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Hidden Colophons

Abstract: On the basis of Georgian codices from the collection of the Iviron Monastery on Mt Athos, the article examines a special purpose of using red ink in medieval manuscripts, namely, to provide information concerning the manuscript in question and the people involved in its production (scribes, authors, translators, or commissioners) by scattering sequences of individual letters over one or two pages. After discussing authentic accounts of the use of rubrics in the Georgian manuscript production of the eleventh century, the shape and scope of ‘hidden colophons’ is illustrated by reference to four codices of the monastery (Ivir. georg. 4, 9, 16, and 61).

1 Introduction

When I first visited the University of Hamburg for a research stay concerning manuscript studies in summer 2009,¹ one of my topics was the typology of the use of red inks in manuscripts of the Christian East, and as a first result of my stay, I was given the opportunity to publish a short paper on this in the Newsletter *manuscript cultures* issued by the Research Group *Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa* in 2010 (no. 3).² The materials I relied upon were mostly Georgian manuscripts from the Caucasus and from St Catherine’s Monastery on Mt Sinai which I had been working on intensively in the years before. The main functions I was able to work out then were decoration, demarcation, the highlighting of headings, titles, and initial letters (including those of proper names

¹ The host of the stay was the DFG-funded Research Group 963 *Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa* (2008–2011), a forerunner of the Sonderforschungsbereich 950 *Manuscript Cultures in Asia, Africa and Europe* (2011–2020) and the present Cluster of Excellence *Understanding Written Artefacts* (2019–). The steady development of this research association, today hosted at the dedicated *Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures*, is a success story that is unparalleled in the history of the Humanities in Germany. – My thanks are due to Michael Friedrich who invited me to Hamburg and who has supported my work immensely over the years – the present contribution is meant to be a humble antidoron to him.

² Gippert 2010. The main points of the paper had been presented to the Research Group during a workshop on July 23, 2009, under the title ‘Textauszeichnungen in Handschriften’ (‘Text markup in manuscripts’).

in enumerations), referencing, esp. via numerical information (as in the case of the so-called ‘Ammonian’ section numbers in Gospel codices), and the marking of peculiar signs such as neumes in hymnographical manuscripts. Recently, during my work on a catalogue of the Georgian manuscripts of the Iviron Monastery on Mt Athos,³ I have come across another function of red ink that seems to have remained unnoticed so far, namely, of constituting a peculiar type of ‘hidden’ colophons. In the following pages, I intend to provide a preliminary account of this phenomenon.

2 The Georgian manuscripts of the Iviron Monastery

With 95 numbered items (93 codices, one scroll and several minor fragments taken together as no. 95), the Iviron Monastery on Mt Athos hosts one of the largest collections of Georgian manuscripts outside of Georgia.⁴ The reason is that the monastery was built up by two Georgian noblemen named John and Euthymius by the end of the tenth century and remained under the leadership of Georgians for several centuries, establishing itself as a true centre of Georgian eruditeness. Among the most remarkable items of its collection, we may count the famous ‘Oshki Bible’ (Ivir. georg. 1), which was written down in the eponymous monastery in East Anatolia⁵ in 978 CE and contains on more than 950 folios, bound in two large volumes today, the oldest near to complete translation of the Old Testament into Georgian.⁶ Another outstanding item of the

3 The project of compiling a new catalogue of the Georgian manuscripts of the Iviron Monastery has been conducted by myself in cooperation with Bernard Outtier and Sergey Kim in the framework of a project on Georgian palimpsests kindly funded by the Volkswagen Foundation between 2009 and 2019. Further cooperation partners were the laboratory ‘Orioni’ at Ivane Javakhishvili State University, Tbilisi and several members of the Korneli Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi. For former catalogues of the collection cf. Cagareli 1886, Blake 1932–1934, and Axobaze et al. 1986.

4 Larger collections abroad are those of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences with c. 560 items, St Catherine’s Monastery on Mt Sinai with c. 200 items (including the so-called ‘New Finds’ of 1975), and the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem with c. 150 items. The largest collection by far is hosted in the Korneli Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, with several thousands of Georgian manuscripts.

5 The remnants of the Oshki monastery are situated at 40°36′50.3″N and 41°32′32.9″E.

6 Leaving lacunae that are due to the loss of quires or folios aside, the only parts that are missing are the Psalter, the Chronicles, and the books of Maccabees.

collection is the so-called ‘Athos *mravaltavi*’ (Ivir. georg. 11), a homiliary as well from the end of the tenth century comprising more than 94 texts, mostly translations of Greek Church Fathers.⁷ If we leave palimpsests aside,⁸ the oldest codex of the collection is the so-called ‘Opiza Gospels’ of 913 (Ivir. georg. 83), a small codex written *in toto* in majuscules.⁹ A second codex in majuscules is Ivir. georg. 9, again written in Oshki in 977 CE, which consists of homilies mostly by John Chrysostom and Ephrem the Syrian as well as a large collection of apophthegms including the *Pratum spirituale* by John Moschus (see 3.1 below).

2.1 Colophons in Iviron manuscripts

The Georgian manuscripts of the Iviron monastery are exceptionally rich in colophons. In many of them, scribes, authors, compilers, translators, binders, commissioners, donors, and other persons that were involved in the production of the codices have left their personal accounts, partly in unusual verbosity, and partly with the expressed wish that they should be included in later copies. This is especially true of the colophons by George the Athonite, the most productive and influential figure among the monks of the Iviron, who, in the eleventh century, produced a huge bulk of translations from Greek, among them homiletic, hagiographic, and hymnographic works, and who was also responsible for the last redaction of the Old Georgian New Testament, which was soon widely accepted as the ‘Athonite vulgate’. The most verbose colophon of his is found in Ivir. georg. 45, which contains a complete *paraklētikē*, i.e., a collection of chants and canons in all eight modes.¹⁰ In the codex, George’s colophon comprises nearly seven folios (fols 2^v–9^r), fully covered with 44 lines each in his tiny cursive hand, in which he provides a complete survey of the structure and contents of the *paraklitioni* (thus the Georgian term, from Greek παράκλητον) consisting

⁷ The provenance of the codex is unknown but it is likely that it was produced in the monastery of SS Cosmas and Damian on Mt Olympus (present-day Uludağ) near Bursa in Bithynia, given that it was probably written by the same hand as Ivir. georg. 42; cf. the colophon on fol. 236^r of the latter codex which reads ‘It was written on Mt Olympus, in the abode of SS Cosmas and Damian, during the patriarchate of Polyeuctus in Constantinople (and) the reign of Nikephoros (II Phokas)’, thus yielding a date between 963 and 969 CE.

⁸ At least one palimpsest of the Iviron collection must be older as it contains an undertext in the so-called *khanmeti* variety of Old Georgian (c. fifth–seventh centuries).

⁹ Opiza was another monastery in East Anatolia (probably situated at 41°13'35.6"N and 42°02'13.5"E).

¹⁰ On the system of canons and modes (or tones), cf. Gippert 2014, 558–561.

of 155 items numbered alphanumerically in the margins. Remarkably enough, the first page, in which he outlines his survey, is written all in red ink; it reads:¹¹

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit! Translated was (this) *paraklēton*, completely and without gap, widely and richly, purely and beautifully, by my, wretched priestmonk George's, hand. And I would barely have been able to fulfil this eminent and unattainable task, but God, benevolent towards my kin through the prayer and virtue of all Georgians, opened my beast-like mouth and aroused my filthy tongue and my soul and mind, liable to all guilt, and granted me to accomplish this all-beautiful and great matter. And now you who will copy this holy and soul-enlightening book, firstly pray for us and do not think that I have seen but some little and neglectable trouble translating and transcribing it! The Lord knows, when I remember the beginning and the end of the endeavour, my bones start quivering and I wonder how I could venture and attempt it or how I completed it! However, for the powers of God nothing is impossible and, as the Master himself spoke truly, 'His power is made perfect in weakness'.¹² And as I could not assess whether I should venture to translate it completely somehow, I first translated the *prokeimenon stichera* in another book, and then, as by order of my spiritual fathers I undertook to translate it completely, the second book was written, (very) big, and inevitably it was written down in scattered pieces; therefore it was necessary to draw up an index (*zanduki*, from Gk. *σάνδυξ* 'red colour') for it so that somebody who would copy it might copy it in just the sequence as we have written it down, and that someone who wants to know its gist, (i.e.), what is written in this holy and all-pleasant book, might easily recognise its gist and the number of *stichera* and chants (contained in it). But now it is appropriate that, if someone copies it entirely, he first begins with the Greek-Georgian *stichera* for the Resurrection. Just as we have written them down in the *paraklēton*, (thus) you should copy them, and do not disturb even one of them, be they (hymns) for the Resurrection or the Archangels or the Baptist or the Theotokos or the Apostles or the Cross or the Saints, they all must be written down at their proper place, and this (is also true) for the proper place of the newly translated (hymns). And if someone should say that it seems appropriate to pronounce either this or that (hymn) or (even) both, it is in the power and the will of everyone, and both are very good and beautiful and both are from Greek and rarely from Georgian, and those that are Georgian and have been written down by us are very good and pleasant. And (lit. but) nobody must sneak in others more, (hymns) that we have not written down, and it will be hurtful for the book if someone said, this is really enough and excessive. And if he did, he who cares for more and corrupts the book will have to answer to God on Judgement Day."

After describing the structure of the *paraklētikē*, George adds a personal account in which he mentions the place where he created the work (in the Laura of

¹¹ This and all other colophons of the Georgian manuscripts of the Iviron Monastery will be found edited and translated into English in the catalogue (Gippert et al. forthcoming). For a colour image of the page (Ivir. georg. 45, fol. 2^v) and a German translation of the first lines cf. Gippert 2018, 137–138 with Fig. 137.

¹² Cf. II Cor. 12.9.

St Symeon the Wonderworker on the Admirable Mountain)¹³ and the date of its accomplishment; interestingly enough, the exact year was left out intentionally, probably because George wrote the colophon down before accomplishing the remaining 304 folios of the codex. The text reads (fol. 8^v, with the address line in red ink again):

Now, holy and godly fathers, I do know that the extent of this soul-enlightening book bears witness unspokenly to our toil and effort, and (that) truly a church that will adopt this holy book entirely will not find it lacking of chant and praise even if some feasts may be missing (in it), once it is used. And no one should surmise that he might find somewhere, either in Greek or in Georgian, a *paraklēton* equal to this. And this toil and effort we took upon ourselves so that in your holy prayers you may remember this soul of mine, liable to all guilt, and that of my teachers and parents and my brothers in spirit and flesh and of all my benefactors and supporters. – I could not sell my handiwork, there was no means, and I was reared by the support of God-loving men, and I had to buy the parchment (myself), too – may Christ pay the reward to their souls and give (something) from His generous treasures to their souls. I did neither pray nor strive, I was lazy myself and idle, but then there was much to be done, and only lately, I was ready to do something for God. Forgive me, you, too, and ask God to forgive me. And if something good is found in this work of mine, you should know that it was fulfilled by the grace of our holy father Euthymius; it was his grace that opened this animal-like mouth of ours, and it was he who after God and the holy Theotokos supported and helped me. And his holy soul knows that I served devotedly on his grave and in the monastery built by him on Mt Athos for many years. – This newly translated *paraklēton* was accomplished in translating and writing it down by the hand of mine, wretched George the priestmonk, on the Admirable Mountain in the Laura of our holy father Symeon the Wonderworker, in the chronicon [] (and) in the year after Creation six thousand five hundred sixty and [] – may God forgive me my sins and have mercy on my pitiful soul, amen!

The indication of a ‘year after Creation six thousand five hundred sixty and []’ might mean any year between 6561 and 6579, given that in Georgian, the numbers between 70 and 79 are styled as 60 + 10, 19 etc. (cf. French *soixante-dix*, *soixante-dix-neuf*, etc.). The time reckoning system used here is that of the Greek *annus mundi*, with 6561–6579 corresponding to 1053–1071 CE.¹⁴ Of these years, only the period between 1053 and 1065 CE can be meant here as 1065 CE was the year of George’s death. The assumption that he wrote the colophon first, before the remainder of the codex, is corroborated by a short note that George added on top of the first page of the main text (fol. 9^r) together with the rogation ‘Lord

¹³ Today Samandağ, lit. ‘Symeon’s Mountain’, near Antioch (present-day Antakya) in Southern Turkey, 36°04’36.0”N and 36°02’32.3”E.

¹⁴ Cf. Gippert 2018, 138 with Fig. 138 for an image and a German translation of the passage in question.

Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and direct the deeds of our hands to the laud and praise of Your most holy name, for You are blessed in eternity, amen!'; the note simply says, 'I began on February 10'. The day of the end of the work is not indicated anywhere in the manuscript.

2.2 Reasoning on the use of red ink

In his description of the *paraklētikē*, George not only provides details as to the contents and the ordering of the elements but also as to the use of red ink in copying them. The first paragraph of his treatise reads (fol. 3^{r-v}):

At first now it is appropriate to write down the Greek (hymns) for the Resurrection and the perpetual (canon beginning with the 1st ode on) 'Lord, I cried' (Ex. 15.1) up to the (matins *sticheron* on) 'Praise the Lord' (Ps. 148.1), in the following way: First the (hymns) for Resurrection, and then, following those for Resurrection, those for Repentance, and (after) those for Repentance, those for the Cross, and (after) those for the Cross, those for the Apostles, and (after) those for the Apostles, those for the Saints, and (after) those for the Saints, those for the Hierarchs and Fathers and Female Martyrs, and then again those for the Soul, and (after) those for the Soul, those for the Theotokos, and in this way should be completed the (whole) mode, and all eight modes should be written down in this manner. – But as we were copying these perpetual (hymns) widely and richly (and) we could not find such a rich book in Greek in which all (hymns) would have been written altogether so that we could have copied them one by one, therefore we have written the remainder and even more at the end of the second book, and now, these are the main ones and the foundations, (those) which are written in the minor book. But if a hymn consisting of pairs (of chant and antiphon) is found in the big book, this must not be copied separately, but if it be a (hymn) for the Resurrection, it should follow those for the Resurrection, and if (it be one) for Repentance, (it should follow) those for Repentance, and (one) for the Cross (should follow) those for the Cross, and (one) for the Apostles (should follow) those for the Apostles, and (one) for the Saints (should follow) those for the Saints, and (one) for the Hierarchs and Fathers (should follow) those for the Saints (!), and (one) for the Soul (should follow) those for the Soul, and (one) for the Theotokos (should follow) those for the Theotokos. It is appropriate to write it down in this way (no matter) whether it may belong to the (canon of) odes or to the *prokeimena*, and likewise the eight modes (and) odes are to be written down in this manner and divided into pairs, and all headings are to be put in rubrics because those that are not (subsumed) under a *heirmos* are *idiomela*, and therefore it is appropriate to apply rubrics. Those again that are (subsumed) under a *heirmos* are likewise to be copied in pairs as usual. And when they are finished, (continue) as follows.

It is clear that here, rubrics are meant to mark headings, a function that has well been established in the typology outlined above. In another autograph of his, Ivir. georg. 65, George mentions a somewhat different function of red ink in one

of his colophons. The codex, which comprises a *menaion* for the months of January and February, is introduced by an index of the canons for the saints and feasts of January (fols. 1^r–2^r), to which George adds:

There will also be (some) *stichera* of this month that we have left over; they were not written among these Greek *stichera* of ours. At the end I found (some) other Greek *stichera*, too, and I have written them down there. (You) now, good brother who will copy (this), check what day you will be copying and copy them together with the *stichera* of that day. And these *stichera* and the remaining (ones), look, are written in the middle of these quires, and the number of the day that they should be ascribed to is placed (lit. sits) in the margin, and the name of the saint (is) in rubrics. And <now> pray for us, (you) whoever come across this work of ours. I had great zeal but the mud of my affairs did not permit me to do it properly. And no one of you should Hellenise something and look for the mode of certain canons as if they were not in that mode in Greek – do not look for it, I have translated certain canons in the mode I liked, but if a word was appropriate and fitting, the words are the same as they were in Greek. Only a small amount of canons did not go well.

Here, it is the function of highlighting the names of saints that a given hymn is addressed to; another function that has widely been adapted in the production of Georgian *menaion* codices.

A third function of rubrics is insinuated by George in a minor note that was copied from his model to Ivir. georg. 56, a *menaion* of May and June that must have been written down after his death, given that it contains a memorial office for George himself (on May 13, together with that of Euthymius). The note appears in the outer margin of fol. 52^r, with the first half written in rubrics itself, and reads: ‘In my canons, beloved one, do not look for initials; I am interested in words and not in red letters’. Here, George is obviously referring to the usual practice of marking the first letters of a hymn in red and, if present, of the *heirmos* that determines its melody; this is clearly visible in the page in question, which contains the beginning of the canon for Thalelaeus the Unmercenary of Anazarbus (May 20). It seems that the copyist added the markings in the normal way, thus ‘reacting’ to George’s warning.

3 Hidden colophons

Marking individual letters that represent the initials of hymns and the like in red was common practice indeed, not only on Mt Athos, and the liturgical manuscripts abound in such rubrics. A very different use of red ink for individual letters is found in at least four other Georgian codices of the Iviron collection, namely, Ivir. georg. 4 (fol. 2^{r-v}), 9 (fols *8^v–*9^r), 16 (fols 299^v–300^r), and 61

(fol. 1^{r-v}). Here, a series of several letters scattered over the main text constitute, in their given order, a subtext in its own right, which may be styled a ‘hidden colophon’, given that it represents, just as usual colophons, a reference of the scribe to the codex he was writing and the persons involved in its production. To illustrate this, it may be convenient to investigate the four examples in more detail.

3.1 Ivir. georg. 9

Of the four codices, Ivir. georg. 9 is the oldest (of 977 CE) and peculiar in being written in *asomtavruli* majuscules throughout (see 2 above). According to its main colophon (fols 375^r–377^v), it was copied in Oshki under commission of John Tornikios, a prosperous Georgian general in the Byzantine army who later became a *synkellos* (assistant of the Patriarch) in Constantinople and contributed a lot to the erection of the Iviron Monastery before his death in 985 CE, and his brother John Varazvače. The codex was obviously written by three different scribes, two of which left their names in usual colophons, namely, one Štepane and one Davit; the first one reads (fol. 374^v): ‘Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on the soul(s) of John and (mine), Štepane, who wrote this book. If anything is missing, forgive me in name of God.’ In contrast to this, Davit’s role was obviously restricted to writing down the commissioners’ colophon, as he states (fol. 377^v): ‘This colophon was written by me, unworthy Davit, sister’s son of the godly father Mikael Modreķili. If I missed anything by negligence, please forgive me in the name of God and pray for me.’¹⁵

Different from Štepane and Davit, the third scribe, who must have been responsible for the first part of the codex,¹⁶ provided his colophon not as an attachment to the main text but in form of individual letters scattered about the first two folios of the fourth quire of the codex (fols *8^v and *9^r, see Fig. 1),¹⁷ within a *Sermo de ieiunio et purificatione animae et mali oblivione* attributed to John Chrysostom (CPG 5175.3). Taken together, they yield the sentence ზოგზო

¹⁵ Mikael Modreķili was the most famous Georgian hymnographer of the tenth century; several hymns of his are included in George the Athonite’s *paraklētikē* in Ivir. georg. 45.

¹⁶ The actual switch from the first to the second scribe is hard to determine, given that there is not much difference in the style of the majuscules throughout the codex. I presume fol. 244^v to be the first page written by Štepane.

¹⁷ The first two quires of the codex are lost so that it begins within the third quire. In its present state, quires IV–VII are bound upside down and in reverse order; fols *8^v and *9^r are therefore numbered 15^r and 14^v, respectively.

მწერალი ცოდვილი გვედია ლოცვასა ღმრთისათჳს, which may be rendered as ‘Giorgi the sinful writer is entrusted to your prayer, for the sake of God’. The hidden colophon thus provides the name of a Giorgi for the first scribe; a fact that has escaped the notice of all former cataloguers.¹⁸ In the case of the catalogue produced in Tbilisi in 1986, this may easily be explained by the fact that this catalogue was based not on inspection *in situ* but on microfilms in black-and-white which conceal the change of the ink colour.¹⁹

3.2 Ivir. georg. 4

Ivir. georg. 4 is the middle part of a trias of codices that contain the complete translation of John Chrysostom’s Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew (90 chapters). Together with Ivir. georg. 13 (as the first part) and 10 (as the last part),²⁰ it was produced in 1008 in the ‘abode of the Holy Theotokos’, i.e. the Iviron Monastery, on Mt Athos by the three scribes Iovane Grzelisze (‘John son of Grzeli’), Iovane Okropiri (lit. ‘John Chrysostom’!) and Arseni Ninočmideli (of Ninotsminda), as the scribes’ colophons tell (Ivir. georg. 4, fol. 263^r; Ivir. georg. 10, fol. 337^r; Ivir. georg. 13, fol. 259^{r-v}).²¹ The author of the Georgian translation was Euthymius the Athonite who was directed by his father, John, as the commissioner, as the latter’s lengthy colophon on fols 331^v–337^v of Ivir. georg. 10 tells us; Euthymius himself left his translator’s colophon (written by the scribe, Iovane Grzelisze) on fol. 331^r: ‘Glory to you, Holy Trinity, one God and one essence, accomplisher of all good, who deemed me, the unworthy one, worthy

¹⁸ Cagareli 1886, 89–91, no. 69; Blake 1931–34, [1], 329–339; Axobaze et al. 1986, 34–49.

¹⁹ Axobaze et al. 1986, 44. The author of the description (N. Čxikvaze) rejects the former proposal by D. Bakraze (1889, 243) and T. Žordania (1892, 107) that there were two scribes, one Ioane and one Štepane, the latter styled a ‘sacristan’ (*dekanosi*; the catalogue erroneously uses the plural as if both scribes had been sacristans) and insists upon Štepane being the sole scribe of the main text.

²⁰ The present shelf numbering system was developed by R. P. Blake in the course of his cataloguing. It is based upon the mere size of the codices, without consideration of contents, internal relationships, and the like.

²¹ The dates given are consistent: Ivir. georg. 13, fol. 259^v, names the ‘year from Creation’ (i.e., *annus mundi*) 6516, which yields 1007–1008, and the 6th indiction, which fits with the same date. In addition, it names the year 983 ‘from the Crucifixion’, the Georgian ‘year from Creation’ 6612 (which equals the Greek 6516), and the ‘chronicon 228 in the 13th cycle’, which again yields 1008. Ivir. georg. 4, fol. 263^r, names only the ‘chronicon 228’. In Ivir. georg. 10, fol. 337^v, the colophon breaks off before the date due to the loss of the last folio. Cf. Gippert 2018, 145 as to the Georgian time reckoning system.

of accomplishing the translation of this holy Gospel book. — Holy Evangelists and St. John Chrysostom, intercede before God for my father John and have mercy on me, too, your slave Euthymius, unworthy and liable of numerous sins, amen!’ On fol. 2^{r-v} of Ivir. georg. 4, the same scribe, Iovane Grzeliszze, concealed an invocation for Euthymius, arranged in a similar form as the hidden colophon of Ivir. georg. 9; it reads (Fig. 2): ღმერთო აკურ(თ)ხე ეფთჳმე ამენ – ‘God, bless Euthymius, amen!’

3.3 Ivir. georg. 16

Ivir. georg. 16 contains another major work of John Chrysostom’s, namely, his Commentary of the Gospel of John, as well translated by Euthymius the Athonite. The codex is without a dating; from the final colophon (fol. 389^v), however, it is clear that it was copied by one Mikael from a model that was written in Jerusalem by a certain Eṣṭaṭi. In a set of short additions to the text, the scribe added invocations for Leonṭi, the archbishop of Ruisi, who is likely to have been the commissioner of the codex; e.g., on fol. 55^r, we read ‘Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on and exalt in both lives Leonṭi, archbishop of Ruisi, and forgive him all his guilts’ (comparable additions on fols 84^r, 245^v, 322^r, 330^r, 338^r, 352^v, 368^v, 386^r, all in red ink). In one case, on fols. 299^v–300^r, a similar invocation is spread in individual red letters across the main text; it reads (Fig. 3): ქ(რისტ)ე ადიდე ლეონტი მროელ მთავარეპისკოპოსი ა(მე)ნ – ‘Christ, exalt Leonti, the archbishop of Ruisi, amen!’ With the repeated mention of Leonṭi Mroveli, the compiler of the Georgian chronicle *Kartlis Cxovreba*, the codex can safely be dated to the second half of the eleventh century.

3.4 Ivir. georg. 61

The case of Ivir. georg. 61 is harder to assess. The codex, which on its 154 folios contains the larger part of a *menaion* for the month of August with additional *stichera*, has no normal colophon that would tell about its provenance, date, or scribe; from its content and its structure, it is probable, however, that it was produced as a copy of a (lost) autograph by George the Athonite in the eleventh–twelfth centuries. Unfortunately, it is highly lacunose: taking its quire numbering as the basis, a total of 37 quires must be missing at its beginning, which suggests that it once comprised not only the missing seven first days of August but rather one or two preceding months more. It is all the more welcome that despite of being heavily damaged and partly covered by a paste-on label to

protect its torn outer edge, just the first folio that has been preserved (fol. 1^{r-v}) provides some letters in red ink that may be taken to represent a hidden colophon. What can be made out today are, in the given order, the letters *ç-m-d-ma* on the recto and *m-e-x-e-ġ-a-v-sa-x-l-m-o-gam-sa-šen-s-a-u-ġirs-a-mo-n-a-sa-a-s-ç-i-n-a-š-e* (Fig. 4). Considering that the saint commemorated in the surrounding text is the apostle Matthias (in Georgian *maṭatia*), the successor of Judas Iscariot who was celebrated on Aug. 9, we may tentatively restitute this to read წმ<ი>დ<აო> მა<ტათია> მე<ო>ხ ეყავ სახ<ე>ლმო<დ>გამსა შენსა უღირსა მონასა <ამ>ას წინაშე <ღ(მერთს)>ა, which would mean something like ‘St Matthias, intercede for your namesake, this unworthy monk, before God!’ If this is correct, the colophon most likely yields us the name of the scribe who took the opportunity to mention himself in connection with his biblical namesake. It is important in this context that other codices containing the commemoration of the apostle on Aug. 9 (Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, georg. 107, fol. 231^{r-v}; Mt Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, georg. 92, fol. 384^{r-v}, and georg. 56, fol. 83^r) do not contain the corresponding rubrication.

4 Conclusion

The four Georgian codices of the Iviron Monastery on Mt Athos reveal the practice to insert secondary information concerning the manuscript in question and the people involved in its production by applying red ink to a sequence of individual letters throughout one or two pages. The hidden ‘colophons’ thus produced may refer to the actual scribe (Ivir. georg. 9 and 61), the author or translator of the given text (Ivir. georg. 4) or the commissioner of the codex (Ivir. georg. 16). It would certainly be worthwhile investigating whether this practice extended beyond the Athos collection, beyond the time frame of the tenth–twelfth centuries, and beyond Georgian.

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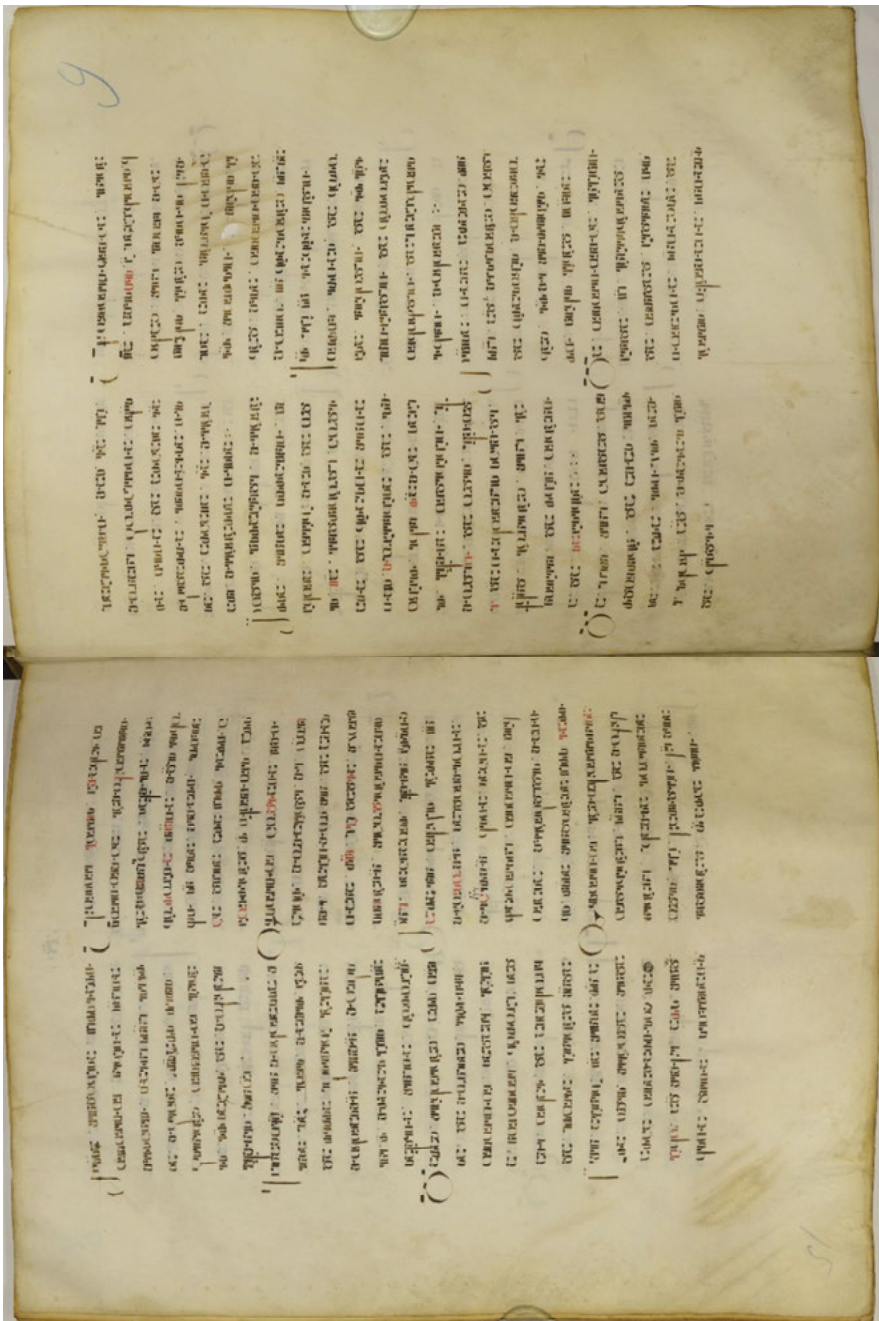


Fig. 1: Hidden colophon in Ivir. georg. 9, fols *8^v–*9^r. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.

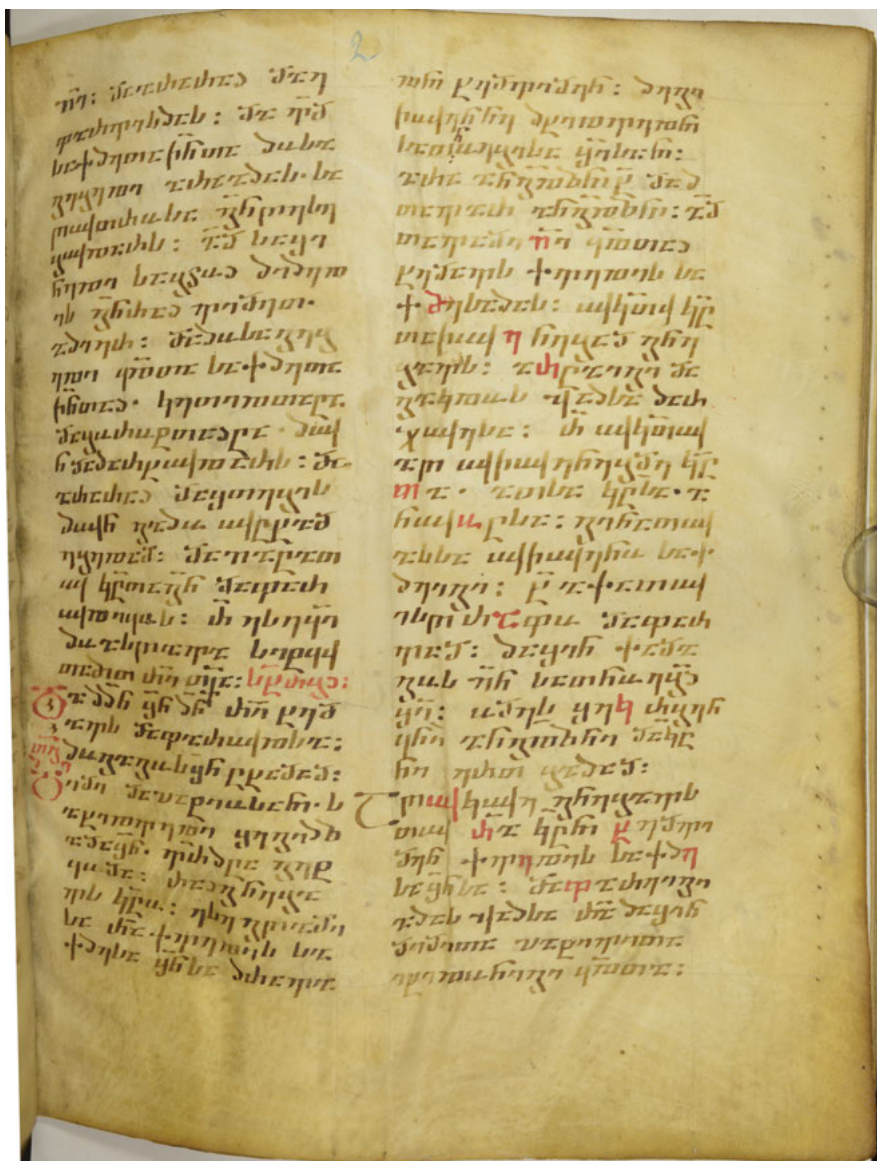


Fig. 2a: Hidden colophon in Ivir. georg. 4, fol. 2^r. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.

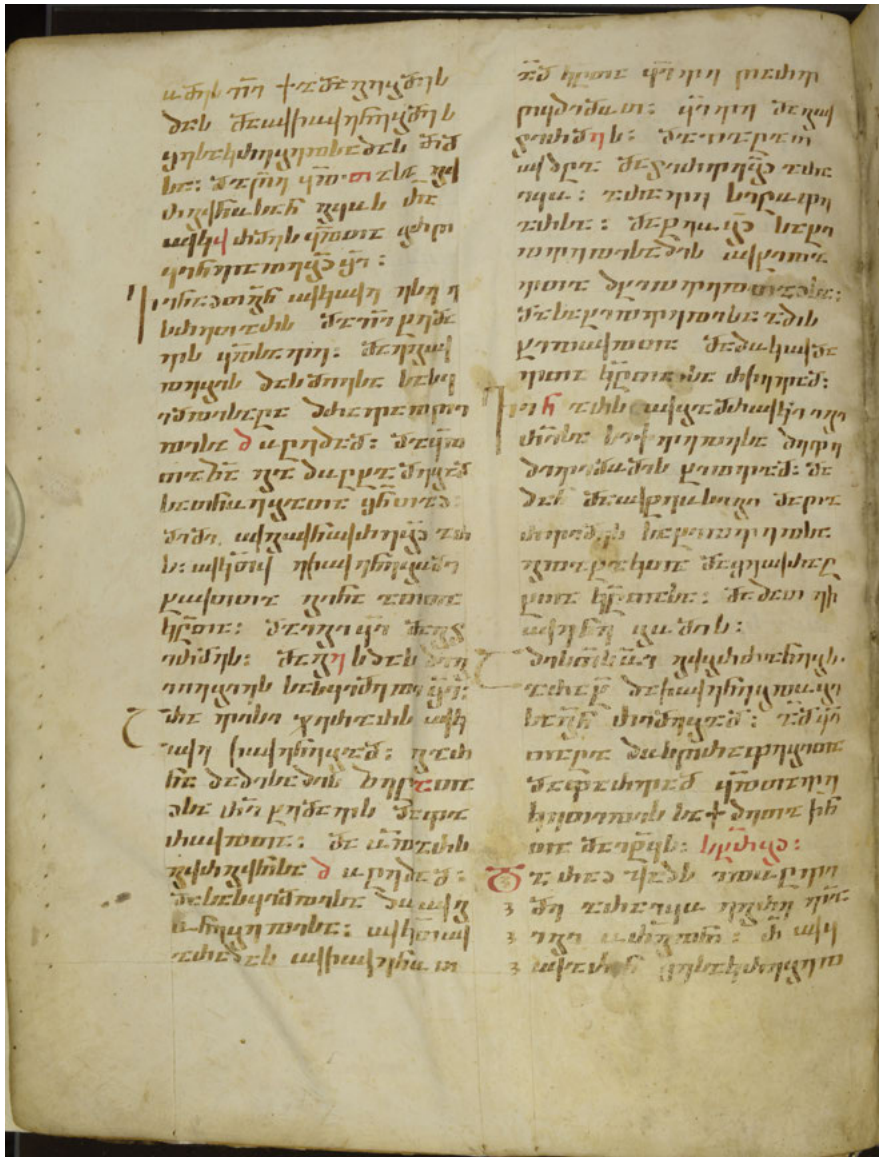


Fig. 2b: Hidden colophon in Iv. georg. 4, fol. 2v. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.

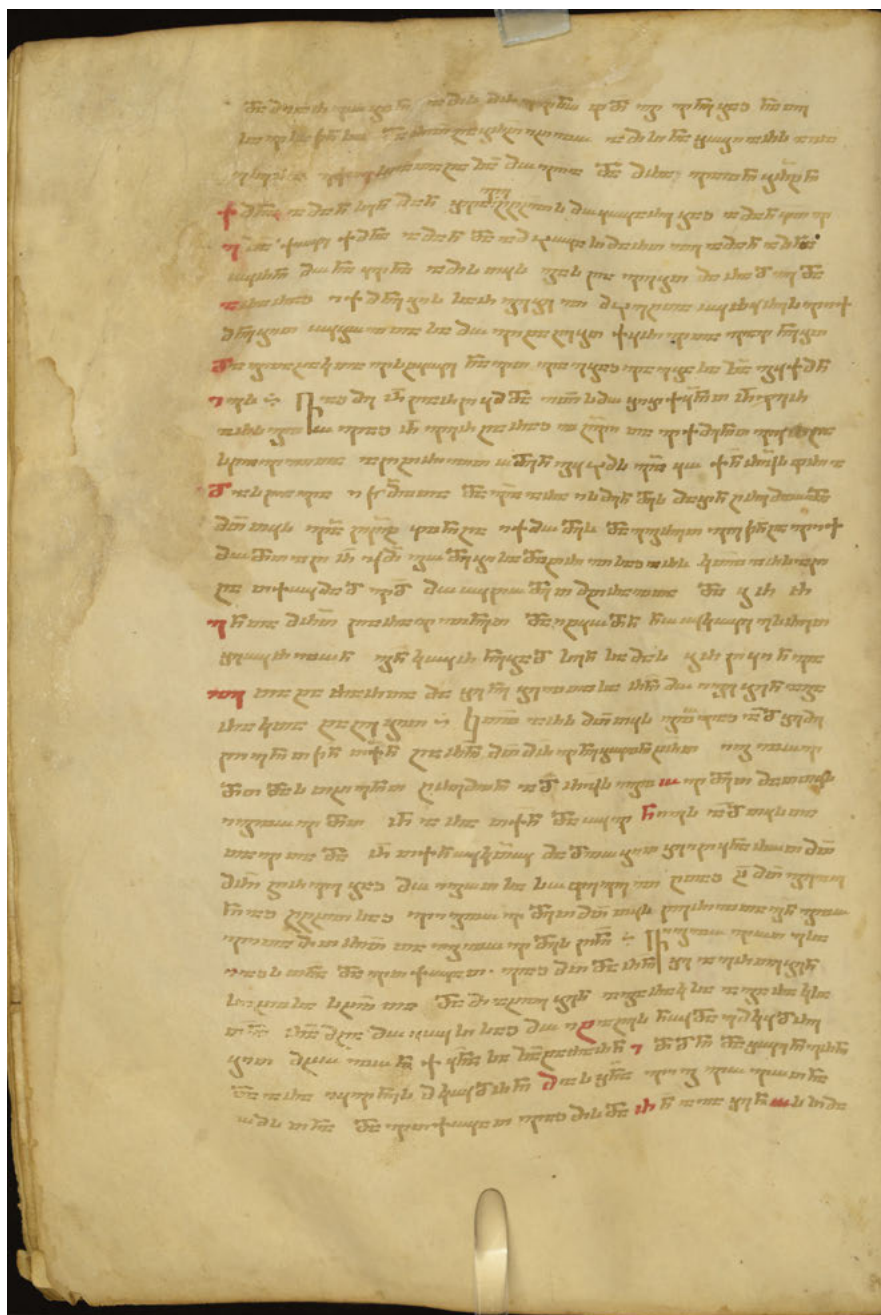
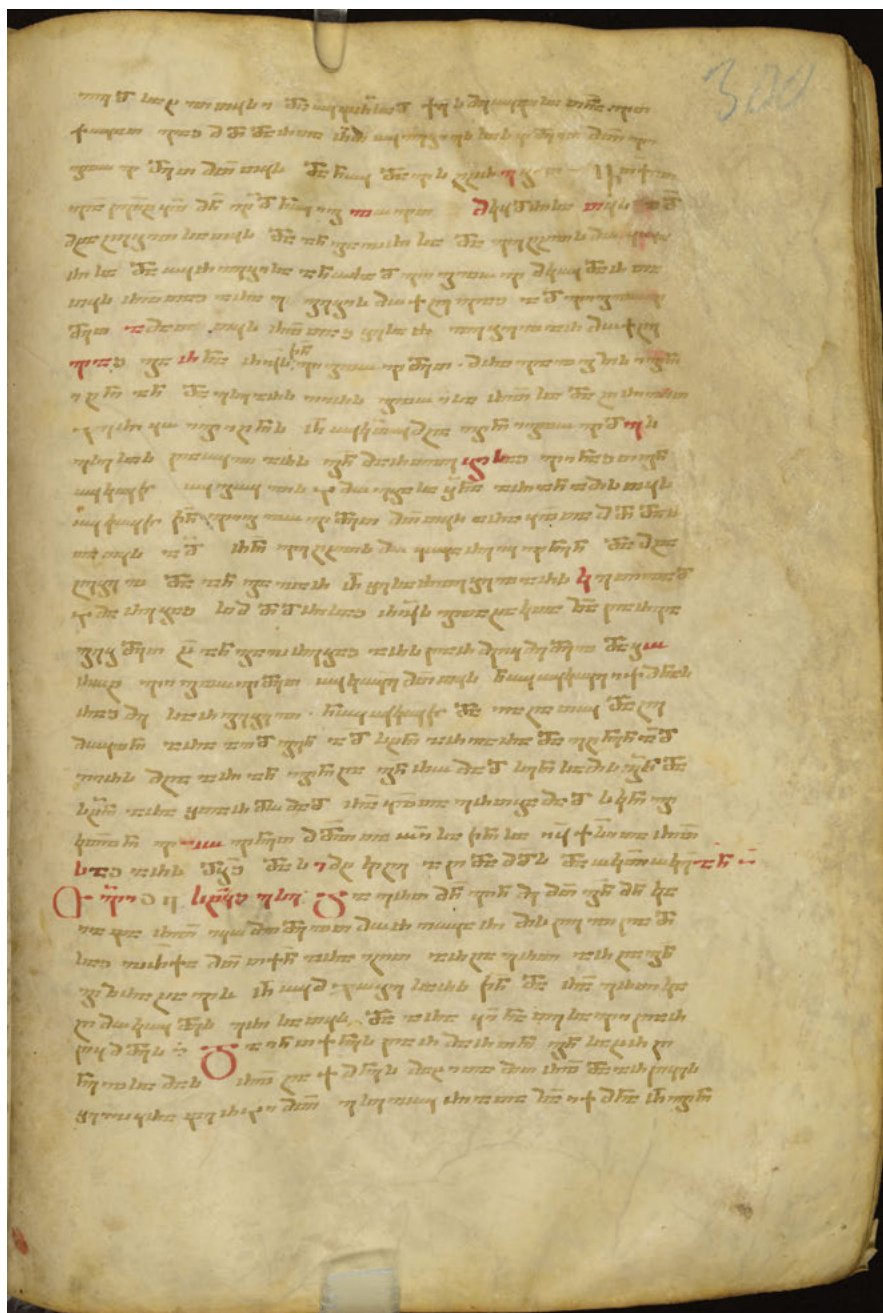


Fig. 3a: Hidden colophon in Iv. georg. 16, fol. 299v. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.



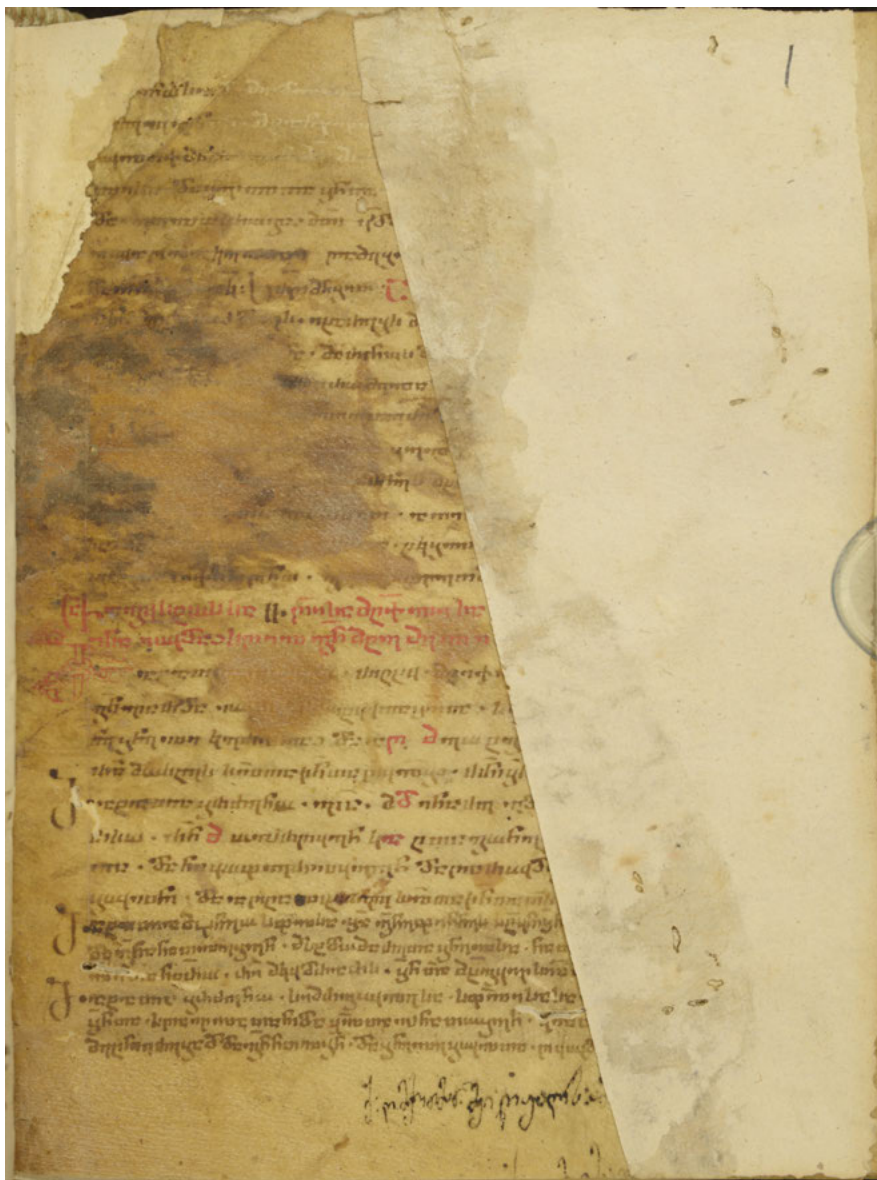


Fig. 4a: Hidden colophon in Ivir. georg. 61, fol. 1'. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.

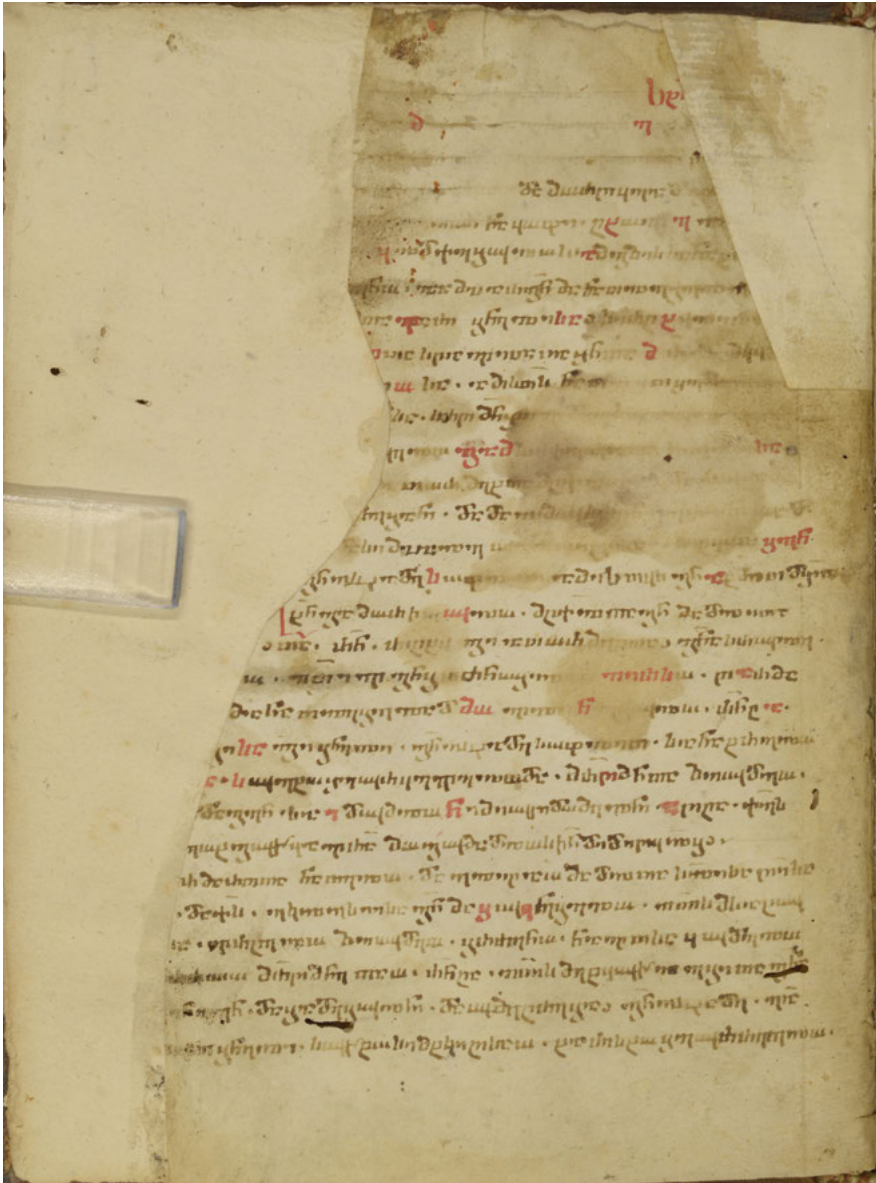


Fig. 4b: Hidden colophon in Ivir. georg. 61, fol. 1^r. © Iviron Monastery, Mount Athos.

