo sazǵvarta m(a)t zabulonista* ('He came [and] settled in Capernaum by the seashore in the confines of Zabulon') (cf. fig. 9). In this form, however, the text is not compliant with the Athonite redaction, which has neither *zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo* nor *mat*, but with that of the Protovulgate, which does contain these words. So again we must assume that the 'corrections' reinstate words that had been previously erased. Table 7 contrasts the relevant versions again; note that the absence of *da* ('and') between the two verbal forms cannot be taken as a decisive feature, since it may have been omitted haplographically prior to *daemkwdra* ('he settled'). In this verse, the Adişi and Opiza versions are closer to the Protovulgate in that they do have *zǵws kǐde-* ('seashore') (parallelling Greek τὴν παραθαλασσίαν), but in the dative-locative case.

## 2.3.4

Why, then, did the corrector replace *sapqrobiled*, *zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo* and *mat* with the same words? In my view, the perplexing picture we have can only be accounted for if we assume that the corrector first attempted to adapt the text to the 'new' Vulgate, but was then forced – for whatever reason – to re-establish the 'older' reading. There is no indication that this was performed by another person, the hand of both types of corrections being the same. However, the erasures might have been applied independently beforehand. This is suggested by Matt. 4:10 (fol. 13<sup>v</sup>), where the corrector provided a contaminated text, with both the 'new' and the 'old' readings covering the same erasure, side by side (cf. fig. 10). The words in question are the vocative forms *sat(a)na* and *ešmaḳo*, both denoting the 'devil' ('Go away from me, devil, for it is written...'), the former appearing in the Athonite text and the latter in the Protovulgate (as well as the Adişi Gospels); and it is clear that it must have been *ešmaḳo* that was erased first (see table 8, which displays the relevant versions as a synopsis).

If the corrector had intended to simply replace the older text with the newer one here, he would certainly have written

Table 7: Recensions of Matt. 4:13 represented in Sin. georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>.

Sin. georg. 16, original text			<i>movida daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo sazǵvarta m(a)t zabulonista...</i>
Protovulgate	F,G,R,P		<i>movida da daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo sazǵvarta mat zabulonista...</i>
	D		<i>movida da daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo sazǵvarta zabulonista...</i>
	Opiza	A	<i>movida da daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdesa sazǵvarta zabulonista...</i>
	Adişi	C	<i>movida daešena kaparnaomd zǵws kǐdesa sazǵvarta zabulonista...</i>
Sin.georg. 16, corrected text			<i>movida daemkwdra kaparnaums zǵws kǐdit kǝrzo sazǵvarta m(a)t zabulonista...</i>
Ath. Vulgate	H,I		<i>movida daemkwdra kaparnaums sazǵvarta zabulonista...</i>
	K		<i>movida da daemkwdra kaparnaums sazǵvarta zabulonista...</i>
Greek			ἐλθὼν κατόκησεν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν ἐν ὁρίοις Ζαβουλὼν ...

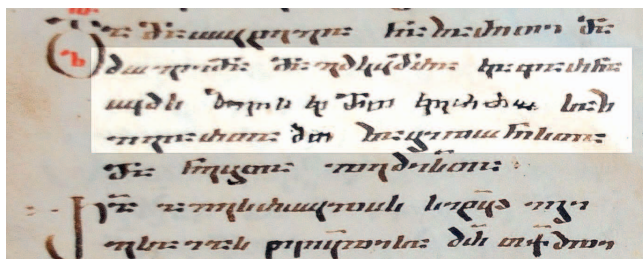


Fig. 9: Sin.georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>, excerpt, with Matt. 4:13 highlighted.

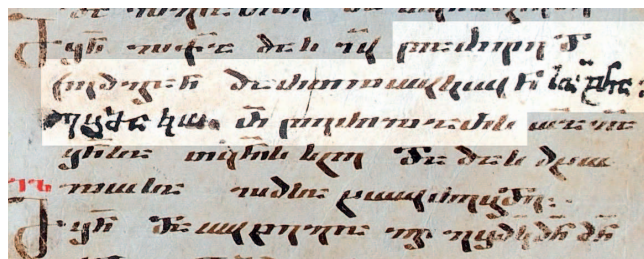


Fig. 10: Sin.georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>v</sup>, excerpt, with Matt. 4:10 highlighted.

Table 8: Recensions of Matt. 4:10 represented in Sin. georg. 16, fol. 13<sup>r</sup>.**Sin. georg. 16, original text**

Protovulgate (D,F,G,R,P,B)

Adiši (C)

**Sin. georg. 16, corrected text**

Ath. Vulgate (H,I,K)

**Greek**

čarved čemgan martluğun \*ešmažo : r(amet)u čeril ars...

čarved čemgan martluğun ešmažo, rametu čeril ars...

vidode, ešmažo, rametu čeril ars...

čarved čemgan martluğun saŋ(a)na : ešmažo . r(amet)u čeril ars...

čarved čemgan martluğun saŋana, rametu čeril ars...

Ὑπαγε, Σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ ...

saŋana over the erasure in the lower line, and if he had added ešmažo later, he would have squashed this in at the end of the previous line instead of saŋana. It thus seems that the corrector was intending from the outset to execute the ‘mixed’ text seen in the manuscript today – with but a slight preference for the Athonite Vulgate.

## 2.3.5

In any case, the codex clearly presupposes – and bears witness to – contacts between the Georgian communities on Mt Sinai and Mt Athos, where the Vulgate was established by about 1025 CE. These contacts are not precisely datable, of course, since the corrector left no colophon or other information in the manuscript on which he worked. However,

Table 9: The scribe’s colophon of Sin. georg. 19, fol. 262<sup>r</sup>.

*K(riste)s moquareno . m(a)m(a)no da žmano . Vis t(a)naca moiči-  
os : č(mida)y ese : s(a)x(a)r(e)b(a)y : š(emdgoma)d č(ue)nsa :  
Locva qavt*

*ğ(mrt)isa t(w)s : da r(omel)i dameklos šemindevit .*

*Axal . targmnilisag(an) . dagwčera . da de-*

*dad : diad . martal ars : Am(a)t žuelta*

*sax(a)r(e)bata : Zogzogi siŋ(ua)y : ara ečamebis :*

*K(rist)e š(eičqal)e možguari . č(ue)ni d(avi)t : da m(i)k(ae)l : ucbad mčx-  
rekalı : Da mose . Da m(i)k(ae)l : da čitay da s(wmeo)n  
da žerasime : Da grigol : Da mšobel-*

*ni : da žm(a)ni m(a)tni : a(me)n . X(olo) daičera mtasa*

*č(mida)sa : sinas : Saqopelsa : č(mid)isa da ġ(mrt)is-*

*mxilvelisa : Mosessa Kronikoni ijo*

*: SŽB : Ricxw . haysten ečera<sup>28</sup> M[(i)k(ae)ls]<sup>29</sup>*

*eŋraŋi : da mčerali : ornive hg[ian]<sup>30</sup>*

*K(rist)e aqmare . Moses : nebisaebr š[enisa]*

Lovers of Christ, fathers and brothers! To whomever  
these holy Gospels will fall after us, pray for him

to God! And pardon me for what I have missed!

We have written it down from the new translation and  
it is very faithful to its mother. Of those old  
Gospels it does not testify many a word.

Christ, have mercy on our leader Davit and Michael, the  
inattentive writer, and Mose and Michael and Čitay and Symeon  
and Gerasime and Grigol and their  
parents and brothers, amen! And it was written  
on the holy Mount Sinai, in the abode of the holy  
and God-viewing Moses. **The chronicon was**

**number 292.** My goodness! Mikael has written so much!

The parchment and the writer, both remain.

Christ, let it be useful to Moses as you like!

<sup>28</sup> The present formula has not yet been identified with any certainty. Garitte (1956, 58) hesitatingly read *laysten* instead of *haysten*, which remains incomprehensible and can be ruled out on closer inspection. A more promising interpretation has recently been provided by B. Outtier (2012, 19–22) who saw *haysten* as a variant of *esten* (< *esoden* < *eseoden*) (‘so much’), with *e* > *ay* representing an otherwise unknown ‘inverted development’ (*ucnobia akamde pirikuğma mozraoba*) of the adaptation of (Greek) αἰσθησις to (Georgian) უბოგობა (i.e. *estetika*), with the initial *h*- being an ‘addition’ (*damaŋebuli*) as in *haba*, *haeri*, and *hegre*. The interpretation preferred here presupposes instead that *haysten* is a contamination of *esten* (‘so much’) with the interjection *hai* (‘goodness me!’; ‘my God!’). A similar exclamation is found in a colophon in the Tbilisi manuscript S-30, the fifteenth-century ‘Queen Mary’ codex of the Georgian chronicle, Kartlis Cxovreba, where the scribe exclaimed: *dedasa esten ečera* (‘Mother, he has written so much!’)

after enumerating the texts authored by Leonti Mroveli; cf. Bregaze et al. 1959, 42 and Kekeliže 1980, 236. A comparable formation is *haysre* (‘thus’) (recorded in Saržvelaže 1995, 279a with an attestation in the thirteenth century ms. A-85, fol. 327<sup>r</sup>), which is likely to consist of *hai* and *esre* (‘id.’). The word *esten* itself is attested as early as the Adiši Gospels (Jn. 14.9), while *hai* appears in Šota Rustaveli’s epic (Vepx. 309a) and later texts.

<sup>29</sup> The restoration of the name is highly uncertain, only the initial capital *M* being discernible. We might also read *M(o)s(e)s* if it was the Mose named previously as the writer of the present Gospels, as suggested by the last line of the colophon.

<sup>30</sup> The last word has not been identified yet, but the two first letters seem quite clear.



Fig. 11: Sin. georg. 10, fol. 262', excerpt, with date within colophon highlighted.

there is another witness among the Georgian manuscripts from St Catherine's monastery that provides evidence of the existence of such contacts during the eleventh century, shortly after the execution of the Vulgate. This is Cod. Sin. georg. 19, another Gospel manuscript written in *nusxuri* minuscules, which represents the Athonite Vulgate text throughout. The scribe's colophon has been preserved in this manuscript (on fol. 262'), and it records that it was written in the year 1072 (chronicon 292), possibly by a certain Mikael, whom it mentions as an 'inattentive writer'.<sup>31</sup> What

is more, it explicitly states that it contains the text of the 'new translation', whilst some of the 'old words' no longer appear. Given its importance for the history of Georgian manuscript culture, I have reproduced the colophon *in toto* in table 9, in as far as it is legible today (cf. fig. 11).<sup>32</sup>

### 2.3.6

The very fact that Cod. 19 was written on Mt Sinai presupposes that the Gospel text from Mt Athos must also have been

<sup>31</sup> In Modern Georgian, *ucbad*, an adverbial form of the adjective *uceb-i*, means 'suddenly, unexpectedly, quickly' (Rayfield 2006, 1263), which would suggest Mikael was considered to 'write fast'. Within the present context, however, we may assume a pejorative meaning ('negligent, inattentive') if we consider that the writer of the *Adiši Gospels* begged

forgiveness for his *si-ucb-e*, i.e. 'inattentiveness' (cf. 2.2 above); Rayfield 2006, 1188 translates *siucbe* as 'ignorance', which seems hard to justify.

<sup>32</sup> The photo taken *in situ* in 2009 shows that the ends of the last four lines have been largely obliterated. Multispectral analysis would be necessary to enhance the legibility.

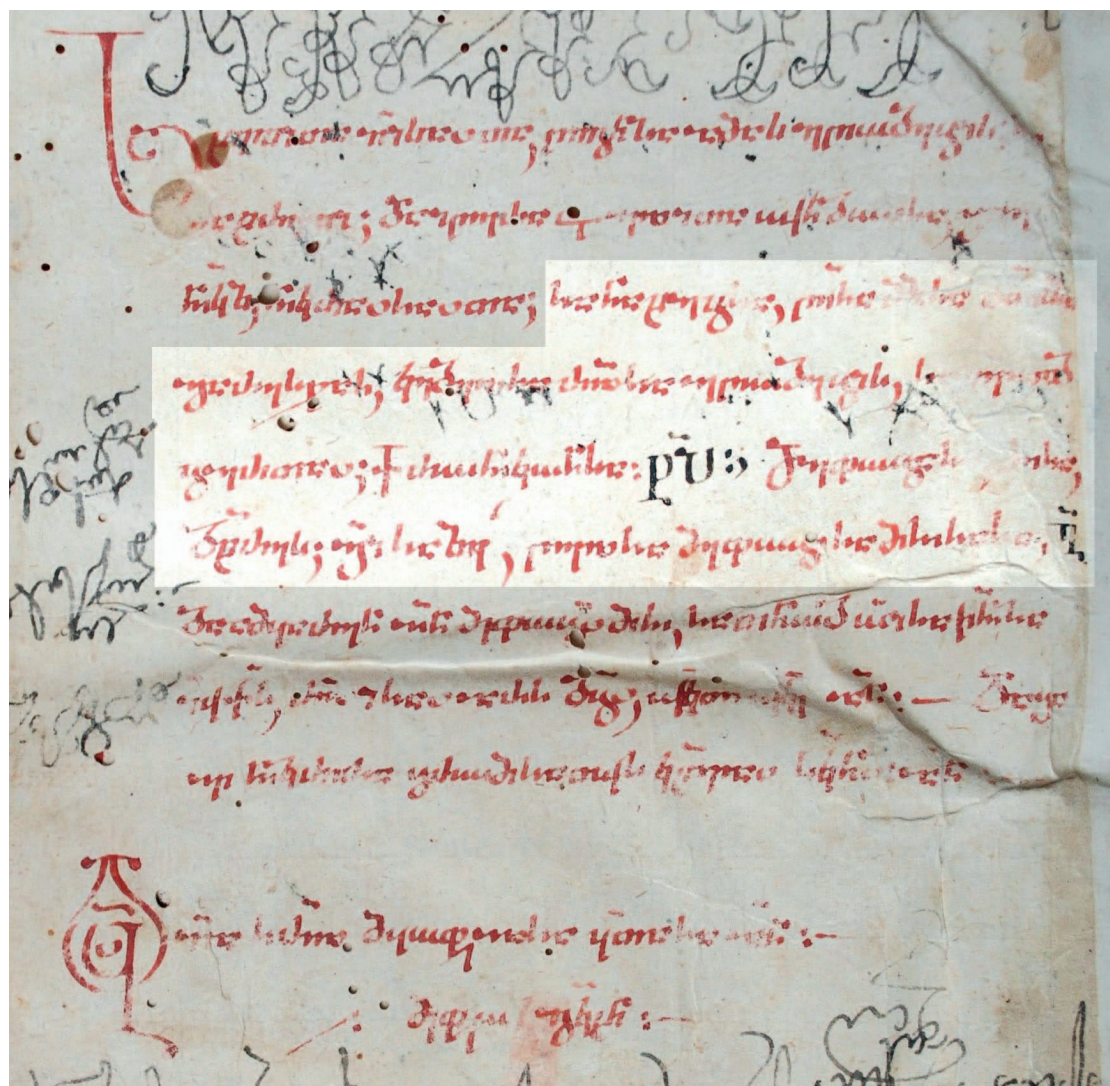


Fig. 12: Cod. Vind. georg. 4, scribe's colophon on fol. 304<sup>v</sup>, with place and date highlighted.

Table 10: Scribe's colophon of Cod. Vind. georg. 4, fol. 304<sup>v</sup>.

*Saxelita gmrtsayta, çignsa amas eçodebis sa-  
naşreli; daiçera qelita undoysa, şavisa  
niķ(olao)z niķraysayta; sanaxebsa ç(mid)isa mamisa  
d(avi)tissa  
garežas, ķedvasa r(ome)lsa eçodebis soplad  
bertay; Kroniķonsa : T̄P̄ : Mepobasa zisa,  
d(eme)tres; g(iorg)isa ze, çelsa mepobisa misisasa G.  
daamqaren g(mertma)n mepob(a)y misi, satnod o(wpl)isa ç(ue)nisa  
i(eso)w k(rişte)s, r(om)lisay ars d(ide)b(a)y; uķ(uni)ti  
uķ(unisamd)e a(me)n : — Da şa-  
v niķrasa şromisatws k(urt)x(e)vay s(au)k(u)n(o)y : a(me)n*

*D(ide)b(a)y g(merts)a sr(u)l-mqop(e)lsa q(ovel)tasa a(me)n : —  
— : me(u)peo<sup>33</sup> g(ua)k(urt)x(e)n : —*

In the name of God! This book is named 'the blissful one'; it was written by the hand of the unapt 'Black' Niķolaoz 'the Niķra', *in the vicinity of the (monastery of) the holy Father David in Gareža, in Ķedva, which as a village is named Berta; in the chronicon 380, under the reign of the son of Demetre, Giorgi, in the third year of his reign.* May God consolidate his dominion, to the delight of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose is the glory forever and ever.  
— And for the black Niķra eternal benediction for his endeavour! Amen!

Glory to God, the accomplisher of all! Amen!  
Ruler, bless us!

present there as the ‘mother’, i.e. the template from which it was copied. We do not know whether there was a direct route leading from the Iviron monastery to St Catherine’s or whether the contact indicated went via Jerusalem. The latter proposal is suggested by the fact that the founder of the Georgian monastery on Mt Athos, Eptwme the Hagiorite, is commemorated in the *menaion* of May (i.e., the liturgical book containing the varying parts of the liturgy for that month), which represents the overwriting of the palimpsest codex, Vind. georg. 2, another codex that originated in Jerusalem (cf. 2.5).<sup>34</sup>

## 2.4

The Georgians in Jerusalem were not only in contact with their compatriots on Mt Sinai and Mt Athos, but also with the centres of manuscript production in their Caucasian homeland. Cod. Vind. georg. 4, a large, illuminated homiliary

codex in *nusxuri* minuscule now kept in the Austrian National Library, Vienna, is testament to this.<sup>36</sup> According to the scribe’s colophon written in red ink on fol. 304<sup>v</sup> (cf. fig. 12), the codex was produced in the year 1160 CE (chronicon 380) by Niḱoloz Niḱra at a place called Berta, which was close to the monastery of St David of Gareḟa in South-east Georgia; compare the transcript with its English translation in table 10.<sup>37</sup>

### 2.4.1

Sometime after its completion, the codex must have been moved to Jerusalem. This is implied by another colophon added on the subsequent page (305<sup>r</sup>) by Vlasi, archbishop of Urbnisi, who visited Palestine between 1570 and 1572 to restore the Georgian manuscripts of the Monastery of the Holy Cross.<sup>38</sup> His colophon (fig. 13) clearly states that he undertook the restoration of the present codex in the year 1570 (chronicon 258); cf. the transcript provided in table 11.

Table 11: Vlasi’s colophon of Cod. Vind. georg. 4, fol. 305<sup>r</sup>.

*Didebay ḡmrtisa srul-mḡopelsa ḡovlisa ḡetilisasa:*

*ḡirs-vikmen me urbnel mtavarebiḡoposi. vlasi . ḡeḡazmad ḡmidisa amis ḡignisa sanatreliḡa: rametu ḡamta sigrḡisagan ḡanrḡunil, da uḡmar-kmnil iḡo.*

*da ḡuen axlad brḡaneḡita da ḡerḡineḡita mamisa ḡuenisa ḡpilel mtavarebiḡoposisa barnabaysita ḡel-vḡav ḡeḡazmad salocvelad codvilisa sulisa ḡemisa da codvata ḡemta ḡesandobelad. da ḡovelta ḡuenta twsta da natesavta micvalebulta ḡesandobelad.*

*da aḡ gevedrebi ḡovelta romelnica ikitḡwdit ḡmidasa amas ḡignsa, rayta ḡsenebit vikmneḡdet ḡmidata ḡina locvata tkuenta, rayta tkuenca moḡot sasḡideli uxuvad mimniḡebelisa mis ḡoveltatwsgan, da ertobit ḡirs vikmnnet sasupevelsa catasa amen : locvay ḡavt mamisa barnabastws da ḡuen sulierta ḡmatatws. da ḡem codvilisa vlasestws romelman ḡmiday ese ḡigni ḡevhḡazme. mravali ḡiri vixile, upalman uḡḡis.*

*ḡeḡkazma<sup>35</sup> ḡmiday ese ḡigni kroniḡonsa : SNE :*

Glory to God, the accomplisher of everything good!

I, the **archbishop of Urbnisi, Vlasi**, have become worthy of restoring this holy ‘blissful’ book. For due to the length of time, it has become rotten and unusable.

And upon the order and regulation of our father, the archbishop of Tbilisi, Barnaba, I have undertaken to restore it to receive prayers for my sinful soul and forgiveness of my sins, and forgiveness for all our deceased kin and relatives.

And now I beg all of you who read this holy book that we may be remembered in your holy prayers, that you, too, may receive ample reward from Him who gives to all, and that we may become worthy of the kingdom of the heavens. Amen!

Pray for Father Barnaba and for us, the brethren in spirit, and myself, sinful Vlase, I who have restored this holy book. I have seen many hardships, as God knows!

**This holy book was restored in the chronicon 258.**

<sup>33</sup> The colophon has *mepeo* without an abbreviation mark, which would mean ‘King!’; *meupeo* (‘Ruler!’) is preferred here as it is more commonly used to address God.

<sup>34</sup> See Gippert 2013b as to further details.

<sup>35</sup> The colophon reads *ḡeḡkazmay* with a hyper-archaising addition of the suffix ‘y’, typical of post-Old Georgian writers.

<sup>36</sup> My thanks are due to the staff of the Austrian National Library, who made the Cod. Vind. georg. 4 and several other manuscripts in its collection available to the members of the aforementioned INTAS project during a stay in Vienna in June 2008.

<sup>37</sup> A German translation of the colophon can be found in Peradze 1940, 226.

<sup>38</sup> See Peradze 1940, 227 following Cagareli.

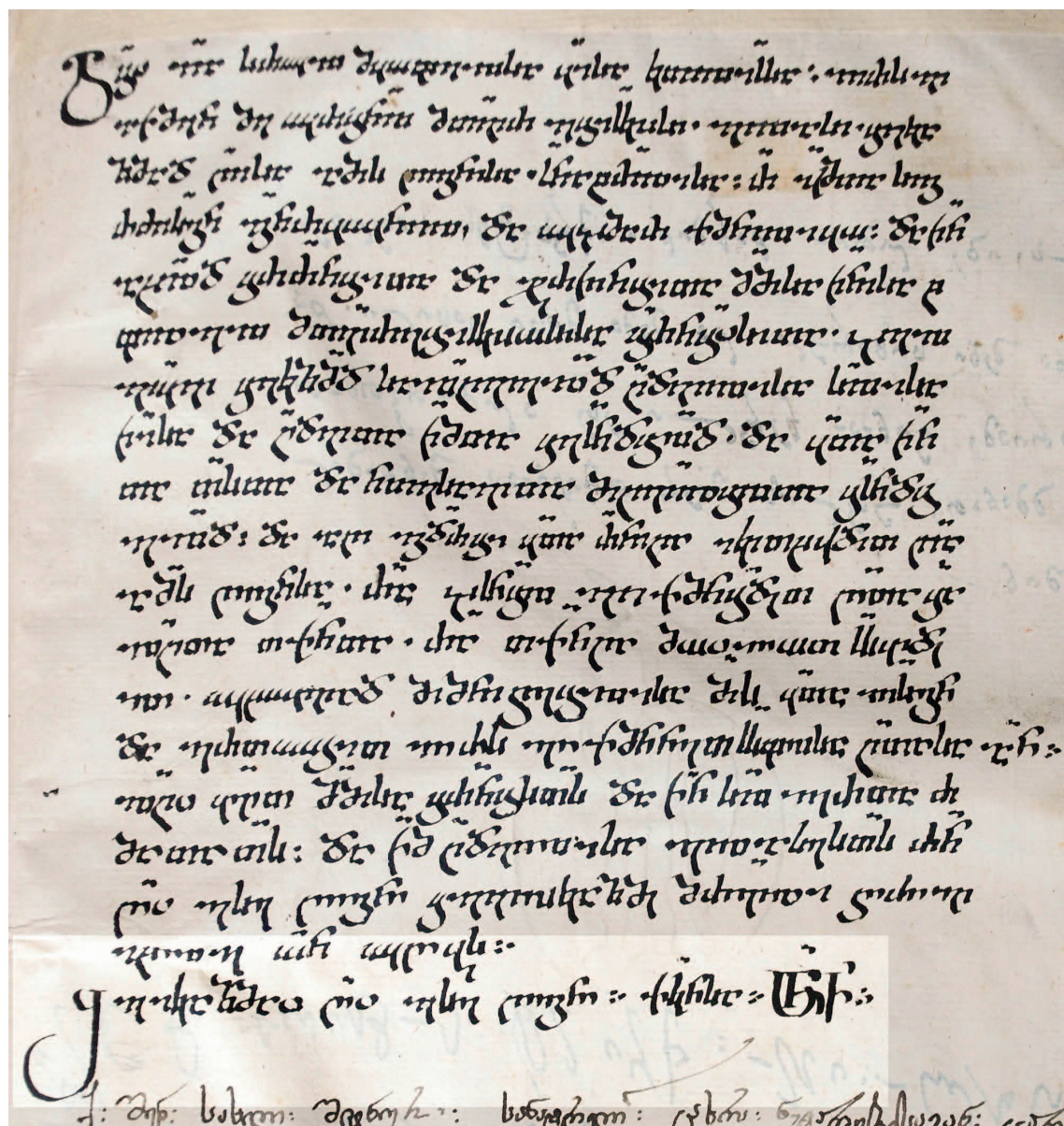


Fig. 13: Cod. Vind. georg. 4, Vlasī's colophon on fol. 305', with date highlighted.

Table 12: Besarion's colophon and note on Cod. Vind. georg. 4, fol. 8'.

çmindano mamano<sup>39</sup> vinac ixilet çminda da sasuliero çigni  
 ese bevrġan damġiluli iġo. mravalġzis vtvale davaġazme. meca  
 vevadre  
 u(pals)a amis mçerlis da mķitxvelisatvis. meca řendobas (?)  
 mibzanet r(ayt)a tkuenca řen-  
 dobil iġvnet u(pli)sa mier. Ġ(mert)o da cxovels-mġopelo,  
 řvaro kriřeso, saplao kriře-  
 [so], \*\*\*\*\*, saplao kriřeso, s(eiçqal)e besario-  
 ni k(riře)s (?) ċqyđ

ġme(rt)o ř(eiçqal)e besarion saçqali da codvili, amin.<sup>40</sup>

Holy fathers, you who have seen this holy and spiritual book (before):  
 it was extensively eaten by worms (?). Many times I have  
 considered restoring it. And I have implored  
 God for its writer and reader. Grant me forgiveness  
 so that you, too, may  
 achieve forgiveness from the Lord. God and Redeemer,  
 Christ's Cross, Christ's Sepulchre,  
 \*\*\*\*\*, Christ's Sepulchre, have mercy on me,  
 Besarion, (in the year) of Christ 1864.

God, have mercy on Besarion, poor and sinful. Amen!

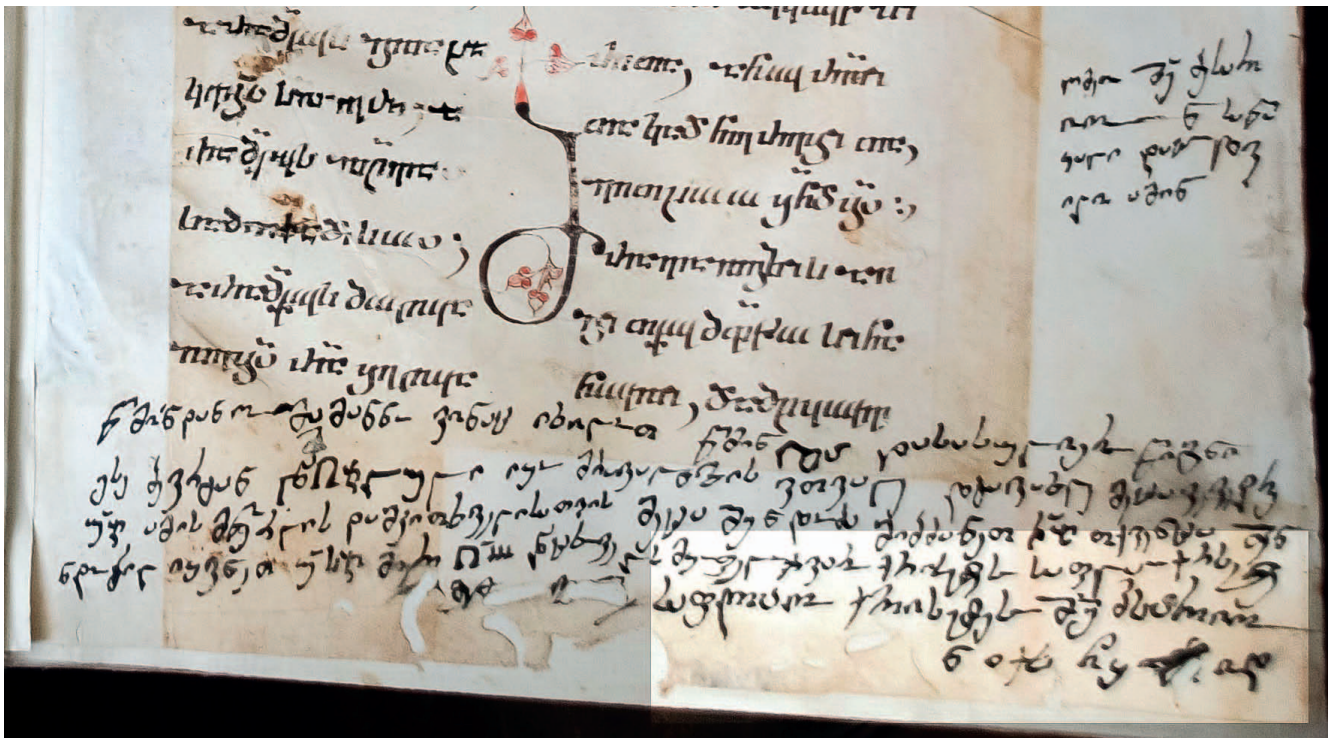


Fig. 14: Cod. Vind. georg. 4, Besarion's colophon on fol. 8<sup>r</sup>, with date and place highlighted.

#### 2.4.2

It is true that the colophon does not indicate the place where the restoration – which is styled *šekazma* here, lit. ‘decoration’ – took place. However, the codex contains the colophon of a second restorer named Besarion Kioišvili,<sup>41</sup> which clearly refers to the Holy Cross and the Sepulchre of Christ. This text, written in a fugitive *mxedruli* cursive, was added at the bottom of fol. 8<sup>r</sup>, with an additional note in the right-hand margin of the same page (fig. 14), being dated 1864.<sup>42</sup> The transcript and translation provided in

table 12 is tentative, since parts of the colophon are no longer legible.

#### 2.4.3

An explicit reference to Jerusalem, then, is found in a lengthy note, again in *mxedruli* script on the verso of the front flyleaf of the Vienna codex (fig. 15). This note, by a mute monk named Ioane, reports on the deposition of several printed books in the Monastery of the Holy Cross and is dated 25 March 1772<sup>43</sup> (cf. the transcript and translation in table 13). It is true that the flyleaf may have been added later, but it seems obvious that this was also done in Jerusalem.

#### 2.4.4

Although it seems clear, then, that the codex was in the possession of the Monastery of the Holy Cross at least from the middle of the sixteenth century until the second half of the nineteenth, it did not find its way into the catalogue of the Monastery library compiled by A. Cagareli during his stay in Jerusalem in 1883. G. Peradze was certainly right in

<sup>39</sup> The colophon reads *mamanno* with a hyper-archaising repetition of the plural suffix.

<sup>40</sup> A similar wording is found in other marginal notes by Besarion, e.g. on fol. 81<sup>r</sup>: *gmerto samebit didebulo da cxovels-mqopelo, žvaro kristeso, š(eicqā-l)e besarion sačqali am čerilis mxilveln)ni š(eundo)s ġ(mertma)n da šendobis-bzanebeli š(eundo)s ġ(mertma)n amin*, i.e. ‘God, exalted with the Trinity and Redeemer, Christ’s Cross, have mercy on pitiful Besarion! May God pardon the reader[s] of this note and may God pardon him who grants forgiveness. Amen!’ See also the notes on fol. 129<sup>r</sup> and 180<sup>r</sup> (right margin, dated 10 Oct. 1863).

<sup>41</sup> The family name is not contained in the present colophon, nor in most of the other notes written by (or referring to) Besarion (on fols. 4<sup>r</sup>; 39<sup>r</sup>; 41<sup>v</sup>–42<sup>r</sup>; 56<sup>r</sup>; 81<sup>r</sup>; 128<sup>v</sup>–129<sup>r</sup>; 180<sup>r</sup>, right margin; and fol. 292<sup>v</sup>). However, a note in the bottom margin of fol. 180<sup>r</sup> does contain the family name; cf. 3.1 below.

<sup>42</sup> The dating *post Christum natum* is usually only encountered in Georgian manuscripts after the fifteenth century. The note referring to Besarion on fol. 4<sup>r</sup> of the present codex bears the date *tvesa dekembersa t k(rište)s čyqy*, i.e. ‘in the month of December, 9; (in the year) of Christ, 1863’.

<sup>43</sup> Peradze 1940, 231, erroneously gives the date as 1770 (‘čgo’), omitting the last character; his transcript (*ibid.*, note 3) has ‘čgom’, with *b* (= 2) misinterpreted as *m* (= 40). A second note on the same page, which refers to that of Ioane, bears the date *čgoē oktombes ke*, i.e. ‘1778, October 25’.

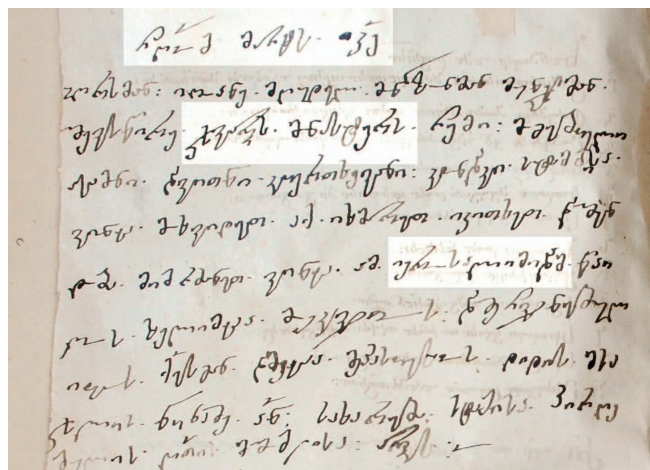


Fig. 15: Cod. Vind. georg. 4, Ioane's note on the verso of the front flyleaf, with date and places highlighted.

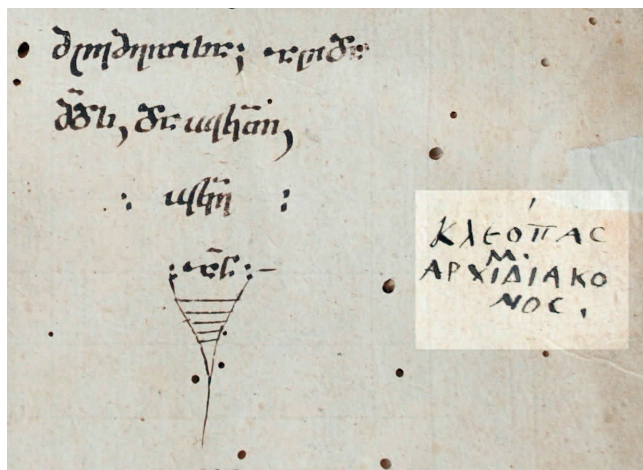


Fig. 16: Cod. Vind. georg. 4, owner's mark on fol. 303r (highlighted).

Table 13: Ioane's note on the front flyleaf of Cod. Vind. georg. 4.

**čgōb marṯs kē**

uḡirsman : ioane . mḡdeli . monazonman munžman .  
 ševsčire . *Žvars monastērs* . čemi : m(o)gebuli  
 žamni . davitni . kurtxevani : kondaḡi . štambisa .  
 vinca . moxvidet . ak . ixmaret . iḡitxet . da šen-  
 doba . mibrzanet . vinca . am . *ierosalimidam* . čai-  
 ḡos . xelimca . moeḡvetos . da šečvenebul  
 iḡos . k(risṯ)esgan . da meca . mepasuxos . didis . msa-  
 žulis . činaše . a(me)n . saxareba . štabisa . pirḡe-  
 bulis . ḡ(mr)tis mšobelisa : aris :—

**1772, March 25**

I, Ioane the mute, the unworthy priest (and) monk,  
 have donated **to the Monastery of the Holy Cross** the  
 (following books) acquired by me:  
 a book of hours, a psalter, a *euchologion*, (and) a *kontakion*, printed.<sup>45</sup>  
 You who come here, use them, read them and grant forgiveness to  
 me. Whoever takes them away **from Jerusalem** here –  
 his hand shall be cut off and he shall be cursed  
 by Christ! And he shall have to answer to me before  
 the great judge. Amen! The printed Gospels belong  
 to the Theotokos 'with a coloured face'.<sup>46</sup>

assuming that the codex had previously been transferred to the private library of an archdeacon named Kleopas, who left his own name in the codex in the form of an owner's mark on fol. 303r (fig. 16). As Peradze further proposed, an heir to the archdeacon,<sup>44</sup> who later became the Archbishop of Nazareth, may have sold the codex to an antiquarian at Alexandria, from where it was acquired by the Austrian National Library in 1931, thus ending its journey from South-east Georgia via Jerusalem to Central Europe.

2.5

Kleopas's codex is not the only Georgian manuscript to have found its way from Jerusalem to Vienna via an antiquarian in Alexandria.<sup>47</sup> According to G. Peradze, the National Library acquired two further Georgian codices at the same time and place, among them the large palimpsest volume styled Cod. Vind. georg. 2,<sup>48</sup> which was the object of an international edition project undertaken between 1997

<sup>44</sup> Recte: Grand Archdeacon. The 'M.' in the note is likely to stand for *Méyaz* and may have been added later (with the archdeacon climbing up the greasy pole).

<sup>45</sup> The word in question is the genitive of *štamba* ('press'), while further down in the text it is spelled *štabisa*. It is unclear whether it refers to all four books mentioned or just to the *kontakion*.

<sup>46</sup> The word *pirḡebul-i* is unattested elsewhere, and it remains unclear which icon or statue of the Theotokos, i.e., the Mother of God, is meant here, cf. Peradze 1940, 231, n. 4. The translation is tentative.

<sup>47</sup> In a similar way, several manuscripts from St Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai, including a *xanmeṯi-haemeṯi* lectionary, were removed and taken to Austria, where they ended up in Graz University Library; for details, see Imnaišvili 1977 and 2004.

<sup>48</sup> Peradze 1940, 222. The third codex is Cod. Vind. georg. 3, a *menaion* for the month of February.

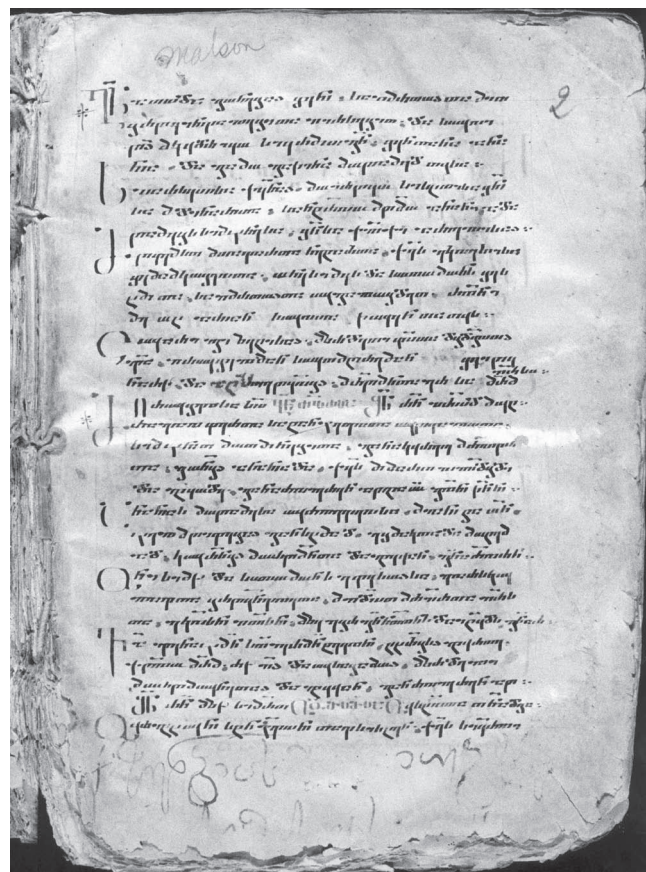


Figure 17: Verso of front flyleaf of Cod.Vind.georg. 2 and fol. 2' of Dumbarton Oaks *menaion* BZ.1952.1 in contrast.

and 2007.<sup>49</sup> Different from Vind.georg. 4, the palimpsest codex was included by A. Cagareli in his catalogue of the library of the Monastery of the Holy Cross, appearing as no. 37 in the collection. Cagareli described it, in accordance with its overtext, as a *menaion* of the month of May.<sup>50</sup> As the manuscript was no longer present in Jerusalem when N. Ja. Marr and Iv. Žavaxišvili undertook their inspection of the Georgian manuscripts of the Monastery in 1902,<sup>51</sup> it must have disappeared from the collection before this date, possibly in the course of the removal of the Monastery library to the Greek patriarchate in the 1890s.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> The edition (Gippert et al. 2007) focuses on the undertexts in *asomtavruli* majuscules; work on undertexts in *nusxuri* minuscules is continuing.

<sup>50</sup> Cagareli 1888a, 164, no. 37. Cf. 2.3.6 above for the commemoration of Eptwme the Hagiorite in the *menaion*.

<sup>51</sup> See the catalogue posthumously published as Marr 1955.

<sup>52</sup> See Gippert et al. 2007, V with n. 13 for further references.

### 2.5.1

In the course of the editing work on the palimpsest, it came to light that the front flyleaf (and perhaps the back flyleaf as well) belonged to another codex from the Monastery of the Holy Cross, that is, the one described by Cagareli as no. 36, which contains a *menaion* of the months of December, January and February. This codex had also disappeared from the collection when Marr and Žavaxišvili visited the site; it did not go to Vienna, however, but to Dumbarton Oaks Library in Washington, DC, where it bears the access signature BZ.1952.1.<sup>53</sup> There is no room for doubt that the front flyleaf of the Vienna palimpsest codex is the first leaf of the Dumbarton Oaks *menaion*, which must have become detached from it during the move.<sup>54</sup> Fig. 17 contrasts the verso of the flyleaf with fol. 2' of the *menaion*.

<sup>53</sup> Other signatures mentioned in the literature are D.O. 53.60.1 and WAS.1.2; see <http://www.doaks.org/library-archives/library/mmdb/microfilms/2207> for information on a microfilm of the manuscript.

<sup>54</sup> See Gippert et al. 2007, xii–xvii for further details. Note that the Graz lectionary (cf. note 46 above) was detached in a similar way, its first leaf being found in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (ms. géorgien 30, fol. 1); cf. Outtier 1972.



Figure 18: Cod. Vind. georg. 2, fols. 25<sup>v</sup>–31<sup>r</sup> and ms. A-737, fols. 134<sup>r</sup>–135<sup>v</sup>+141<sup>v</sup>–140<sup>r</sup> in contrast.

Table 14: Distribution of leaves from ms. A-737 among the leaves of Cod. Vind. georg. 2.

25 <sup>r</sup>	25 <sup>v</sup>	A134 <sup>r</sup> –A141 <sup>v</sup>	A141 <sup>r</sup> –A134 <sup>v</sup>	21 <sup>r</sup>	21 <sup>v</sup>	71 <sup>r</sup>	71 <sup>v</sup>
31 <sup>v</sup>	31 <sup>r</sup>	A135 <sup>v</sup> –A140 <sup>r</sup>	A140 <sup>v</sup> –A135 <sup>r</sup>	20 <sup>v</sup>	20 <sup>r</sup>	63 <sup>v</sup>	63 <sup>r</sup>
70 <sup>r</sup>	70 <sup>v</sup>	22 <sup>r</sup>	22 <sup>v</sup>	A136 <sup>r</sup> –A139 <sup>v</sup>	A139 <sup>r</sup> –A136 <sup>v</sup>	26 <sup>r</sup>	26 <sup>v</sup>
64 <sup>v</sup>	64 <sup>r</sup>	19 <sup>v</sup>	19 <sup>r</sup>	A137 <sup>v</sup> –A138 <sup>r</sup>	A138 <sup>v</sup> –A137 <sup>r</sup>	30 <sup>v</sup>	30 <sup>r</sup>

### 2.5.2

Another remarkable case of disintegration of the Vienna codex concerned one of the manuscripts that were reused in it in palimpsest form. Of the twelve original manuscripts in *asomtavruli* majuscules that have been identified in it so far,<sup>55</sup> one contains the legends of St Christina and Sts Cyprianus and Justina in an archaic linguistic form datable to the fifth to seventh centuries (the so-called *xanmeṭi* period of Old Georgian). As early as 1974, L. Kažaia proposed that some leaves from the same original

manuscript might be included in another palimpsest codex, viz. ms. A-737 of the Kekelidze Institute of Manuscripts (today the National Centre of Manuscripts) in Tbilisi,<sup>56</sup> a multiple-text manuscript rewritten by around the fourteenth century.<sup>57</sup> As a matter of fact, the eight leaves of the Tbilisi codex in question fit exactly into two lacunae in the Vienna palimpsest within St Christina's legend, as illustrated in table 14 above (where the pages from A-737 are marked

<sup>56</sup> See Kažaia 1974, 419.

<sup>57</sup> See Žordania 1902, 198.

<sup>55</sup> See Gippert et al. 2007, 18–25 for details.

with an ‘A’ and a grey background). Note that when reused, the folios belonging to the original manuscript were prepared in different ways, so that they yielded one bifoliate each of the Vienna codex (turned round by 90°), but two bifoliate each in the Tbilisi codex (cut horizontally and folded in the middle). The resulting effect is illustrated in fig. 18.<sup>58</sup>

### 2.5.3

The question now is where and when the disintegration of the leaves of the original *xanmeṭi* codex took place and how the two different sets resulting from it came to be reused in the production of two different palimpsests. Several scenarios can be drawn up here. The original codex might have been kept in Georgia before it was divided up there, with parts of it being taken to Jerusalem prior to being palimpsested, or vice versa. On the other hand, both palimpsests may have been produced in the same location, in Jerusalem or in Georgia, with one of them being moved to the other site later. The palimpsests may even have been produced at a third site such as Mt Sinai or Antioch. As no hints have been found as yet in the upper layers of the palimpsests, which would indicate where they were written, the question must be left open until other (possibly scientific) means have been devised to determine the provenance of the individual layers.

## 3. Secondary use of manuscripts

Regardless of their place of origin and their later whereabouts, Georgian manuscripts were subjected to various types of reuse. Leaving aside the special case of palimpsests, this was especially true for blessings, rogations and prayers added by later readers, users or owners, and also for less ‘immanent’ additions such as prescriptions, contracts or writing exercises. A few examples will again suffice to illustrate this.

### 3.1

It was, indeed, quite common throughout the history of Georgian manuscript production for blessings, rogations and prayers to be added by readers and users, both for their own and for others’ purposes. A good example of this is the Vienna codex no. 4, discussed above, to which Besarion Kioṭišvili added not only a restorer’s colophon (on fol. 8<sup>r</sup>; cf. 2.4.2 above), but also, as marginal notes, a whole set of

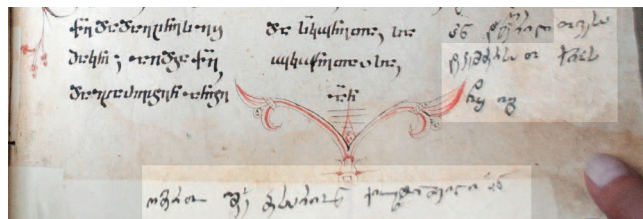


Fig. 19: Cod. Vind. Georg. 4, Besarion Kioṭišvili’s note on fol. 180<sup>r</sup> (name and date highlighted).

*gmerto še(içqal)e besarion kioṭišvili. a(mi)n*  
 ‘God, have mercy on Besarion Kioṭišvili. Amen!’

rogations of the type *gme(r)to še(içqal)e besarion saçqali da codvili, amin* (‘God, have mercy on Besarion, poor and sinful. Amen!’).<sup>59</sup> This type is also encountered in Besarion’s last note, applied to the lower margin of fol. 180<sup>r</sup>, the only note that contains his family name (cf. fig. 19 where the note is highlighted).<sup>60</sup>

### 3.2

The interplay of (primary) colophons with (secondary) notes can easily be demonstrated with one of the three manuscripts from Svanetia (northwestern region of Georgia) that have not been transferred to the Museum of Meṣṭia or the National Centre of Manuscripts, that is, the Laxamula Gospels, a Tetraevangelion written in *nusxuri* minuscules dating to around the twelfth century.<sup>61</sup> The codex, which is still preserved in the village church of Laxamula,<sup>62</sup> has been dismantled in part and considerably damaged by moisture and other harmful effects, with the result that many pages are now only partly legible. Some important colophons have survived, however. This is true, above all, for two notes that provide us with the name of the scribe, a certain Grigol, and a deacon of his, named Štepane (on fol. 36<sup>v</sup>, at the end of the index of lections from St John’s Gospel, and on fol. 52<sup>r</sup>, following another liturgical index; cf. figs. 20a and b).

<sup>59</sup> See the list in note 41 above.

<sup>60</sup> The right-hand margin of the same page shows a lengthier note by Besarion, dated 9 September 1683 (the date is also highlighted in fig. 19).

<sup>61</sup> For an earlier discussion, see Silogava 1986, 59–60. The codex was inspected by the present author and several colleagues during two trips to Svanetia in 2007 (as part of the above-mentioned INTAS project) and in 2010 (as part of the ‘Old Georgian palimpsests’ project, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, 2009–14). My thanks are due to the inhabitants of the village for allowing us access to this important codex.

<sup>62</sup> Located at 43°3’6’’ N and 42°26’27’’ E.

<sup>58</sup> Edited multispectral images taken from Gippert et al. 2007, 6–36 and 6–38.

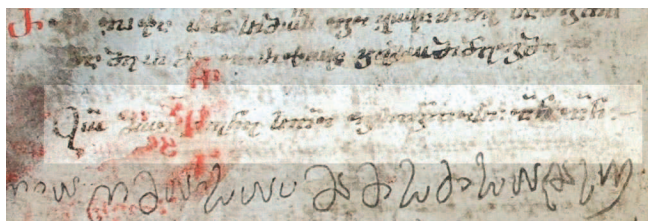


Fig. 20a: Laxamula Gospels, scribe's note on fol. 180<sup>r</sup> (highlighted).

*O(wpal)o moiqsene s(u)li grigolisi : a(me)n a(me)n :—*  
 'Lord, remember the soul of Grigol! Amen, amen!'

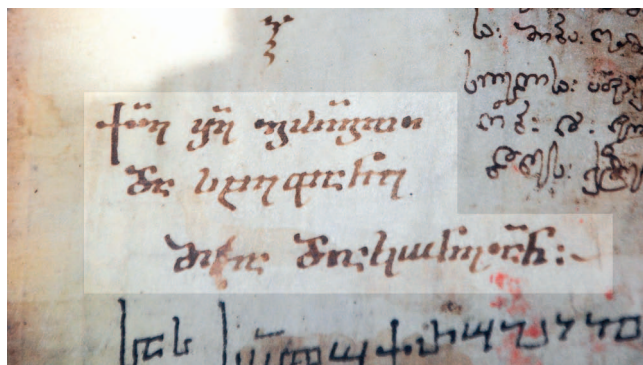


Fig. 20b: Laxamula Gospels, scribe's note on fol. 52<sup>r</sup> (highlighted).

*K(ri)st)e š(eiçqal)e grig(o)li | da štepane | misa diaqone a(me)n :—*  
 'Christ, have mercy on Grigol | and Stepane | his deacon! Amen!'

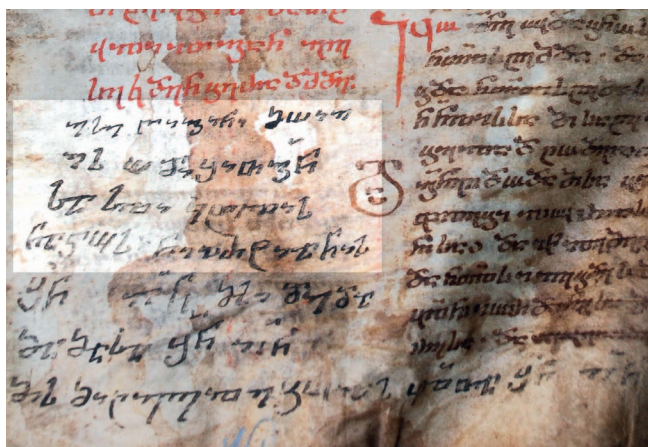


Fig. 21: Laxamula Gospels, Naču Nipartiani's colophon on fol. 79<sup>r</sup> (highlighted).

*ese çigini<sup>63</sup> moigles odištg(a)n | s(ul)s a sul-i-k(urt)x(e)v(u)lis |*  
*načus nip(a)rřianis | š(eiçqale)n ġ(mertma)n*  
*m(i)si deda | mamasa š(eiçqale)n ġ(mertma)n | mis micv(a)-*  
*lebuls q(ove)lta š(eiçqale)n ġ(mertma)n*  
 'This book was brought here from Odiši. | God have mercy  
 on the soul | of Naču Nipartiani, blessed by the (Holy) Spirit;  
 God have mercy on his mother | and father; | God have mercy  
 on all his deceased!'

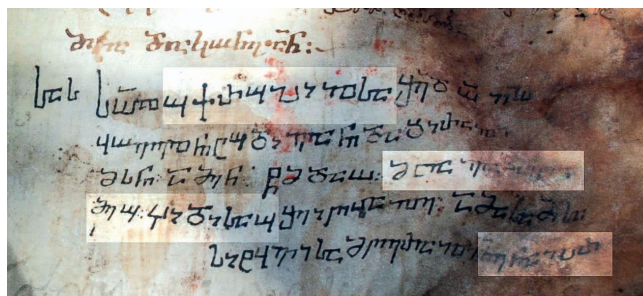


Fig. 22: Laxamula Gospels, Zenahar's note on fol. 52<sup>r</sup> (name highlighted).

*s(ul)sas<sup>64</sup> sōl ukruṗilsa še(un)d(ven) o(wpalo) ġ(mert)o |*  
*qovelni cudivani da birali<sup>65</sup> | m(i)sni : amen:*  
*čm(i)dao : mtavarm(o)ča|meu : qidisau š(eiçqale) : ama samisa |*  
*siṭqvisa mčerali zenah(a)r*  
 For the soul of **Okropiri**, forgive, Lord, God, all | his sins and  
 guilt! Amen!  
 Holy **Archimartyr of the Bridge**, have mercy on the writer of  
 these three words, **Zenahar**!

### 3.2.1

On fol. 79<sup>r</sup>, below the colophon (in red), which provides details about the execution of the Gospel of Matthew, the much later hand of Naču Nipartiani informs us that the codex was brought (to Svanetia?) from Odiši, i.e. Mingrelia (cf. fig. 21, where the important parts of the note are highlighted).

<sup>63</sup> The correct form would be *çigni*; the insertion of the anaptyctical *i* can be taken as an influence of spoken *Svan*.

<sup>64</sup> The usual form would be *s(ul)sa* 'for the soul'. Possibly the word was added in the left margin to correct the spelling *Sōl* (for *so(w)l(sa)*?) at the beginning of the line; but cf. Naču Nipartiani's note treated above.

### 3.2.2

Another note written in a clumsy late *nusxuri* minuscule, added below the scribe's note on fol. 52<sup>r</sup> by a certain Zenahar on behalf of one 'Chrysostom' (*ukrupil*, a Svanicised variant of Georgian *okropiri* ('golden-mouthed')), addresses the church of St George in Laxamula by its traditional name, *mtavarmoçame qidisa*, i.e. 'the Archimartyr of the Bridge' (cf. fig. 22, where the names are highlighted again).

<sup>65</sup> The correct forms would be *codvani* and *brali*; again we have Svanicized forms here.

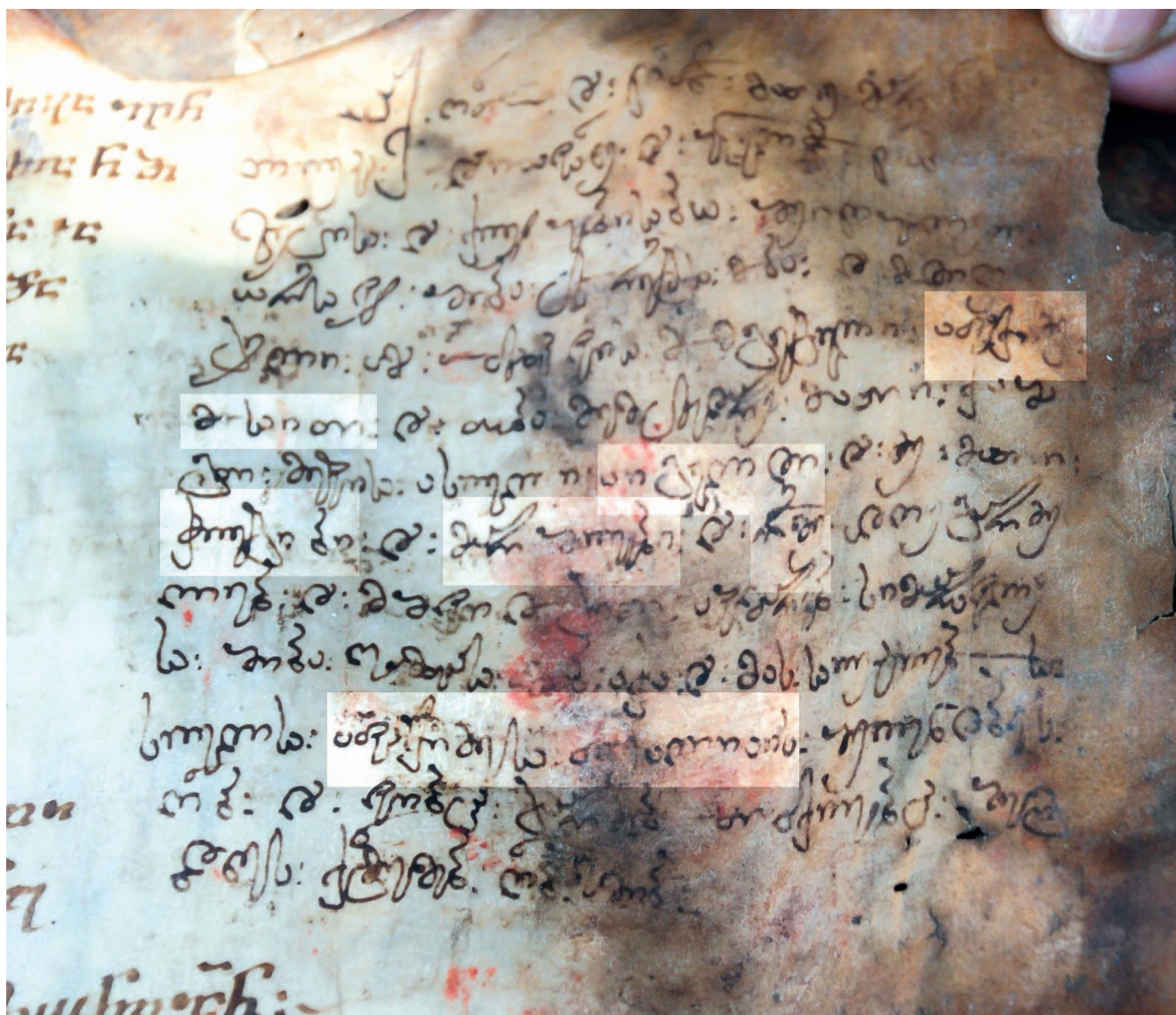


Fig. 23: Laxamula Gospels, the Apakizes' note on fol. 52' (names highlighted).

Table 15: Laxamula Gospels, the Apakizes' note on fol. 52'.

*K(ris)te* : ġ(*mer*)to da : ç(*mid*)ano : mate . marķoz  
 luķa : da iovane : da : ġovelno ġ(*mrtisan*)o  
 zecisa : da : kueġanisano : šeicġalet :  
 orsave : šina : cxorebasa : mona : da madide-  
 beli : am : otxtavisa : momgebeli : **apakiže**  
**mosaiti** : da tanamemcxedre : mati : kaša-  
 gi : mepisa : asuli : **aigeldi**<sup>66</sup> : da : ze : mati :  
**čubini** : da : **maršueni**<sup>67</sup> : da : **rome**<sup>68</sup> : adġegrze-  
 len : da : mšvidobit : aqmaren : simravle-  
 sa : šina : žamtasa : amin : aka : da : mas : sauķunos  
 sulsu : **apakizesa tualiaisa** : šeundnes :  
 ġ(*mertma*)n : da : vinca brzan[debi]t . tkuenca : šegi-  
 ndes : k(*ris*)teman : ġ(*mertma*)n : amin :

Christ, God and Sts Matthew, Mark,  
 Luke and John and all God's (crowd)  
 in heaven and on earth, have mercy  
 in both worlds on (your) servant and praiser,  
 the acquirer of these Gospels, **Apakiže**  
**Mosaiti**, and their (!) bedfellow, the Circassian  
 king's daughter **Aygeldi**, and their son(s)  
**Čubini** and **Maršueni** and **Rome**! May they live  
 long and may they be supportful in peace for plenty  
 of times, amen, now and in eternity!  
 May God pardon the soul of **Apakiže Tualia**,  
 and whoever you deign to be, may you be pardoned  
 by Christ the God, too! Amen!

## 3.2.3

The same page features yet another colophon that is legible, but unlike the notes mentioned above, it is written in a *mxedruli* cursive (cf. fig. 23).<sup>69</sup> Its subject (and author?) is Apakize Mosaiti, who is styled as an ‘acquirer’ (*momgebeli*) of the Gospel codex, together with his wife (of Circassian origin) and his family. It may be important within this context to note that the name Apakize is well known in both Svanetia and Mingrelia, the most prominent family members being known as the ‘princes of Odiši’. However, neither Mosaiti<sup>70</sup> nor his deceased relative, Tualia, can be identified historically. The transcript given in table 15 is again tentative.

## 3.2.4

Apart from the rogations discussed thus far, the codex contains at least three notes that can be categorised as treaties or oaths, either uttered by the village community (addressing themselves as *laxamlelni*) or by individual persons.<sup>71</sup> For this kind of text, the Gospel codex obviously served as a guarantee of their validity. The following example (from fol. 35<sup>r</sup>; fig. 24) even addresses the subject of blood feuds, a practice upheld in Svanetia at least until the nineteenth

century. Again, the church of Laxamula is mentioned by its traditional name (cf. table 16). Note that in applying the note, the codex was turned 90°.

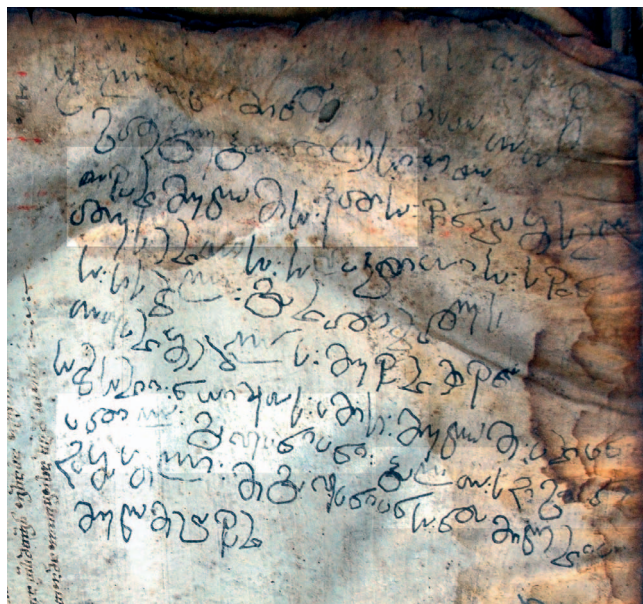


Fig. 24: Laxamula Gospels, Gažaniani's note on fol. 52<sup>r</sup> (names highlighted).

Table 16: Laxamula Gospels, Gažaniani's note on fol. 35<sup>r</sup>.

*K(ris̄te) ġ(mr̄)tisa dedisa misisa da ġove-  
lta ċmindata mista tau-  
sdebubita : dġes ikita  
tavarmuċamesa : q(i)disa : vinca ſesco-  
dus ertisa : sapāioisa : svani-  
sa : sisxli : gardixadus  
tu ar ſeezlos : muvarċvna<ſ> :  
saxsari : no iġos : amiſi : muċame : arian :  
adila : gažaniani : balta : ſkiziani  
kaſaſeli : me, gažaniansa damiċeria .  
muċameca var*

At the will of Christ God, his mother and all  
his saints!  
If from now on someone should sin  
against the **Archimartyr of the Bridge**,  
he should pay with the blood  
of one noble Svan.  
If he is not able, we will suffocate him,  
there will be no redemption. Witnesses of this are:  
**Adila Gažaniani, Balta Škiziani**,  
from Kašaši. I, **Gažaniani**, have written it,  
(and) I am a witness, too.

<sup>66</sup> Silogava 1986, 59, reads *aiageldi*. However, there is no second *a* in the name, and *Aygeldi* is a perfect Turkic name formation (lit. ‘the moon has come’).

<sup>67</sup> Silogava 1986, 59, reads *maršuebi*; however, the first from last character is clearly the same as the first from last, not the third, of the preceding name, *ċubini*. The name is otherwise unknown.

<sup>68</sup> Silogava 1986, 59, reads *romi*. However, the curved descender of the final *e* is clearly visible and interferes with the *r* of *aqmaren* in the line below.

<sup>69</sup> A fourth note (in large *mxedruli* letters) added under Zenahar's note at the bottom of the page is too faint to be deciphered.

<sup>70</sup> The name probably reflects Arabic *musā'id* (‘helper’), cf. Turk. *mūsait* (‘apt’). In the Georgian chronicle of the Mongol period (by the anonymous ‘chronicler’, *Žamtaagmċereli*), Musait is the name of the Ilkhanid ruler, Öljaitü, who is otherwise known as Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan (Qauxċišvili 1959, 324, l. 22 and 325, l. 4).

<sup>71</sup> These ‘documentary’ texts were first edited by P. Ingoroċva (1941, 19, no. 17, and 72, nos. 73 and 74) and, secondly, by V. Silogava (1986, 121–122, nos. 16–18); the notes in question, dated by Silogava to the fifteenth century, are on fols. 35<sup>v</sup> and 36<sup>v</sup>.

Table 17: Laxamula Gospels, Pipia's colophon on fol. 20<sup>r</sup>.

çavikıtxe ese çmida  
otxtavi saxareba ugırsma  
dekanozma daviti pipiam  
1975 ç. 19-20 ivlisi.

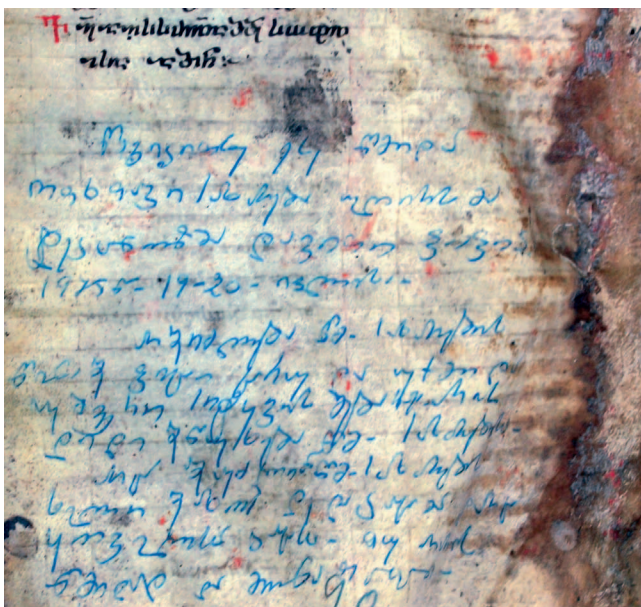
ar šeizleba çm(ida) saxarebis  
çinaše pici cru da ukmi da  
ušveri siṭqvis geba, rac aris  
didi šeçuxeba çm(ida) saxarebisa  
arca šeuzleba çm(ida) saxarebas  
xeli šeaxos dedaḱacma arca  
qovelsa ḱacsa tu ar aris  
çmidad da monatluli

I have read this holy  
*Tetraevangelion*, (me), the unworthy  
decanus Davit Pipia.  
Year 1975, 19–20 July.

It is not allowed in front of the holy Gospels  
to swear a false oath and to pronounce idle and  
obscene word(s), which is  
a great torment for the holy Gospels.  
Nor is it allowed that the holy Gospels  
be touched by a woman, or  
by any man if he is not  
clean and baptised.

### 3.2.5

The habit of adding notes to the Laxamula Gospel codex lasted at least until 1975, when a decanus named Davit Pipia inspected it, leaving his handwritten comments on several pages. On fol. 20<sup>r</sup>, he provided a clear statement as to further usage of the codex (fig. 25), including the practice of swearing oaths before it (cf. table 17).<sup>72</sup>

Fig. 25: Laxamula Gospels, Pipia's note on fol. 20<sup>r</sup>.

### 3.3

The custom of using Gospel codices for blessings, rogations and other personal notes was not restricted to Laxamula, however. The same type of notes occurs, in even greater variety, in another codex kept in a village church in Upper Svanetia, viz. the *Tetraevangelion* of Kurashi, another Gospel manuscript dating from around the twelfth century and written in *nusxuri* minuscules. This codex, too, contains a scribe's colophon (by a certain Giorgi; fol. 138<sup>r</sup>), as well as one by its donor (Inay Xeštinisze; fol. 85<sup>r</sup>). Additionally, there is a note by the 'rulers of Kurashi' who possessed the 'cemetery in front of the Archimartyr of Kurashi', stating that they deposited the book there (fol. 161<sup>v</sup>). Furthermore, the codex abounds in rogations of priests, deacons and other people. A remarkable example of this is one by Deṭo (Gurčiani), who styles himself the priest of 'St George of Tēxiši' (fol. 113<sup>r</sup>), thus using the traditional name of the church in question. What is peculiar about this codex is the occurrence of at least three notes in the Lower-Bal dialect of the Svan language, obviously written by the same Deṭo Gurčiani in the same *nusxuri* hand as the above-mentioned roga- tion, which dates to around the seventeenth century, and thus represent the oldest extant specimens of written Svan. Moreover, these notes deviate considerably from the 'usual' type of roga- tion-like notes; instead, they represent rather personal reproaches addressed to the priest's deacon (and, probably, nephew), Guṭu Gurčiani. The latter, on the other hand, is likely to have been responsible for a good many notes consisting of nothing more than characters in their alphabetic sequence, with or without their numerical values,

<sup>72</sup> Pipia's note is written in blue ink, possibly the same ink used for the page numbering of the codex (which deviates enormously from the original order). Further notes by Pipia are found on the inner sides of the (wooden) front and back covers of the Laxamula Gospels.

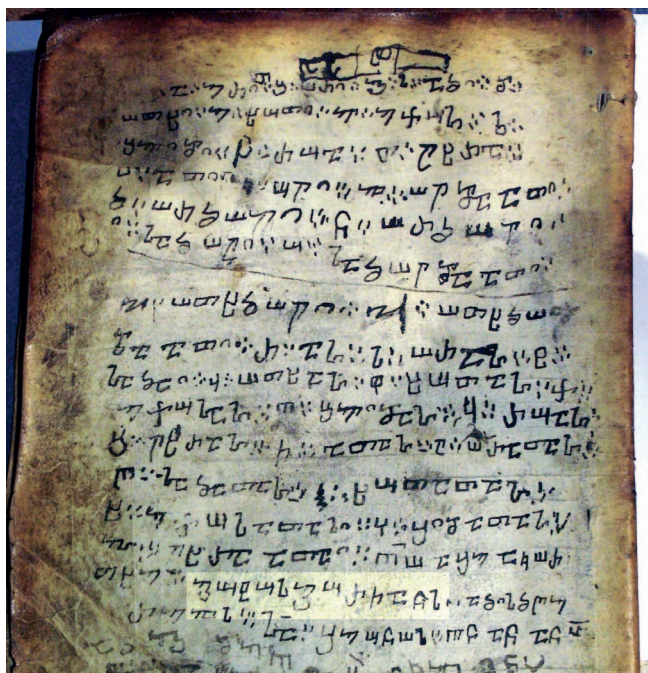


Fig. 26: Kurashi Gospels, Guṭu Gurčiani's writing exercise and rogation on fol. 85<sup>v</sup> (name highlighted).

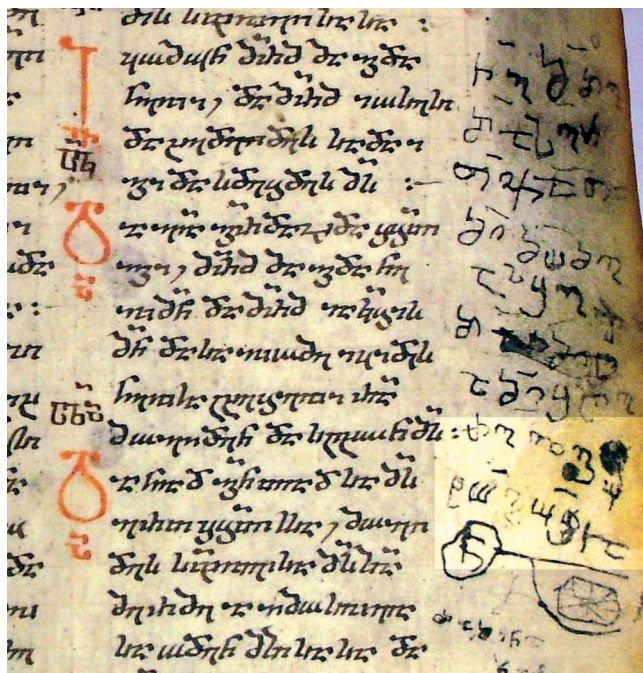


Fig. 27: Kurashi Gospels, Guṭu Gurčiani's writing exercise on fol. 84<sup>v</sup> (name highlighted).

Table 18 : Kurashi Gospels, Guṭu Gurčiani's rogation on fol. 85<sup>v</sup>.

ḡ(mert)o aše(ne) akurtxe  
 guṭus gurčans  
 amis mçerels  
 s(uls)a šeundos o(wpalma)n  
 a(me)n a(me)n o(wpalo)

God, build up (and) bless (the home)  
 of Guṭu Gurčiani,  
 the writer of this!  
 May the Lord forgive (his) soul,  
 amen, amen, Lord!

spanning the complete alphabet or parts of it, as well as other unintelligible material. Considering Guṭu's clumsy hand, it seems highly conceivable that most of his 'notes' were mere writing exercises. As the Kurashi Gospel codex, which also comprises one palimpsest bifoliate, has been the subject of a comprehensive study recently,<sup>73</sup> it should suffice if only a few examples of notes of this type are cited here.

### 3.3.1

More than half of fol. 85<sup>v</sup> (fig. 26), originally a *vacat* between the Gospels of Mark and Luke, comprises a nearly complete *nusxuri* alphabet (from a to h; only the last letter, ḡ, is missing), with the numerical value of every character added in full. The last item, *h* = *cxraata(s)i* ('9,000'), is followed by two and a half lines which read *ḡō aše akort|xe : guṭus*

*gurčans* : *amis mçe|rals* : *sa* ; *šeunos* : *on an an ḡ*. This can easily be interpreted as a rogation of the writer, Guṭu Gurčiani, for himself, as proposed in table 18. At the bottom of the page, we find one more alphabetic sequence (from *a* to *s*, with no numerical values), but obviously written in another hand, thus suggesting that it was not only Guṭu Gurčiani who used the codex for his writing exercises.

### 3.3.2

A strange note abounding in unusual abbreviations in the right margin of fol. 84<sup>v</sup> (fig. 27) may also have been intended as a writing exercise. It was written in the hand of Guṭu and 'signed' by him again. It reads: *čēmde|dāser|tikāt|mīmome | asšek|miaymiç | amiš çe|rel gu|to gurča|n*. It is clear that the last four words once more stand for *amis mçeral(i) guṭu gurčian(i)* ('the writer of this, Guṭu Gurčiani'), with *amiš* (instead of *amis*) and the missing nominative endings clearly stemming from the influence of spoken Svan. If we ignore the abbreviation marks

<sup>73</sup> See Gippert 2013a, which includes reproductions of the main colophons and the Svan notes.

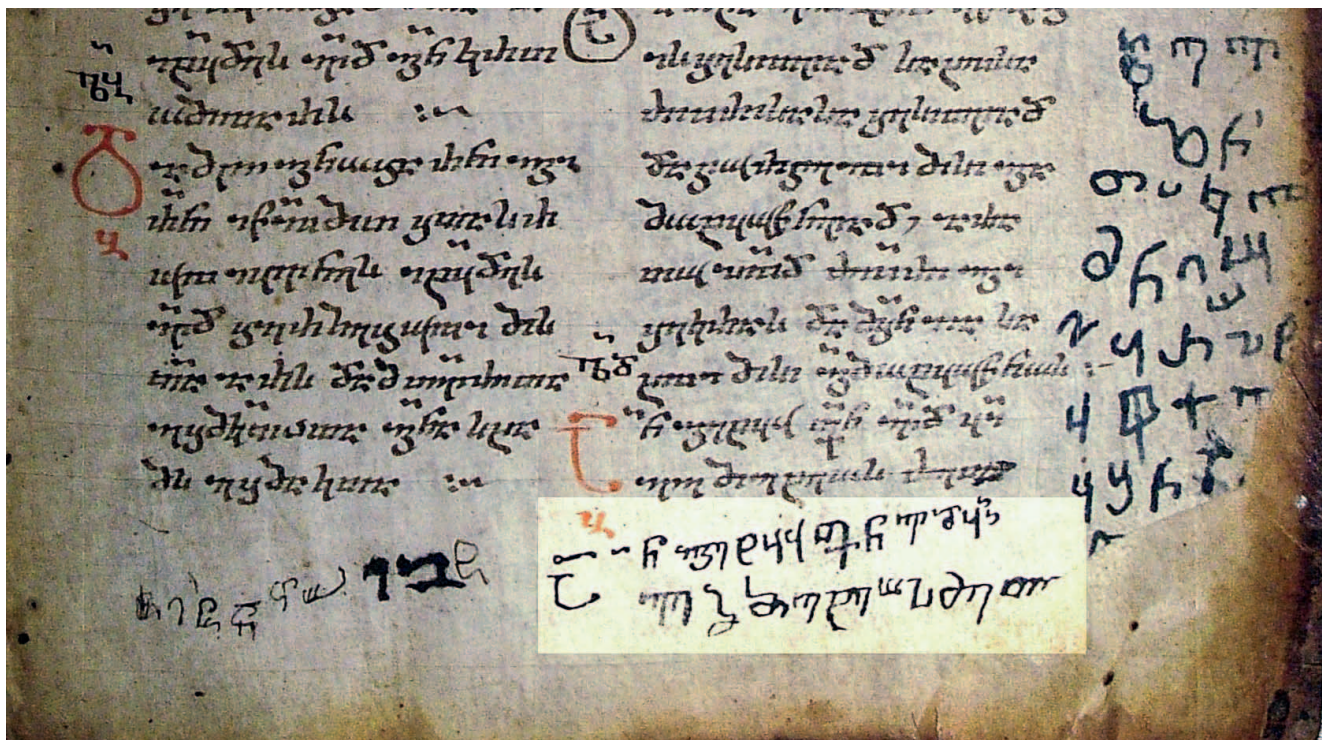


Fig. 28: Kurashi Gospels, writing exercise on fol. 59<sup>r</sup> (text copy highlighted).

Table 19: Cod. Sin. georg. 16, anonymous complaint on fol. 5<sup>r</sup>.

š(eiçqale)n . s(a)šinelo : m(a)::q(u)l(o)v(a)nis :::: ġ(mrt)is-  
mšob(e)lo ese . ōrni zm(a)ni damemter-  
nes da š(e)n dā š(e)ni zē x(a)rt mebrčve .  
tu rays memartlebian.

Have mercy, frightful Theotokos of the (Unburnt) Bush, on  
these two brethren. They have become hostile to me,  
and you and your son are (my) judges  
as to what they want from me.

in the first half of the note, we may tentatively read it as *čem(s) dedas erti kat(a)mi mome(c)*, which would mean something like ‘give me one hen for my mother’. The ‘word’ in the middle, which may read *asšekmiaymiç*, remains enigmatic,<sup>74</sup> as do the characters preceding and following the note (*a|tyš|gud|d* and *zamina|nar|ai?*).

### 3.3.3

Another type of writing exercise is encountered for instance on fol. 85<sup>r</sup>, where somebody (not necessarily Guṭu Gurčiani) copied the first four lines of the donor’s colophon, including the outdented initial letter,<sup>75</sup> or on fol. 59<sup>r</sup>, where the last two lines of the Gospel text on the page (Mark 3:29) were copied into the lower right-hand margin (alongside an almost

complete *nusxuri* alphabet spelled out in another hand in the right-hand margin and an unintelligible sequence of characters added in yet another hand in the bottom margin below the first column and turned round 180°;<sup>76</sup> fig. 28). Conversely, we find that the Gospel text of Matthew 28:16–18 in the lower margins of fols. 71<sup>r</sup> and 70<sup>r</sup> (again turned 180°; fig. 29) is not a copy of the ‘main’ text of the pages in question, which contain Mark 9:18–10:1. Instead, it is likely that this is a copy from a lectionary manuscript, given that Matt. 27:58–28:20 is missing in the Kurashi Gospels and the ‘quotation’ begins with a typical introductory formulation, *mas žamsa šina* (‘by that time’).<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> It is possible that the *k* does not belong to the note, since it is written in a different style. It may simply be a sign of the cross.

<sup>75</sup> See Gippert 2013a, 92 with fig. 7.

<sup>76</sup> This note might represent a (Turkic) personal name ending in *beg* in the dative case, given that it ends in *bgs* (names like *zaurbeg* were quite common in Svanetia).

<sup>77</sup> See Gippert 2013a, 102–103 for further details and *ibid.* 103–104 for another ‘quotation’ of this type (from Mt. 1.1–11), which appears on fol. 116<sup>r</sup>.

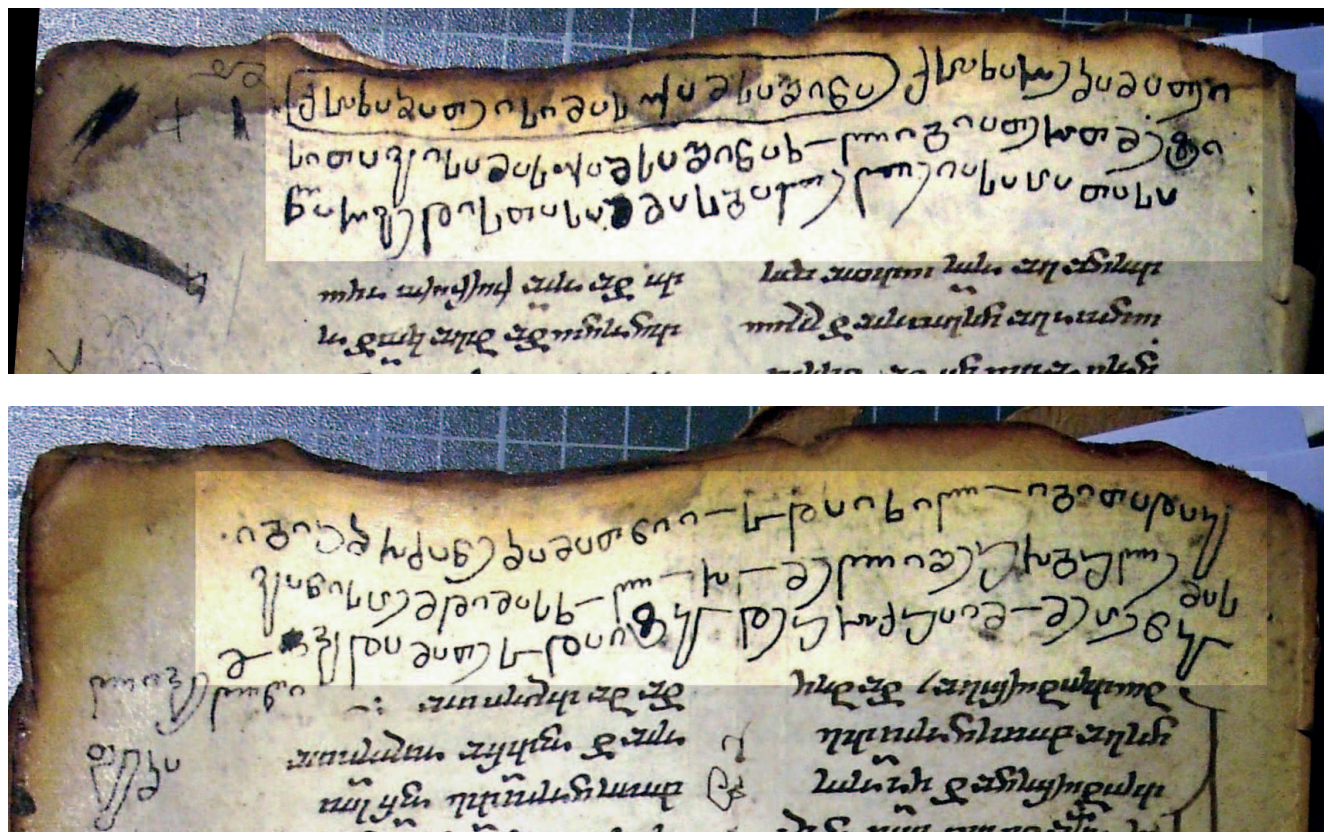


Fig. 29: Kurashi Gospels, Lectionary quotation on fols. 71<sup>v</sup>–70<sup>r</sup> (highlighted).

Table 20: Cod. Sin. georg. 16, Davit's rogation on fol. 5<sup>v</sup>.

dvitas <sup>78</sup>	<i>d(a)vits,</i>	Davit
Codvilsa	<i>Codvilsa</i>	the sinful
Šeondnes	<i>Šeundvnes</i>	may be pardoned
nġn d vinc	<i>ġ(mertma)n d(a) vinc</i>	by God and (you) whoever
šndoba qvtan	<i>š(e)ndoba-qāvt. a(me)n</i>	practice forgiveness. Amen! <sup>79</sup>

### 3.4

Most of the ‘secondary’ types of notes dealt with above are not limited to manuscripts from Svanetia. This is true, first of all, of rogations added by laymen or other uneducated people, discernible by the clumsy and faulty way in which they are written. A series of good examples of this is to be found in the Gospel codex, Sin. georg. 16, mentioned above. On fol. 5<sup>v</sup> (fig. 30a) after the short rogation *k(rist)e š(eiçqal)e d(a)n(i-e)l, a(me)n*, (‘Christ, have mercy on Daniel, amen!’), added by

the scribe in red ink after the index of miracles taken from the Gospel of Matthew, there is, firstly, a four-line complaint made by an anonymous person, also in red ink, addressed to the Theotokos ‘of the (Unburnt) Bush’<sup>80</sup> (see the transcript in table 19), and, secondly, another rogation by one Davit, written in extremely large and awkward *nusxuri* characters with many additional dots (cf. the transliteration and the transcript in table 20).

<sup>78</sup> The cross-shaped symbol at the end of the line might be taken to be the letter *k* (an abbreviation for *kriste*, ‘Christ’), but this seems unlikely when placed between the name of Davit and his epithet, ‘sinful’.

<sup>79</sup> A sixth line at the bottom edge of the page, beginning with *ō*, i.e. an abbreviated form of *upali* (‘Lord’), is no longer decipherable today.

<sup>80</sup> The Unburnt Bush of Mt Sinai is a symbol of the Virgin birth of Jesus in Eastern Orthodoxy. The mention of the bush as part of the present complaint speaks in favour of the text having been written down on Mt Sinai. For a previous discussion of this note, see Žavaxišvili 1947, 38.

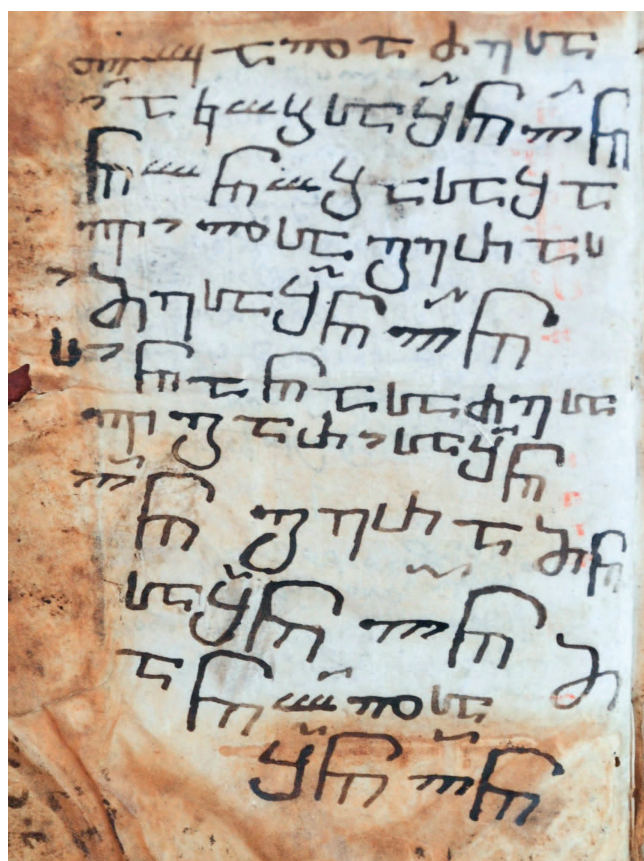
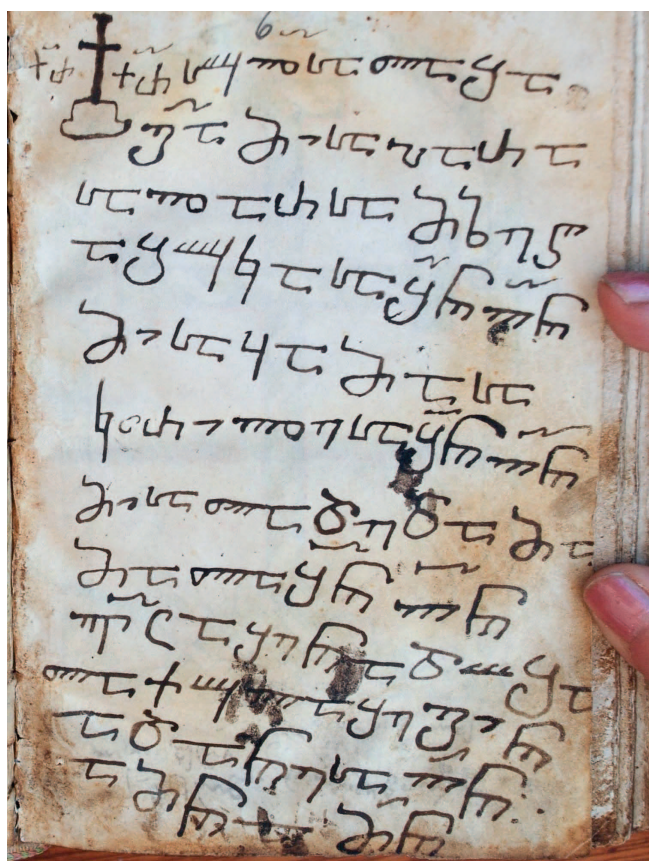
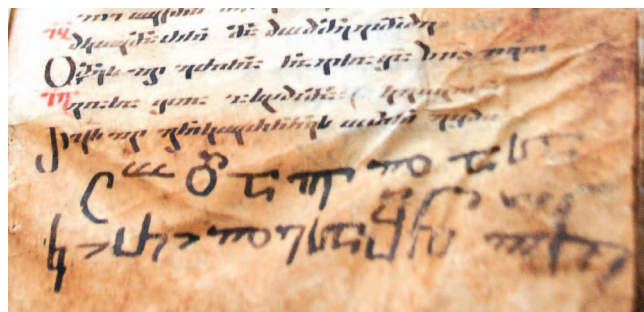
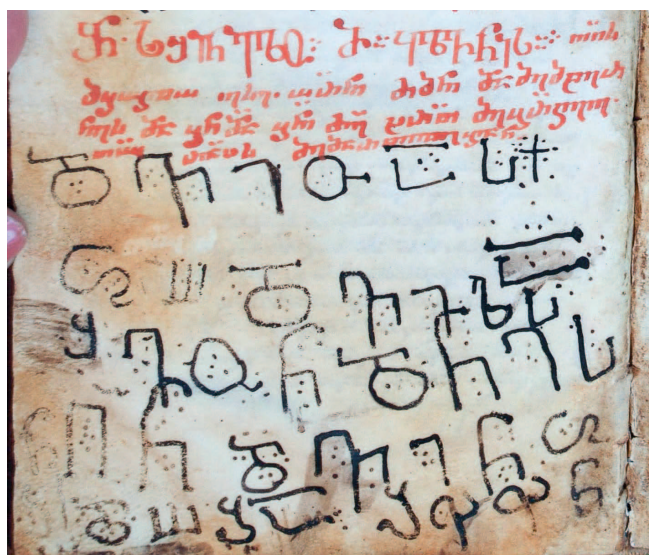


Fig. 30a-d: Cod.Sin.georg. 16, rogations on fols. 5<sup>v</sup>, 6<sup>r</sup>, 2<sup>r</sup>, 1<sup>v</sup>.

### 3.4.1

In the same codex, there are at least three further lengthy rogations of this sort, possibly written in the same hand (on fols. 1<sup>v</sup>, 2<sup>r</sup> and 6<sup>r</sup>; figs 30c, 30d and 30b).<sup>81</sup> Of the persons

mentioned in them, at least one seems to occur twice: Kiriile, who is likely to have been the author of the note on fol. 2<sup>r</sup> and is introduced as the ‘page’ (*qma-*) of Mzečabuk on fol. 6<sup>r</sup>. The latter person, if his title is correctly restored

<sup>81</sup> Garitte 1956, 51, also considered the note on fol. 5<sup>v</sup> to be in the same hand. This is unlikely, however, given the peculiar extension of the *m* and *n* characters and the acute form of the *i* character in the other three notes.

Cagareli 1888b, 198–9, no. 7, does not mention these notes, nor does Žavaxišvili 1947, 36–8, no. 16.

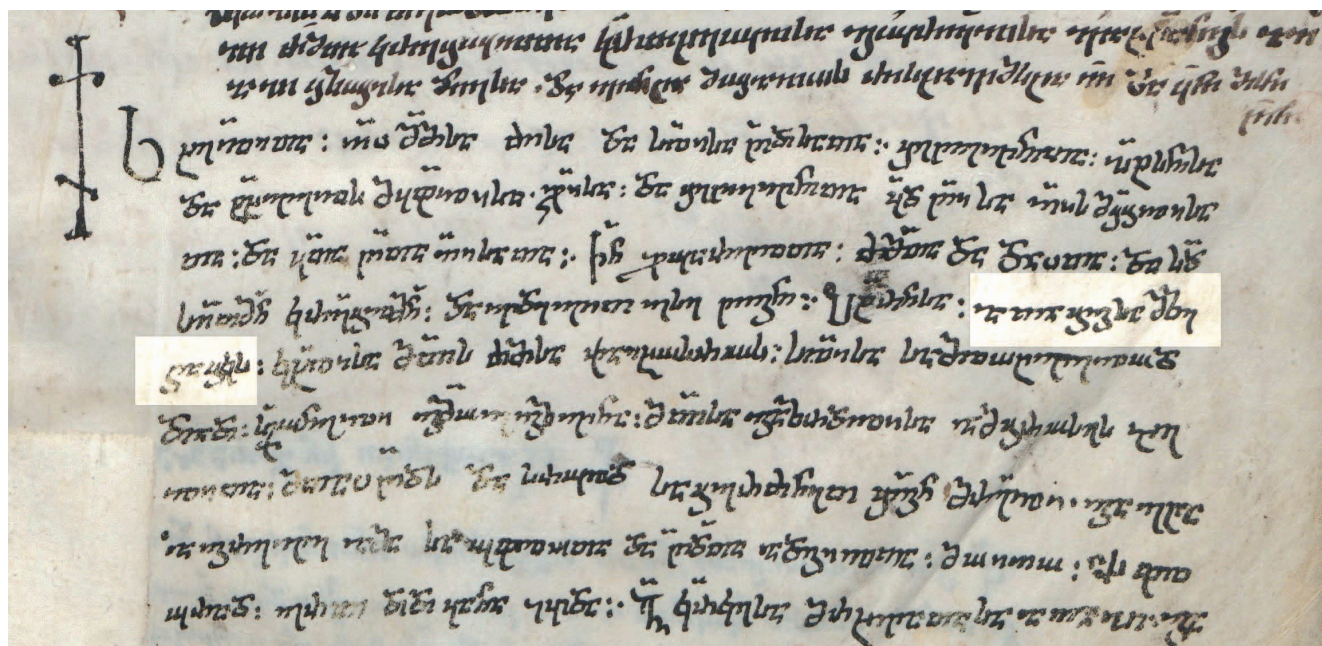


Fig. 30e: Leipzig Cod. no. V 1095, fol. 15<sup>v</sup> (name of Atabag Mzečabuk highlighted).

as *atabag-amirspasalari*, i.e. ‘atabag (and) commander-in-chief’, can be identified as the son of Quarquare II (the Great), ruler of the south-western Georgian province of Samcxe in the second half of the fifteenth century. Mzečabuk, who bore the title of *atabag* from 1500 to 1515 CE, adopted the name of Iačob after retreating from the secular world.<sup>82</sup> He is not identical, however, with a Iačob who is mentioned in the note on fol. 1<sup>v</sup> of the present codex, given that this person bore the patronym Tualaze (lit. ‘son of Tuala’). There is no information available as to whether Mzečabuk ever visited Mt Sinai. However, he is

mentioned in a codex from Jerusalem, which was brought to the University Library of Leipzig by C. Tischendorf (Cod. V 1095, fol. 15<sup>v</sup>; fig. 30e) in an *agapi* (a requiem-like record of deceased persons).<sup>83</sup> This suggests that he may well also have been the object of commemoration at St Catherine’s Monastery.<sup>84</sup> Due to the orthographical inconsistencies, the transcripts given in tables 21a–c on the following page are again tentative.

### 3.4.2

An attempt to copy a previously added note can be seen on fol. 146<sup>v</sup> of the Gospel manuscript, no. 76 from the Historical-Ethnographical Museum of Kutaisi<sup>85</sup> where, after the end of the Gospel of Mark (fig. 31), Ioane Kaselaze begs for mercy for his deceased parents using the same words as a relative of his, Manavel Kaselaze, had previously done on

<sup>82</sup> This is clear from the Tbilisi codex Q-969, which mentions a ‘Iačob who was Mzečabuk before’ (*mzečabuk-gopilisa iačobisi*) in a series of notes concerning the *atabags* of Tao, amongst the ‘orthodox kings’ (*martlmadidebli mepeebi*) of Georgia, beginning with the *atabag-amirspasalari* Quarquare, his wife Dedisimedi and his first son Kaixosro, the elder brother of Mzečabuk; cf. Bregaze et al. 1958, 381–2 and Šarašize 1961, 15–6. The name *mzečabuk*, lit. ‘sun-squire’, first occurs within the Georgian tradition in the twelfth-century epic *Amirandarežaniani*, where it is borne by one of the protagonists. This Mzečabuk is mentioned in the anonymous chronicle of Queen Tamar, *Istoriani da azmani šaravantedtani* (‘Histories and praises of the garlanded’; thirteenth century) together with the ‘sun of the Khazars’, i.e. the daughter of the Khazar king, whom he married according to the epic (ch. 10; Lolašvili 1968, 432: *xvasro xazarta mepeman ... šerto asuli misi colad mze-čabuksa* [‘Khosrow the king of the Khazars ... gave Mzečabuk his daughter in marriage’]), in a list of amorous couples compared to Tamar and her first husband (Qauxčišvili 1959, 36: *vitat mzečabuk mzisatws xazartasa* [‘like Mzečabuk for the sun of the Khazars’]). Remarkably enough, the next couple in the list are Jacob and his wife, Rachel (*vitat iačob rakelists* [‘like Jacob for Rachel’]). One wonders if this was the reason for the *atabag*’s choice of *iačob* as his second name.

<sup>83</sup> For a complete transcript of the *agapi*, see Metreveli 1962, 77, no. 90. The first edition of the *agapis* by N. Ja. Marr (1914) does not contain the present text.

<sup>84</sup> See Šarašize 1961, 94–7 for more information on Mzečabuk’s ‘ecclesiastical politics’. Further details of Mzečabuk’s life are provided in Šarašize 1954, 198–203.

<sup>85</sup> My thanks are due to the staff of the Kutaisi Museum, who made this manuscript available to the members of the above-mentioned INTAS project in April 2007.

Table 21a: Cod. Sin. georg. 16, rogation on fol. 2<sup>r</sup>.

codavlasa	<i>Codvilsa</i>	May God pardon the sinful
ķirilesa šn ġn	<i>ķirilesa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	ķirile!

Table 21b: Cod. Sin. georg. 16, rogation on fol. 6<sup>r</sup>.

kr k kr sulsa taba	<i>Kr(ište), kr(ište)! sulsa ataba-</i>	Christ, Christ! May God pardon the soul of the
ġamisapara	<i>g-amirsġa-</i>	Atabag (and) Commander-in-Chief,
salarsa mzeċ	<i>salarisa mzeċ-</i>	Mzeċabuk!
abukasa šn ġn	<i>abukissa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	
misa qamasa	<i>missa q(r)masa</i>	May God pardon his page,
ķyrilesa šn ġn	<i>ķyrilesa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	ķirile!
misata dedama	<i>mista deda-ma-</i>	May God pardon their
mata šn ġn	<i>mata š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	mothers and fathers!
vca šenadoba	<i>v(in)ca šendoba-</i>	May God pardon
t akuta šegin	<i>t akut šegin-</i>	you whoever grant (lit. have)
adanes ġn	<i>dnes ġ(mertma)n</i>	forgiveness!
amn amn	<i>am(e)n am(e)n</i>	Amen, amen!

Table 21c: Cod. Sin. georg. 16, rogation on fol. 1<sup>r</sup>.

tuala zesa	<i>Tualazesza</i>	May God pardon Iaķob
iaķobsa šn ġn	<i>Iaķobsa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	Tualaze!
nonobasa ša	<i>Nonobasšvilsa</i>	May God pardon
vilsa geras	<i>Geras-</i>	Gerasime
imesa šn ġn	<i>imesa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	Nonobašvili!
inanaszesa	<i>Inanaszesa</i>	May God pardon Avgari
vgarisa šn	<i>Avgarisa š(eundve)n</i>	Inanaze!
ġn geramn	<i>ġ(mertma)n Gerasime-</i>	May God pardon
sa šn ġn m	<i>sa š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n M-</i>	Gerasime!
anolsa	<i>ano(we)lsa</i>	May God pardon
šn ġn	<i>š(eundve)n ġ(mertma)n</i>	Manoel!

his own behalf (cf. the transcripts in table 22).<sup>86</sup> Note that in addition to the two rogations (both of which are faulty in their grammar), the page contains the drawing of a rectangular object, which may be identified as a scribe's writing tablet, strongly reminiscent of a similar image added to the grave inscription of Lauritius, which is exhibited in the cloister of S. Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome (fig. 32).<sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Both Ioane and Manavel Kaselaze, and other members of the family, are also the subject of a lengthy rogation on fol. 7<sup>r</sup> of the same codex.

<sup>87</sup> See Becker 1881, 27 and Greeven 1897, 53, which reads *Lauricio con(iu) g(i) benemerenti | uxor pientissima posuit q(ui) v(ixit) an(nos) XXV*. The

### 3.4.3

An attempt at copying some of the original text of a manuscript into the margins can be seen on fol. 36<sup>r</sup> of the fragmentary Gospel ms. A-1699 held by the National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, where the heading (in red ink), *sašabatoy*, i.e. 'Sabbath service', and the words, *quvilisasa* ('of the ear'), *tavsa* ('the head') and *da* ('and') of Mark 2:23 seem to be repeated (in black ink and in a clumsy hand) in the lower margin of the page (fig. 33). As it stands, the gloss may be taken to serve

images contained in the plate were first published by Perret (1851, pl. LXXIII/6) as part of a series of wall paintings in the catacombs, which may indicate the origin of the monument; cf. also Martigny 1865, 368 and Reusens 1885, 98 as to the interpretation of the images.

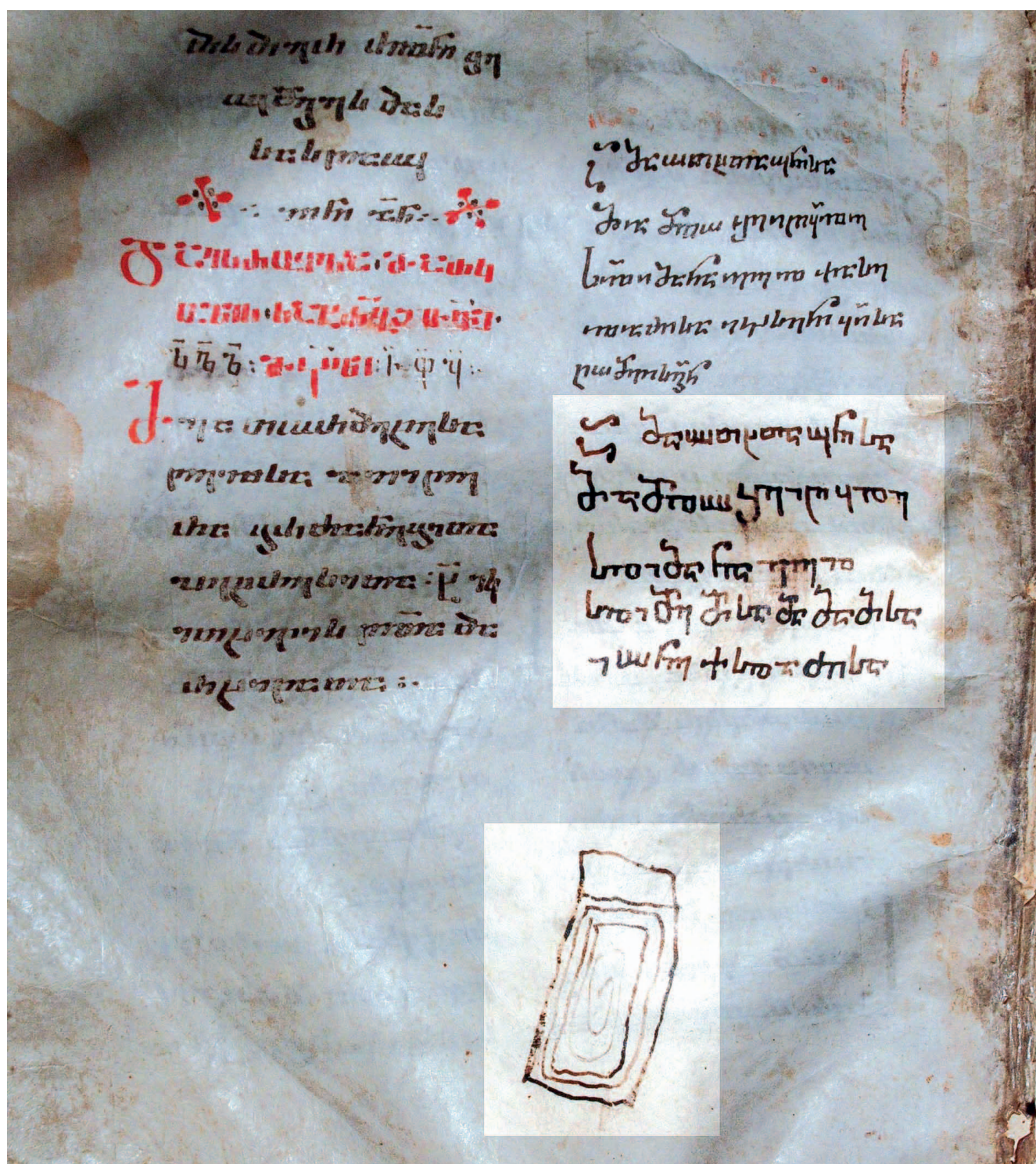


Fig. 31: Kutaisi Gospel Cod. no. 76, fol. 146v ('copied' note and drawing highlighted).



Fig. 32: Grave inscription of Lauritius, S. Lorenzo fuori le mura (drawing highlighted).

Table 22: Cod. Kut. 76, rogations on fol. 146<sup>v</sup>.

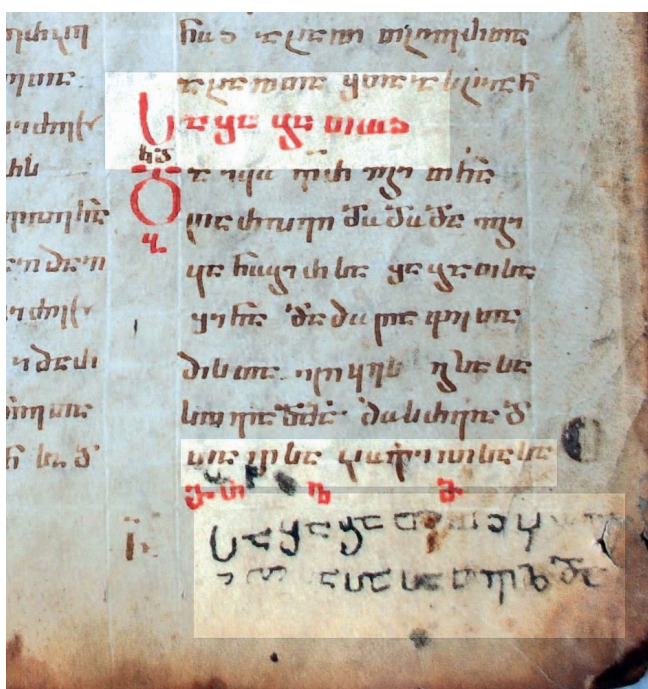
ama otxtavni sa-  
madlo šeičq(a)le  
s(u)li manavel kase-  
lazisa iqseni q(ovl)isa  
codvis(a)g(a)n

May he have mercy on these Gospels  
charitably!

May the soul of Manavel Kase-  
laze be freed of all  
sin!

ama otxtavni sa-  
madlo šeičq(a)le  
s(u)li manavel  
s(u)li dedisa mamisa  
io(a)ne k(a)s(e)lazisa

May he have mercy on these Gospels  
charitably,  
on the soul (of) Manavel,  
on the soul of the mother (and) father of  
Ioane Kaselaze!

Fig. 33: Cod. A-1699, fol. 36<sup>r</sup> ('copy' and 'source' highlighted).

the purpose of clarifying the day on which the Gospel passage was to be read ('Sabbath of the ear heads'). However, Mark 2:23 sqq. seem not to have been a usual lection in the Georgian tradition,<sup>88</sup> and in its given form, the note is too faulty to be taken seriously as a piece of liturgical advice (cf. the transcript of both the Gospel passage and the note in table 23).

<sup>88</sup> That the Gospel passage in question is Mark 2:23 and not one of its synoptical parallels (Matt. 12:1; Luke 6:1) is clear from the last word of the previous passage, *štaasxian* ('they pour in'), which closes Mark 2:22. The Gospel text is that of the Protovulgate. The passage taken from Mark 2:23 sqq. is not contained in the Paris Lectionary (ed. Tarnischvili 1959–60), whereas the Greek lectionary (in the Byzantine style) has it on the Saturday of the first week of Great Lent. The Paris Lectionary does include Matt. 12:1–8 amongst the lections for Saturdays (Tarnischvili 1960, 106, no. 1674).

#### 3.4.4

Unlike this, the lengthy (and very faulty) note in the left-hand margin of fol. 1<sup>r</sup> of the fragmentary Tbilisi Gospel ms. H-1887 (fig. 34) is not a copy of the main text of the page, which cites Matt. 17:9–18, but another quotation from a lectionary, in this case comprising the very end of the Gospel, Matt. 28:16–20, which was usually read on the Holy Saturday, according to the Jerusalem rite. Due to the bad state of the folio in question, not all of it can be restored with any certainty, as indicated in table 24; the intended text seems clear enough, though.

#### 3.4.5

In rare cases, the authors of secondary notes deemed it appropriate to use a secret script for their 'private' texts. One such case is encountered in Cod. H-372 held by the National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, a fragmentary Gospel codex considered to date from the twelfth century.<sup>89</sup> The note in question is found after the index of lections from the Gospel of Matthew (fig. 35).<sup>90</sup>

<sup>89</sup> My thanks are due to Teimuraz Jojua of the National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, for drawing my attention to this note and to Bernard Outtier, Paris, who discussed its deciphering with me in July 2013.

<sup>90</sup> There is no information on this peculiar note in the catalogue by Kutatelaze and Kasraze 1946, 273.

<sup>91</sup> Sic; note the dittography of the syllable *do*.

<sup>92</sup> Corrected from *slva da* (for *slvad da*?)

<sup>93</sup> Between the last text line and the marginal note, the abbreviations *MR* = Mark, *L* = Luke, and *M* = Matthew appear in the codex as headings to the Eusebian apparatus (in red).

Table 23: Cod. A-1699, 'liturgical note' on fol. 36'.

*Sašabatoy*

Da iḡo v(ita)r iḡi t(a)na-  
 ḡarhvidododa (!)<sup>91</sup> iḡi  
 ḡanobirsa šabatsa  
 šina da moḡapeta  
 mista iḡḡes ḡzasa  
 slvay da<sup>92</sup> mosrvad  
 tavsa ḡovilisa<sup>93</sup>  
 sašabatoy quv  
 ilsasasa tvz da

## Sabbath service

And it was, when he  
 went along  
 in the corn field on the Sabbath,  
 and his disciples  
 began on the way  
 to walk and to pluck  
 the head of the ear (of grain).  
 Sabbath service of  
 the head of the ear (of grain) and (?)



Fig. 34: Cod. H-1887, fol. 1' (marginal note highlighted).

Table 24: Cod. H-1887, lectionary passage of Matthew 28:16–20 on fol. 1<sup>v</sup>.

sxrebyma	saxarebay ma-	Gospel of Matthew.
teysa mas	teysay mas	In those
žisa ša	žamsa šina	days:
xīgi	xolo igi[ni] ...	But the[y]...
... brza	... brza-	... Jesus
nebamat	nebda mat	ordered them
iso da eṭqo	iesow da eṭqo-	and said to
des hkra mo	da (da) hrkua: mo-	them and spoke:
mec me ḡly qe	mec(a) me ḡoveli qe-	‘All authority has been given to me
lcypa cata	lmčipebay cata	in the heavens
da kēqanasa	da kueqanasa	and on earth.
[zā čarva]	zeda. čarve-	Go (and)
dis moimo	dit, moimo-	make
čapenlta	čapenit	Disciples
mamsata sx	mamisata sax-	of the Father in the
ilta žisa	elita (mamisayta da) žisa-	name of the (Father and the) Son
saa da sa	yta da suli-	and the Holy
sa čmsa d	sa čmidisayta, da	Spirit, and
aščave	aščave-	teach
bdt mt	bdet mat.	them.’

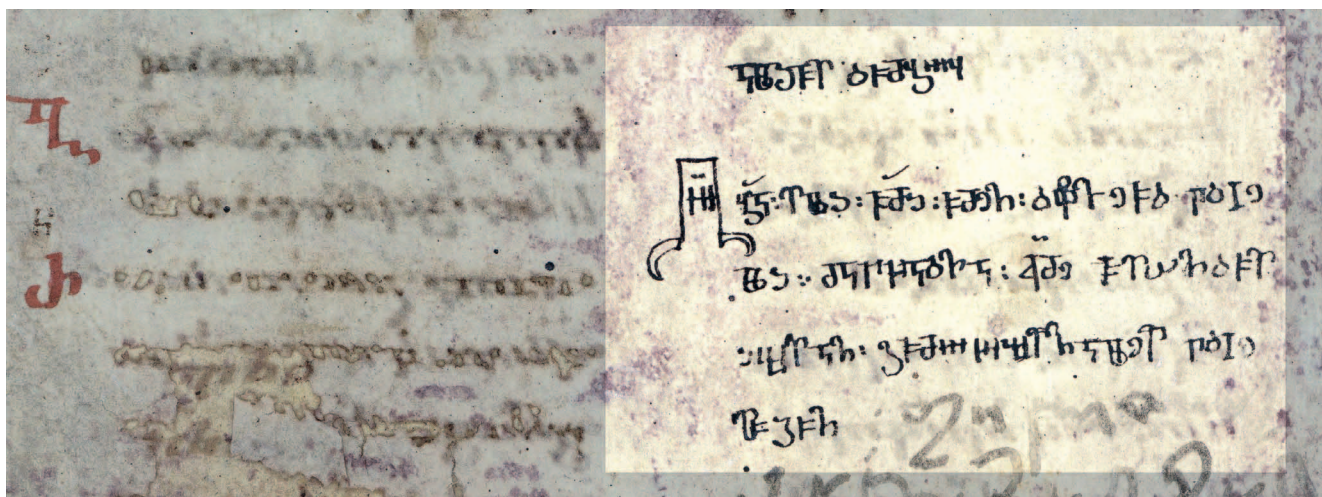


Fig. 35: Cod. H-372, Elia's note (highlighted).

Table 25: Cod. H-372, Elia's note in secret script.

<i>O(wpal)o š(eičqal)e : s(u)li : a(braa)m(is)i : amin :</i>	Lord, <sup>94</sup> have mercy on the soul of Abraham, amen!
<i>d(a) priad . c(o)dvi-</i>	And the very sin-
<i>li : mecxedre : č(e)mi aswrdas</i>	ful spouse of mine, Asordas, <sup>95</sup>
<i>iqsen : gamouqsnelis c(o)dvi-</i>	resolve from the unresolvable
<i>sagan</i>	sin!

Its author is likely to be a certain Elia, who, however, mentions himself only in a single defective line that can be read as *elias damšo*, possibly restorable as *elias da mšobelta mista* ('for Elia and his parents').<sup>96</sup> In the more verbose text that follows, he prays for two other persons whose names are, however, not certain. The transliteration printed in table 25 is tentative, given that there is no other example of the secret script that has become available to date.

4.

The examples given above were intended to show how and to what extent Georgian manuscripts from the Middle Ages were reused in later times by people seeking support, health or welfare, or just trying to work in accord with the tradition of writing and reproducing 'holy' scriptures. Not all of those who left their personal traces in the manuscripts were as certain of the durability of their notes as the scribe of Sin. georg. 19, who stated with confidence in his colophon that 'The parchment and the writer, both remain' (cf. 2.3.5 above). One hundred years before him, the scribe of another Gospel codex of Mt Sinai (Sin. georg. 30), a certain Ezra Kobuleani, added the following words to his colophon in a much less optimistic vein after completing his transcription of the Gospel of Matthew (on fol. 75<sup>r</sup>, fig. 36 and table 26): *nakmari egos, xolo*

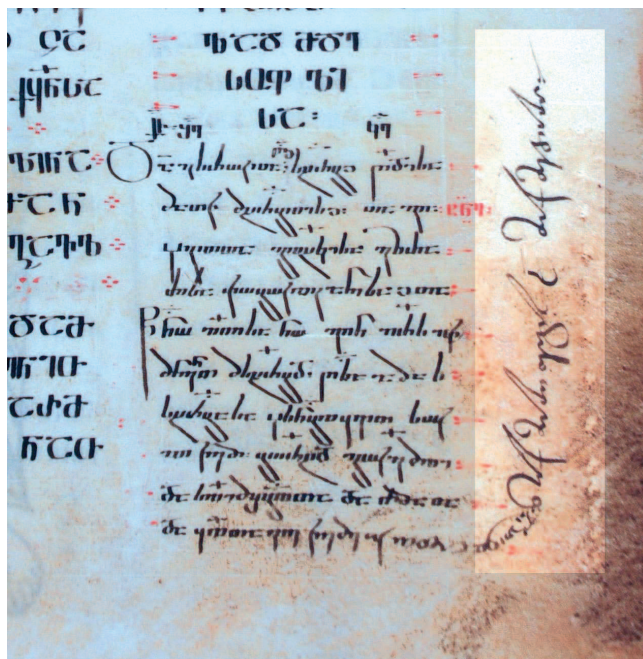


Fig. 36: Cod. Sin. georg. 30, fol. 75<sup>r</sup>, scribe's colophon (personal note highlighted).

*mokmedi ara* ('The work will remain, but not the creator'). His endeavour produced not just the Gospel codex itself, but also one of the very first specimens of the *mxedruli* cursive, employed by him as if to increase its personalising effect.

Table 26: Cod. Sin. georg. 30, scribe's colophon on fol. 75<sup>r</sup>.

*Daesrula : ç(mida)y s(a)x(a)r(e)b(a)y ç(mi)disa :—  
matē m(a)x(a)r(e)b(e)lis(a)y : tavi : tne :  
qelita g(la)x(a)kisa ezra :—  
zisa kobuleanisayta :—  
Ç(mida)no ġ(mr)tisano vin ġ(i)rs ik- :—  
mnenit ms(a)x(u)r(e)b(a)d : ç(mida)sa amas :—  
s(a)x(a)r(e)basa qs(e)n(e)b(u)l-ġ(a)vt su- :—  
li čemi : bor(o)t(a)d guem(u)li :—  
da s(u)li mš(o)b(e)lta da zmata :—  
da ġ(ove)ltave čemeultay am(e)n l(o)cv(a) ġ(av)t  
**nakmari egos x(olo) mokmedi ara***

It has been accomplished the Holy Gospel of St  
Matthew the Evangelist, chapter 355,  
by the hand of poor Ezra,  
the son of Kobuleani.

Holy ones in God, you who will become  
worthy of doing service with this holy  
Gospel, keep remembrance of my  
soul, badly tortured,  
and of the soul(s) of my parents and brothers  
and of all my (relatives), amen! Pray a prayer!

**The work will remain, but not the creator.**

<sup>94</sup> Ġ(mert)o ('God') would also be possible. The initial letter only occurs here.

<sup>95</sup> B. Outtier (letter of 31 July 2013) drew my attention to the family name, *asrdašvili*, which is listed in Kldiašvili et al., 1991 as documented from 1692 onwards. This might stem from the name present in this note.

<sup>96</sup> On fol. 78<sup>v</sup> of the same manuscript, we find another note by one Elia (in a hand dating from the fifteenth or sixteenth century, in black ink), saying that he had tried to 'revive' obscure passages of the manuscript; see Žožua 2014, 370-372 and 380 with fig. 6. This Elia is likely to be the same person as the author of the 'secret' note.

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