Achtung!

Attention!
This is a preprint version of the article „The Khanmeti Fragment of London“ by Jost Gippert (2019).
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Jost Gippert, Frankfurt 2020
In his famous article of 1923, Ivane Javakhishvili for the first time drew the attention of the scholarly world to the existence of the so-called *khanmeti* period of Georgian literacy [*javaxiSvili 1922-23: 313-319*]. One of the five manuscript specimens he dwelt upon was the fragment of a Georgian-Hebrew palimpsest from the Bodleian Library in Oxford (ms. Georg. C 1 = ms. Heb. 2672),¹ the Georgian undertext of which (written in large *asomtavruli* letters) had been proposed by Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare to belong to the Old Testament book of Jeremiah² and was determined as covering the passage of Jer. 17.26-18.8 by Javakhishvili [*javaxiSvili 1922-23: 373-374; a photograph of the recto was printed ib., pl. X*].

Two further fragments of a Georgian-Hebrew palimpsest containing an undertext from the book of Jeremiah were first published by Robert Pierpont Blake in 1932, in his catalogue of the Georgian manuscripts preserved in the library of the University of Cambridge (Taylor-Schechter ms. 12,183 and ms. 12,741, described as nos. 1 and 2 of the 11 items of the collection).³ In their undertext, Blake was able to detect portions of Jer. 12.10-16 and 20.9-16, resp., with similar khanmeti features as in the Oxford fragment. In a separate article immediately following the catalogue [Blake 1932: 225-272], Blake undertook a thorough analysis of

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¹ The other four manuscripts are all kept in the Korneli Kekelidze National Centre for Manuscript, Tbilisi, today (nos. A-737, A-89, A-844, and H-999).
² Neubauer, Cowley 1906: 74: “Palimpsest of Jeremiah, chap. viii, in Georgian (9th century, or perhaps earlier, according to Mr. F. C. Conybeare)”. – A first notice of the fragment, without regard of its being a palimpsest, is found in Lewy 1895: 20; the Georgian undertext is first mentioned in Коковцов 1899: 195-205 and 413. The latter article also contains the first photographs (as plates X and XI, appended at the end of the volume).
³ The catalogue comprises photographs (Plates 1–4), sketches (Plates 1a–4a), and complete transcripts of the Georgian undertext.
⁴ This article comprises photographs (Plates 7-8), sketches (Plates 7a-8a), and transcripts of the Oxford fragments.
both the Cambridge and Oxford fragments, concluding that both came from the
Cairo Genizah and derived from the same codex.⁵

In an article of 1937, Akaki Shanidze joined a third fragment to this set, viz.
ms. Or. 6581 of the British Museum, London, one of three minor pieces also
stemming from the Cairo Genizah [Shanidze 1937: 29-42].⁶ The Georgian under-
text content of this fragment had first been noticed by Oliver Wardrop in his
catalogue of Georgian manuscripts in the British Museum [Wardrop 1913: 406
under no. 3],⁷ who already stated its affinity to the Cambridge fragment Taylor-
Schechter 12,183.⁸ Wardrop tentatively proposed the following reading for the
two sides of the fragment, without attempting at an identification of the text:

\[
\begin{align*}
d. m & \mid a(?i) \\
ei...d(a) & \mid (?qovlis ? e
\end{align*}
\]

This reading was much improved on by A. Shanidze, who proposed the fol-
lowing rendering instead:

\[
\begin{align*}
yodi m & \mid x(?)uam \\
Cemi d[a] & \mid gulis
\end{align*}
\]

⁵ Explicitly stated also in Lake, Blake, New 1928: 289: “They unquestionably belong
to the same manuscript as the Bodleian leaf, which, though bought in Jerusalem, came
from Cairo”.

⁶ The article includes photographs of all three fragments (on pp. 40-42).

⁷ Wardrop’s discovery had well been noted by Blake who wrote [Blake 1932b: 226]:
“Through a reference in J. O. Wardrop’s Catalogue of the Georgian Mss. in the Brit-
ish Museum I discovered that one minute fragment is preserved there ... The British
Museum fragment proved to be so small that it is impossible to place it, though it can
be said with certainty that it belongs to the same codex as the fragments in Oxford and
Cambridge”. Blake inspected the fragment himself, cf. ib. 228: “The British Museum
specimen ... is a tiny, irregular bit of parchment, measuring about 38 by 30 mm. It is
framed with two other palimpsest fragments containing Palestinian Syriac texts”.

⁸ “The style of the writing resembles that of the fragment T–S. 12. 183 of the Cambridge
University Library, and both probably belong to the same MS. of the Bible. These frag-
ments are from the Genizeh at Cairo”. – The two other frag ments stored under the same
shelf number contain a Palestino-Aramaic undertext. Digital images of ms. Or. 6581
are available on http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=or_6581_f001r and ...
f001v; colour images of f. 1v of the London fragment are also provided in Karanadze,
Kekelia, Shatirishvili, Chkhikvadze 2018: 47 (no. 28.) and 291 (no. 153.). The same
book offers colour images of the Oxford fragment, too (p. 61, nos. 50 and 51).
However, Shanidze did not attempt any identification of these shreds of text either. It is not surprising then that in the subsequent decades, only the fragments from Oxford and Cambridge have been taken into account for further investigations into their dating and the position they take in the history of the Old Georgian Bible. Nevertheless, a thorough re-analysis of the London fragment enables us to proceed a bit further. First of all, Shanidze’s reading can be improved on and extended by a few characters. In the second line of the first side, one character more is discernible at the beginning, most probably an ḏ, and the Ḩ can be confirmed. On the second side, the second line seems to continue with a second ḏ, perceived the ḩ). We thus arrive at a representation that can be schematised linewise as follows:

This, now, fits astonishingly well with the Cambridge fragment Taylor-Schechter 12,183, more precisely with the first lines each of the outer columns of its verso and recto as established by Shanidze, i.e., with Jer. 12.10 and 15. The text of the “verso” can be integrated with the recto of 12,183 with a few minor restitutions as follows in accordance with the Greek text:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Or. 6518 “verso”</th>
<th>T-S 12,183 recto col. a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḩ ṣ ḧ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḧ ṣ</td>
<td>ḥ ṣ ḧ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḣ ṣ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḩ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḣ ṣ</td>
<td>ḥ ṣ ḧ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḣ ṣ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| δα μου, (ἔδωκαν) μερι- | δα ἐπιθυμη-
| ṣ ṣ ḧ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḣ ṣ | ṣ ṣ ḧ ṣ ḥ ṣ ḣ ṣ |
| μητήν μου εἰς ἔρ- | ημον ἀβα-
| | τον... |

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9 Cf. დანელია 1992: 279-280; ჩამთავაძე 2012: 56-57; and especially ხარანაული 2004: 314–333, who argued that the text form they contain is based upon a hexaplaric Greek text form of the 6th-7th centuries.

10 Hereafter, a grey background indicates uncertain readings and a black one, reconstructed text.
Note that the only major divergence as to the Greek text here consists of the omittance of ἔδωκαν ‘they gave’;\(^\text{11}\) on the other hand, the published images of the Cambridge fragment clearly show remnants of the \(\text{ἄ}\) and the \(\text{ή}\) at the beginning of the second and third lines as well as the \(\text{ι}\) following later on so that there can be hardly any doubt as to the reconstruction. For the restitution of ἔρημος ὡς ὑστάμενον for the ‘desolate wilderness’ (ἔρημον ἀβατον) we may compare the cooccurrence of the two words in Jer. 50.12 in the Mexeta Bible (σῖμη καὶ ὑστάμενον καὶ ὑστάμενον); the Oshki and Jerusalem Bibles have ὑστάμενον instead of ὑστάμενον here.\(^\text{12}\) For the “recto” of Or. 6518, things are a bit less straightforward; however, the transition to the first line of the verso of Taylor-Schechter 12,813 can as well be established with certainty:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Or. 6518 “recto”</th>
<th>(...ἐπιστρέψω καὶ)</th>
<th>Jer. 12.15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ἐλεήσω αὐτοὺς</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ κατοικ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ἐλεήσω αὐτοὺς</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case, too, the Cambridge fragment has preserved some traces of characters that must have pertained to the lines represented by Or. 6518, viz. the final \(\text{ἄ}\) of the second and, possibly, the second \(\text{ἄ}\) of the third line. What remains problematical is the verbal form corresponding to Greek ἐλεήσω (αὐτοὺς) ‘I shall have compassion (on them)’;\(^\text{13}\) if we have <흐ჳოგ>ჳ<ხ> here, i.e. ‘I shall talk to them’ as proposed above, we might expect this to have been

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\(^{11}\) ἔδωκαν + μερίδα is missing in Greek manuscripts of the Lucianic recension, and instead of ἔδωκαν, Symmachos has εταξαν; cf. Ziegler 1976: 211 n.

\(^{12}\) The Greek text of the Septuagint has only ἔρημος ‘desert’ in the corresponding verse (Jer. 27.12). – There are several other cooccurrences of σῖμη- and ὑστάμενο- attested; e.g., in Juanšer’s Life of Vaxt’ang Gorgasali (§ 15; p. 239, l. 2 in qarTlis cxovreba 1955); the passion of Davit and Čoonsṭanṭine (§ 35; p. 259, l. 9 in Zveli qarTuli agiografiuli literaturis Zeglebi 1971; or the Vita of St. Symeon the Stylite (§ 199; p. 328, l. 4 in Zveli qarTuli agiografiuli literaturis Zeglebi 1918).

\(^{13}\) Aquila and Symmachos have οικτίρησω instead of ἐλεήσω (cf. Ziegler, o.c., 212 n.), which does not help.
combined with something like יד רחמים ‘with compassion’ expressing a similar meaning. If the restitutions are correct, we gain with יד רחמים ‘I shall settle them in (their own inheritance)’ a hitherto unregistered khanmeti form, corresponding to יד רחמים in the Mxeta Bible and opposing itself to יד רחמים in the Oshki and Jerusalem Bibles. The transition between the Cambridge and London fragments is further confirmed by the Hebrew overtext, which in the case of the Cambridge fragments has for long been identified as belonging to the tractate Bābā Qammā in the text form of the Jerusalem Talmud. The London shreds, which have hitherto remained undeciphered, fill the gaps of the Cambridge fragment at the indicated positions neatly, yielding, e.g., the following wording at the junction of Or. 6518 (a) with the verso of Taylor-Schechter no. 12,183v:

“If an ox (that is) deaf-mute, insane, or young falls inside (a pit, the owner is) liable. Rabbi Eleazar said, thus is the Mishna: an ox that is deaf-mute, an ox that is insane. If a boy or a girl, a slave or a maidservant (falls inside, the owner is) exempt.”

14 Cf., e.g., the verse יד רחמים יתבש אַלּות יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבש יתבş

15 Cf. Blake 1932a: 210, who erroneously mentions the 9th chapter; the text is from the 5th chapter instead.

16 Cf. the description in Margoliouth 1915: 579, no. 1154: “Another palimpsest (middle piece), the lower writing being Georgian, and the upper writing Rabbinic Hebrew (also apparently oriental) probably belonging to a date not far removed from the first-described fragment. – The Hebrew fragment seems to deal with the Calendar, the word יד רחמים occurring twice, besides יד רחמים, יד רחמים, and apparently also יד רחמים.”

17 Indications of missing or barely readable characters as above. – For the text passage (BQ 5.9(6) ~ 5a, 44-46 ~ 26a, ll. 5-7) cf. Guggenheimer 2008: 151 (with vocalisations) and further the English translations by Guggenheimer 2008: 152; Neusner 1984: 128; and the German translation by Wewers 1982: 95. The passage is not included in the edition of the Genizah fragments by Ginzberg 1909: 242, pace Blake 1932a: 210 n.1.
Taking all this evidence together, there can hardly be any doubt that the fragment kept in London belongs not only to the same codex as the fragments of Oxford and Cambridge but even to one of these fragments exactly, viz. ms. Taylor-Schechter 12,183, completing its upper corner as illustrated in Figure 1 for the recto and Figure 2 for the verso.

Figure 1: ms. Taylor-Schechter 12,183r joined with ms. Or. 6581

Figure 2: ms. Taylor-Schechter 12,183v joined with ms. Or. 6581
SaniZe 1937: SaniZe a. 1937, xanmeti ieremias kembrijuli fragmentebi, n. maris saxelobis enis, istoriisa da materialuri kulturis insti-tutis moambe, 2, 29-42


Zveli qarTuli agiografiuli literaturis Zeglebi 1971: Zveli qarTuli agiografiuli literaturis Zeglebi, III, 1971, dasabeWdad moamzades il. abulaZem, e. gabiZaSvilma, n. goguaZem, m. dolaqiZem, g. kiknaZem da c. qurcikiZem, il. abulaZis xelmZRvanelobiT da re-daqciiT, Tbilisi


SaniZe 1987: SaniZe a. 1987, xeremiaskhe beromina istoria, Zveli qarTuli mwerlobis Zeglebi, 10, Tbilisi

JashovaniSvili 1922-23: JashovaniSvili iv. 1922-23, axlad aRmoCenili uZvelesi qarTuli xelnawerebi da maTi mniSvneloba mecnierebisaTvis, 2, 313-391


Ziegler 1976: Ziegler J. 1976, Jeremias · Baruch · Threni · Epistula Jeremiae (Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum 15), Göttingen

Коковцев 1899: Коковцов П. 1899, Еще один рукописный фрагмент Йерусалимского Талмуда, Записки Восточного Отделения Императорского Русского Археологического Общества, 11, 195-205

ლოდენტროს ბაზები ფრაგმენტები

იმპერია გამოკრძალავს ლომენის ბრიტანიის ბიბლიოთეკის ხელშეწყობაში, Or. 6581-ის პასუხის პროგრამას დამოუკიდებლად ფრაგმენტები, რომლის შედეგად უკავშირდება მოცულობა და არის ტრადიციული და ნიშნულ ხმაურებს. ფრაგმენტების კატალოგი ეკუთვნის კვლევით სახელმწიფოს უპირატესობას, რომ გადახურვის მიზნით დაგეგმილი იყოს მისი ჰისტორია. ჩამოდგმილი მიზნით, რომლის გადახურვის შესახებ ძალიან ცნობილი იყო, რომელსაც ნიშნულ სტრატეგიებს მოიცნობენ, რომლებიც შეიცავდნენ რობერტ ბლეიკს თეფებს. ასეთი ექსპერიმენტები გამოიყენებდა Taylor-Schechter 12,183, რომელმაც მის 1913 წლის შეუძლებლობაზე იყო მოტივირებული, ანუ გადახურვის სკესინმანი თავად ამ ფრაგმენტების ხანძარს და სხვა შესახებ შეემატა კვლევა. ამისთვის, ბრიტანიის ფილისტიკა დახვდა სხვა მდგომარეობის (12:19 და 12:15) პასუხის მიზნით ხანძრებიდან დედამისის. იქნებოდა სხვა კლასიკური ცრუ - ლემრის უფრო არ არქი დაახვილებული.