



“Georgian Manuscript”

International
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Proceedings



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Conference Proceedings



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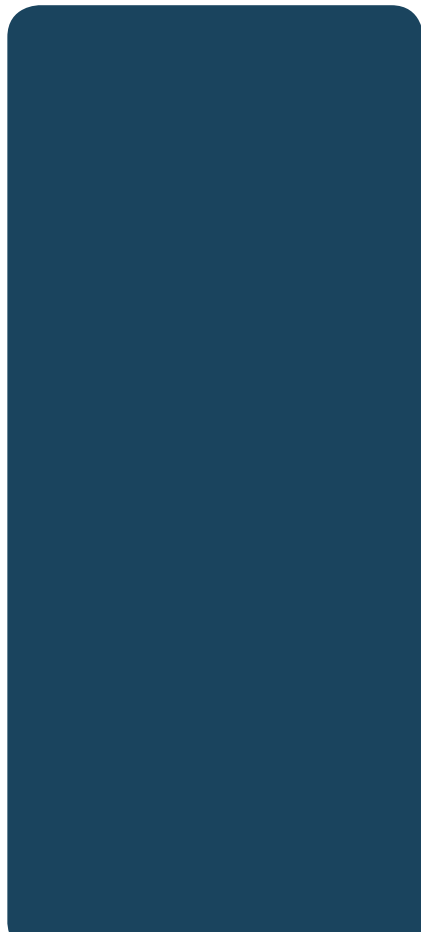
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Elizabeth Anderson

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Syrian Orthodox Commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius: Authors, Texts, and Manuscripts

Although it is widely believed that the author of the Dionysian corpus was likely himself a Syrian Orthodox bishop, the reception and influence of the Dionysian writings has been studied in almost every major Christian theological tradition except for the one in which it originated. There has been extensive study of the Dionysian influence on both Latin and Byzantine Christianity, as well as on East Syriac and Armenian Christianity, and nearly all of the Syrian Orthodox commentaries remain entirely unedited and untranslated.

This presentation will give an overview of the major commentaries and their manuscripts, which include those from collections in England, Rome, Turkey, India, and the United States. While often presenting themselves in the form of commentaries on the Dionysian corpus, they often diverge from it in interesting ways. They tend, for example, to downplay any suggestion of negative theology, seeing both scripture and the natural world as filled with symbols that point directly to God, and which do not need to be negated. There seems to be a fear that negative theology could lend itself to iconoclasm, and instead most of the authors seem to advocate for the proliferation of biblical and liturgical symbols more than the negation of them. The notion of “dissimilar similarities”, so prominent in the original corpus, does not seem to have any presence in these commentaries.

The commentaries also display much greater concern for how all of creation might be saved, from its material elements like rocks and trees, all the way down to demons. While this is arguably a concern that is already latent in the original corpus, it is given a much greater prominence in the commentaries than in the original texts. Nearly all of the commentaries address the question of the possible salvation of demons, a question that the original Dionysian corpus does

not address at all, although different commentators offer different verdicts on whether such salvation is likely.

Finally, many of the commentaries draw close connections between the liturgical rites of the Syrian Orthodox Church and the liturgy as it is described in the Dionysian text. Liturgical themes are central to many of the commentaries, which tend to see themselves (not necessarily with great accuracy) as continuing to practice the liturgical rites precisely as the original Dionysian texts indicate.

Andreas Rhoby

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Greek Inscriptions in Medieval Georgia: Their Text, Their Form, and Their Context

The Shalva Amiranashvili Museum of Fine Arts in Tbilisi contains one of the most famous artefacts of the country, the so-called Khakhuli triptychon. Part of it is small plate, which displays the coronation of Michael VII Doukas and his Georgian-born wife Maria by Christ. The scene is accompanied by a short Greek metrical inscription. The interaction of Greek epigraphy and Georgian inscriptions will be the focus of my presentation. Greek inscriptions are part of fresco decoration and appear on artefacts. The reasons why Greek was used within its Georgian context are manifold: Byzantine workshop traditions also intruded other cultures, so, e.g., the Georgian one. Byzantine painting guides with instruction how to paint and which (Greek) inscriptions to add circulated also beyond the borders of the Byzantine empire. In addition, Greek was regarded not only as a learned but also as a sacred language. Thus, it is not surprising that Greek was used for dedicatory inscriptions as well as for inscriptions accompanying scenes and on saints' scrolls in Georgian culture. Of significance are also the abundant testimonies of depictions of crosses with accompanying

so-called tetragrams, i.e. four letters or four pairs of letters. Of interest is also the language register of Greek which was used in Georgian environment. In my presentation, I will offer meaningful examples of Greek inscriptions (both prosaic and metrical) which interact with Georgian epigraphy. I will also analyze the meaning of these inscriptions for the medieval beholder. What was, e.g., the reaction of Georgian beholders when they were confronted with Greek inscriptions?

Vladimer Kekelia

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Two unexplored Georgian manuscripts stored in abroad

The photo repository of the K. Kekelidze Georgian National Center of Manuscripts and the private archive kept on it contains the most important material for research Georgian manuscript heritage.

In the archive of the Center are kept four microfilms of manuscript from Azerbaijan: two Georgian manuscripts, two Armenian. As the texts attached on the microfilms tell us the manuscripts are undescribed and unexplored. The seals on Armenian manuscripts tell us that one of them was kept in Baku, In the former city library named V. Lenin, and the second one in the library of the Azerbaijan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Presumably, two Georgian manuscripts are kept in these institutions.

1. **Prayers**, 19th c. in Mkhedruli. 205 pages. Begins from 19 page. Inventory number 1790/d. 1134. The prayers was supposedly for Georgian Catholics.
2. **№5106 manuscript, Catholic prayers**. Inventory number 1424/883.

18-19th c. In Mkhedruli, 100 folios. The manuscript are not pagination, illustrated with 55 miniatures, including the image of the Armenian Catholics Nerses.

Observing on the second manuscript shows that the Georgian Catholics translated the prayers from the Armenian language, or the manuscript was intended for the Georgian-speaking Armenian Catholic parish.

Darejan Gogashvili

Georgian National Museum, Georgia

***Repair of the Wooden Board and the Leather Cover in the Middle Ages
(According to the Georgian Historical Sources)***

1. Introduction

Throughout the centuries frequent mishandling and harmful external forces and influences caused great damage to the manuscripts, hence making the repair and renewal of the books an urgent necessity and a priority. Georgian written historical sources of the 10th-18th centuries have safeguarded important information about rebinding and renewal of disassembled and damaged manuscripts.

The study of historical documents, colophons, inscriptions and codicological analysis of manuscripts restored in the middle ages, creating an interesting picture and presented an opportunity to investigate techniques and materials used for the renewal or repair of various kinds of damaged books.

2. Renewal and Repair

According to the colophons of the Sinai Homiliary (sin.32-57-33, Mount Sinai),

copied in 864, it was repaired for the third time in 981 using calf skin [Garitte (1956), pp. 95-961] 11th century manuscript, Menion (H-2336, NCM), was rebound by Vlasi Urbneli in 1570 at the Monastery of the Cross, Jerusalem [Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts (1949), pp. 231-232.]; As for the 11th century manuscript, Menion (H-2339, NCM), it was renewed by Griol the Deacon in 1649 [Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts (1949), pp. 233-23]; According to the inscription of the Life of St. George Hagiorite (S- 353, NCM), copied in the 11th century, it was rebound by Barnaba Tbileli in 1570 at the Monastery of the Cross, Jerusalem [Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts (1959), pp. 409-401]; According to the colophons of George the Hagiorite, Great Synaxarion (H- 1661, NCM) was copied in 1156 in the Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem and It was restored in 1570 by Vlasi Urbneli [Georgian Manuscripts Copied Abroad in Libraries and Museums of Georgia (2018), p. 48]; as for the 16th century four gospels (Q-84, NCM), it was restored in 1860, the manuscript has an inscription of the abbot of the monastery in Sairme, referring to the renewal and repair of the book cover for the Gospels [Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts (1957), pp. 97-98]; As for Jruchi I Four Gospels (H-1660, NCM), according to the colophons, it was written in 936 at the Shatberdy Lavra of the Tao-Klarjeti monastic centre [Catalogue of Georgian Manuscripts, (1950), pp. 81-82]. The gospel has a combined metal and blind-stamped reddish-brown leather cover [9] (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. H-1660, NCM. Jruchi I Four Gospels. The upper part of the cover, decorated with silver spheres.

There exists a hypothesis stating that the Jruchi I Four Gospels had its cover changed three times [Karanadze (2002), pp. 36–38]; First in Shatberdi, in the 10th century, immediately after the copying; secondarily it was rebound in the 16th century and wooden boards covered with reddish-brown stamped leather was attached to the manuscript; next change in the design of the cover occurred in the 17th century, when, in attempt to preserve and mend the cover silver decorative details were added (Fig: 2) ; The last time the manuscript cover has been

renewed, was 2006, when the split board and the original leather cover were restored [Gogashvili. D. (2016) pp. 271-292].

Fig. 2. Jruchi I Four Gospels. Fastenings and furnishings.

It is also interesting in this regard the manuscript known as the Kalkosi four Gospels (Q-1602, 13th century. NCM) . The gospel as the Jruchi I for Gospels has a combined metal and blind-stamped leather cover (Fig. 3). The manuscript contains a few important inscriptions, containing the information concerning the restoration and renewal throughout different periods of time. According to one of such inscriptions, the disassembled manuscript was rebound by Zakaria Abelishvili in 14th -15th centuries. In this case, the gospel also has a combined metal and blind-stamped leather cover (Fig. 3). The gospel under discussion is also significant for one of the oldest surviving mentions of the paleographical term “ak’indzva” [აკონძვა] - carried the meaning of binding, and the term “mk’indzavi” [მკონძავი] - binder carried the meaning of binding [Taqaiashvili. E. (1910), pp. 223- 228, Gogashvili. D, Chitunashvili. D (2014. pp.72-73; 209-210]. This proves that the paleographical term “ak’indzva” [აკონძვა] has been used in Georgian Literacy from as early as 14th -15th centuries.

Fig. 3. Q-1602, NCM. Kalkosi Four Gospels. Combined metal and blind-stamped leather cover.

A) The upper board; B) The lower board.

3. Terminology

The tradition of renewal of damaged manuscripts existed in Georgia for centuries. The restoration of books presented such an important manufacturing process that there were various terms specific to this work. According to Georgian historical sources (10th–18th centuries), there are two types of damages: 1. the damaging of the written text, it means the damage or discoloration of the writing

ink, resulting in difficulties with reading the text; 2. The dismemberment of the codex (Fig. 4. A; B). The first was called “dashaveba” [დაშავება], “dashavebuli” [დაშავებული] (harmed // damaged) - carried the meaning of harmed, damaged, the second - “dashliloba” [დაშლილობა], “dashlili” [დაშლილი] (dismemberment // dismembered // unbound) - carried the meaning of dismemberment, dismembered. The renewal of the damaged writing was signified by “gatskhoveleba” [გაცხოველება] (Fig. 5). As for the renewal of the manuscript, it was called “ganakhleba” [განახლება] “gaakhleba” [გაახლება] (repair // restoration) - carried the meaning of repair, restoration [Javakhishvili (1996), pp.82, 85-86].

Fig. 4. A) The damaging of the written text. GNM SMHE-Mestia 621, Canon of Jerusalem (lectionary

of Latali). 10th century, parchment; B) The dismemberment of the codex. GNM SMHE-Mestia

5, Triodion. 15th century, parchment.

Fig. 5. The renewal of the damaged writing: A) NCM A-98, Tskarostavi Four Gospels, 10th century, parchment; B) NCM H-1667, Jruchi II Four Gospels, 12th century, parchment, renewed text - on paper

According to the colophons existent on Georgian manuscripts [Sin.32-57-33; Sin.96 (Mount Sinai, St. Catherine’s Monastery); Ier.21; Ier.48; Ier. 51; Ier.77; Ier.120; Ier.143 (Library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem); Ath.4, Ath.13 (the Holy Mount Athos, Monastery of Iviron); H-600; H-1661; H-2336; H-3239; Q-84; Q-661; S-169 (NCM); “shemosva” [შემოსვა], “k’azmva” [კაზმვა], “shek’azmva” [შეკაზმვა], “shek’vra” [შეკვრა] - carried the meaning of binding, rebinding, sewing; Terms “mk’azmavi” [მკაზმავი], “shemk’vrel” [შემკვრელი], “mmosveli” [მმოსველი] referred to the binder, the rebinder of books; “ganmaakhlebeli” [განმაახლებელი] indicated the repairer [Surguladze (1978), pp.131-133]. According to the colophones

of Georgian manuscripts from the Holy Mt. Athos; Jerusalem and Mt. Sinai the terms “sheimosa” [შეიმოსა], “sheik’azma” [შეიკაზმა] and “sheik’ra” [შეიკრა] were synonyms and carried the meaning of bookbinding [Karanadze (2002), P. 33-35, 38-39]. The term “k’azmva” [კაზმვა] had another meaning. According to the inscriptions on 11th century manuscripts Ath. 20 (the Holy Mountain. Athos) and Jer.32 (Library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) the terms referred to the preparation of the quires [Gogashvili (2006), pp. 77-88].

As mentioned above, looking through Georgian historical sources and systematic analysis of manuscripts restored in the Middle Ages presents an opportunity to investigate techniques and materials used for the renewal or repair of damaged or dismembered, unbound manuscripts, more specifically only two methods will be discussed; first refers to the book board repair, the second involves the renewal of the damaged leather cover .

4. Repair of the Wooden Board

Presented Figures show the repair of the split wooden board: Horologion, size: 130× 85 mm, printed in 19th century, preserved at Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography (GNM SMHE - Mestia 2026). The split board sewed in the tail area. The split pursues the direction of the wooden grain (Fig 6); The Four Gospels, size: 255 × 185 mm, printed in 1791, in Tbilisi, preserved at the National centre of Manuscripts (№72, NCM). The lower board is severely damaged. There are various missing and split parts. The splits are sewn only in the middle and the tail area. The splits run along the direction of the wooden grain (Fig. 7. A, B); Manuscript board with original leather cover, size: 150 × 110 mm, preserved at Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography (GNM SMHE - Mestia 14). The split board is sewn in the central area, the split follows the direction of the wooden grain (Fig. 8); The Four Gospels, size: 255 × 185 mm, printed in 1791, in Tbilisi, preserved at the National centre of Manuscripts (№72, NCM), the split board is sewn in the tail area. The split run along the direction of the wooden grain (Fig. 9).

Fig. 6. GNM SMHE-Mestia 2026, Horologion. Lower board, inner face. The board (thickness – 8 mm) is sewed in the tail area. The split pursues the direction of the wooden grain. The grain direction is horizontal, vertical towards the spine.

Fig. 7. №72, NCM. The Four Gospels. A) Lower board, inner face;
B) Lower board, inner face.

The board (thickness: 6 mm) is badly damaged; there are various split and missing parts.

The splits are sewn in the middle and the tail area. The splits run along the direction of the wooden grain, the direction of which is horizontal, vertical towards the spine.

Fig. 8. HNM SMHE-Mestia 14. 17th century manuscript board (thickness – 5 mm). The Lower board is split and sewn in the central area. The split follows the direction of the wooden grain. The grain direction is vertical, parallel to the spine.

Fig. 9. №72, NCM. The Four Gospels. Upper board, outer face. The board (thickness: 6 mm) is sewn in the tail area. The split run along the direction of the wooden grain, the direction of which is horizontal, vertical towards the spine.

Observations have shown the repair of the wooden board was done without using any additional material, simply by a thread, according to the following rule: the board was sewn by passing the thread through a pairs of holes drilled in advance. The wooden board was repaired by two different methods:

1. The board was sewn with several separate threads. It is sewn in such a manner, that every two holes in a pair are connected only to each other (Fig 10).
2. The board was sewn with a single thread connecting pairs of holes to one another and creating a zigzag, cross, or a mix of both patterns (Fig. 11).

Fig. 10. Repair by three independent threads, every two holes in a pair is connected only to each other. The direction of arrows indicates the thread movement.

Fig. 11. Repair by a single thread connecting pairs of holes to one another and creating

[A] a zigzag, [B] cross, and [C] mix of both patterns. The direction of arrows indicates the thread movement

5. Repair of the Leather Cover

Presented Figures illustrates the repair and renewal of damaged leather cover. Fig. 12. A; B) exemplifies the filling of the damaged parts of the leather cover by the use of an adhesive.

In the first case the damaged parts at the head and tail of the spine area were filled before covering with leather of appropriate colour and thickness (A. SM-HE-Mestia 648, preserved at Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography); In the second case, the damage caused by fire is repaired by a leather patch of different thickness and colour. The patch is attached directly to the board by the use of an adhesive (B. mestia 480, preserved at Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography). However, the method used in the 18th century manuscript, differs from the one mentioned above, more specifically, the manuscript leather is sewn approximately in the middle across the whole cover (Fig. 13. SM-HE-Mestia 2134, preserved at Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography)

As seen from the given examples the repair of the leather cover was done according to two different methods: by an adhesive and by a thread.

Fig. 12. A) GNM SMHE-Mestia 648. Euchologion, 152×105 mm, 18th century; Lower board, outer face; B) GMN SMHE-Mestia 480. Horologion, 155×110 mm, 14th–15th centuries; upper board, outer face.

Fig. 13. GNM SMHE-Mestia 2134. Psalter, 125 × 105 mm, printed in 179, Spine,

6. Conclusion

As seen from the discussed materials, damaged wooden board was repaired quite simply, according to the following rule: the board was sewn by passing the thread through a pair of holes drilled in advance. The repair was carried out by two different methods: 1. The board was sewn with a single thread connecting pairs of holes to one another and creating a zigzag, cross, or a mix of both patterns 2. The board is sewn with several separate threads in such a manner, that every two holes in a pair are connected only to each other. As for the damaged leather cover, the repair was done by a thread, by means of sewing, or by adhesive.

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Forced Mobility, Inaccessibility, and Exile Destination: Pityus in Late Antiquity and the case of John Chrysostom

The last years of career of John Chrysostom (ca. 349–407) are occupied by a long exile that brought the archbishop of Constantinople to move from the ‘City’ towards eastern Anatolia. Passing through Nicomedia, Nicaea, Ancyra, and Caesarea of Cappadocia, John Chrysostom spent his last years (404–407) almost constantly on the move, with longer stays in the western Armenian town of Cucusus and the fortress of Arabissus. Although technically banished from the Byzantine capital in order to remain isolated, in fact John continued to be in touch with his friends and supporters from both Constantinople and Antioch, and also managed to develop new useful connections in his new locations and along the way. Contrary to the imperial’s plans, letters between John and his addressees continued to be exchanged, goods, drugs, and commodities were shipped, and visits from relatives and acquaintances from Antioch continued to be made. Because of this sort of ‘failed’ exile, John was finally sent to a more remote destination: Pityus. Of this late step we unfortunately know nothing, because John died on the way, in the vicinity of Comana Pontica.

This paper aims at discussing the significance of Pityus as exile destination by means of comparison with the living conditions of John during his exile in western Armenia. While the Chrysostomian *Epistolary* presents John’s exile in dramatic tones, recent scholarship (for instance, W. Mayer) has demonstrated the rhetorical sides of the exilic construction of this collection of letters, pointing at more positive sides of John’s banishment in Armenia. By comparing the actual living condition of John Cucusus and Arabissus with the reasons for his removal to Pityus, new hypotheses on the symbolic and realistic significance of this latter exilic location are thus put forward.

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***Manuscript evidence of the transition process from Asomtavruli to Nuskhuri
and from Nuskhuri to Mkhedruli***

The presentation about the three Georgian scripts (Mrgvlovani Asomtavruli, Kutkhovani Nuskhuri and Mkhedruli/Mtavruli) aims to identify mixed manuscript evidence of the process of transition from one writing system to another as well as, more in general, codices that contain more than one of the scripts. By analysing these elements together with the historical reasons behind the stages of development of these different writing systems, and thanks to the comparison with other scripts, namely Phoenician, Greek, Armenian Erkat’agir and Caucasian Albanian, to all of which the Georgian alphabet is related, the purpose of the presentation is to provide a first attempt at studying how the shift from one script to the following one was perceived by Georgian amanuensis copyists and scholars of the time, how it affected their work and how it was reflected on their handwriting. Moreover, following UNESCO’s addition, in 2016, of the three Georgian scripts to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, some time is dedicated to see how the coexistence of these alphabets in the past and still today, because of their specific cultural and social functions, has an impact on the society and identity of Georgia. The presentation concludes with some consideration on how the unicity of the Georgian case, as far as writing system is concerned, helped preserving a national identity throughout many centuries of troubled history and the role that it can still play in this day and age at its current state as well as in an improved scenario in which a more extensive and thorough teaching of the two older versions of the Georgian script was to be carried out in Georgian schools.

The Composition of Bishop's Consecration from Medieval Georgian Art: Homilies of St Gregory Nazianzen at Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, A-109

The manuscript of liturgical homilies of St Gregory Nazianzen (A-109), transcribed and illuminated at the beginning of 13th century, probably in “Many mountains” of Gareja, rises various aspects for discussion. The illustrations of this manuscript, which consist of thirteen full-page miniatures, are inserted before the each of St Gregory’s homily and give an opportunity to generally characterize the iconographic and especially, the stylistic features of the period. The miniatures can be divided into several groups, from which the cycle of St Gregory’s “historic” homilies (six scenes) contains an interesting scene - the Consecration of the Bishop, on f. 115v. The full-page miniature illustrates the meeting of St Gregory Nazianzen with St Gregory of Nyssa for the occasion of the consecration of St Gregory of Nyssa as bishop. The schematic model, generally used in Byzantine art for such scenes was copied by the miniaturist - two bishops are standing in the interior of the church, before the canopied altar and the main act of consecration - reading of the prayer with the open roll at the head of bishop-elect is depicted. The authority of St Gregory Nazianzen is furthermore accented by the use of Polystaurion in his vesture - an element, which appeared at the end of 11th century and became the distinguishing garment of Patriarchs of Constantinople and the part of iconographic imagery of the saintly bishops. St Gregory of Nyssa is already represented with Omophorion, before the act of his consecration. The liturgical character of the scene is underlined by the presence of a deacon at the edge of the composition.

The general interest in the ordination practice of Byzantine Rite naturally rais-

es the subject of its interpretation in visual art (standard schemes of the rite, depiction of distinctive garments or insignia and various attributes). This case was widely discussed by Christopher Walter in various cycles of saintly bishops and historic narrative scenes of Byzantine art. Only a few compositions of the consecration are preserved from medieval Georgian art (e.g. in the cycles of St Nicholas in Kinstvisi and Tslenjikhka murals), therefore, the miniature depicting bishop's consecration from A-109, gives valuable visual evidence for studying the peculiarities of consecration scenes (e.g. relationship between the text and image) from Medieval Georgia.

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St. Michael of Mar Saba and its Georgian version

The hagiographical tradition testified by Arabic Christianity preserves the memory of many local saints and martyrs who serve as eloquent examples to the Christian faith under Muslim rule. This literature genre got increased interest in recent scholarship, as especially the eloquent book *Christian Martyrs under Islam* by Christian Sahner testifies to. Although such stories flourished among Christians of all confessional backgrounds living across the Islamic world, I would like to focus in the present paper on those texts which originated in the monastic environment of Palestine. In particular, I want to present some features of the Martyrdom of saint Michael, monk of the Mar Saba Monastery in the Judean desert. This life, originally written in Arabic at the very beginning of the 9th century CE has only been preserved in a Georgian translation and in a Greek adaptation of later date which was incorporated in the Greek life of St. Theodore of Edessa. The Georgian version was translated in the 10th century by the same monks in Palestine who translated other Arabic Christian texts which can be found today, among others at the Iviron Monastery at Mount Athos. Although the author of the martyrdom of St. Michael is anonymous, he seems

to stem from the monastic context of the Mar Saba monastery. He speaks in the first person plural, in the name of an audience to whom ‘Father Basil, a priest of St. Sabas, had recounted the story of Michael.’ Basil in his turn heard the story from the monk Theodor Abu Qurrah while paying him a visit at his cell near the laura. The close ties with the monastery and some of its famous monks are also visible in the panegyric dedicated to the monastery which closes the story of saint Michael:

Just as Jerusalem is the queen of all cities, so is the laura of Sabas the prince of all deserts, and so far as Jerusalem is the norm of other cities, so too is St. Sabas the exemplar for other monasteries. That praiseworthy and splendid Saba [was] chosen, having come from the ends of the earth [...]. Fortunate Saba the spiritual teacher discovered such disciples as Stephen and John and Thomas and Theodore Abū Qurrah.

The story of Michael can be summarized as follows: Michael was a young monk at the aforementioned monastery of Mar Sabas and – at least according to the Georgian version – originating from Tiberias in Galilee. The narrative framework of the story recounts that one day the young monk went to Jerusalem in order to sell the handywork products of the monastery. On the market place in Jerusalem he met an agent of the wife of the Umayyad caliph Abd el-Malik. The eunuch invited Michael to come to the residence of the caliph’s wife in order to meet her. As she received him at her residence, smitten with love for him, she attempted to attract him into her service. In a way reminiscent to the story of Joseph, Michael did not respond to her seduction therefore provoking her anger and desire for revenge. In order to get him forced to her disposal, she then brought Michael to the caliph’s court. There the monk expounds the reasons for his refusal to abandon monastic life and to enter the service of the queen. Admiring his wit and wisdom, Abd el-Malik acquitted him of his shackles. The Caliph thereupon opened a dialogue about religion with Michael, also inviting a Jewish scholar to take part. The debate touched questions about ascetical life and their biblical legitimacy. As the caliph insinuated that Paul led the follow-

er of Jesus astray, a common accusation raised by Muslim apologists towards Christians, and as he tried to offer him material incentives to convert to Islam, the monk brought forward a refutation against the prophethood of Muhammad, asserting that Islam was only able to spread and gain new followers by the sword and by virtue of promises of earthly goods such as food and marriage in paradise. By contrast, Paul spread the Christian message to the gentiles without any of these allures. And so, while the Saracens ‘have gained one island’ only, most of the inhabitants of the earth would still adhere to Christianity, even most of the servants and physicians at the caliph’s court. The apologetic argument then led the way to insult and blasphemy, as the monk proclaimed to the whole assembly, ‘Muhammad is most certainly not a prophet or an apostle but an imposter, a deceiver, and a forerunner of the anti-Christ’. In this way, frank conversation between the followers of two religions devolved into accusations of insult. The caliph therefore orders him to undergo two ordeals. In the first one the monk had to stand barefoot on hot coals, while in the second he had to ingest fatal poison, but both ordeals had no effect on him. On the instigation of the servants, who were fearing that the miracle would unmask the weakness of Islam, the caliph ordered then to behead Michael. After the monk’s death the citizens of Jerusalem and the monks of Mar Saba monastery argued over the possessions of the body of the martyr, but it was to the monastery where eventually the relics have been brought.

This highly fictional story blends together literary genres and themes which were quite common in Christian Arabic literature of the Abbasid period. For reason of time we can only briefly hint at the most important features. The literary genre of a martyrology, to which the narrative framework of our story belongs, is well attested in the literary production of the Palestinian monasteries. Famous examples for the first Abbasid century are the accounts of the martyrs Abd al-Masihi an-Najrani or St. Anthony Ruwah. Both accounts present stories of Muslims converts to Christianity who, after taking up monastic life, suffered martyrdom after they publicly professed their faith. Other martyrs like Romanos and Peter Capitolias are more like to Michael as they were condemned to death

after defaming Islam during their interrogations by Muslim officials. And this is why several martyrs accounts also dedicated larger sections to theological debates between the Christian hero and the Muslim ruler with the latter's court as the setting of the debate. To use a term minted by Sidney Griffith, the theme of 'the monk in the emir's majlis' was a prominent feature among apologetic texts from the early Islamic period, the most famous examples being the dialogue between the Nestorian patriarch Timothy (780-823) and the caliph al-Mahdi or the disputation of the monk Abraham of Tiberias. The latter debate, which allegedly took place in Jerusalem around the year 820, shares some interesting features with the case of Michael, both relating an elaborate story which explained how the Christian monk got involved in the debate and both presenting the monk as well informed in the Quranic teaching about Jesus. Compared to this dialogue, however, the dialogue staged in the story of St. Michael has only a few but nonetheless significant topics, giving a prominent place to the question on the reliability of the preaching of the apostle Paul and on the value of monasticism.

The Georgian text seems to offer a rather faithful translation of the original account and preserves several peculiarities of the Arabic language. This is especially visible in the handling of proper names and nomenclatures. An evident case is for example the fact the Georgian text presents the caliph by the name Abddal-melik, a careful reproduction of the Arabic 'Abd al-Malik. In the same way, the epithet amir mumli which the Georgian text uses as title for the caliph, again reproduces the Arabic term amir al-mu'minin with which the caliph is usually designated in his military role as commander of the faithful. Concerning the names of places and regions, the Georgian translator on the other hand chose

to resort to accepted Georgian forms rather than literal transcriptions from the Arabic original. So for example in the designation of the twelve farthest regions of the world listed by the monk in order to stress the spread of Christianity, the translator chose to employ the term ap'riket'i to designate Northern-Africa and not to follow the Arabic ifriqiya, as other Georgian texts chose to do. In one case, however, the translator did not seem to understand the peculiarity of Arabic nomenclature. The fact that in the Georgian translation the monk asserts that the Saracens only conquered 'one island' (hert'visi) calls to mind the jazīrat al-'arab with which Arab geographers used to designate the Arab peninsula, the land of the Arabs. Last but not least, in the case of Greek loan words, it is more difficult to recognize the hand of the Georgian translator, as most of the Greek terms used in the Arabic original already entered Georgian language, as for example the terms lavra (monastery), eklesia (church) or episkoposi (bishop).

Compared with the peculiarities of the Georgian translation, the Greek version of the story presents a quite different picture. On the one hand the dialogue staged at the caliph's court between Abd al-Malik preserves quite faithfully the original Arabic text. On the other hand, the narrative frame of the account presents longer interpolations and additions. In the introduction of the story, the Greek version even provides the reader with a polemical description of the Islamic conquest, setting the historical stage for the theological controversy between the caliph and the monk. The Greek version also seems to insist more than the Georgian translation on the holiness of Jerusalem, not just praising the city itself but also mentioning her most important religious sites. These peculiarities are also explained by the fact that the Greek version originated from a different context than its Arabic original, namely in Antioch during the second half of the 10th century. At that time the Byzantine regained again political and military control over Antioch and its surrounding territories, offering therefore a new historical context with its new perspective on Islam and Arab Christianity.

The value of the Georgian translation is therefore given by the very fact that it closely reflects the monastic milieu of Palestine from which the Arabic ver-

sion originated and from which also the translator himself originated, blending together literary genres which had both currency in these circles, praising the spiritual heritage of the Sabaite monastery and presenting a theological plea not just for Christianity but for monasticism itself.

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The question of the authenticity of the note on the Eucharistic Liturgies in the letter of Euthymius of Mount Athos

At the beginning of the 20th century K'. K'ek'elīze published a piece of correspondence between Euthymius of Mount Athos and an unknown presbyter Theodoros of St. Saba.

According to this source the Liturgy of St. James had fallen into disuse because of its length. and Christians chose the liturgies of John Chrysostom and Basil the Great (during Lent) for their brevity. But it is also possible, to use the liturgies of St. James and also of St. Peter besides those of Chrysostom and Basil.

This notice immediately attracted the attention of scholars of liturgy and was quoted and commented several times during the 20th century.

There are three versions of this letter: One is contained in the ms. *Ath 79* (11th century) of the library of the Iviron monastery. Another one is contained in the ms. *A 737* (13th century) of the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, and the last one, used by K'ek'elīze, is contained in the ms. *A 450* (17th cent.) of the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts.

Unlike the *A 450*, the two ancient versions do not have the form of a dialogue. The comparison of these three sources demonstrates that:

- 1) The ms. *Ath 79* probably represents the notes of the letter, lacking in conciseness between different passages. This ms. briefly mentions the change of liturgies because of their brevity, but without recalling the possibility of celebration of the liturgy of James, and without mentioning the liturgy of Peter.
- 2) The ms. *A 737* is more synthetic than the *Ath79*. But this ms. does not testify anything about the Eucharistic liturgies.
- 3) The ms. *A 450* is an elaboration of ancient versions. It seems reworked from an epistolary genre to a dialogical one. Therefore, it entails certain interpolations, including certainly the note on Eucharistic liturgies.

The question of authenticity of the answer of Euthymius on the Eucharistic liturgies arises from these data.

Recent liturgical studies have shown that: 1) The *theory of the abbreviation* of the liturgies is not consistent, 2) In the Byzantine Empire the prevalence of Chrysostom's formulary over Basil's formulary takes place only in the 11th century. 3) The process of Byzantinization, which involves replacing the hagiopolitan formularies (James) with the Constantinopolitan formularies (Chrysostom and Basil) lasts almost the entire 11th century.

Comparing contents of manuscripts with the modern study of oriental liturgies, we can assume two possibilities: either the note on the liturgies is a late and pure interpolation, absent from the original letter, or Euthymius of Athos with the phrase of the *Ath 79* (which later was interpolated in the *A 450*) tries to justify the process of Byzantinization, which had already begun in Georgia at that time.

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Was the Earliest Georgian Version of Basil's Hexaameron Based on an Arabic Vorlage?

Basil the Great's Homilies on the Hexaameron is one of the most widely-translated early Christian texts and, in addition to being a major work of Old Testament exegesis, it proved to be an important vehicle for the transmission of Late Antique scientific ideas into the medieval period. A Latin translation had already appeared by the early 5th century and a Syriac version appeared shortly thereafter. An Armenian version was made from the Syriac and, while there is no extant Coptic translation, evidence from a Copto-Arabic version of the text makes it clear that it had been translated into Coptic in its entirety. In a later period, it was also translated into Slavonic in the Balkans.

The Georgian version exists in two recensions, an undated pre-Athonite version and that of George the Athonite (d. 1065), who adapted this earlier version with reference to the original Greek. The critical edition of the earlier Georgian version of the Hexaameron was published by Ilia Abuladze on the basis of two manuscripts: Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Georgian mss 44 (12th-13th century) and 74 (12th-16th century). To these should be added the text of the Hexaameron found in the Shatberdi Collection, copied between 973 and 976, which establishes our only terminus ante quem for its translation. Given that Abuladze published this edition in 1964, he did so without the benefit of a critical edition of the Greek original (which would only appear in 1997) or the studies made of the Armenian and Syriac versions of the text by Levon Ter-Petrosyan and Robert W. Thompson. Nevertheless, Abuladze correctly argues against a relationship between the Georgian and Armenian versions and we can likewise *prima facie* rule out a dependence on the Syriac version (of which Abuladze was unaware), given the latter's highly expansive and periphrastic

character in common with the Armenian.

Where things become more complex is when he turns to the question of whether this Georgian text was made from an Arabic translation. Here Abuladze raises the possibility on the basis of the forms of transliterated Greek words and the presence of seemingly Arabic loanwords. In particular, he highlights the use of **ასქიონო** for **σχῖνος** (the mastic tree)—compare George the Athonite’s **სჰიონო--**, which may reflect the epenthetic vowel found in loanwords into Arabic that originally had initial consonant clusters; **ჯიპონი** for **γύψ** (gen. **γυπός**) (vulture)—compare George the Athonite’s **ორბი--**, which may reflect the tendency in Arabic to use the letter **jīm** for the Greek letter gamma; and finally the use of **კვრიონი** for **άλκυών** (halcyon)—compare George the Athonite’s **ალკვიონი--** which may reflect a fairly widespread phenomenon where an initial syllable “al-” is dropped from a word when it is mistaken for the Arabic definite article (think of the name Alexandros becoming Iskandar).

Finally, Abuladze identifies a list of Arabic and Persian loanwords in the early Georgian version of Basil’s Hexaemeron and Gregory of Nyssa’s *On the Making of Man*. However, if we set aside the three Persian words found only in the translation of *On the Making of Man*, we’re left with only **ზაფრანი** (saffron), from the Arabic **za‘farān** and **სანობარი** (pine) from the Arabic **ṣanawbar**. This is a rather thin basis for determining an Arabic origin for the Georgian text and Abuladze was confronted with the further problem that at the time when he was writing, the only known Arabic translation was that of the extremely prolific translator and deacon ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī, made in 1052, some 80 years after our terminus ante quem. Nevertheless, it is still sometimes stated in the secondary literature that the Georgian Hexaemeron was made from an Arabic text.

Fortunately, our knowledge of Arabic versions of the Hexameron has improved since that time and so we are now in a position to test Abuladze’s hypothesis. Setting aside the Copto-Arabic translation mentioned above, the two Melkite Arabic versions turn out to evince a pattern very close to that of the Georgian

translations. There exist two recensions, an earlier one of indeterminate date and a later one, produced by Ibn al-Fadl in Antioch in 1052 on the basis of the earlier version, which he revised with reference to the Greek text. Nevertheless, the nature of this revision is quite different from that of George the Athonite. Where Georgian Athonite translations sought to reflect the Greek as closely as possible, even at the expense of natural-sounding Georgian, while Ibn al-Fadl does correct for accuracy, he also seeks to improve the style of the Arabic text. This contrast might perhaps be explained by the difference between the needs of translations produced for a lay audience-- as we know that Ibn al-Fadl's patrons were almost all laymen or lower clergy like himself—and those of translations produced for use in monasteries. The Georgian translators of the Athonite period sought to bring a highly-educated monastic audience as to the original Greek text as is possible through the medium of Georgian, while Ibn al-Fadl sought to bring the text as close as possible to the expectations of an audience whose taste was formed by the Arabic literary tradition. This urban/monastic divide is also evident in the transmission history of Arabic translations of the Hexameron: the earlier recension continued to be copied in monasteries well after the 11th century, while Ibn al-Fadl's recension now only exists in a group of Ottoman-era manuscripts produced in Syria, a situation common to many of his works that did not seem to be transmitted in monastic circles prior to a revival of interest in them in the 17th century.

So, given the close chronological overlap between the translations and the parallel manner in which they were redacted in the mid-11th century, we can now turn to . In recent decades, scholars such as Bernard Outtier and Tamara Pataridze have attempted to describe the features of Georgian texts made from Arabic. The two most salient syntactic features of such translations, a preponderance of finite verbs over participles and excessive use of the word **მას** to translate the many uses of the Arabic *mā*, are not present in our text. Neither, if we examine its formal features, does the Georgian have the same subdivisions of the text that we find in all the Arabic manuscripts (or the section headings found in the Paris and Vatican manuscripts of the text)—though it is impossible

to be completely sure that these aren't later additions.

But in any case, perhaps the best place to begin an examination of Abuladze's Arabic hypothesis is the examples he provides of Arabicisms in the text. Do they reflect the language of the actual Arabic text?

To start with, it should not be surprising that the terms **ზაფრანი** and **სანობარი** do correspond, respectively, to *za'farān* and *šanawbar*, but this tells us very little, as it is difficult to think of other ways one might say “saffron” and “pine” in Arabic. Then, while I have no explanation for how the word came to have an **-რ** in it, **კვრონო** could indeed reflect a dependency on the Arabic, as there we find *ἀλκυών* simply transliterated **نويكل** (*alkiyūn*), a form that does indeed lend itself to being misinterpreted as **نويك** (*kiyūn*) with the definite article *al-*. However, **ჯოშნო** cannot depend on an underlying Arabic word, as the word used for vulture there is *rakham*. In the case of **სსქონო**, the corresponding Arabic is **نول الكطصم او رخ دال** (*al-idkhir wa-l-maṣṭakālūn*) “lemongrass and mastic” and so is clearly divergent from the Greek original.

In fact, the entire short passage about mastic in Homily V is a good illustration of the degree of divergence between the Georgian and the Arabic relative to their common source.

The original Greek reads:

Ἄλλο γὰρ τοῦ σχίνου τὸ δάκρυον καὶ ἄλλος ὁ ὁπὸς τοῦ βαλσάμου, καὶ νάρθηκες τινες ἐπὶ τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ Λιβύης ἕτερον ὁπὼν γένος ἀποδακρύνουσι.

“The gum of the mastic tree is one thing and the juice of balsam is another. And certain reeds in Egypt and Libya weep another kind of juices.”

So, in Georgian we have:

სხუაჲ არს სსქონოჲს გომიონი და სხუაჲ ბარსაძონისაჲ. და სხუანი

მცენარენი არიან ეგვიპტეს და ლუბიეს, რომელთაგან გამოვაღს მრავალფერი გომიზი.

“The gum of the mastic tree is one thing and that of balsam is another. And other are the plants in Egypt and Libya, out of which flows various gum.”

In Arabic we have:

لكاشي رخا تابن رصم ةي ح ان ي فو رخا ن اس ل بل ا ق ر اص ع و ن و ل ا ك ط ص م ل ا و رخ د ا ل ا غ م ص
ت ا ر اص ل ا ن م رخا ا س ج ه ن م ع م ج ي ف م م د ي ا ي ك ي ث ر ن ي م س ي ا ن د ن ع ي ذ ل ا ت ا ب ن ل ا

Literally:

“The sap of lemongrass and mastic [is one thing], and the juice of balsam is another. In a corner of Egypt, there is another plant that resembles the plant that we have named narthikiya [i.e., ferula], which weeps and another sort of juices is gathered from it.”

Just from this short example, it should be clear that the Georgian could only be derived from the Greek and not the Arabic, so I will not belabor the point here with further examples.

That said, Abuladze’s examples still appear to be Arabicisms of a sort. Rather than indicating that the text was translated from Arabic, however, they hint that the translator was reading Greek with a pronunciation somewhat influenced by Arabic. Further evidence for this can be found in Greek words where omega and omicron are transliterated with a უ, as in ანთილიუს for ἀνθίλιος, უკეანოს for ὠκεανός, and უპიონი for ὄπιον, following the Arabic pronunciation of these Greek letters as a short or long [u] (either the short vowel dumma or a long wāw. This is remarkable, given the close correspondence between the Greek and Georgian alphabets and the ease of transliterating (as opposed to transcribing) Greek words into Georgian.

This sort of interference from Arabic in the pronunciation of Greek is not nec-

essarily all that surprising in the context of 9th or 10th century Palestine, where the early Georgian Hexaameron was most likely translated. By this time, population of the monasteries of the Holy Land had undergone a significant demographic and cultural shift, recruiting monks primarily from the Arabic-speaking lands of the Islamic Caliphate rather than Greek-speaking Byzantium. It appears that the anonymous Georgian translator of the text learned his Greek either from Arabic-speakers or at the very least in an environment where an Arabized pronunciation of Greek was favored. Further research is, of course, necessary to determine whether this is reflective of a trend rather than merely of one translator's personal circumstances.

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The Sori Gospel (12th c.) and Documents in a Form of Colophons Issued by Bedani, the Eristavi of Racha (15th c.)

A Gospel of the 12th century (H-1707), known as the Sori Four Gospels, is held at the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Center of Manuscripts. It is one of the best monuments of the Georgian manuscript heritage, though it hasn't yet been studied essentially.

The Sori Four Gospels was copied on the commission of Vardan Konstantis-Dze Avleveli, a well-known historical figure. It was copied by his vassal Arsen. As it turned out, Varden Avleveli donated the manuscript to the Monastery of St. Theodore, where the burial church of Avleveli's Feudal Family was located. The place of residence of the representatives of this Feudal House was located in Shida Kartli, in the gorge of the Shua Prone River, approximately in vicinity of the village of Avlevi.

By the 15th century, the above-mentioned manuscript was transferred to the Racha province, to the monastery of the Crucifixion of Sori (From this place-name derives the name of the Four Gospels). It remained there till 1920.

The Four Gospels of Sori contain several dozens of colophons dated to the 15th-19th/20th centuries. Some of them are legal documents. Four colophon-documents of this type can be noted, which were issued by Bedani, the Eristavi of Racha. Based on palaeographic features, they all date to the 15th century.

The colophon-documents of Eristavi Bedani, especially the first two documents, are diplomatic monuments of special interest. From the point of view of their structure, each document contains several donation sub-documents written in continuation of previous sub-documents. All these sub-documents cover successive periods of time.

The colophon-document 1 issued by Eristavi Bedani contains two sub-documents. Among them, the sub-document 1a narrates that Bedani renovated ownership of a monastery village, serfs and land estates to the Sori Monastery. According to the sub-document 1b, Bedani nominated the Superior of the Sori Monastery and put him in charge of its governance.

The colophon-document 2 issued by Eristavi Bedani contains three sub-documents. The sub-document 2a states that Bedani asked for reciprocal church service to be held for him on the Ascension Day in the Sori Monastery. In exchange, he made commitment to contribute a vineyard garden, an egg-shaped pot for keeping wine, a cow, a sheep, two ovens of bread, sufficient amount of wax and a silver water jar to the monastery. According to sub-document 2b, in exchange for the church service to be held on the Ascension Day, Bedani additionally donated a cow and a sheep to the monastery. It is mentioned in sub-document 2c that Bedani asked for reciprocal church service to be held in the name of his spouse Keklutsa on the Ascension Day and donated a cow, a sheep and sufficient wax to the monastery.

The colophon-document 3 issued by Eristavi Bedani mentions that Bedani asked for reciprocal church service to be held for his spouse Keklutsa on the day of Dormition and donated a cow, a sheep, sufficient bread, wine and candles to the monastery.

The last colophon-document 4 issued by Eristavi Bedani mentions that Bedani donated ten jars of wine and eight ovens of bread to the monks of the monastery for their worship and everyday needs.

Results of the study of various issues associated with the colophon-documents of Eristavi Bedani by means of historical and source study methods are included in the presentation.

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Manuscript And Epigraphic Heritage Of Khor Virap Monastery (Armenia, Province Of Ararat)

For the study of the history of Middle Ages are important sources epigraphic and manuscript monuments. Medieval monasteries and churches are not only famous spiritual centers, but also monastic schools, where were copied thousands manuscript books with their rich miniatures and very valuable colophons. From this perspective especially Armenia and Georgia have a rich cultural heritage, because manuscript and epigraphic sources are remarkable documents for the correct and carefully investigations. This study is about Armenian spiritual and cultural center Khor Virap Monastery which is now located in Ararat province of Republic of

Armenia, about 45 km away from Yerevan, near Armenian and Turkish border.

Khor Virap is one of the famous religion center of Armenia, second major sanctuary after Cathedral St. Etchmiadzin, which is founded in the first period of 4th century by St. Gregory Illuminator. For accepting and spreading Christianity St. Gregory Illuminator approximately 13-15 painful years spend in Virap. Important events are kept on the pages of the historical and literary sources. First historiographer is Agatangelos (5th cent.), who reported interesting details of this period which is about St. Gregory Illuminator's torture episodes, his being thrown into the pit, the adoption of the new religion, subsequently the foundation of the monastery and church construction (Agatangelos 2003, 1366-1368, 1419, 1705).



Fig. 1 The general view of Khor Virap Monastery

It indirectly refers to the foundation of a monastery on the site of the pit from where the complex received its generic name of Khor Virap (literal-

ly meaning “Deep Pit”). In the works of the historiographers and chroniclers of later centuries (Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Hovhan Mamikonyan, Ukhtanes, Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Stepanos Taronetsi Asoghik, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, chroniclers Ananun (Anonymous) Sebastatsi, Davit Baghishetsi, Hakob Karnetsi and others) Khor Virap and details related to it are repeatedly attested.

Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, later Stepanos Taronetsi Asoghik, Samuel Anetsi, Kirakos Gandzaketsi and others testify that Nerses the Builder Tayetsi (641-661) founded a church here in the 7th century and the Arab literary figure of the same century, Al-Mukaddasi’s by mentioning about the architectural composition of the church built by Nerses makes the existence of the church more certain. According to the mentioned testimony it was located not far from Dvin (only 3 leagues, that is 17,256 km) and presented a church with round hall built with white polished stone, was crowned with eight-pillared rotunda and resembling a dome-shaped cap (Al-Mukaddasi 1908, 16).

In the developed phase of the medieval period Khor Virap was proclaimed as an episcopal center and in this context established contacts with the diocesan infrastructures of the Armenian church. In the face of the diocese of Virapavan the monastery was the center of the Ararat patriarchal diocese and one of the important links of the Armenian church: the literary and lapidary colophons of the 11th and later centuries testify about it. During the council of Dzagavan (1270) the diocese of Virapavan was unified with the Chair of Bjni and Archbishop Grigor of Bjni headed the two unified dioceses (Hovsepyan 1913, 31-32).



Fig. 2 Epigraph from Vanstan Monastery, where was mentioned the name of the leader of Khor Virap and Vanstan monasteries – Grigor Archimandrite, 1283

According to the epigraphs unearthed in the result of the archaeological excavations conducted by archaeologist Ashkharbek Kalantar in 1912 in Vanstan Monastery located not far from Khor Virap (now in Khosrov forest-reserve, province of Ararat), Vanstan and Khor Virap were under the subjection of the same diocesan Primate. Father Davit, the vicar of Ararat province or the homonymous diocese who founded Vanstan Monastery in the 13th century, is mentioned in one of the newly-found lapidary (Kalantar 2007, 57). The diocesan center of Ararat province in the mentioned period was very Khor Virap Monastery.

Archimandrite Grigor, the Primate of Khor Virap and Vanstan is mentioned in another lapidary dated by 1283 which is the stone evidence for our aforementioned viewpoint (Kalantar 2007, 62-63) (fig. 2).

Later records on the diocesan center of Khor Virap and its bishoprics are dated by the 17th century based on which it becomes clear that Virapavan diocese also operated actively having Vanstan, Urtsavank and Mushaghbyur monasteries under its subjection. In the brief registry of

the ecclesiastical dioceses and their bishoprics of St. Etchmiadzin constituted in 1765 by Yeremia Oshakantsi (died 1781 and buried in the monastic cemetery of St. Etchmiadzin [Harutyunyan 2016, 186]), the notary of Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi (1763-1780), all of the 11 bishoprics of Virapavan diocese are mentioned: Vedi, Arkuri, Artashat, Mushaghbyur, Jghun, Vanstan, Mankus, Avanik, Vanik, Deghznnavank, Urtsadzor and the diocesan center was Khor Virap Monastery (Simeon Yerevantsi 1873, 280).

In fact, Khor Virap Monastery have a rich manuscript and epigraphic heritage and a main information about the history of this monastery have been preserved on the pages of aforementioned sources.

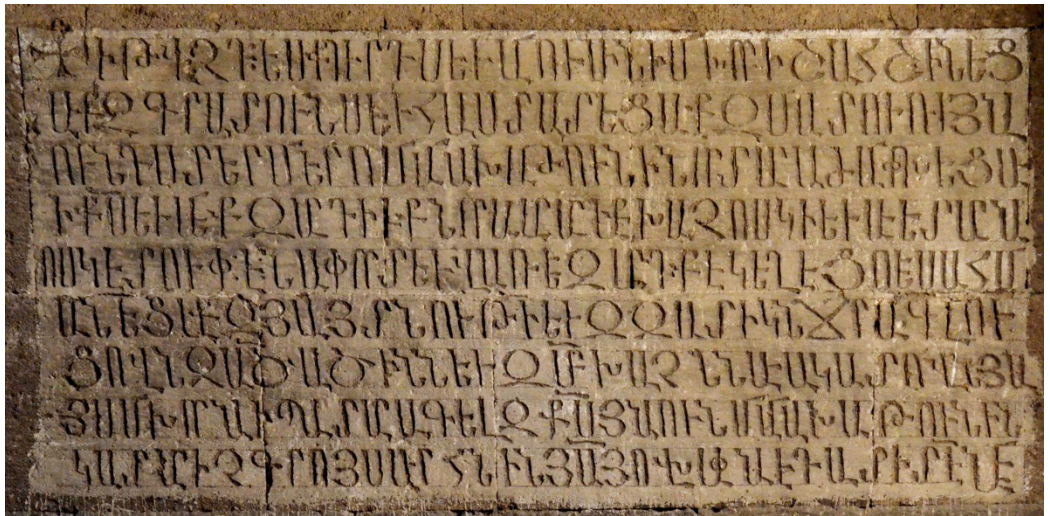
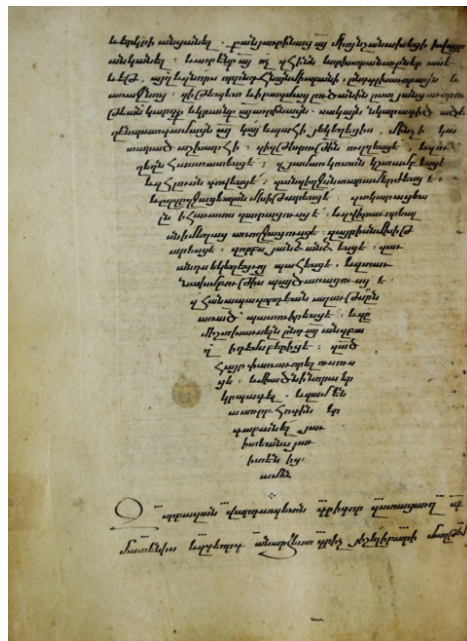
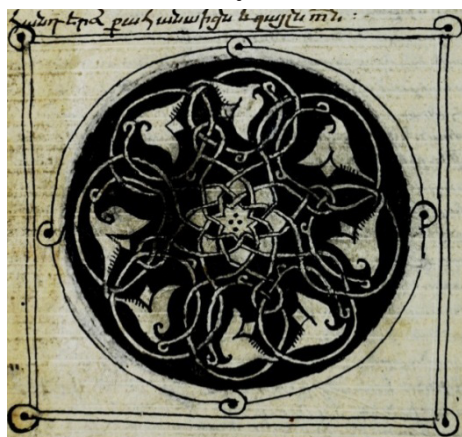
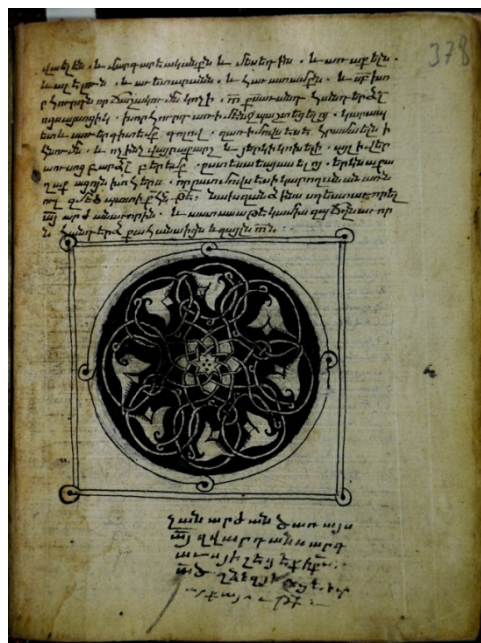


Fig. 3 Epigraph about construction church-scriptorium in Saghmosavank, 1255

The study of the educational and literary school of Khor Virap enabled to launch source examination on the activities of the school-archimandrite office founded by Vardan Areveltsi in the second half of the 13th century and the manuscripts which passed to us from here. From this period passed to us only 2 manuscripts which is dated by 1266 and 1267. Scribes

of this manuscripts are pupils of the same Vardan Areveltsi, whose names are Tiratsu, Gevorg, Manuel etc. One of that manuscripts is kept in the manuscript collection of St. Amenaprkich Monastery of New Julfa (Ms. 212) and the another in the collection of Matenadaran after Mesrop Mashtots in Yerevan (Ms. 3082). According to large colophon of Ms. 3082 manuscript was copied in the three monasteries – first part in Khor Virap, than Saghmosavank ang Teghenyats Monastery (Matevosyan 1984, 349-352). Both Saghmosavank and Teghenyats Monastery were also very famous religion and writing centers of the Medieval Armenia. It was interesting that from Khor Virap Vardan Areveltsi moved his school to abovementioned monasteries. Now in Saghmosavank Monastery we can see building church-scriptorium which according to epigraph was built in 1255 by princ Kurd I Vachutyan and his wife princess Khorishah Mamikonyan to the memory of their dead daughter Mamakhatur (fig. 3) (Manucharyan 2015, 154).





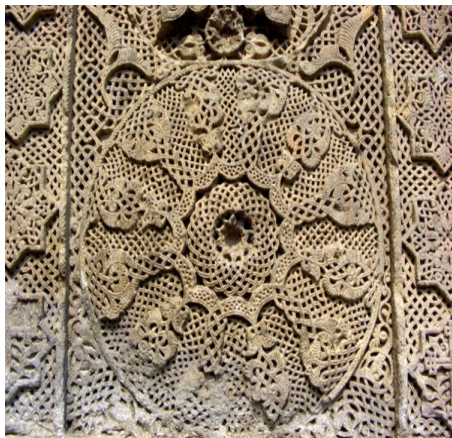


Fig. 5a-b Miniature-rosette (Ms. 3082) and detail of Cross-stone (Khachkar) – rosette, master Poghos, Goshavank Monastery, 13th century

Writing center of Khor Virap Monastery became remarkable also in the 17-18 centuries. Considerable part of the manuscripts which passed to us is dated by the aforementioned centuries. Around 15 manuscripts are preserved from Khor Virap and nearby Akori village (Ms. 329, 544, 811, 3825, 4022, 4457, 4458, 5413, 5756, 6698, 6752, 7044, 7621, 8126, 10573, Ms. of Jerusalem N 1797) (Harutyunyan 2017, 79-94). Manuscripts' birth and later colophons are important source material not only for the creation of the manuscripts and its later "destiny" but also for the elucidation of the history of the monastery. The study of the literary heritage of Khor Virap also clarified an important circumstance. The thing is that the examination of the manuscripts directly states if the writing center in the days of Vardan Areveltsi had relations to the writing centers monasteries of Saghmosavank, Teghenyats and Aghjots St. Stepanos then in the late medieval period, particularly from the second half of the 17th century, the connection with the writing center of Akori is obvious. This phenomenon is also conditioned by the circumstance of the two monasteries being under the subjection of the same diocese.



Fig. 6a-d St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John evangelists (Ms. 6752, scribe and miniaturist Murat, Khor Virap Monastery,

The literary monuments testify that majority of manuscripts were written by father and son Murat and Petros scribes who in parallel operated also in Khor Virap. Considering this important circumstance we also put together the description of the manuscript collection of Akori with the description of the manuscripts of Khor Virap. Murat was also miniaturist of manuscripts which are dated in the second half of the 17th century (fig. 6a-d, 7a-b) (Harutyunyan 2016a).

In fact, miniatures of Murat can't be compared with the miniatures of the Gold Age of developed phase of the medieval period but they also very important samples for the study of the features of Ararat miniature school and cultural heritage.

About history of Khor Virap monastery are also very important sources epigraphs, which is dated especially in the 17-18th centuries. 16 of 69 lapidaries deciphered by us were published in the past (they found their place mainly in the works of H. Shahkhatuntyants, Gh. Alishan, K. Kostanyants, M. Papazyan, M. Hasratyan and others) yet devoid of the currently acceptable components for scientific decipherment.



**Fig. 7a-b Fish (symbol of Christ) and Christ Enters to Jerusalem
(Ms. 6698, scribe Petros, miniaturist Murat, Akori, 1671)**

In general, epigraphs are about construction and reconstruction works of Virap, churches St. Gregory Illuminator and Holy Mother of God (St. Astvatsatsin). Many of epigraphs are short memories, where are mentioned the names of famous priests, patrons, overseers, visitor-donators etc. According to one inscription of church of St. Gregory Illuminator, it was rebuilt in the period of Hakob Jughaetsi Catholicos of All Armenia (1655-1680) and during the leadership of Abbot David Virapetsi in 1669 (fig. 8a-b) (Hasratyan 2001, 187: Harutyunyan 2017, 100).



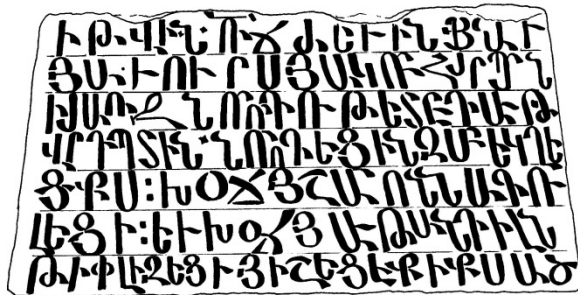


Fig. 8a-b Epigraph about reconstruction St. Gregory Illuminator church by donation

Shmavon Aguletsi and Avtandil Tiflisetsi, 1669

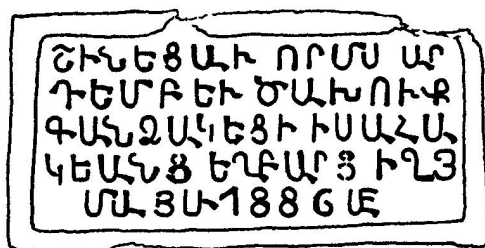
The initiation of the monastery's reconstruction, however, was assigned to Archimandrite Davit Virapetsi (Tpkhisetsi), a prolific priest of the 17th century, who, taking advantage of more or less political favourable conditions created in the country, revived from desolation and breathed new life into this ancient monastery. Traveller and seller Zakaria Aguletsi reports noteworthy information in the pages of his diary by means of whose brother Shmavon (Simon, Siamon) Aguletsi construction and improvement works were realized in late 1660's (Zakaria Aguletsi 1938, 80-81). On the southern wall of St. Gregory Illuminator church was preserved a short epigraph (1670) where were mentioned the names of Shmavon (Simon) and his brother – Zakaria (fig. 9a-b) (Harutyunyan 2017, 103).





Fig. 9a-b Epigraph in memory Shmavon and Zakaria Aguletsi brothers, 1670

In the 18-19th cc. Khor Virap Monastery again regularly fell into disrepair and was neglected on which we get information from the memoirs of traveller geographers and visitor-pilgrims. According to one of the epigraphs the all fortress of monastery was rebuilt in 1886 by donation of Isahakyants brothers from Gandzak (fig. 10a-b) (Harutyunyan 2017, 122). This stone with inscription is placed on the southern wall of the same fortress.



**Fig. 10a-b Epigraph about reconstruction of fortress monastery,
1886**

Due to the lapidaries the names of the patrons of the monastery (khojas of Shmavon (Simon, Siamon) Aguletsi, Avtandil Tiflisetsi, Ayvaz Makuetsi, Harutyun and Poghos Shakhkerttsi, Bastam, paron Stepan), overseers (Ohan baba, Ghazar Arch. Vetsi), visitor-donors (Vardan Keandarean Alexandropoltsi, Kirakos, Ter Khachatur, Mkrtum, Israel, Movses, Avetik Bstatsi, Khatun Gharabaghtsi, Ter Nichoghayos Akoretsi and Movses) and events related to them were clarified.

North-west from the monastery is located sanctuary of “Otyats Khach” where according to the oral tradition, apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew met (Harutyunyan 2017a, 141-148). Here we documented the earliest inscription of the site dated by 1181 which is a literary monument of a cross-stone (khachkar). According to short epigraph some erected cross-stone to the memory Mkhitar and his parents (fig. 11b-c) (Harutyunyan 2017, 111).

As reported by Ghevond Alishan, in 1859 Vardan Keandaryan Alexandropoltsi, who was the abbot of Khor Virap Monastery, built a chapel on the abovementioned site by his own means and constituted a lapidary inscription about it. Kajberuni, who mentions about the chapel and sanctuary, refers to the former Abbot Hakob Archimandrite Keandaryan Aleksandropoltsi of St. Gevorg Monastery of Mughni as the Abbot of Khor Virap in this period of time, during whose abbacy, apparently, either his brother or his cousin Vardan built a chapel by his own means and immediate efforts on the site of the abovementioned sanctuary. Vardan's name is also mentioned in one of the lapidary inscriptions on the southern wall of St. Gregory Illuminator church of Khor Virap, according to which he came to Khor Virap on pilgrimage in 1855 (Harutyunyan 2017, 109). Vardan of Alexandropol (from Alexandropol) mentioned both in this and

the other inscription referred by Alishan lacks any holy orders and apparently is a secular person, who in 1859, during the abbacy of his brother or relative, built a chapel at “Otyats Khach” sanctuary adjacent to Khor Virap (Alishan 1890, 439).

On 25th October, 2015, the day of the Discovery of Holy Cross, a seven-meter cross obelisk was erected out of the walls of Khor Virap Monastery, near to its north-western side. It was consecrated by Fr. Artak Bishop Tigranyan and they say the pillar crowned with a winged cross is placed at the site of the sanctuary called “Otyats Khach”.





Fig. 11a-c “Otyats Khach” sanctuary and a small Cross-stone placed on the pedestal - 1181

In the result of our study we can present a chronological table of manuscript heritage of Khor Virap Monastery and Akori village.

N	Data	Content	Place	Scribe	Minia- tunist	Custom- er
Ms. of New Julfa N 212	1266	Commentary of Davit by Vardan	Khor Virap	Tiratsu		
Ms. 3082	1267	Collection	Khor Virap, Saghmo- savanq, Teghenyats Monastery	Georg Lam- bronat- si, Man- uel		Grigor Bjnetsi
Ms. 4458	1646	Four Gospel	Akori	Maruk Priest		Maruk Priest

Ms. 4022	1647	Four Gospel	Akori	Maruke		
Ms. 6752	1662	Four Gospel	Khor Virap	Murat, anony- mous	Murat	Shayap
Ms. 5413	1663	Four Gospel	Khor Virap, Akori	Murat	Murat	Khlkhat
Ms. 5756	1666	Four Gospel	Akori	Petros	Petros, Murat	Yesajan
Ms. 7621	1667	Four Gospel	Akori	Murat, Petros	Murat, Petros	Satlmish
Ms. 4457	1670	Four Gospel	Akori	Murat		Ter Hayrapet
Ms. 3825	1671	Agatangelos, Armenian History	Khor Virap	Voskan Monk		Voskan Monk
Ms. 6698	1671	Four Gospel	Akori	Petros	Murat, Petros	
Ms. 10573	1671	The Syn- odicon of St. Hakob's Monastery	Akori			
Ms. of Jrslm. N 1797	1675	Four Gospel	Akori	Petros		
Ms. 329	1678	Four Gospel	Akori	Petros		Hakob
Ms. 8126	17 th cent.	Ritual	Akori	Maruke		
Ms. 544	1740	Dictionary	Khor Virap	Rafayel Jughay- etsi		

Ms. 7044	1774	Collection	Khor Virap	Grigor Syunet- si		Grigor Syunetsi
Ms. 811	1775	Collection	Khor Virap	Grigor Syunet- si		Grigor Syunetsi

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Libraries and Book Repertoire in Medieval Georgian Monasteries

Georgian manuscripts, historical documents and colophons have safeguarded interesting information about the books, kept in the medieval Georgian monasteries. The earliest information is dated back to the 10th century and it is kept as a palimpsest in one of the manuscripts on Sinai mountain. There is the information on the libraries and books kept in the Monastery of the Cross, Sedazeni and Gareji monasteries, as well as in the monasteries of Kapati and Petritsoni. The colophons report on the existence of the private libraries as well, for instance: the information on “Kvirike’s Cave” where, presumably, Kvirike the monk’s books were placed. There is also the note which informs us that other monks of the Georgian fraternity actively used those books.

The presentation is focused on the repertoire of the books and circumstances of how the libraries got books or how the monks managed to find all the necessary texts, prepare and send quires in order to copy the manuscripts.

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The Prosopography of High Medieval Georgia

Two of the core problems for Kartvelology, especially in an international context, are the difficulty of providing reference resources based on up to date research, and the inaccessibility of those that exist to scholars outside Georgia. The collection and study of person data, the field known as prosopography, is one of a number of areas for which this holds true. Considering both the

importance of high medieval Georgia to its wider region, and the potentially wide array of options now available for more prosopographical approaches and methodologies to expand our understanding of this period, a database approach to Georgia's prosopography has become an increasingly relevant and pressing undertaking.

Here, I will both outline the shape of the ongoing project to provide such a resource, which forms the core of my doctoral work, and place it in the context of the ongoing development of both prosopography and of Kartvelology. The Prosopography of High Medieval Georgia (hereafter, usually PHMG for brevity) database will provide coverage of this period via an openly accessible English language online resource which will provide researchers with both a large set of article-level discussions of the people, places and events recorded in the Georgian Chronicles among other sources.

Historical Background

It is first necessary to provide some brief historical background for the period the PHMG covers. The medieval polity ruled by the Georgian Bagrationid family and usually referred to as the Kingdom of Georgia is often regarded as having reached its zenith at the end of the twelfth century, within a period stretching for around 150 years between the waning of Byzantine influence in the eleventh century and the beginning of Mongol domination in the early thirteenth (Muskhelishvili/Samsonadze/Daushvili, 2012, 216-17). This period has a number of characteristics, most obviously the Georgian monarchs' ability to project force over a far wider geographical area, with strong direct Georgian influence being exercised well into Armenia and over the allied state of Shirvan, and Georgian armies at the extreme extent campaigning for raiding or interventionist purposes as far away as Khorasan in the east or Heraclea Pontica in the west. This period also had a number of specific features to its governance, especially the prominence of a court structure with specifically Georgian titulature, with Byzantine nomenclature becoming less prevalent. The court was also the focus of a specific literary turn, which included both secular chronicles and a number

of literary romances, the most famous being Vepkhist'q'aosani, the Knight in Panther Skin.

This is the period covered by the PHMG project, the backbone of which will consist of information from the Kartlis Tskhovreba (Life of Kartli), a court chronicle collection several parts of which cover this time span. This is just one of a number of available sources, however; epigraphy, a limited number of surviving charters, and several non-Georgian sources from the period can also supplement the available knowledge. Those mentioned in our surviving sources are overwhelmingly elites, and the Kartlis Tskhovreba is generally organised around the reigns or deeds of particular monarchs. This limits the social coverage of prosopographical work, as with most medieval prosopography, to those elite groups. We can make occasional additions of those lower down the social orders whose names have survived for one or another reason, often likely to be those in monastic communities whose names come down to us via colophons, but these rarely come with much surrounding data on the life, origins, status or genealogy of an individual.

As a result of the significant cultural legacy of the high medieval period, it has attracted continual interest in Georgia in subsequent periods through to the present day and aspects of Georgia's historical development in the period have been re-appropriated in more recent political, cultural, and religious narratives. The perspective of the Georgian nation-state historiography of Ivane Javakhishvili in his seminal *History of the Georgian Nation*, and the more generally statist perspective adopted by Soviet era historians such as Mariam Lordipaniidze, has tended to place the medieval Georgian 'state' at the heart of consideration as a hypothesised precursor to Georgia as a modern nation-state (e.g. Lordkipanidze 1987). To the extent that Georgian scholarly work is available outside Georgia and in languages other than Georgian, it tends to largely be works that follow this broad historiographical trend.

One of the strongest arguments for adopting a systematic, prosopographical approach to the source material is that it may unlock alternative ways of viewing

this period that highlight the presence and contribution of groups under-represented in dominant historiographical traditions, and through the process of making explicit the encoding of particular information provide avenues to describe historical events, institutions, and identities in different ways. An example of the former would be the role of women in twelfth century Georgia. One or two individuals have been subject to forensic levels of attention, most obviously Mepe (the Georgian title for a King or Queen) Tamar, Georgia's first female monarch. The ability to gather information for a more holistic study of other women could, however, allow a stronger analysis of women beyond and compared to Tamar's particular case. A similar case could be made for looking at regional identities and politics within the Georgian polity, or for minority ethnic identities represented in the Georgian court hierarchy such as Ossetians and Armenians.

The possibility of re-envisioning the operation of institutions via prosopographical research is also potentially valuable. There is a clear difficulty when it comes to discussing the formal operations of governance in a society like that of high medieval Georgia, from which few written records exist. We have the titlature of particular figures well recorded, and the broad implications and names of those titles are often clear from the nomenclature or from later documents. The extrapolation of later court manuals and documents back into the twelfth century cannot provide fully satisfactory answers for how things functioned in this period, however, with elision of the dislocation caused by the Mongol invasions proving an awkward necessity for such explanatory attempts. What a prosopographical approach can provide is a viewpoint on institution and governance that is built from seeing institutions in part as a collection of individual actors. The lines between offices and individuals are rarely clear and absolute in any period of history, and implicit features (for example, if a certain role was in practice dominated by appointees in a certain category) can be as important as explicit features (if a role was officially required to contain someone in a certain category). As such, assessments in full of what the holders of offices are portrayed as doing, who they were, and how they compared to one another can

be useful in detailing and analysing how institutions functioned as much as, if not more than, assessments of the formal status and obligations of certain roles.

Prosopography, as a broad, person-focused approach to historical study, is important in building these more holistic and diverse approaches to the people and institutional structures that existed in this period. It provides above all a more complete picture of the available information, reducing the need to argue from individuals and anecdotes when considering particular theorised historical trends. Understanding more precisely how it can achieve this, however, and what conditions must be met to do so, is important to looking at the details of a project such as the PHMG. We must therefore now consider what prosopography is, the challenges inherent to it as a method, and options that are open to the modern prosopographer.

A Prosopographical Approach

Definitions of prosopography have not always been easy to produce. The methodology evolved from classics, where lists and dictionaries of Roman imperial officials and references to information about them were considered to be a useful starting point for analyses of them as a general category. These early studies staked out a basic core principle, that of looking at groups of historical persons with one or more shared characteristics. These persons can more accurately be called *prosopons*, a person as conceived by a modern historian from a written source. As a result of the frequently disputed disambiguation issues around names in historical documents, and of the incomplete or embellished pictures available to us of some individuals, the distinction between the *prosopon* and the underlying person is important to maintain. This practice of collecting information around *prosopons* in particular categories provided a way of analysing across a group to look at areas that the sparse biographies did not allow to be approached at an individual level. These datasets were (and in the case of most things that define themselves as prosopographies, are still) generally either too small or rely upon an insufficiently rigidly collected and systematised dataset to be amenable to the statistical analysis methods more common in the social

sciences.

Questions of which prosopons and what types of information should be included in such a dataset have rarely been approached in a genuinely systematic manner, however, and this continues to be a problem – for example, whilst nominally the early prosopographies of the Roman Empire contained information on officials, chunks of information on writers and thinkers tended to appear as well. Whilst it may not always be possible to perfectly encapsulate the scope of a dataset, making explicit the design choices made and exposing to future users the historical logic behind choices in such a database has long been a challenge. This is one of the larger challenges of modern prosopography, especially coming in combination with the digital turn which, whilst providing more analytical options, may also increase the risk of “black box” tools where what the underlying data are and how they are processed is unclear.

A further problem for prosopography is that the development of the available tools has permitted the exponentiation of what a prosopography can do or consist of, making the definition more difficult to work with. With the creation of person databases, digital data having become the norm in prosopographical studies since the advent of modern computing, has come the ability to query and analyse those data in a variety of new ways, and thereby also to create different preparations of the data to facilitate different use-cases. The most significant variation is probably in the extent to which data are disambiguated and normalised in different projects.

There is no such thing as a truly “non-interpretative” prosopography – categorisations of for example ethnonyms, or normalisation of names or georeferencing of places, are necessary to make most such databases and systems useable for historical research, and these inherently place a modern layer of interpretation between the source texts and a future user. There is, however, a significant divide between a prosopography that seeks not to disambiguate between clearly competing claims in its source material and one that does. The dominant paradigm in recent years has been the avoidance of such disambiguation, on

the grounds that it minimises the level of authorial intervention through which future researchers must wade to reach any given piece of information. For example if three different chronicles give three different dates for the death of a particular figure, then as far as the data is concerned that person has three dates of death assigned – the impossibility of someone dying three times is not taken into consideration, because this is considered to be part of the job of a future end-user. Such a database is built as a person-referenced collection of assertions, commonly known as factoids by prosopographers, about things sources say, without any attempt to assign relative or absolute truth claims to them at the data level (Bradley/Pasin, 2015). The databases that act as collections of this sort, known as ‘factoid model’ databases, effectively form prosopographical indexes of source material. This potentially allows for easy construction and compilation from digitised source material and avoids some of the necessity for exposing the historical logic behind preferring particular references or readings to others, because such work is entirely placed in the province of the end user of the database.

As interpretative tools have expanded, however, the possibilities and utility of collecting person data in ways that do disambiguate at the data level has increased. The advantage of having a dataset which has a single standard reading of the sources is that it allows analyses across the data without any need for tweaks to avoid logical impossibilities; visualising data in which the same person is in multiple places at once, or dies three times, is rather less useful for finding patterns in the events or people included in the dataset. Such a database can additionally incorporate data that are produced through means other than a direct assertion about what a source claims. For example, representing the most common assumed identities in a true factoid model database poses a problem – in that those identities are rarely explicitly stated in source material. A Georgian chronicler writing in the twelfth century would have been extremely unlikely to note the specific ethnonym of “Georgian” for someone with a Georgian name who was a noble at the Georgian court. Likewise, it is likely that the large majority of the court were Orthodox, but other than for a few members of

the nobility for whom particular acts of devotion or donations to monasteries are known, there are many figures in the period for whom there is no specific attested writing to show their religious affiliation. In a single-reading analysis-equipped database, the information is more fundamentally situated around the people or identities rather than a layer of independently existent factoids, allowing for the incorporation of this secondarily derived or deduced information.

This broad division – between the single-reading database and the prosopographical index – is only a very rough overview of the many possibilities in how one could categorise the field of prosopography. It is nonetheless an important distinction to consider because it both highlights one of the key trade-offs in the field, that between most effectively indexing sources and most powerfully showing the resulting data, and also because it shows the development of possibilities in prosopography in recent decades. Having this distinction in mind allows us to consider the role these issues and choices played in the design of the PHMG database and see the project in its methodological context.

Scope of the Project

Having considered the methodological background, we can see more easily where the ongoing PHMG project sits within it. The PHMG database is of the second type discussed above: that is to say that it is not a factoid-model database constructed to reduce authorial intervention but rather is equipped to facilitate a maximum of analytical tools for querying the fragmentary available data. Disambiguation of names, dates, and other such information is consistently in place – the database thereby forms a single, consistent source reading as discussed above. The information gathered for each person is in significant depth – the relatively small geographic and chronological scope of the project mean that the database is unlikely to exceed 300 or so individuals, and to best analyse them and their activities their individual records are connected to data records for georeferenced places and “events”, the latter consisting of any point where a person can be located within the source material as existing at a particular time, or a particular place, or in the same (if unidentified) place as another

person. Connections can be made between most of these node types via a PHP based editing interface, with a Neo4j graph database providing the storage and linkages of the underlying information.

The formal project scope is that the database is intended to cover individuals in the geographic scope of the Bagrationid polity and its dependent allies within a time span roughly from the mid eleventh to early thirteenth centuries – the range is based on chronology and geography rather than explicitly being limited to a particular body of source material. It is unlikely, though, that chronological coverage of the entire period will be achieved within the scope of the time available. Individuals outside the core geographic scope may be included if they are one remove from it (so for example, if an individual X travelled from Georgia to Jerusalem to see a particular individual Y, then individual Y could be given a brief entry but only such as was sufficient to note their relationship to X). Depth is being prioritised over breadth – being able to incorporate charter and epigraphic data properly will be a higher priority than expanding chronological coverage. The minimum scope will be the 1150s to 1220s, covering the reigns of Giorgi III, Giorgi IV, and Tamar.

The tools available with the database include mapping systems that allow point maps of both individuals and groups of individuals to be produced. This in turn will give the database traction for some geographical questions of interest in this period, for example comparing the locations of land holdings of particular figures or families with their offices or military deployments, or even identity features. For example, the extent to which Armeno-Georgians such as the Mkhargrdzeli family, many of whom were situationally identifiable as either Armenian or Georgian and who included both Georgian Orthodox and Armenian Christians by faith, were dominant in Georgian activities in Armenian-majority regions is a potentially interesting area of study. This sort of georeferencing can also show up features that would be difficult to observe whilst reading a chronicle in narrative order. Numerous episodes in the chronicles mention particular sites of royal activity around Tbilisi, for example – but georeferencing

them all and comparing to which events and activities happened where allows a chronologically wider view of a more complete sociopolitical geography of elite actions in the area around the city in this period. In future, if combined with a logging of road routes, the PHMG's spatial data could also provide some interesting potential for logistical analyses around Georgia's projection of force in this period, though such work is well beyond the project's current scope.

Future iterations of the project are likely to include some facility for network analysis, though data limitations mean that this particular methodology is unlikely to yield significantly interesting results for the PHMG dataset. For example, large networks of epistolary connections or detailed family lineages for the nobility that could provide data for network analysis are lacking for this period; larger networks that Georgia may have connected into tend to pass well beyond the geographical scope of the project, and whilst people can be connected via event nodes (in other words, people being networked by where and when they were in the same place at the same time) there are generally too few of these for prosopons beyond perhaps the top ten or so mentioned figures in any given chronicle to provide a cohesive network. Whilst it is to be hoped that the addition of other data sources may build up some more useful information for this method, at present the prospects for it in the specific case of the PHMG appear to be limited by the available data.

An example of the sort of analyses that are available may be given via a brief look at the (notably, incomplete) set of *eristavis* that can be gained from the database in its present form, which mainly covers the reign of Tamar as presented in the *Life of Tamar*, the *History and Eulogy of Monarchs*, and *Of Giorgi Lasha and his Time*, the three parts of *Kartlis Tskhovreba* which deal with her reign specifically. The *eristavis* can perhaps best be thought of as provincial or regional governors – in some periods the title can also have military implications or be used for non-Georgian regional governors, but in the twelfth century the mentions of *eristavis* seem to mostly connect to leadership in a particular region or province. One of the most notable things about the information available so

far in the dataset is its poorly interconnected nature. Three regions – Samtskhe, Kartli, and Hereti – have a cluster of data around their eristavis, but several more essentially form disconnected nodes with the only real information coming from a list of eristavis at the start of Tamar's reign given in one of the chronicles.

Despite this, there are numerous conclusions that can be tentatively drawn based on the available data. In particular, we see that the majority of recorded handovers from one eristavi to another were within families – but also that changes of family could happen, especially in the wake of rebellions where a monarch who survived the attempt might have gained a precious chance to intervene and install a new, more loyal office-holder in a particular region. This contrasts with more central administration roles like that of the commander of the armed forces (*amirsp'asalar*) which seem to have been more actively and personally appointed by rulers when the previous holder died. Being able to examine all of the eristavis we have information for simultaneously is of vital importance when trying to draw conclusions of this sort, especially since individual case studies that contain any detail will almost by definition be of individuals that were exceptions rather than those whose life stories were unremarkable and followed general trends.

The structure and tools of the PHMG are built for maximising the utility of the database for examining patterns in the data, with written sections of text presented to explain choices in which information has been included. This will provide the system with greater analytical power for finding patterns in the data as an assistive tool for historians. It is important, nonetheless, that the PHMG is treated as just that – an assistive tool – and is seen as enabling new avenues of research rather than in and of itself answering historical questions. Placing the tool in the context of developments in the field more widely and considering the longer term issues with its use and storage may help to provide some sense of where the PHMG ultimately fits in, and it is to this area that we can now turn.

There are at this point a number of issues to consider about and around the project, which may help to inform both its use and future research directions around it. The PHMG has been enabled by a number of other developments in Kartvelology: some written prosopographical work has been completed, and the availability of more source material in English has assisted international efforts for working on this area (Surguladze 2017; Jones 2013). Digital prosopographical work on Georgia is nonetheless at a rudimentary state and the PHMG project will form only a tentative start towards filling that gap. Its limited time-span is perhaps the most obvious factor in this, with prosopographies of late medieval, early medieval, and early modern Georgia still sorely lacking. It is also, however, true that a project like the PHMG that seeks to provide a single source reading is not necessarily a good substitute for a factoidal database, and a factoid model database covering the same period, whilst perhaps decreasing in the intensity of its need as a result of the PHMG's availability, would still be a desideratum in the medium term.

A far wider base of twelfth century material beyond the Georgian chronicles – especially the aforementioned charter and epigraphic sources – exists and needs to be incorporated into the PHMG and other projects. The Georgian-language portion of this material has in many cases been well studied by Georgian scholars but this work has not been well disseminated outside Georgian publications. Meanwhile, the most recent international studies covering Byzantine, Arab, Armenian or Persian material have not necessarily been feeding back efficiently into Georgian language scholarship. Whilst the language barriers are still a potential problem, the PHMG nonetheless offers a potential platform for connecting these sources together and its English-language construction will allow the widest possible dissemination of the resulting conclusions.

Another issue to mention here is project sustainability. One of the primary issues with digital resources is that most digital media are not well designed for long term storage and compatibility. The latter problem is likely to be the worse to cope with. For the former, some digital media, such as USB/flash drives,

have a potentially extremely long lifespan, and there is potential for distributed systems to provide multiple mirrors of online resources, something that consortia of universities, libraries and possibly other third sector groups will need to sign up to. This will be a surmountable but difficult problem, as it will require moving away from the principle that such resources are controlled and owned at a particular point by a particular university, something that may not be well supported by current funding structures, but this paradigm shift is not impossible and areas like Kartvelology which have less of a long-standing archive of digital resources may be able to lead the way in this area.

However, the ability of software to parse and use older programs, especially web software written for a particular generation of browsers, is more of an issue. To counter this, exports of data and updates of reading software may need to happen every five to ten years for many of these projects, a large new area of maintenance of research requiring some technical knowledge. Some projects may simply not be able to get funding for this sort of continued maintenance, and will need to be stored in simpler archiving formats where they may lose the suite of querying tools that were built to be used alongside the data. The expansion of digital humanities will be an increasing necessity to allow projects to be maintained longer than their original creators remain in post. There are however some brighter spots of news, not least that the digital humanities are indeed expanding in Georgia and elsewhere. Moving to rolling new edition timetables for projects is a potentially viable model that to some extent is being pioneered by the major Byzantine prosopographies, and it may be that continued improvement and expansion is actually easier to support in the medium term than maintenance of an unchanging resource – with continual development in Georgia's medieval archaeology and other allied fields, as well as improvements over time in what can be technically added to such a system, this is a plausible optimistic scenario for the maintenance of the PHMG.

The challenges of encapsulating the full expanse of Georgian research on the period and of ensuring project sustainability will take some effort to overcome,

but are by no means insurmountable. Furthermore, overcoming them for this project will provide a basis for future researchers to follow suit and contribute to the greater international reception of Georgian studies. Widening the availability of Georgian research and making the field more accessible to new scholars, as well as providing reference material and potentially highlighting new possible avenues of enquiry for scholars already engaged on medieval Georgian history.

Conclusions

A prosopography database for medieval Georgia is, in conclusion, a much needed enterprise that will make studies of this critically important period more widely accessible and offer new possible avenues of research. It can act as a gateway to studying some groups that deserve greater historical attention, to highlighting spatial and chronological patterns that are invisible in scattered narrative formats, and help us come to alternative ways of examining the socio-political and institutional structures in which they operated. Whilst not a complete historical method in itself, prosopography can provide an invaluable assistive tool when studying the socio-political world of premodern states, and the study of medieval Georgia can gain much from its application.

The PHMG as a project will seek to fulfil these goals by using a specific prosopographical methodology that allows for the incorporation of maximum amounts of data and a single, consistent source reading to allow better tool-based exploration and analysis. Whilst there are challenges of sustainability for projects of this kind, these can be solved, and the promise of being able to incorporate a wider array of source material into an accessible system of this sort makes them well worth solving. With the support of Georgian and international colleagues, it may be hoped that the online publication of the database, likely to be in 2021, will mark a useful supporting milestone on the road of studies of high medieval Georgia.

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Georgian manuscripts in Italian libraries: studies, projects and perspectives

The current report was presented in the frame of the Summer School on Georgian manuscripts held in Tbilisi in July 2019. The author's specific interest for the physical and curatorial aspects of manuscript collections led to an overview on Georgian manuscripts collections in Italy, and the way they are currently made accessible to research: textual research, as well as codicological research. As a premise we have to say that Italian libraries include a very limited number of Georgian manuscripts. At current status of research, only the National Library in Naples preserves a collection of Georgian manuscripts (ten manuscripts); in the National library in Venice there are two manuscripts in Georgian

language, but mainly in Latin writing. In the Vatican library outstanding Georgian manuscripts are preserved, even though in limited number as well.

This situation rises a question about the actual status of accessibility of these collections that are no doubt minority if compared to other “foreign” manuscript collections, such as Arabic or Hebrew. The presence of alphabets of different kinds has always raised more than one cataloguing issues, that are being solved in different ways as for Arabic or Hebrew, but the question about Georgian alphabet in Italian libraries, and generally speaking, in Western European libraries, is an interesting point. This affects curatorial and management aspects of special collections that I would like to address in this contribution.

The collection in Naples includes ten manuscripts dating to XVII century. They are texts of different types, such as Gospels, dictionaries, tales, copied and/or translated by the missionary monk Antonio Cioffi, known as Bernardo Maria di Napoli, during his mission in Georgia (1670-1677).

As for the Vatican Library, two kinds of collections include Georgian manuscripts: the Vaticani Iberici, where two manuscripts are preserved, and the Borgiani Georgiani, fifteen manuscripts dating mainly to the XVIII century, which were owned by Stefano Borgia (1731-1804), cardinal and secretary of Congregatio de Propaganda Fide.

This being the situation in terms of presence of Georgian manuscripts, some remarks are possible from the access point of view for these collections. The manuscripts in the National Library of Naples have been catalogued, but currently are not available on-line: their cataloguing entries are on traditional catalogues, accessible in the library, or in specific publications that were issued over the last years; studies by prof. Gaga Shurguaia have led to a more comprehensive and thorough study of these manuscripts.

Manuscripts in the Vatican library have been processed in different ways, some of them have been digitized and are available on-line: it is the case of ms. Iber.

I, that can be accessed on the Vatican digital library (<https://digi.vatlib.it/>), a comprehensive virtual library that allows for browsing the manuscript collections and, for individual available manuscripts, images can be viewed and also downloaded for personal use.

In Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, two manuscripts are preserved in Georgian language, but mainly in Latin alphabet – this is the reason why they have not been included in the above mentioned publication. The two manuscripts (ms. Or. 245 and ms. Or. 248) are grammars of Georgian language, dating to the XVIII and XIX century, bequest of Emilio Teza (1831-1912), philologist and librarian; the first one is entirely transliterated into Latin alphabet, and translated as well; the second one, mainly in Latin as well, bears words in Georgian. These two manuscripts are nevertheless worth mentioning from the curatorial and access point of view. Their full catalog entry is available on NBM, Nuova Biblioteca Manoscritta, a collective catalogue for manuscript collections covering the area of Veneto Region. Search can be done in the collections of one specific library, or in all available libraries in the database.

Descriptive entry of these manuscripts are quite complete and provide information not only about the text, but there are also links to names (copyists, owners etc) and information about the physical features and history of the item; on the other side, images of the manuscripts are not available.

These three small collections of Georgian manuscripts that have been mentioned, in Naples, Venice and Vatican, show us quite a variety of cataloguing methods that reflect in the way the items are made accessible for research. So, some questions arise that strictly involve scholars. Dealing with curatorial issues can maybe sound as off-topic in the frame of a conference that dealt with a wide range of studies on Georgian manuscripts, from texts to palaeography, codicology and conservation. Curatorial aspects are usually outside of the scope of such conferences, since they are the object of specific events and discussion groups devoted to cataloguing and access to collections.

However, it comes as an obvious remark the importance of the role plaid by collections accessibility in research development: it is thus important to ask whether research questions posed by the scholar match the access points provided by heritage institutions. The way manuscript collections are made available to scholars is strictly relevant and acquires even more importance as long as the on-line availability of written sources for research increases. The question thus becomes how do we make manuscripts available to scholars, and a related question: for which scholars are we (curators, archivists) making manuscripts accessible, and in which way?

Talking about accessibility, we have to deal with a double-folded issue in the case of Georgian manuscripts. First of all a very general one, due to diversity of writing systems: such an issue, that in principle is common also to Hebrew and Arabic collections, in Western European libraries has been so far addressed, in the best cases, with multi-lingual and multi-writing cataloguing systems, that allows for collections search in different alphabets. The National Library of Jerusalem cataloguing system is a well-known example from this point of view: different options for search are provided to the user, in different languages and writing systems: Latin, Hebrew, Arabic . The assumption that a user looking for a Hebrew text must certainly know Hebrew can be misleading and risks to limit collections accessibility: manuscripts are to be made available not only to textologists, but also to scholars interested in the physical aspects of the book, such as codicologists, bookbinding historians. And yet, to professionals who will have to take decisions about the conservation of specific items: such user categories are unlikely to know Arabic, Hebrew or Georgian, unless in very specific cases; nevertheless the fact that they are able to access collections of very specific kind is crucial for the management, and future preservation of our written cultural heritage.

Multilingual and multi-writing cataloguing gives the scholars the opportunity to search items in different ways, and this was one of the issues the University of Turin, Department of Oriental Studies, faced as well with one its special col-

lections, the Paul Kahle Fonds, personal documents of the German Orientalist Paul Ernst Kahle (1875-1964); in this collection the presence of Arabic, Hebrew and Latin alphabets required the creation of a customized data-base where items could be searched in different languages and alphabets, thanks to a three-languages keyboard .

This being one of the possible answers to the issue of writing systems and the “doors” that librarians provide to scholars for accessing collections – in other words, the access points to the bibliographical record – another aspect has to be addressed: the multiplicity of scholar fields that are concerned with manuscripts. Not only scholars interested in the texts, but also codicologists and, possibly, curators and conservators. Information about the material features of items (both manuscript and printed) are only occasionally available in catalogue: if we get back to the above mentioned collections, only cataloguing entries of Venice manuscripts bear some codicological indication. The availability of digitized collections represent only a partial a solution from this point of view, because digitization is meant primarily for improving texts accessibility while a good number of material features cannot be properly displayed unless very specific imaging is provided . And till, everything that is related to binding – from the sewing structure to board attachment, endbands etc – is usually not represented nor in cataloguing entries, nor in images. Catalogues of Georgian manuscripts in Georgian libraries seem to be much more detailed in this regard, and also specific catalogues and researches are being published: nevertheless, one could still remark that international exchange and communication in textual studies have been quite widely developed, while studies in codicology, bookbinding, and conservation topics of Georgian manuscripts are still not largely available for international community, because often published in Georgian only. The availability of English versions of these studies could be of great help for people working not only in codicological research, but it would impact positively also on special collections management and preservation. This applies of course not only to manuscripts, but also to early prints and to other aspects of Georgian manuscript studies: specific reserach such as the ones on Georgian bookbind-

ings, or on early print that have been published in the last years would be of great help in improving the quality of curatorial and conservation approaches in Western libraries, where the reduced number of Georgian artefacts, combined with the lack of specific studies, has often led to mistakes in conservation treatments in the past. A typical example, that has affected larger collections in Italy such as the Islamic manuscript collections, is book rebinding: in the past books coming from other cultures have been rebound in Western bookbinding style, thus erasing the original features of items, and providing them with a completely “wrong” structure. The seriousness of damage in terms of historical loss is in these cases both self-evident, and irreversible. Such mistakes in conservation treatments begun to be largely reduced as far as specific literature and researches were published in English, or French, about codicology of these specific collections. The curatorial, and conservation answer to specific problems of collections comes in large part from the availability of specific literature and researches, that can help curators in the decision-making process when dealing with specific collections: and the less specific items are represented in our library collections (such as Georgian items), the bigger the need of accessing original and specific research on these topics, because no specific training was provided to curators and conservators for such specific cases.

This topic leads us to the need of improving international exchange in the field of material studies for Georgian manuscripts and printed books studies, for the sake of providing better understanding, and more cautious management and preservation, of our collections. International exchange opportunities for librarians, archivists, curators should be improved the same way it has been done for textual studies: opportunities that are already available through organizations such as IFLA (International Federation of Libraries Associations and Institutions), ICA (International Council of Archives) should be further exploited for disseminating high level research on Georgian collections. The development (or reinforcement) of an international net is essential for improving our way of approaching artefacts, and a comparative perspective such as the one developed in the frame of the COMST net (Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies) is

very helpful as well in this regard.

International collaboration is thus one of the essential points on which institutions should engage for boosting a thorough understanding of written artefacts, and thus improving the way they are managed, accessed, and conserved.

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Medieval Georgia-Byzantine Commonwealth relations: Problems and Perspectives

Recent decades have been marked by an expressed interest towards research of the Byzantine Commonwealth concept in literature. This concept became a working hypothesis after it had first been published in the homonymous work of Dimitri Obolenskiy (1971), which is mostly dedicated to the issues of Eastern European peoples within the political orbit of Byzantium.

Obolenskiy's work had immediately drawn attention due to the methodology used by the author, specifically expressed by consecutive historicism, historical parallels, and his sequential analysis of the commercial-economic, religious-cultural and legal factors in the wide realms of political-geographic reality. Formation of the Commonwealth is presented against the background of the ongoing historical processes in Europe, marked by the rivalry of Rome and Constantinople on Slavic lands. The author believes that the totality of the great variety of either gravitating or contradicting factors on this vast geographic area shaped the Byzantine ecumene. The main characteristics of the latter were: recognition of the Byzantine Emperor's sovereign rights over the Orthodox world, consideration of the Constantinople Centrism and metropolitan culture as a universal values phenomenon.

For the peoples living in this realm one of the most obvious unifying signs was the integrity of ecclesiastic organization and the resulting ecclesiastic writing, which, after being transplanted into Eastern Europe formed a common literature foundation, which in its turn later created local literatures.

The author proves the existence of Commonwealth based on the above-mentioned factors, however he does not use the contemporary context to justify it, but merely bases it in the notion of friendship frequently used by the Roman Empire diplomacy. The definition of this friendship, in the “political language” meant feudatory or confederate cluster of countries, protecting the borders of Roman Empire vigilantly controlled by the center. However, the firm foundation of these “friendly countries” used to be occasionally shaken by the allies’ anti-byzantine, ethnocentric riots.

The 90-ies of the past century have been marked by a few works presenting the effort to apply the Commonwealth parameters to discuss the relations between Byzantium and Caucasus countries, one of them is the work by G. Fowden, S. Rapp addressing the problems of Georgia-Byzantium relations. Those works are interesting methodologically as well as in the wider historical context, however due to the incomplete and insufficient knowledge of the original Georgian sources and scientific literature, the works do not fully reflect the heart of the problem and the historical development logic of the Georgian state and culture.

Ever since the beginning of the 20th century the multi-century cultural and political relations between Georgia and Byzantium have been the subject of continuing interest and research for Georgian scientists. The topics for research vary from political history, ecclesiastic structure, language, ecclesiastic literature and related contacts, the art of translation and manuscripts. However, these relations studies have not yet been unified within the concept of Commonwealth.

This is why I believe that it would be extremely beneficial for the mentioned research to establish cooperation between the Georgian scholars and European Byzantine scientists, which will enrich the Commonwealth concept with new

materials and components, and at the same time will evaluate its relevance towards Caucasus countries – the countries whose historical, political and cultural experience starting from Hellenic period, have been tightly related to Roman Empire on one hand, and Iranian and Asia Minor worlds on the other hand. Complex political and cultural configuration resulting from multi-century contacts with Western and Eastern empires, requires finding of additional original parameters, which will naturally shed more light on Caucasus version of Commonwealth. Up to date, the researches related to these issues have been focusing on two historic periods: 1) From Constantine the Great to Heracles the Caesar rule; this period is marked by Christian heresy interloping with politics and the factor's huge influence on formation of the specific cultural identity of the Eastern Christian peoples. 2) Eastern Christianity starting from Arabic rule up to 12th century. This period is marked by a unified battle of Byzantine and Caucasus countries against Arabs, and further incorporation of Armenic kingdoms into “friendly” Byzantine empire, gradual diminishing of its dominant role, accompanied by the battle against Seljuk Turks and resulting in domination of Georgian Monarchy rule in the region.

The current paper focuses on the specific conditions marking the start of the mentioned second period, which have been well reflected in Georgian and Byzantine sources. At the beginning of the 9th century confrontation against Arabic rule resulted in formation of Tao-Klarjeti province under the rule of Georgian Bagrationi dynasty. The Byzantine titles of Tao-Klarjeti rulers obviously point to the vassal relation to Byzantine Empire, which at that time was used as a tool in confronting the common enemy – Arabs.

If at the beginning of the 9th century Byzantine political influence was merely symbolic, the last decades of the same century were marked by the growing influence in Taron Kingdom and Tao-Klarjeti. This is the period when Byzantium switches from defensive position to attack on Arabs, using the local countries' military potential to its fullest, which would have been impossible without the cultural and political interest of these countries' side. This is why Byzantium

starts its actions as an ally or “friend”, however the legal mechanisms involved in this “friendship” were growingly ambiguous and threatening to the position of small sovereign countries. However, this alliance had such significant positive side that Georgian and Armenian political actors became actively involved in the fight of Byzantium against Muslim emirates and made substantial input in common effort of fulfilling the strategic anti-Arabic tasks.

The same period in Byzantine history is marked with the growing prosperity of Constantinople culture, which relatively shifted the focus from famous eastern Christian centers to urban culture and education. This is the time when the Empire regains the lost-before pro-Christian image among secular and religious circles of eastern Christian countries, including that of Tao-Klarjeti political and ecclesiastic actors. The latter acclaimed super-national authority of Byzantine Emperor, which was clearly reflected in the “divine” aesthetics and etiquette of the imperial courtyard. At the same time, they attached the etalon meaning to Byzantine education, literature and arts. This period also reflects that Tao-Klarjeti ecclesiasts gradually moved from eastern Christian ascetics to Byzantine monastery lifestyle. Such tight relations with Byzantium pushed them towards “copying” and “byzantification”, which resulted in a long-term shaping Tao-Klarjeti secular and ecclesiastic elite’s choices of Constantinople-style culture and its intellectual progress. We come across these impulses in the ecclesiastic movements of the 9th and 10th centuries when anachoretic ecclesiastic style has been almost fully replaced by monastery organizations bearing many elements of Constantinople Typikon; that was the time when the bilateral agreement between Tao-Klarjeti rulers and Byzantine Emperor was signed, bounding them to protect the borders of the Empire with their own means in exchange for the Emperor’s protection, financial aid and the unlimited self-governance.

One of the examples of this bilateral obligations is the historic fact when David the Third Kouropalates received some lands in Tao and Northern Armenia in exchange for the military support provided to the Byzantium in Bardas Skleros rebellion.

This is the period when the word “eastern” evolves in Tao-Klarjeti ruler titles, pointing at Constantinople orientation (Eastern Kouropalates), this time, specifically in 982, marks the completion of construction the Monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos, where the Georgian ecclesiasts commence the translation of new liturgical repertoire in order to transfer the Georgian Church from Jerusalem-style to Constantinople-style liturgies. That was the place where new translation principles were established enriching the Georgian literature with the new genre.

Tao-Klarjeti province of the 10th century fully met the criteria of Byzantine Commonwealth paradigm, however the relations between Byzantium and Tao-Klarjeti were based on the legal mechanisms which could be used by the Empire to its own interests at any time – Byzantium handed over to conquered lands to their allies for ruling, however not on a hereditary basis, but temporarily – for the lifetime, which has been the ground for numerous conflicts. This principle was well-known to Tao-Klarjeti rulers, but they still chose to fight in a common strategy together with Byzantines and use the results of these battles to their best political interest.

On the verge of the 10th and 11th centuries in the conditions of cooperation-confrontation paradox with Byzantium, the Georgian Monarchy was born. At the same time, the Georgian culture reached impressive heights in both material and spiritual aspects. What is the fruit of Byzantine influence in this cultural development, how naturally and to what degree was the Byzantine culture adopted in Georgian reality, what role did political confrontation with Byzantium play in shaping of Georgian ethnic-cultural identity, what was the influence of new

translations of Byzantine literature on the deepening of cognitive abilities of the Georgian language and where was the border of Byzantine cultural influence – all these topics have become the subjects of numerous researches.

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The Qur’ānic View of the ‘Fall’ of Iblīs and the Rise of the Devil in the Context of the Georgian and Armenian Apocryphal Adam Literature

Iblīs’ refusal to bow down before Adam and subsequent expulsion from heaven features prominently in the Qur’ān, occurring five times in both Meccan and Medinan material (Q2:33 – 34; 7:11–18; 15:28–35; 18:50; 38:71–78), leading Reynolds to conclude that this is “an account of fundamental importance to the Qur’ān” (Reynolds 2010: 39). How this episode relates to events involving Adam, Eve, and the serpent in the Garden in Eden, and the ensuing rise of the figure of al-Shayṭān, a character usually identified as the Devil, or Satan, continues to perplex scholars. Not present in the biblical text but known from rabbinic literature, the Devil/Satan’s refusal to worship Adam also appears in various texts referred to collectively as the “Books of Adam and Eve”. While the extant manuscripts of such texts are usually decidedly post-qur’ānic, they have been determined as preserving pre-qur’ānic material, and are therefore relevant to the study of the Qur’ān as a receptacle of such traditions. The Devil/Satan’s ‘fall’ is recounted in Armenian, Georgian, and Latin versions of this material, with the most extensive and complete versions being those in Georgian and Armenian (Vita 12.1 – 17.1). Given the parallels between these texts and the qur’ānic versions of the story, the Georgian and Armenian recensions have the potential to shed light on the qur’ānic interpretation of these events. This paper will therefore provide an overview of the parallels that exist between the

Georgian and Armenian recensions of the ‘fall’ of the Devil/Satan, and that of Iblīs in the Qur’ān, focusing on specific elements in the Iblīs-Garden pericopes that are particular to them. In doing so, it will aim to shed light on the Qur’ān’s interpretation of these stories and discuss the relevance of Georgian and Armenian apocrypha for qur’ānic studies.

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Transformation of the Holy Rider. Depictions of Saint George Slaying Diocletian in the Caucasus

The cultural shifts that occurred as the pagan, classical world of Hellenism transformed into the Christian world of late antiquity—roughly the third to the eighth centuries—are many. The transformations encompassed politics, religion, a self-understanding in terms of how one fits into the world, legal and social institutions, philosophy, art, magic, ritual and even chance. This list is not exhaustive, and though the topic has been studied extensively, no single explanation has adequately addressed the breadth of these changes. In *The Clash of Gods*, Thomas Mathews (2003) writes, “The Christian world-view involved not just a re-definition of God, but a redefinition of man’s relationship to the physical universe” (149). Agreeing with Mathews, my study of the image of St. George slaying Diocletian focuses primarily on how the change in ‘worldview’ and the understanding of the self is reflected in the art that was used to help effect these changes in the populace of the Eastern Mediterranean world.

A Brief History of the Image of the Holy Rider

The image of St. George slaying the dragon that became common around the eleventh century is well known throughout much of the world. The image shows

the saint on horseback slaying a dragon with a spear. This portrays St. George as the protector of the weak, shielding them from the symbolic threat of the dragon or monster. Over the centuries, the rider slaying the serpent or dragon has become a ‘universal’ apotropaic image. Nonetheless, images of holy riders existed long before the emergence of the medieval image of St. George and the dragon with which modern viewers would be familiar (figure 1).

This essay focuses on how early Christian images were transformed into the early Byzantine religious style. In the process of this transformation, new meanings emerged as the early Christian and Hellenistic imagery formed the style of the new Christian empire. The image of mounted men spearing opponents is almost universal, and can be found well before the Christian era. However, several examples stand out that can be seen as the forerunners of the form the later image will take. These examples could show a connection between the pre-iconoclastic image of St. George and the early medieval depiction that became a central theme in eastern Mediterranean religious art. The rider was seen in magic gemstones as Solomon’s Seal, a ring said to have the power to dispel demons (figure 2). The power to dispel demons was thought to be essential to the holy rider’s early form (Pancaroğlu 2004, 152). The fourth century image of Horus, mounted and spearing a crocodile, is also thought by some to be a precursor to the image of St. George spearing a man or serpent (figure 3).

St. Sisinius may be one of the first named saints to take on the magical power of Solomon’s seal (figure 4). Pre-iconoclasm, the saint’s ‘magic’ was seen in household objects used to repel demons (Pancaroğlu 2004, 152-153). The Church adopted the post-iconoclasm image of St. George slaying Diocletian as part of its ecclesiastic program. In this form it would be used to request intercession, rather than protection from magic. Images of Christian saints on horses spearing dragons date back to the sixth and seventh centuries, nonetheless, the earliest images of St. George, depicted in the sixth-century chalices of the Syrian Attarouthi Treasure, show a standing George spearing a serpent (figures 5-6). Interestingly, one of the images shows George spearing a serpent with a

man's head, showing a connection of the serpent to a specific individual, likely an unpopular ruler.

Saint George and Diocletian

Most of the earliest images of St. George depict him slaying a man usually identified as Emperor Diocletian. According to historical accounts, it was Diocletian who had George put to death. A relief from the Martvili Monastery in Georgia is perhaps the earliest known depiction of St. George slaying Diocletian. It imparts to the viewer that the transition to the Christian world will be accompanied by a superior form of protection (figure 7). St. George, said to be the cousin of St. Nino, who led the Georgians to Christianity, has a deeply rooted Georgian identity. Though for the most part specific to (early) medieval Georgia, images of the martyred saint returning to this world to depose of an emperor are also found outside of Georgia, for the most part in areas that were outside the borders of the late antique Eastern Roman Christian world: in the Caucasus, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and as far south as Ethiopia. The warrior saints Theodore, Demetrius, and Mercurius share a similar hagiography. According to legend, each saint was martyred, then called from the 'afterlife' to slay an unpopular person. This Old Testament passage foreshadows this form of protection, which, through resurrection, is availed to those who put faith not in 'this world' but in the 'other world'. "So when he was ready to die he said thus, It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God to be raised up again by him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life" (2 Maccabees 7:14).

It is my belief that the format of this image, that manifests an otherworldly protection, even in the face of a 'this worldly' defeat, is related to the stylistic change of the late Hellenistic realist style to the 'symbolic' style of early the Byzantine icon. It is commonly said that the late antique and medieval artists did not know how to create images that conformed to the object of representation. But the artists of the early Byzantine period clearly had the capacity to create images in a realist style. They simply chose not to, and the factors involved with this choice may have also been a factor in the stylistic presentation of the

image of St. George slaying Diocletian.

The stylistic choice of late antique and Byzantine artists was the result of a co-ordinated effort to resolve a number of issues regarding problems of depiction. In the third century, the patriarchs of the Church raised iconoclastic questions regarding the use of imagery, challenging the artistic style emerging through the metamorphosed classical form. The restrictions on images came from several sources, among them, the Judaic prohibition of idolatry, Platonic philosophy's concerns with mimetic representation, and the growth of the Christian populace. As Christianity grew, more converts came from the western pagan population, rather than eastern Judaic. A need arose to resolve this problem, and the answer came in a new style that better fit the philosophical and theological requirements of the eastern Mediterranean's new religion (figure 8). Images that directly depicted Jesus or the saints were eschewed. Direct depiction could be considered idolatry; it was the universal God that was to be worshiped, not the particular saint, especially not a particular image of a saint. As well, images that were mimetic, following Platonic critiques, could result in a deception, causing the viewer to confuse the real divinity (reality in the Platonic sense) with the image. The solution stipulated that images acceptable for religious use could be either narrative, showing a history and not something to be venerated, or depictions presenting the divine in such a way that they could not be confused with the real. Thus, a style emerged which represented the divine in a non-particular way, lacking dimension and weight, shown in a nimbus or in a manner that could not confuse the eye (see Jensen 2005, 26-8).

In a manner linked to the way that the Byzantine icon adopted a style contrived to represent sacred persons in a 'non-representational' manner, the image of the warrior saint killing the man represents domination in style that is not this worldly. The early Christian ethos of trusting other-worldly powers in the face of the physical threats they faced from secular rulers or opposing religious groups is clearly articulated in texts and in the early Christian art. The Roman ethos of power was often manifested in the public way that Christians were martyred in

the circus and in daily life. In light of their disdain for the Roman glorification of physical strength, an alternative way of depicting domination would have been desirable, and useful, for the early Byzantine Christians. Because of the complexity of how an 'otherworldly' power is depicted, these images embody a type of dualism insofar as the style of presentation of the emperor and saint represent the domination of one worldview over another-Orthodoxy vs. Orthopraxy (Ando 2008, xiv, 13). Philosophically speaking, the structural linkage between worldview and pictorial representation is of interest, but these structural connections will not be discussed here. In the pages that follow, I focus on the dualism exhibited through the interspersing of the warrior saints among Old Testament narrative scenes. This, I surmise, was done to show the beholder that one is still protected as the naturalistic understanding of the cosmos is transformed into a 'two-worlds' understanding. Placing the 'protective' images of George and other warrior saints together with Old Testament scenes implies that those who subscribe to the new monotheistic worldview, will, through resurrection, be protected by a more powerful form of magic (Mathews 1999, 65-67).

Christ is not Depicted as an Emperor in Early Christian Art

In *The Clash of Gods*, Thomas Mathews (1999) presents a convincing argument that those holding Christ to be depicted in the style of an emperor are mistaken. Briefly, he makes the case that the motifs used, Christ enthroned, Christ as Pantocrator, Christ as teacher, and Christ in procession, are not imperial (figures 9-10). He shows that a) the throne upon which Christ is depicted is not the throne used to depict an emperor (*sella curulis*), though it is often used when representing the Gods; b) the bearded Pantocrator resembles more Zeus or Sarapis than an emperor; c) Christ's dress resembles more the philosopher than an emperor; and d) the procession, though certainly an imperial function, was also used by common folk. In fact, Christ entering Jerusalem could not be an imperial depiction, because Christ is riding side saddle on an ass (Mathews 1999, 39-46, 98-111).

Rejecting the widely held claim that Christ was depicted as an Emperor

in early Christian art, Mathews (1999) shows that the one motif tying nearly all of the early Christian art together is the miracle scenes, which he refers to as 'magic'. There is no place for the pacific, non-military and non-imperial miracle scenes in imperial imagery (54-61). Numerically speaking, Mathews contends that miracle scenes are the most prevalent of all. The miracle scenes are often mixed with Old Testament 'miracle' or 'magic' scenes, which, according to Mathews, show the continuity of the powers of the Old Testament tradition with the new movement. Mathews argues that magic powers were commonly contested in the first centuries after Christ. One of the greatest powers of the pagan gods was magic, and for Christ the miracle worker the resurrection was his greatest magic trick (figure 11). In coming back to life, he bested the powers of Rome and Judea that condemned him (91).

A list of frequently employed scenes that represented a transformation, resurrection, or depicted the power of Christ's magic in early Christian art would include the following.

Transformation

- Christ entering Jerusalem
- Crucifixion
- Adam and Eve
- Baptism

Old Testament 'Magic'

- Moses and the burning bush/10 commandments
- Jonah and the whale (ketos)
- Abraham sacrificing Isaac
- Daniel and the lion's den
- Sampson and the lion

Christ's Magic (Miracles)

- Resurrection of Lazarus
- Water to wine/multiplying loaves and fishes
- Healing the sick (blind, possessed, paralytic, hemorrhaging woman)

The images I include here show numerous examples of Christ working miracles or bringing transformation in early Christian art. The gold glass bowl (figure 12) depicts three scenes in which Christ is performing miracles with a wand: the three young men in the fiery furnace, the wine miracle, and the cure of the paralytic. What is most interesting in this fourth-century artifact is the image of Christ performing the saving miracle on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, which is an Old Testament story. In this depiction, Christ's magic is connected to the magic of the Hebrew tradition. This motif is often seen in early Christian art when Old Testament miracles, or magic, are reinterpreted in light of the transformative power of Christ. Figures 13-19 are a small sample of the numerous examples of Old Testament stories represented alongside scenes from the life of Christ on third- and fourth-century sarcophagi.

After the fifth century, the images of Christ's miracles appear with far less frequency. Thus, it is of interest that these images appear with far greater frequency in the Christian East, particularly in the Caucasus. It is of particular interest to this study that images used during the early Christian period also appear as late as the eleventh-century together with St. George and St. Theodore in Georgian and Armenian art. Though Walter (2003) notes that the first firmly dated and identified version of a mounted St. George spearing a man is on the Armenian Church of the Holy Cross on Aght'amar Island, there are numerous earlier examples of Georgian depictions identified as St. George slaying Diocletian (128-129). The earliest example is found at the Martvili Monastery (figures 20-22). The narrative sequence on the western projection of the Martvili-Chkondidi Cathedral dates to seventh century. The sequence depicts St. George spearing Diocletian, Samson and the lion, two riders spearing a two headed serpent, Christ's ascension and Daniel in the lion's den. On the eastern façade is a hunting scene that likely depicts St. Eustathios. St. Eustathios is a warrior saint martyred by Emperor Hadrian, often shown mounted and hunting, who is seen as a transformative figure. The Tsebelda chancel-barrier is another example of seventh- or early eighth-century relief sculpture. The narrative sequence, in a carpet-like arrangement, presents images depicting the themes of "Redeem-

ing Sacrifice and Resurrection, Second Coming and Salvation of the Mankind” (Dadiani et al. 2017, 230). The chancel-barrier is broken into two pieces with some parts lost. One fragment includes images of Christ’s crucifixion, Mary at Christ’s tomb, Christ’s baptism, the sacrifice of Isaac, the crucifixion of St. Peter, and St. Eustathios hunting (figure 23). The other depicts St. Theodore spearing a serpent and St. George spearing a man, Daniel in the lion’s den, and Mary with Jesus as a child (figure 24). The reliefs framing a chancel window at the St. George Church in Joisubani, dating to the tenth century, depict another narrative sequence that includes the Old Testament themes of salvation and redemption together with the warrior saints. The reliefs show, from top down, the image of Christ enthroned with Peter and Paul, directly below are scenes of the last judgment, at bottom, on either side of the window, are two riders, St. Theodore spearing a serpent, and St. George spearing a man, presumed to be Diocletian. Below the window are two reliefs, now lost, of Jonah and the whale and Daniel and the lion’s den (figure 25).

The tenth-century Church of the Holy Cross on Aght’amar Island in Eastern Turkey provides some of the most stunning examples of Old Testament miracle scenes of which I am aware. Though these reliefs were created much later than those of Tsebelda and Martvili, their design may have an earlier provenance. The historian Thomas Artsruni tells us that the Church’s architect chose the model of a seventh-century church for the design (Harada 2003, 10). The Armenians’ “almost reverential use of 7th c. models” is seen in the use of the images that had been employed in early Christian art (ODB 841-2). Because these images had not been used in Byzantine or western Roman artistic motifs for centuries, the choice of these “dispossessed” narrative scenes supports the notion that the choice of style may have referred to an earlier era.

Like the Georgian images already discussed, we find in the tenth-century Armenian friezes on the Church of the Holy Cross images of the holy riders integrated into a program of Old Testament scenes. The south façade is covered with scenes from the Old Testament, including Moses and the Ten Command-

ments, David and Goliath and a Jonah Cycle (figure 26). On the north façade reliefs of St. Theodore spearing a serpent, St. Sergius spearing a tiger, and St. George spearing a man, appear directly after the images of Adam and Eve and the serpent in the tree (Figures 27-29). Immediately following the images of the three holy riders are images of Samson and the lion, the three youths in the fire, Daniel and the lion's den and the baptism of Christ (Figures 30 & 31). The juxtaposition of holy riders with images from the Old Testament miracle or transformation scenes, on a tenth-century church, is a notable departure from the early Christian motifs of the West, which as stated above, had not been used for several centuries. The Armenian's "reverential" use of seventh-century designs is important here. To the best of my knowledge, this is the only example of St. George slaying Diocletian found in Armenian art. That the Georgian and Armenian styles split after the Arab invasion in the seventh century indicates that the image of the mounted saint subduing an Emperor persisted from a late Antique form which, though not frequently used in Armenian art, was carried on in Georgian art tradition. This provides support for placing this tenth-century Armenian image of St. George in the same category as the Georgian images.

The Ikalto altar is last Georgian narrative sequence in the group which I am researching. Dating to the tenth- or eleventh-century, the two-tiered altarpiece shows the narration of the passion cycle, the nativity scene, the resurrection of the widow's son from Nain, Christ's entry into Jerusalem, the annunciation, the adoration of the magi, and the crucifixion (Dadiani et al. 2017, 239). Two riders, situated between the scenes of Christ entering Jerusalem and the crucifixion, appear with a tondo of Christ. The riders are identified by initials as St. George and St. Theodore, spearing a man and a serpent respectively (figures 31-33).

Transformation of the image of the holy rider

The aim of this article has been to show how the image of the holy rider merged together with early Christian themes in the Georgian art of the middle ages to form an image that represents protection through transformation and resurrection. My research suggests that these themes unify local Georgian mythical/

religious images by adding St. George to the story of Christianity. The conclusion of this research is that the image of St. George slaying Diocletian may have been transformed from the apotropaic depictions of holy riders in gemstones and household objects to become a religious icon used by the Church as an emblem of the protection that faith in the powers of the ‘other-worldly’ Christian God offers. In this sense, the image of the holy rider, who returned from martyrdom to carry out divine justice from the afterlife, offers a symbolic depiction of transformation and resurrection. These represent the power of the monotheistic, two-world religion that the raw depictions of this worldly power cannot convey. Though it goes beyond the scope of this essay, there are alternative theories regarding what the origins of the image of St. George slaying Diocletian may be. Some speculate that George spearing Diocletian comes from the image of the moon god sacrificing a man. The arbitrariness of the sacrifice to the moon god would not have been compatible with the Christian ethos; hence, Diocletian became the sacrificial victim. Others have argued that the narrative of George’s torture and martyrdom have made George into a local version of Christ. These alternative stories do not necessarily contradict the broader claims made in this paper.

Regardless of how the image came to manifest itself in medieval Georgian religious art, it represents an iconic form that in early medieval times appeared when the transformation of worldview that also maintains continuity with the past is needed. The message of the image is to accept God, accept Christ’s resurrection, and your world will be transformed. In this new world, you will be protected by George and Theodore from Emperors and the powers of evil. Thus, the image offers the depiction of a new form of protection. Playing out in the establishment of the image of the holy warrior who avenges after martyrdom is what Mathews (1999) refers to as a “war of images” (10). The emperor, like the god, is shown destroyed. If the emperor’s image is destroyed, so is the emperor (Eastmond 2003). A statue of an emperor, if made in the realist style, was said to be vulnerable and when portrayed in the otherworldly style, the saint was thought to be invulnerable. Thus, in this representation, we find the paradigm of

domination for the ‘new world order’. Mathews argued that the early Christian art, typified by magical scenes, was anti-imperial. The depiction of the mounted saint slaying Diocletian, though not pacifistic, is line with this trend of early Christian art. The form of image which names a specific saint killing a specific man appears to have been incorporated after the Roman Empire was established as Christian. Outside of the reach of the Byzantine world, it became an established part of the Georgian social and political culture. Though it is neither pacifist nor non-military, it still represents the ‘military’ power of the other world. George was martyred in the old world order; but resurrected and in the army of saints, he is a protector of the new order.

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Natural Disasters in the South Caucasus. Earthquakes and attending Natural Phenomena in Historical Sources from the Ancient Period up to the 19th century

Catastrophic natural disasters have always played a key role in shaping human history. In many parts of the world, over the centuries, natural disasters caused destruction and devastation of developed economic regions and social infrastructure, not to mention a heavy toll in terms of the loss of human lives. Territory covering Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and the eastern part of Turkey is within the zone of high seismic activity. Analysis of the historical and instrumental seismological data shows, that strong earthquakes with magnitude up to 7.0-7.5 and macroseismic intensity 9 (MSK scale) and Mag=7.0-7.5 have occurred here.

Historical sources, over a long chronological period, have preserved evidence

of the earthquakes and other natural phenomena occurring in the region. Architectural monuments damaged by earthquakes as well as seismic archaeology also provide us with important data concerning the time and effects of past seismic events.

In written sources we come across interesting observations on the site of the strong earthquakes, as well as frequency and attending anomalous natural phenomena. As a rule, the written sources give indications of the destructive consequences which often caused ecological catastrophes in the region, as well as economic depression, change of the political and demographic picture and mass migration.

The interdisciplinary project of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia - Natural Disasters in the South Caucasus. Earthquakes and attending Natural Phenomena in Historical Sources from the Ancient Period up to the 19th century - began in 2017 and it has been conducted by the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Center of Manuscripts and Ilia State University. With this interdisciplinary project historians and seismologists envisage culling information from various-language historical sources about earthquakes in the South Caucasus and the adjacent seismic zones. The information found in written sources and material monuments will be gathered and analyzed. The aim of the project is to identify and classify seismic facts found in the various historical sources, reveal seismic hazard zones, examine, describe and study the cultural heritage sites damaged by earthquakes and natural disasters. One of the main tasks of the project is to analyze the revealed and accumulated evidence in order to enter the data into the geo information system and carry out its complex analysis. The project also envisages to identify historical earthquakes and damaged areas, determine coordinates of possible epicenters, assess magnitude and macroseismic effects (intensity) of the earthquakes, and prepare materials for a unified catalogue of historical earthquakes in the Caucasian region. On the basis of these studies online data bank (Georgian-English) will be created. The results of the research will be available for researchers and the public at large.

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**“The book of mixing oils and making chemistry” - Chemical Knowledge
in 18th century Georgia**

We have prepared a project which aims to research the part of the world scientific heritage – Georgian, Arabic and Persian scientific, particularly, chemistry manuscripts kept in Georgian antiquity repositories; the tasks planned within the projects includes development of educational-learning course “Chemical Knowledge in Manuscript Heritage of Georgia”.

In this presentation, unique work by Vakhtang the VI “The book of mixing oils and making chemistry” preserved in the National Centre of Manuscripts is described in order to overview chemical knowledge in Eighteenth-Century Georgia. The manuscript S-3721 consists of 72 pages, 279 paragraphs. It contains rich data about chemical substances, description of the procedure of preparation of different chemical compounds, laboratory equipment.

It’s interesting for us that this manuscript represents the first chemistry textbook, the content of which shows king Vakhtang’s aspiration for enlightenment activity. The author groups the material according to a certain principle, thematically unites techno chemical recipes. The first paragraph is dedicated to the description of the concrete substance. A descriptive paragraph is followed by paragraphs which are descriptions of the substances received from this “main” substance and describes the methods of making these substances. It should be noted that such grouping of the material is a characteristic of modern chemistry textbooks, where the description of the substances is given in the following order: chemical element, simple substances produced by this element and compounds of this element (oxide, acid/base, salts, etc.).

Vakhtang's "Chemistry" in general deserves high appraisal and represents an important scientific monument of the history of science which uses an adequate methodology for teaching chemistry.



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