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# The Oldest Georgian Witness of the Martyrdom of St Febronia

**Abstract:** The paper examines a Georgian palimpsest containing the martyrdom of St Febronia (Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, georg. NF 84 + 90) and its relation to other witnesses (Georgian, Greek, Latin, and Armenian), with a focus on the Georgian versions of the text. After a codicological description of the palimpsest and other relevant witnesses of the martyrdom, the differences between the text versions contained in them are categorised (e.g. lexical, grammatical, orthographic) and some of these differences, such as the representation of <i> as <y> or cases of tmesis, are elaborated further. Subsequently, the Georgian text variants are illustrated in parallel using the example of one page, followed by a parallelisation of the Georgian, Greek, Latin, and Armenian versions of the same passage.

## 1 Introduction

Within the literary and religious heritage of Georgia, hagiography has a long and distinguished history; its origins date back to the early centuries of Georgian literacy (fourth to eighth centuries). A significant differentiation must be made here between autochthonous and foreign texts: whereas the former remained restricted to a handful, the great bulk of saints' legends were translated into Georgian (from Greek, Armenian, or other languages of the Christian East) in the given period as well as in later times. One of the most prominent translators of saints' legends into Georgian was Euthymius the Athonite, who lived in the tenth to eleventh centuries.

Today, Georgian hagiography is studied not only for its religious significance but also for its role in preserving the nation's cultural and historical heritage, as well as for its importance to various fields of research such as palaeography, codicology, and linguistics. The subject thus fits exactly within the framework of the project on the Development of Literacy in the Caucasian Territories (DeLiCaTe), which aims at the first cross-language synthesis of the common conditions and

circumstances of the development of literacy in the Caucasus.<sup>1</sup> For the successful execution of this project, palimpsests play a crucial role, given that most of the written materials of the first centuries are preserved only in palimpsest form; this is also true of the oldest witnesses of hagiography in Georgian. Working with the relevant palimpsests has proven to be a difficult task, however. Several methods for their decipherment had to be developed and applied, such as processing multispectral images, calculating letters and lines, comparing extant parallels, identifying text passages, and analysing and explaining differences that appear during the comparison. The palimpsests dealt with in the present paper are Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, georg. NF 84 and NF 90, two badly damaged manuscripts which represent one *codex rescriptus* (hereafter: Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90)<sup>2</sup> and which contain a fragment of the legend of St Febronia, a beautiful nun who suffered persecution, torture, and death under Emperor Diocletian for not renouncing her faith.

## 2 Codicological description of the palimpsest

The manuscript represented by Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90<sup>3</sup> is a double palimpsest, containing not just one lower and one upper layer but a lowest, a middle, and an uppermost layer. The uppermost layer of both Sin. georg. NF 84 and Sin. georg. NF 90 consists of apophthegms and homilies, datable to the tenth to eleventh centuries and, as the writing style suggests, probably written by the same hand in Old Georgian minuscules (*nuskhuri*), with dark-brown or black ink; initials and titles are in red. Sin. georg. NF 84 is the less voluminous part of the manuscript: it contains seven parchment folios (three loose bifolios and one single folio, all damaged),<sup>4</sup> with a size of approximately 15 × 12 cm. Sin. georg. NF 90 comprises thirty-eight leaves of the same size and material as Sin. georg. NF 84; the leaves form an unbound combination of single folios and quires. Most of the folios are fragmentary,

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1 Alongside myself, the project participants include Emilio Bonfiglio, Eka Kvrikvelia and Hasmik Sargsyan. For a description of the goals and methods of our project, see Jost Gippert's contribution to the present volume.

2 The assumption that Sin. georg. NF 84 and NF 90 represent one codex was first published in Aleksidze et al. 2005, 402 and further elaborated by Gippert and Outtier 2021, 41–42.

3 The research carried out for this paper is based on the multispectral images provided by the Sinai Palimpsests Project (<<https://sinai.library.ucla.edu>>, a publication of St Catherine's Monastery of the Sinai in cooperation with the UCLA Library and the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library (EMEL)).

4 For the quire structure, see Gippert and Outtier 2021, 45–46 (Table 1).

as the manuscript is severely damaged.<sup>5</sup> The following texts were identified for the middle and lowest layers of Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, all written in *asomtavruli* majuscules:<sup>6</sup>

- Fols 30–37 of Sin. georg. NF 90 contain fragments from the Gospel of Matthew in their lowest layer, written in large majuscules with *khanmeti* features,<sup>7</sup> datable to the fifth to seventh centuries. The reconstructed order of the folios is 35<sup>r</sup> + 34<sup>v</sup>, 36<sup>v</sup> + 37<sup>r</sup>, 36<sup>r</sup> + 37<sup>v</sup>, 35<sup>v</sup> + 34<sup>r</sup>, 32<sup>v</sup> + 33<sup>r</sup>, 31<sup>r</sup> + 30<sup>v</sup>, 31<sup>v</sup> + 30<sup>r</sup>, 32<sup>r</sup> + 33<sup>v</sup>.
- The lowest layer of Sin. georg. NF 90, fols 19–22, 25, 28, 29 and Sin. georg. NF 84, fols 1–5 contains parts of a homiliary (*mravaltavi*) with the linguistic characteristics of the *khanmeti* period. To be more precise, it is the homily by Athanasius of Alexandria *On Nativity* (CPG 2270/4560), written in large majuscules and datable to the fifth to seventh centuries. The reconstructed order of the folios is NF 90, fol. 25<sup>r</sup>; NF 84, fol. 1<sup>v</sup>; NF 90, fol. 25<sup>v</sup>; NF 84, fol. 1<sup>r</sup>; NF 90, fols 22<sup>r</sup> + 19<sup>v</sup>, 22<sup>v</sup> + 19<sup>r</sup>, 21<sup>r</sup> + 20<sup>v</sup>, 21<sup>v</sup> + 20<sup>r</sup>; NF 84, fols 5<sup>v</sup> + 4<sup>r</sup>, 5<sup>r</sup> + 4<sup>v</sup>; NF 90, fols 28<sup>v</sup> + 29<sup>r</sup>, 28<sup>r</sup> + 29<sup>v</sup>; NF 84, fols 3<sup>r</sup> + 2<sup>v</sup>, 3<sup>v</sup> + 2<sup>r</sup>.
- In the lowest layer of Sin. georg. NF 90, fols 1–18, 23, 24, 26, 27, 38 and Sin. georg. NF 84, fols 6 and 7, we find fragments of a psalter with *khanmeti* and *haemeti* characteristics,<sup>8</sup> extending from Psalm 20:10 to 140:4 and written in mid-sized majuscules datable to the seventh to eighth centuries. The reconstructed order of the folios is NF 90, fols 23<sup>r</sup> + 18<sup>v</sup>, 23<sup>v</sup> + 18<sup>r</sup>, 24<sup>r</sup> + 17<sup>v</sup>, 24<sup>v</sup> + 17<sup>r</sup>, 27<sup>r</sup>, 27<sup>v</sup>, 26<sup>r</sup>, 26<sup>v</sup>, 15<sup>r</sup> + 10<sup>v</sup>, 15<sup>v</sup> + 10<sup>r</sup>, 16<sup>r</sup> + 9<sup>v</sup>, 16<sup>v</sup> + 9<sup>r</sup>, 38<sup>v</sup>, 38<sup>r</sup>, 14<sup>r</sup> + 11<sup>v</sup>, 14<sup>v</sup> + 11<sup>r</sup>, 13<sup>r</sup> + 12<sup>v</sup>, 13<sup>v</sup> + 12<sup>r</sup>, 5<sup>r</sup> + 4<sup>v</sup>, 5<sup>v</sup> + 4<sup>r</sup>, 6<sup>r</sup> + 3<sup>v</sup>, 6<sup>v</sup> + 3<sup>r</sup>, 7<sup>r</sup> + 2<sup>v</sup>, 7<sup>v</sup> + 2<sup>r</sup>, 8<sup>r</sup> + 1<sup>v</sup>, 8<sup>v</sup> + 1<sup>r</sup>; NF 84, fols 7<sup>v</sup> + 6<sup>r</sup>, 7<sup>r</sup> + 6<sup>v</sup>.
- Fols 3, 6, 26, 27, 30–37 of Sin. georg. NF 90 and fols 6 and 7 of Sin. georg. NF 84 contain fragments of the martyrdom of St Febronia in their middle layer, written in small, clumsy, and slightly slanted majuscules, transitional toward *nuskhuri* minuscules and datable to the ninth to tenth centuries. The reconstructed order of the folios is NF 90, fols 6<sup>r</sup> + 3<sup>v</sup>, 6<sup>v</sup> + 3<sup>r</sup>, 27<sup>r</sup>, 27<sup>v</sup>, 26<sup>r</sup>, 26<sup>v</sup>, 31<sup>v</sup> + 32<sup>r</sup>, 31<sup>r</sup> + 32<sup>v</sup>, 34<sup>r</sup> + 37<sup>v</sup>, 34<sup>v</sup> + 37<sup>r</sup>, 35<sup>r</sup> + 36<sup>v</sup>, 35<sup>v</sup> + 36<sup>r</sup>, 30<sup>v</sup> + 33<sup>r</sup>, 30<sup>r</sup> + 33<sup>v</sup>; NF 84, fols 6<sup>v</sup> + 7<sup>r</sup>, 6<sup>r</sup> + 7<sup>v</sup>.<sup>9</sup>

5 For example, of fols 1–22, the middle part has been eaten; parts of fols 23, 24, and 29 are torn off; parts of fols 30–33 are eroded; and of fols 34–38, only fragments have survived.

6 Gippert and Outtier 2021, 42–43.

7 See below in Section 6 as to *khanmeti* characteristics.

8 See below in Section 6 as to *haemeti* characteristics.

9 In the description on the Sinai Palimpsests Project website (Gippert and Outtier *s.a.*), fols 3 and 6 are listed as part of an ‘unidentified’ text (see below as to St Xenophon). However, in reality they contain the martyrdom of St Febronia. Additionally, the reconstructed order assumes fols 31 and 32 in reverse order, which is corrected here.

- Fols 1, 2, 7, 8, 11–14 of NF 90 contain two homilies by John Chrysostom on the Dormition of the Mother of God in their middle layer, written in small, clumsy, and slightly slanted characters and datable to the ninth to tenth centuries. The reconstructed order of the fols is 8<sup>r</sup> + 1<sup>v</sup>, 8<sup>v</sup> + 1<sup>r</sup>, 11<sup>r</sup> + 14<sup>v</sup>, 11<sup>v</sup> + 14<sup>r</sup>, 12<sup>r</sup> + 13<sup>v</sup>, 12<sup>v</sup> + 13<sup>r</sup>, 7<sup>r</sup> + 2<sup>v</sup>, 7<sup>v</sup> + 2<sup>r</sup>.
- Fols 4, 5, 9, 10, 15–18, 23, 24, 38 of NF 90 contain fragments of the legend of St Xenophon in their middle layer, written in the same type of small, clumsy, and slightly slanted characters of c. the ninth to tenth centuries. The text has only recently been identified.<sup>10</sup>

### 3 Greek, Latin, and Armenian witnesses of the martyrdom of St Febronia

The identification of the martyrdom of St Febronia was not easy, given that no edited Georgian version is available. It was achieved by Jost Gippert and Bernard Outtier<sup>11</sup> on the basis of personal names (especially that of Febronia herself) and a comparison with the Greek and Latin martyrdom as published in *Acta Sanctorum*.<sup>12</sup> The manuscript used for the Greek text (*BHG* 659) could be Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.gr. 1667 (Diktyon 68298; fols 238<sup>v</sup>–257<sup>v</sup>), which Paolo Chiesa lists as the oldest witness from the Vatican Library<sup>13</sup> (datable to the tenth century).<sup>14</sup> For the Latin version in *Acta Sanctorum* (*BHL* 2843), Chiesa names Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.lat. 7810 (fols 146<sup>r</sup>–154<sup>v</sup>), from the eleventh century, as the oldest witness.<sup>15</sup> Aside from the one published in *Acta Sanctorum*, another Latin version of the legend of St Febronia (*BHL* 2844) is contained in the *Sanctuarium seu Vitae Sanctorum* by Bonino Mombritius, which was compiled in the late fifteenth century.<sup>16</sup> According to Chiesa, the oldest witness of this Latin version is Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XCV (fols 259<sup>r</sup>–272<sup>v</sup>),

<sup>10</sup> See Jost Gippert's contribution to the present volume.

<sup>11</sup> Gippert and Outtier *s.a.*

<sup>12</sup> *Acta Sanctorum* 1867, 16–31.

<sup>13</sup> In the introduction to the martyrdom of St Febronia in *Acta Sanctorum*, it is only stated that the underlying manuscripts are from the Vatican Library ('Ex MSS. Bibliothecae Vaticanae', p. 16).

<sup>14</sup> Chiesa 1990, 337. For a more recent survey of the manuscripts containing the legend of St Febronia, see <<https://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/saint/342/>> (accessed on 9 April 2024).

<sup>15</sup> Chiesa 1990, 213.

<sup>16</sup> Mombritius 1910.

from the ninth century, which may have originated from northern Italy.<sup>17</sup> Neither for the Greek nor for the Latin editions does Chiesa explicitly state which manuscripts were used as their underlying models.

An Armenian version of the legend (*BHO* 303) was published in 1874 in *Lives and Martyrdoms of Saints*,<sup>18</sup> a hagiographical collection compiled by the Venice Mekhitarists. Unfortunately, no information about the source manuscript is provided for this edition either. However, manuscript no. 17 (cat. 200, dated 1224) of the Mekhitarists' library, which contains the legend on fols 476<sup>vb</sup>–484<sup>rb</sup>, can be assumed to be the underlying manuscript,<sup>19</sup> given that the catalogue explicitly refers to the edition for it.<sup>20</sup>

In Georgian as well as in Greek<sup>21</sup> and Armenian,<sup>22</sup> a short version (between 4 and 8 pages) of the martyrdom of St Febronia is also contained in synaxaria. This version is almost identical across the three languages; it does not contain the passages found in Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90.

When working on the palimpsest, the question arose immediately as to which version of the text could be considered the source for the others. This topic was treated by Jean Simon, who argued that the Greek text (*BHG* 659) is an adaptation of an original in Syriac (*BHO* 302). According to him, the martyrdom of St Febronia was created by the Christians of Nisibis with the intention to distance themselves from the heresy of the monophysites and to establish a Christian past.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Chiesa 1990, 43 and 66.

<sup>18</sup> *Vark'* 1874, 409–429.

<sup>19</sup> The Mekhitarists' catalogue notes several manuscripts containing the martyrdom (e.g. nos 599, 602, 603, 606, 612). However, only for no. 200 does it explicitly refer to the edition contained in *Lives and Martyrdoms of Saints*.

<sup>20</sup> Sarghissian 1924, 29, no. 102. An illustration of St Febronia is found in Yerevan, Matenadaran, M 6315 on fol. 352<sup>r</sup> (Harutyunyan 2019, 330).

<sup>21</sup> Delehayé 1902, 769–772.

<sup>22</sup> *Synopsis* 2011, 238–245.

<sup>23</sup> Simon 1924, 75–76.

## 4 Georgian witnesses of the martyrdom of St Febronia

Besides the Sinai palimpsest, the Georgian version of the martyrdom of St Febronia exists in different redactions (including metaphrastic and synaxarian ones) in at least thirty manuscripts, as listed by Enriko Gabidzashvili:<sup>24</sup>

- Older redaction:<sup>25</sup>
  - Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, georg. 6, fols 184<sup>r</sup>–200<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to 981–983;
  - Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, MS georg. b.1 (hereafter: Oxford georg. b.1), fols 181<sup>r</sup>–193<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to 1038–1040;
  - Tbilisi, Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (hereafter: KKNCM), A-95, fols 305<sup>v</sup>–319<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-382, fols 15<sup>r</sup>–21<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the fifteenth century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-433, fols 48<sup>v</sup>–66<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, S-300, fols 133<sup>v</sup>–139<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1779;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-649, fols 56<sup>r</sup>–63<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1785;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, S-134, fols 78<sup>r</sup>–95<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, datable to the eighteenth century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-2386, fols 64<sup>r</sup>–80<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1812;
  - Tbilisi, National Archives of Georgia, 1446/87, fols 1<sup>r</sup>–12<sup>r</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1819;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-381, fols 179<sup>r</sup>–196<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, datable to 1837–1838;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-285, pp. 671–694: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1852;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-947, fols 43<sup>r</sup>–61<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1864;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-1370, fols 178<sup>r</sup>–191<sup>r</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1871–1884;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-335, fols 17<sup>r</sup>–35<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, datable to the nineteenth century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-1762, fols 42<sup>r</sup>–60<sup>v</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, datable to the nineteenth century.

<sup>24</sup> Gabidzashvili 2004, 348–349, nos 1116–1120.

<sup>25</sup> Gabidzashvili 2004, 349, no. 1118: 'Keimena' redaction, authored by a certain Tomaida.

- Translation by Euthymius the Athonite:<sup>26</sup>
  - Athos, Holy Monastery of Iviron (hereafter: Ivir.), georg. 79, fols 7<sup>r</sup>, I<sup>r</sup>–II<sup>v</sup>, 1<sup>r</sup>–6<sup>v</sup> (beginning and end missing): *nuskhuri* script, datable to 1042–1055;<sup>27</sup>
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-1769, fols 2<sup>r</sup>–2<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to 1042–1055.<sup>28</sup>
- Metaphrastic redactions:<sup>29</sup>
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, S-417, fols 177<sup>v</sup>–200<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the twelfth century;
  - Kutaisi, State Historical Museum, 3, fols 256<sup>v</sup>–282<sup>v</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the sixteenth century;
  - Akhaltsikhe, Samtskhe–Javakheti History Museum, 3483, pp. 54–66: *mkhedruli* script, dated 1838;<sup>30</sup>
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, S-2766, fols 48<sup>r</sup>–58<sup>r</sup>: *mkhedruli* script, datable to the twentieth century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-2678, fols 1<sup>r</sup>–13<sup>r</sup> (parts at the end missing): *mkhedruli* script, datable to the twentieth century.
- Short redaction in the *Great Synaxarion* by George the Hagiorite:<sup>31</sup>
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-97, fols 230<sup>v</sup>–232<sup>r</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, A-193, fols 247–248: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Tbilisi, KKNCM, H-2211, fols 290–292: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, georg. 25, fols 249<sup>r</sup>–251<sup>r</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Athos, Ivir., georg. 30, fols 280<sup>r</sup>–282<sup>r</sup>: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century;
  - Sinai, St Catherine’s Monastery, georg. 4: *nuskhuri* script, datable to the eleventh century.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Gabidzashvili 2004, 349, no. 1120.

<sup>27</sup> See Gippert, Outtier and Kim 2022, 637.

<sup>28</sup> Not mentioned in Gabidzashvili 2004. The fragment (two leaves) was once part of Ivir. georg. 79 (see Gippert, Outtier and Kim 2022, 637); it is unclear how it came to Tbilisi (Gippert, Outtier and Kim 2022, liii).

<sup>29</sup> Gabidzashvili 2004, 348–349, no. 1116.

<sup>30</sup> According to Gabidzashvili 2004, 349, this and the following two witnesses represent later translations from Armenian.

<sup>31</sup> Gabidzashvili does not provide the page numbers for these manuscripts; the information given here relies upon Dolakidze and Chitunashvili (2017, 274–275).

One more witness containing the martyrdom is Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchate, georg. 152, fols 88<sup>v</sup>–135<sup>v</sup>, written in *nuskhuri* script and datable to the eleventh to twelfth centuries. Gabidzashvili mistakenly lists this manuscript as representing a category of its own, with the remark: ‘the beginning differs from the short and metaphrastic redactions (it may be a hymnal)’.<sup>33</sup> In reality, only the first ten folios in question (fols 88<sup>v</sup>–98<sup>v</sup>) contain the canon for St Febronia; they are followed by the martyrdom in the older redaction (fols 98<sup>v</sup>–135<sup>v</sup>).<sup>34</sup>

For the comparative analysis of the palimpsested text of Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, the following manuscripts were selected: Sin. georg. 6, KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1, which are the oldest known witnesses in Georgian; and KKNCM A-1769 + Ivir. georg. 79, which contain a new translation from Greek by Euthymius the Athonite. The latter is very different from the other Georgian witnesses (including the palimpsest) and cannot be considered for the larger comparative analysis provided in Section 7; the excerpt in Table 1 provides evidence of how divergent it is from the older Georgian redaction.

**Table 1:** Excerpt of the legend of St Febronia in Greek and five Georgian versions.

<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>	Ταῦτα εἰπούσης τῆς Βρυένης, <b>περιπτυσσάμενη τὴν Φεβρονίαν</b> , καὶ <b>ἀσπασαμένη μετὰ πολλῶν δακρῶν</b> , ἀπέλυσεν αὐτήν (‘Saying this, Bryene, <b>embracing Febronia</b> and <b>bidding her farewell with many tears</b> , dismissed her’) (22 [19], ll. 18–20)
KKNCM A-1769 + Ivir. georg. 79	<i>Ese tk(u)a da šeiṭkbo pebronia da ambors-uqo cremlit da cargzavna</i> (‘[she] said this and <b>embraced Febronia</b> and <b>kissed her with tears</b> and sent [her] away’) (Ivir. georg. 79, fol. 2 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 15–17)
Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90	<i>Ese ray tk(ow)a brweni moykitxa da ganowṭeva igi</i> (‘Bryene said this, greeted her and let her out’) (fol. 26 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 4–5)
Sin. georg. 6	<i>Ese ray tk(u)a breṇi moykitxa da g(a)nuṭeva igi</i> (‘idem’) (fol. 193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1)
KKNCM A-95	<i>Ese ray tk(u)a breṇi moykitxa da ganuṭeva igi</i> (‘idem’) (fol. 313 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 17–19)
Oxford georg. b.1	<i>Eseray tk(u)a breṇi moykitxa da ganuṭeva igi</i> (‘idem’) (fol. 187 <sup>vb</sup> , ll. 11–13)

<sup>32</sup> This manuscript is erroneously listed in Gabidzashvili 2004, 349 as one containing the martyrdom; however, it lacks exactly the feast days between 24 June and 5 July (between fols 193<sup>v</sup> and 194<sup>r</sup>) where the martyrdom of St Febronia would be expected.

<sup>33</sup> Gabidzashvili 2004, 349, no. 1117: ‘ტექსტის დასაწყისი განსხვავებულია კიმენური და მეტაფრასული რედაქციებისგან (შეიძლება საგალობელი იყოს)’.

<sup>34</sup> See <<https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271073434-jo/?sp=101>> (accessed on 19 November 2023).



As we see, the texts of the older redaction are almost identical (except for a few orthographic differences). Ivir. georg. 79, on the other hand, is the only witness containing the phrase *šeitkbo pebronia* ('[she] embraced Febronia'), corresponding to Greek περιπτυσσόμενη τὴν Φεβρονίαν. Furthermore, only these two versions mention tears (δακρύων, *cremlit*) but in combination with 'bidding farewell' in Greek (ἀσπασσόμενη μετὰ πολλῶν δακρύων) and with 'kissing' in Georgian (*ambors-uqo cremlit*). For the most part, it was not even possible to parallelise Euthymius's version with the other four Georgian witnesses line by line but only by paragraphs; in addition, not much could be compared, as half the text passages in question are missing in KKNCM A-1769 + Ivir. georg. 79.<sup>35</sup>

## 5 Palaeographical examination of the martyrdom of St Febronia in Georgian

Even though I could base my work on a provisional transcript from 2014, which Jost Gippert provided when working on the online catalogue of the Sinai palimpsests,<sup>36</sup> the decipherment of the martyrdom of St Febronia as contained in Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 turned out to be comparatively difficult. The difficulty mostly stemmed from the fact that the palimpsest has two lower layers with many letters, and even words, covering each other. This is particularly true for Sin. georg. NF 84, which exhibits extreme overlapping, as, for example, in the right lower corner of fol. 7<sup>r</sup> (see Fig. 1).

The undertext containing the martyrdom of St Febronia on fols 6<sup>r</sup> and 7<sup>v</sup> of Sin. georg. NF 84 appears turned by 270° as against the present orientation of the page (determined by the uppermost layer); accordingly, the undertext of fols 6<sup>v</sup> and 7<sup>r</sup> appears turned by 90°. As for the lowest layer of the two folios, the *khanmeti-haemeti* psalter, it is turned by 90° as against the uppermost layer on fols 7<sup>v</sup> and 6<sup>r</sup> and by 270° on fols 7<sup>r</sup> and 6<sup>v</sup>. On these pages, it was extremely difficult to decipher more than fragments of letters and words, given that both the middle and the lowest layers not only overlap but also are equally erased. In contrast to this, the middle layer of Sin. georg. NF 90 is fairly easy to read, as is visible in Fig. 2.

<sup>35</sup> See Gippert, Outtier and Kim 2022, 647 as to the fragmentary preservation of Euthymius's version.

<sup>36</sup> This work was carried out within the framework of the Sinai Palimpsests Project, which was funded by Arcadia and ran 2012–2017. For more information, see <<http://sinaipalimpsests.org/>> (accessed on 9 April 2024).



**Fig. 1:** Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, georg. NF 84, fol. 7<sup>r</sup>; multispectral image processed by Keith T. Knox, © Sinai Palimpsests Project.



**Fig. 2:** Sinai, St Catherine's Monastery, georg. NF 90, fol. 26<sup>v</sup>; multispectral image processed by Keith T. Knox, © Sinai Palimpsests Project.



*asomtavruli*, but in some cases, the reason is not immediately clear (especially for words written partially in *asomtavruli* and partially in *nuskhuri*).

The remaining two witnesses, KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1, are both written in two columns in *nuskhuri* script (with titles and initials in majuscules); the initials of the right columns take up nearly the complete space between the columns. The script in KKNCM A-95 is straight without ligatures, the title of the legend is written in red ink with a mixture of majuscules and minuscules, and initials are in majuscules. Lastly, the script of Oxford georg. b.1 is slanted without ligatures, the title is written in red ink in majuscules as well as minuscules, and the initials are in majuscules.

Another palaeographic characteristic that has to be taken into account is the punctuation system, as it differs depending on the given manuscript. In the oldest Georgian palimpsests, a minor break (between clauses or phrases) was marked by a single dot, the end of sentences or paragraphs by two dots, and the end of a section or longer passage by an arrow flying to the right.<sup>37</sup> Later codices (of the ninth to tenth centuries) are characterised by less systematic rules, using a single dot or a group of three dots to express a minor break, double dots for a major break, and groups of three or four dots for the end of a paragraph.<sup>38</sup> In Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, only double dots are attested, as is also the case in Sin. georg. 6 and KKNCM A-95; in the former, four dots appear at the end of the martyrdom, and the latter exhibits two passages in which a single dot is used. As for Oxford georg. b.1, an alternating use of one, two, and three dots is attested, with the single dot being the most frequently used (345 times).

All four text versions contain abbreviations, typically affecting the following word types: *nomina sacra* (e.g. *k(rist)ēsni* ['(those) of Christ'], Sin. georg. NF 90, fol. 3<sup>v</sup>, ll. 3–4 [13–14]); conjunctions (e.g. *x(olo)* ['but'], Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 181<sup>vb</sup>, l. 8); relative pronouns (e.g. *r(ome)li* ['which'], Sin. georg. NF 90, fol. 6<sup>v</sup>, l. 5); quantifiers (e.g. *q(ovel)i* ['all'], KKNCM A-95, fol. 308<sup>vb</sup>, l. 5); preverbs (e.g. *g(a)nuteva igi* ['[she] let her go'], Sin. georg. 6, fol. 193<sup>r</sup>, l. 1); postpositions (e.g. *z(ed)a* ['on'], Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 181<sup>vb</sup>, l. 16); personal and possessive pronouns (e.g. *š(en)n* ['you'], *š(en)i* ['your'], KKNCM A-95, fol. 306<sup>ra</sup>, l. 12, l. 26); and others (e.g. *k(ue)q(a)nay* ['land'], Sin. georg. 6, fol. 186<sup>v</sup>, l. 19). Sin. georg. 6 reveals some interesting cases concerning the abbreviation of *nomina sacra*: the Christian god is abbreviated (*ġ(mert)i*, fol. 187<sup>v</sup>, l. 9) while other gods are not (*ġmertni misni* ['his (Diocletian's) gods'], fol. 198<sup>v</sup>, l. 4). In contrast to this, KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1 abbreviate both the Christian god (*ġ(mert)i*, KKNCM A-95, fol. 308<sup>vb</sup>, l. 24; Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 183<sup>vb</sup>, l. 26) and

<sup>37</sup> Danelia and Sarjveladze 1997, 322.

<sup>38</sup> Danelia and Sarjveladze 1997, 322–323.

the pagan ones (*ġ(mer)tni misni* [‘his (Diocletian’s) gods’], KKNCM A-95, fol. 317<sup>va</sup>, l. 16; Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 190<sup>va</sup>, l. 34). The same holds for the text fragment preserved in Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90: only one text passage mentions Diocletian’s gods (*ġ(mer)tni misni* [‘his (Diocletian’s) gods’]; Sin. georg. NF 90, fol. 30<sup>v</sup>, l. 2), with the ‘gods’ abbreviated, and there is also one mention of the Christian god on fol. 26<sup>r</sup>, l. 9, where Bryene pleads for Febronia’s safety (*evedreboda ġ(merts)a pebroniaystws* [‘[she] pleaded to God for Febronia’], fol. 26<sup>r</sup>, ll. 9–10).

## 6 Linguistic features

Based on morphological differences, Old Georgian written texts are usually classified according to three diachronic layers, namely, *khanmeti*, *haemeti*, and *sannarevi*. In *khanmeti* texts (usually assigned to the fifth to seventh centuries), second-person subjects and third-person objects are marked by a verbal prefix *x-*. In *haemeti* texts (assigned to the seventh to eighth centuries), we find a prefix *h-* instead of the *x-*. Lastly, in *sannarevi* texts (from the ninth century onwards), a second-person subject and a third-person object is partly marked by the allomorphs *x-*, *h-*, *s-* and *š-*, and partly unmarked. All four Georgian witnesses of the older redaction of the legend of St Febronia, including the palimpsest, belong to this last type.

As mentioned above, no edited text of the martyrdom of St Febronia in Georgian is available, so a transcript of the whole text of the three sister witnesses (Sin. georg. 6, KKNCM A-95, Oxford georg. b.1) was indispensable in order to provide a parallelisation with the available text passages from the palimpsest. This process revealed several lexical, grammatical, typological, and orthographic differences, as shown in Table 2.

The most frequent type of difference between the four Georgian witnesses is additions, such as when a figure is reintroduced in the form of a personal pronoun (as shown in Table 2 under Additions) or when larger phrases are added (see Table 4, l. 5). The second most frequent types are lexical and grammatical variations; the former are attested in the form of synonyms or paraphrases (differentiating between nominal and verbal forms), and the latter can be subcategorised within the nominal domain as concerning case and/or number variation, the use of focus particles, or the use of postpositions. Of course, there are also mere errors, such as one or two letters missing in certain words. Among the orthographic differences, an interesting case is the frequent representation of <*i*> by <*y*> in the palimpsest, as illustrated in Table 3.

In sixteen of the twenty-eight examples listed in Table 3, the representation of <i> as <y> concerns the initial vowel of a word. In six examples, <y> appears in a verb in the position after a preverb. The remaining six examples concern personal names: for example, *tomays* (Θωμαῖς, Thomais, ll. 9 and 22), which is the name of a female figure (a nun) in the martyrdom. Such discrepancies are to be expected, as the representation of names in translated texts is always likely to provide some variation, especially when these names are not typical or even unknown in the given language. This also holds true for *yeria* (Ἰερία, Ieria, ll. 11, 15, 23, 27), which is represented as *ieria* in the other versions.<sup>39</sup> In describing this phenomenon, which does not imply any lexical difference, Korneli Danelia and Zurab Sarjveladze state that the use of *y* instead of *i* can be regarded as ‘improper’<sup>40</sup> and that it is ‘comparatively rare’ after the preverbs *še-* (see e.g. Table 3, ll. 4, 10, 21) and *mo-* (Table 3, ll. 1, 7), where *y* follows a vowel.<sup>41</sup> In rare cases, *y* is realised in ‘impermissible’ positions, namely before or after a consonant;<sup>42</sup> this is attested in most of the examples in Table 3 (ll. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 16–20, 24–26, 28). Nonetheless, the representation of <i> as <y> is

39 See Kamarauli 2024 for a comparison of the names in the Georgian text versions with those of the Greek, Latin, and Armenian texts.

40 Danelia and Sarjveladze 1997, 245: ‘*ი არადანიშნულებისამებრ არის ნახმარი. ასეთ შემთხვევაში ი სხვადასხვა ზგერად წაიკითხება და მცდარად მის ხმარებას სხვადასხვა გარემოება განაპირობებს*’ (*y* is used improperly. In such a case, *y* is used instead of other letters [lit. *y* is read instead of other sounds], and its incorrect use is caused by different circumstances’.)

41 Danelia and Sarjveladze 1997, 245: ‘*აქ ი დამავალ დიფთონგთა დაწერილობის ანალოგიითა ნახმარი ი-ს ადგილზე, რასაც ადგილი აქვს სახელებთან თავკიდურა სა მაწარმოებლის და ზმნებთან ა, და, შე, მო, წა ზმნისწინთა მომდევნო პოზიციაში. ასეთი შემთხვევები ხშირი არ არის: საიდუმლოდ (3v, Sin-26), აძულეს (ლ., 24, 29C), აძლეთ (მ., 11, 29C), დადევ (საპაკ. წარწ.), შედარებით ხშირია შე- ზმნისწინთან ი-ის ხმარების შემთხვევები Sin-20 ხელნაწერში: შეიმოსენ 32r, შეიარაცხე 26v, შეიწყნარეს 33v, შეიგვა 82r*’ (*Here, y is used instead of i analogously to a falling diphthong in nouns with the prefix sa- and in verbs after the preverbs a-, da-, še-, ca-. Such cases are not frequent: saydumloy (secret), ayzules ([they] forced [him/her]), ayget ([you] took [it]), daycve ([you] would keep/maintain); comparatively frequent is the usage of y in combination with the preverb še- in the manuscript Sin. 20: šeymosen ([they] got dressed), šeyracxe ([you] considered/deemed), šeycqnarets ([they] had mercy), šeycva (([s]he/it) compassed [him/her/it])*’).

42 Danelia and Sarjveladze 1997, 245: ‘*იშვიათად წარმოუდგენელ, დაუშვებელ პოზიციაშია ი რეალიზებული თანხმოვნის გვერდით, მის წინ, ან მომდევნოდ. ასეთი იშვიათი ფორმები წარწერებსა და ხელნაწერებში შენიშნული აქვს ზ. სარგველაძეს: იციით, იხარებდ, იყო, იფქლი, სოფლბა, ისწავ, ჩემი და სხვ*’ (*‘Rarely, y is in an unimaginable, impermissible position next to, before or after a consonant. Such rare forms have been noted from inscriptions and manuscripts by Sarjveladze: yicit (most probably a spelling mistake for ycit ([you] know)), yx-arebd ([you] rejoice), yqo ((s)he/it was), ypkli (wheat), soplysa (of the village), yscav ((s)he/it learns), čemy (my) and others*’).

not systematically executed in the palimpsest, as there are also cases of, for example, *iqo* ('was') (fol. 6<sup>r</sup>, l. 8) and *igi* ('the, that') (fol. 30<sup>v</sup>, l. 9) instead of *yqo* and *ygi*. Since the examples in Danelia and Sarjveladze come mainly from Sinai manuscripts (Sin. georg. 20, Sin. georg. 26) and the examples in Table 3 also are attested in a Sinai manuscript (Sin. georg. NF 90), we can carefully assume that this phenomenon may have something to do with or indicate the origin of a manuscript.

**Table 2:** Categorised linguistic differences between the four Georgian witnesses.

Type of differences	Example
Word order	<i>owplisa čemisa</i> ('of <b>my</b> lord') (Sin. georg. 6, 191 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7–8 and Oxford georg. b.1, 186 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 13) vs <i>čemisa owplisa</i> ('of <b>my</b> lord') (KKNCM A-95, 312 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 10–11) vs <i>owplisa</i> ('of the lord') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 27 <sup>r</sup> , l. 8)
Additions	<i>pašowxi miowgo</i> / <i>pašuxi miugo mas</i> ('[he] gave the answer <b>to her</b> ') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 31 <sup>v</sup> , l. 5; Sin. georg. 6, 195 <sup>v</sup> , l. 16; Oxford georg. b.1, 189 <sup>vb</sup> , ll. 15–16) vs <i>pašuxi miugo</i> ('[he] gave the answer') (KKNCM A-95, 315 <sup>rb</sup> , ll. 7–8)
Lexical variation	
Nominal	<i>pačivita</i> ('with <b>respect</b> ') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 30 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7; Sin. georg. 6, 198 <sup>v</sup> , l. 8; KKNCM A-95, 317 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 23) vs <i>locvita</i> ('with <b>prayer</b> ') (georg. b.1, 191 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 8)
Verbal	<i>moykcet</i> / <i>moikcet</i> ('you would <b>return</b> ') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 6 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1; Oxford georg. b.1, 181 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 13; KKNCM A-95, 306 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 2) vs <i>moxwdet</i> ('you would <b>come</b> ') (Sin. georg. 6, 184 <sup>v</sup> , l. 13)
Grammatical variation	
Focus particle	<i>bržanebayca</i> ('command, <b>too</b> ') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 6 <sup>v</sup> , l. 10; Sin. georg. 6, 185 <sup>v</sup> , l. 12) and <i>mcnebayca</i> ('precept, <b>too</b> ') (KKNCM A-95, 306 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 21) vs <i>bržanebay</i> ('command') (Oxford georg. b.1, 182 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 25–26)
Case and/or number	<i>ağmosavalad</i> ('eastward [ <b>adv.sg</b> ]') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 6 <sup>r</sup> , l. 10; KKNCM A-95, 306 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 11) vs <i>ağmosavalit</i> ('eastward [ <b>instr.sg</b> ]') (Sin. georg. 6, 184 <sup>v</sup> , l. 22; Oxford georg. b.1, 181 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 21)
Postpositions	<i>monaštrisagan</i> ('from the monastery [gen.sg+ <b>from</b> ]') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 27 <sup>r</sup> , l. 2) vs <i>monaštrisa</i> ('of the monastery [gen.sg]') (Sin. georg. 6, 191 <sup>r</sup> , l. 17) vs <i>monaštrit</i> ('from the monastery [ <b>instr.sg</b> ]') (KKNCM A-95, 311 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 8; Oxford georg. b.1, 186 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 14–15)
Verbal forms	<i>ixilos</i> ('[she] <b>would have seen</b> ') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 31 <sup>v</sup> , l. 2; Sin. georg. 6, 195 <sup>v</sup> , l. 14) vs. <i>ixila</i> ('[she] <b>saw</b> ') (Oxford georg. b.1, 189 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 12; KKNCM A-95, 315 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 4)
Orthography	<i>simravley</i> ('multitude') (Sin. georg. NF 90, 6 <sup>r</sup> , l. 4) vs <i>simravle</i> ('multitude') (Sin. georg. 6, 184 <sup>v</sup> , l. 16; KKNCM A-95, 306 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 9; Oxford georg. b.1, 181 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 19)
Errors	<i>uržana</i> ('[he] commanded') (Sin. georg. 6, 193 <sup>v</sup> , l. 14, with <i>b</i> missing after <i>u</i> ) vs <i>ubržanes</i> ('[they] commanded') (KKNCM A-95, 313 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 23; Oxford georg. b.1, 188 <sup>rb</sup> , ll. 10–11)

**Table 3:** <y> in Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 vs <i> in the other witnesses.

	Sin. georg. NF 90	Sin. georg. 6	Oxford georg. b.1	KKNCM A-95
1	<i>moykct</i> (6 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1)	<i>moxwdet</i> (184 <sup>v</sup> , l. 13)	<i>moikct</i> (181 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 13)	<i>moikct</i> (306 <sup>va</sup> , l. 2)
2	<i>ygi</i> (6 <sup>v</sup> , l. 5)	—	—	<i>igi</i> (306 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 12)
3	<i>yscrapda</i> (6 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7)	<i>icrapda</i> (185 <sup>r</sup> , l. 9)	<i>iscrapda</i> (182 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 20)	<i>iscrapda</i> (306 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 16)
4	<i>šeyṗqrobden</i> (3 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 6–7 (16–17))	<i>šeyṗqrobden</i> (185 <sup>r</sup> , l. 18)	<i>šeyṗqrobden</i> (182 <sup>rb</sup> , ll. 2–3)	<i>šeyṗqrobden</i> (306 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 31)
5	<i>ygi</i> (27 <sup>r</sup> , l. 2)	—	—	<i>igi</i> (311 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 7)
6	<i>yqo</i> (27 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7)	—	<i>iqo</i> (186 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 13)	<i>iqo</i> (312 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 10)
7	<i>moykitxa</i> (26 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 4–5)	<i>moik̄itxa</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1)	<i>moik̄itxa</i> (187 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 12)	<i>moik̄itxa</i> (313 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 17–18)
8	<i>ygi</i> (26 <sup>r</sup> , l. 5)	<i>igi</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1)	<i>igi</i> (187 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 13)	<i>igi</i> (313 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 19)
9	<i>tomays</i> (26 <sup>r</sup> , l. 10)	<i>tomais</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 5)	<i>tomaia</i> (187 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 20)	<i>tomaia</i> (313 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 25)
10	<i>šeymosa</i> (26 <sup>r</sup> , l. 10)	<i>šeimosa</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 5)	<i>šeimosa</i> (187 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 20)	<i>šeimosa</i> (313 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 25)
11	<i>yeriasca</i> (26 <sup>v</sup> , l. 1)	<i>ieria</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 14)	<i>ieriasca</i> (187 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 34)	<i>ieriasca</i> (313 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 7)
12	<i>ṽkr̄xialna</i> (26 <sup>v</sup> , l. 3)	<i>ik̄rxialna</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 15–16)	<i>ik̄r̄xialna</i> (188 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 2)	<i>ik̄rxialna</i> (313 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 10)
13	<i>ygi</i> (26 <sup>v</sup> , l. 9)	<i>igi</i> (193 <sup>r</sup> , l. 22)	<i>igi</i> (188 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 13)	<i>igi</i> (313 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 20)
14	<i>daycqo</i> (26 <sup>v</sup> , l. 10)	—	—	—
15	<i>yeria</i> (31 <sup>v</sup> , l. 3)	<i>ieria</i> (195 <sup>v</sup> , l. 14)	<i>ieria</i> (189 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 12)	<i>ieria</i> (315 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 4)
16	<i>yxile</i> (31 <sup>v</sup> , l. 6)	<i>ixile</i> (195 <sup>v</sup> , l. 18)	<i>ixile</i> (189 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 18)	<i>ixile</i> (315 <sup>rb</sup> , ll. 9–10)
17	<i>ycqo</i> (34 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7)	<i>icqo</i> (196 <sup>v</sup> , l. 19)	<i>icqo</i> (190 <sup>va</sup> , l. 20)	<i>icqo</i> (316 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 17)
18	<i>yxile</i> (37 <sup>r</sup> , l. 3 (10))	<i>ixile</i> (196 <sup>v</sup> , l. 21)	<i>ixile</i> (190 <sup>va</sup> , l. 25)	<i>ixile</i> (316 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 22)
19	<i>yxiles</i> (35 <sup>r</sup> , l. 3)	<i>ixiles</i> (197 <sup>r</sup> , l. 13–14)	<i>ixiles</i> (191 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 22)	<i>ixiles</i> (316 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 22)
20	<i>ygi</i> (35 <sup>r</sup> , l. 3)	<i>igi</i> (197 <sup>r</sup> , l. 14)	<i>igi</i> (191 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 22)	<i>igi</i> (316 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 23)
21	<i>šeykriba</i> (35 <sup>v</sup> , l. 5)	<i>šEEKriba</i> (197 <sup>r</sup> , l. 27–198 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1)	<i>šEEKriba</i> (191 <sup>va</sup> , l. 13)	<i>čakriba</i> (317 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 18–19)
22	<i>tomays</i> (36 <sup>r</sup> , l. 2 (10))	<i>tomais</i> (198 <sup>r</sup> , l. 4)	<i>tomaia</i> (191 <sup>va</sup> , l. 20)	<i>tomaia</i> (317 <sup>ra</sup> , ll. 25–26)
23	<i>yeria</i> (36 <sup>r</sup> , l. 3 (11))	<i>ieria</i> (198 <sup>r</sup> , l. 4)	<i>ieria</i> (191 <sup>va</sup> , l. 20)	<i>ieria</i> (317 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 26)
24	<i>ygi</i> (30 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7)	<i>igi</i> (198 <sup>r</sup> , l. 7)	<i>igi</i> (192 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 7)	<i>igi</i> (317 <sup>va</sup> , l. 22)
25	<i>ygi</i> (33 <sup>r</sup> , l. 1 (10))	—	—	<i>igi</i> (317 <sup>va</sup> , l. 28)
26	<i>natel yġes</i> (30 <sup>r</sup> , l. 7)	<i>natel iġes</i> (198 <sup>v</sup> , l. 20)	<i>natel iġes</i> (192 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 31)	<i>natel iġes</i> (317 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 18)
27	<i>yeria</i> (33 <sup>v</sup> , l. 6 (14))	<i>ieria</i> (198 <sup>v</sup> , l. 24)	<i>ieria</i> (192 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 5)	<i>ieria</i> (317 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 27)
28	<i>natel yġes</i> (33 <sup>v</sup> , l. 7 (15))	<i>natel iġes</i> (198 <sup>v</sup> , l. 25)	<i>natel iġes</i> (192 <sup>rb</sup> , ll. 6–7)	<i>natel iġes</i> (317 <sup>vb</sup> , ll. 28–29)

The last type of interesting differences that must be addressed here relates to tmesis, the linguistic phenomenon of a word or phrase being separated by an intervening word or words for emphasis or as a stylistic effect. In Old Georgian,



this typically affected the position between a preverb and the main part of the verbal form.<sup>43</sup> In all versions except for the palimpsest, examples of tmesis such as the following can be found:

- |     |       |           |                         |                  |            |
|-----|-------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------|------------|
| (1) | [...] | <i>da</i> | <i>da-xolo-hkr̥zala</i> | <i>luṣkuma-y</i> | <i>igi</i> |
|     | [...] | and       | pv-alone-bury.s3sg.aor  | coffin-nom.sg    | the.nom.sg |

‘[...] and **just when** [she] buried the coffin’ (Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 193<sup>ra</sup>, ll. 33–34)

- |     |       |                |                |                      |              |
|-----|-------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|
| (2) | [...] | <i>tumca</i>   | <i>mindā</i>   | <i>da-mca-malul</i>  | <i>viqav</i> |
|     | [...] | however        | want.s1sg.pres | pv-irr-hidden.nom.sg | be.s1sg.aor  |
|     |       | <i>sxua-ta</i> | <i>da-ta</i>   | <i>tana</i>          |              |
|     |       | other-dat.pl   | sister-dat.pl  | with                 |              |

‘[...] however, I wish I **would** have hidden myself with the other sisters’ (KKNCM A-95, fol. 311<sup>ra</sup>, ll. 9–12)

In example (1), *xolo* (‘only, just [when]’) is inserted after the preverb *da-*, thus separating it from the verbal stem *-kr̥zal-*, which in its turn is combined with the object marker *h-*. In example (2), the modal particle *-mca-*<sup>44</sup> does the same with the participle *damalul* (‘hidden’), separating the preverb *da-* from the verbal stem *-mal-*. This very example can also be found in Sin. georg. 6, but with a small difference:

- |     |       |                |                   |                      |              |
|-----|-------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| (3) | [...] | <i>tumca</i>   | <i>mindā</i>      | <i>da-mca-malul</i>  | <i>viqav</i> |
|     | [...] | however        | want.s1sg.pres    | pv-irr-hidden.nom.sg | be.s1sg.aor  |
|     |       | <i>sxua-ta</i> | <b><i>mat</i></b> | <i>da-ta</i>         | <i>tana</i>  |
|     |       | other-dat.pl   | the.dat.pl        | sister-dat.pl        | with         |

‘[...] however, I wish I would have hidden myself with **the** other sisters’ (Sin. georg. 6, fol. 190<sup>r</sup>, ll. 21–23)

In this text version, the phrase *sxuata data tana* (‘with the other sisters’) is supplemented with the definite article *mat* (dat.pl.); as here, articles in Old Georgian typically occupy the second position within the nominal phrase.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Shanidze 1980, 323.

<sup>44</sup> According to Shanidze 1976, 149, this particle expresses a wish, whereas Papidze 1981, 38 specifies it further as a particle expressing an irreal wish.

<sup>45</sup> See Kamarauli 2022, 184 as to the ‘Wackernagel’ position within nominal phrases in Georgian.

## 7 Parallel structures

The parallel structure that results from the comparison of the different witnesses of the martyrdom of St Febronia yields interesting results. In Table 4,<sup>46</sup> the four versions are arranged according to their similarity: the closest to Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 is Sin. georg. 6; the next closest is Oxford georg. b.1; and KKNCM A-95 is the most divergent. This assessment of the closeness of the other Georgian witnesses to Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 is based on the prior calculation of Levenshtein distances.<sup>47</sup>

In some passages, the text is completely identical, as in Table 4, ll. 1, 11, 14, 15. In other passages, only minor differences appear, as in l. 2, where only in the palimpsest and KKNCM A-95, *spasalarsa* ('commander-in-chief') is added to the name of Primus; in l. 4, in which the conjunction *da* ('and') is added in Sin. georg. 6, KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1; or in l. 16, where *šeyṗqrobden* ('they would capture') is attested in the palimpsest and Sin. georg. 6 versus *šeiṗqrobden* in KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1, without any difference in meaning. In contrast, some other passages are more colourful because they contain more significant differences: l. 9, for example, offers all the possible types of differences, as it features a variation in word order (*qopad ese* ['to do so'] in NF 84 + 90 vs *ese qopad* ['idem'] in Sin. georg. 6, KKNCM A-95 and Oxford georg. b.1); an addition (*aramed* ['but'] plus *me* ['I'] in Oxford georg. b.1 vs simple *aramed* ['but'] in NF 84 + 90 and Sin. georg. 6 and *da* ['and'] in KKNCM A-95), and orthographic variation (*makws* ('I have') in KKNCM A-95 vs *makows* in NF 84 + 90 and *makus* in Sin. georg. 6 and Oxford georg. b.1).<sup>48</sup> Beyond these variances, some passages are also different, as in l. 5: according to the palimpsest and KKNCM A-95, the father of Lysimachus passed away while serving false gods and devils, whereas in Sin. georg. 6 and Oxford georg. b.1, he is only described as serving false gods.

<sup>46</sup> In Table 4, [ ] indicates 'less readable', { } 'unreadable', and < > 'cut out' text passages (the latter are only reconstructed in accordance with the available space). Round brackets ( ) are used for abbreviations, a vertical bar | indicates a line break, a double underscore \_\_ is used when there is either a larger space between two graphemes than usual or space between two graphemes where there is usually none. The last type of symbols used in Table 4 are carets ^ ^, which mark text elements added over the line; this is typically found where there was no sufficient space in a line, or where the scribe missed something, such as a letter, or a combination of these factors. Additionally, colours are used to highlight the differences between the text versions: additions are marked in green; red is used for grammatical, lexical, and orthographic variations; and blue indicates word order variations.

<sup>47</sup> See Kamarauli 2024.

<sup>48</sup> See Sarjeladze 1984, 129: 'ვ გრაფემა საკმაოდ ხშირად გამოხატავს /უი/ დიფთონგს, მაგრამ დარღვევები აქაც შეინიშნება: ვ ზოგჯერ შეცვლილია უ-თი: წჳმა | წჳმა; ცჳლი | ცჳლი. არის შემთხვევები ჳ-ს დაწერილობისა იქ, სადაც უ უნდა იწერებოდეს: გჳლი (გჳლი) და მისთ' ('The grapheme ჳ (w) quite often expresses the /ui/ diphthong, but irregularities are also observed here: ჳ is sometimes replaced by უ (u): *cwma* | | *cuma*; *cwli* | | *culi*. There are also cases of ჳ where უ should be written: *gwli* (for *guli*) etc.').

**Table 4:** Parallel structure of the four Georgian text versions.

	<b>Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, fols 6<sup>v</sup> + 3<sup>r</sup>, ll. 1–19</b>	<b>Sin. georg. 6, fol. 185<sup>r</sup>, ll. 5–20</b>	<b>Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 182<sup>ra</sup>, l. 13 to fol. 183<sup>rb</sup>, l. 6</b>	<b>KKNCM A-95, fol. 306<sup>vb</sup>, l. 6 to fol. 307<sup>ra</sup>, l. 3</b>
1	[...] ertsa ġame sa One night	[...] ertsa ġamesa One night	[...] ertsa ġamesa One night	[...] ertsa ġamesa One night
2	moowcoda [low]simaxo-ſ p}rimens <i>ſpa salarsa</i> Lysimachus called for Primus, <i>the commander-</i> <i>in-chief</i>	moucoda lusimaxos primens Lysimachus called for Primus	moucoda lusimaxos primens Lysimachus called for Primus	moucoda lusimaxos primens <i>ſpasalarsa</i> Lysimachus called for Primus, <i>the commander-</i> <i>in-chief</i>
3	da <i>rkowa</i> <mas : o(wpa)lo> ſen [twɪ] owc qi and <i>said</i> to him: Lord, you yourself know,	da <i>h(r)k(u)a</i> ſen twt ucqi and <i>said</i> : You yourself know,	da <i>h(r)k(u)a</i> : ſ(e)n twt ucqi and <i>said</i> : You yourself know,	da <i>h(r)k(u)a</i> : o(wpa)lo <i>primen</i> ſ(e)n twt ucqi and <i>said</i> : Lord Primus, you yourself know,
4	daġacatow mamay č[e]mi carmar_ti [i]qo> even though my father was a heathen	daġacatu mamay čemi carmarti i <i>qo da</i> even though my father was a heathen and	daġatu mamay čemi carmarti i <i>qo da</i> even though my father was a heathen and	daġacatu mamay čemi carmarti i <i>qo da</i> even though my father was a heathen and
5	<i>r(omel)i ygi {a}ġesrowla</i> <i>kerp̃ta da ešmaḳ ta</i> who passed away serving false gods and devils,	<i>kerp̃t msaxuri</i> was a servant of false gods,	<i>kerp̃tmsaxuri</i> · a servant of false gods,	<i>r(omel)i igi aġesrula</i> <i>kerp̃ta da ešmaḳta</i> who passed away serv- ing false gods and devils,
6	[msaxow]rebaso : a(rame)d deday čem[i] <i>k[r]iſp ia(ne)y</i> my mother yet was Christian	<i>iqo : a(rame)d deday</i> <i>čemi k(rist)eanē</i> my mother yet was Christian	<i>a(rame)d deday čemi</i> <i>k(rist)eanē</i> my mother yet was Christian	<i>msaxurebaso a(rame)d</i> <i>deday čemi k(rist)eanē</i> my mother yet was Christian
7	<i>{iqo} da {y}scrap{d}·a</i> <i>r(ayt)amca {m}qo&gt;  me</i> and strove to make me	<i>iqo da icrapda</i> <i>r(ayt)amca mqo me</i> and strove to make me	<i>iqo · da iscrapda</i> <i>r(ayt)amca mqo me</i> and strove to make me	<i>iqo da iscrapda</i> <i>r(ayt)amca mqo me</i> and strove to make me
8	<i>{k(rist)ia}n{e} a(rame)d</i> <i>{šiši}sagan {me}p{isa d}·a</i> <i>mamiſa</i> a Christian, but from fear of the king and my father	<i>k(rist)eanē : a(rame)d</i> <i>šiſiſa mepiſa da</i> <i>mamiſa</i> a Christian, but from fear of the king and my father	<i>k(rist)eanē : a(rame)d</i> <i>šiſiſag(a)n mepiſa · da</i> <i>mamiſa</i> a Christian, but from fear of the king and my father	<i>k(rist)eanē a(rame)d</i> <i>šiſiſagan mepiſa da</i> <i>mamiſa</i> a Christian, but from fear of the king and my father
9	<i>{č}[emis]{a ver ſeowɜ}lo</i> <i>[q]opad [eſ]·e : a(rame)d</i> <i>ma&gt; kows</i> she could not do this. But I have	<i>čemiſa ver ſeuzlo eſe</i> <i>qopad : a(rame)d</i> <i>makus</i> she could not do this. But I have	<i>čemiſa ver ſeuzlo eſe</i> <i>qopad : a(rame)d</i> <i>makus me</i> she could not do this. But I have	<i>čemiſa ver ſeuzlo eſe</i> <i>qopad da makus</i> she could not do this. And I have

	Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, fols 6 <sup>v</sup> + 3 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 1–19	Sin. georg. 6, fol. 185 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 5–20	Oxford georg. b.1, fol. 182 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 13 to fol. 183 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 6	KKNCM A-95, fol. 306 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 6 to fol. 307 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 3
10	{br3}aneb[ay]{ca} «misga»{n r(ayt)a ara}vin kristi»   anetagan even the order from her that no one from the Christians	br3anebayca misgan r(ayt)a aravin k(rist)eanetagan even the order from her that no one from the Christians	br3anebay misg(a)n r(ayt)a aravin k(rist)eanetag(a)ni the order from her that no one from the Christians	mcnebayca misgan r(ayt)a aravin k(rist)eanetag(a)ni even the command from her that no one from the Christians
11	{m}«ovkla a(rame)d r(ayt)a viqo me mo»   {qoware}	movkla : a(rame)d r(ayt)a viqo me moquare	movkla : a(rame)d r(ayt)a viqome moquare	movkla a(rame)d r(ayt)a viqo me moquare
	I shall kill but that I shall be a friend	I shall kill but that I shall be a friend	I shall kill but that I shall be a friend	I shall kill but that I shall be a friend
12	{kris}tia»[ne]»ta : da vx- davde» of the Christians. And I will see	k(rist)eaneta : da vxedavde of the Christians. And I will see	k(rist)eaneta : da vxedav me of the Christians. And I see	k(rist)eanetay da vxedav me of the Christians. And I see
13	{ac} m{oc}qo{wedasa kristia}»netasa owš3ow- loysa» now the annihilation of Christians by the faithless	ac mocquedasa k(rist)eanetasa uš3uloysa now the annihilation of Christians by the faithless	ac mocquedasa k(rist)eanetasa uš3uloysa now the annihilation of Christians by the faithless	ac mocquedasa k(rist)eanetasa určuloysa now the annihilation of Christians by the faith- less
14	[m]{amis 3m}i{sa čem}[isagan] {da s}»tḱivis» brother of my father, and it hurts	mamis 3misa čemisagan da sṭḱivis brother of my father, and it hurts	m(a)mis 3misa čemisag(a)n · da sṭḱivis brother of my father, and it hurts	mamis 3misa čemisagan : da sṭḱivis brother of my father, and it hurts
15	{sowlsa če}m[sa] mat»tws :» my soul for them.	sulsa čemsa mattws : my soul for them.	s(u)lsa čemsa mat tws : my soul for them.	s(u)lsa čemsa mattws : my soul for them.
16	d[a] {ac megowleb}is r(ayt)[a] «(ome)lsa» {š}eyl[ṗqr]   o{b}d[en] And now I wish that whichever Christian they will capture	da ac megulebis r(ayt)a r(ome)lsa šeyṗqrobden And now I wish that whichever they will capture,	da ac megulebis r(ayt)a r(ome)lsa šeyṗqrobden and now I wish that whichever Christian they will capture	da ac megulebis r(ayt)a r(ome)lsa šeyṗqrobden and now I wish that whichever Christian they will capture
17	[k]{ris}tianas «idow»[m]{a}l gan{o}{w}   tev^eb^den they will secretly set free	k(rist)eaneta idumal ganuṭevebden they will secretly set free the Christians	k(rist)eanesa idumal ganuṭevebde · you will secretly set free	k(rist)eanesa idumal ganuṭevebde you will secretly set free

	Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, fols 6 <sup>v</sup> + 3 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 1–19	Sin. georg. 6, fol. 185 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 5–20	Oxford georg. b. 1, fol. 182 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 13 to fol. 183 <sup>rb</sup> , l. 6	KNCM A-95, fol. 306 <sup>vb</sup> , l. 6 to fol. 307 <sup>ra</sup> , l. 3
18	{mat} ševrdom·admde	v(idr)je ševrdomadmde	v(idr)je ševrdomamde	v(idr)je ševrdomamde qelta
–	qel_ta m[is] ta	qelta mista	qelta mista ·	mista
19				
	before they fall into his hands.	before they fall into his hands.	before they fall into his hands.	before they fall into his hands.

This difference in information is also represented in the other languages, as illustrated in Table 5, where the same text passage from the palimpsest is compared with the Greek (from *Acta Sanctorum*), Latin (from the *Sanctuarium*), and Armenian versions (from *Vark*).<sup>49</sup> Here the following picture emerges: the Georgian palimpsest and the Latin text exhibit the same ‘active’ description of the father (l. 2: ‘my father was a heathen who passed away **serving false gods and devils**’ ~ *pater meus gentilis fuit idolis et daemoniis seruiens*), while the Armenian text styles him only a heathen (*hayrn im het’anos vaxčanec’aw* [‘my father died a **heathen**’]). In the Greek version, the father is again not called a servant of false gods or devils but simply a pagan (‘Hellene’: ὁ πατήρ μου ἑλληὺν ὢν ἐτελεύτησεν [‘my father died a **pagan**’]).

Another interesting parallel structure is found in l. 4 of Table 5, where, in the Georgian text, Lysimachus is ordered not to kill any Christians but rather to be a friend of them. In all three of the other versions, Greek, Latin, and Armenian, a different reference is made: instead of being ordered to be a friend of Christians, Lysimachus is requested to be a friend of Christ in Greek and Armenian, and to be a friend of God in Latin. Aside from that, parts and phrases are also missing in the different versions: in l. 5, Lysimachus expresses his emotional state in Georgian, Greek, and Latin by stating that his ‘soul [is] suffering for them [i.e. the Christians]’; this utterance is missing in Armenian.

<sup>49</sup> In Table 5, a simplified rendering is used for the palimpsested text.

**Table 5:** Comparison of the same passage in Georgian, Greek, Latin, and Armenian.

Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, fols 6 <sup>v</sup> + 3 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 1–19	<i>Acta Sanctorum, Junii</i> , VII, p. 16, l. 49 to p. 17, l. 2	<i>Sanctuarium</i> , p. 536, ll. 5–13	<i>Vark'</i> , 2, p. 410, ll. 15–26
1 ... ertsā gāmesa moowcoda low·simaxo·s p̄rimens sp̄asalarsa da rkowa «mas :  One night, Lysimachus called for Primen the commander-in-chief and said to him:	Ἐν μιᾷ οὖν νυκτὶ προσκαλεσάμενος ὁ Λυσίμαχος τὸν Κόμητα Πρίμον, εἶπεν αὐτῷ·  One night, Lysimachus summoned Count Primus, he said to him.	[...] nocte autem qua- dam uocauit oculute comitem Primum et dixit ei :  One night, he called secretly for Count Primus and said to him:	isk' i gišeri miowm koč'eac' Liwsimak' os zkomsn Primen ew asē c'na.  Now, one night, Lysimachus called for Count Primen and said to him:
2 a(wp̄al)o· šen twt owcqi dağacatow mamay čē·mi carm·arti i·qo· r(omel)ji ygi ağesrowla ke·r̄pta da· ešmakta msaxowrebasa :  Lord, you yourself know, even though my father was a heathen who passed away <b>serving false gods and devils</b> ,	Κυρίε μου Πρίμε, σὺ γινώσκεις, ὅτι, εἰ καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου Ἑλλήν ὢν ἐτελεύτησεν,  My lord Primus, you know that even though my father died a pagan,	Tu cognouisti quia pater meus gentilis fuit idolis et daemoniis seruiens  You knew that my father was a pagan, serving false gods and demons	Dow gites zi hayrn im het' anos vaxčaneč'aw.  You know my father died a pagan.
3 a(rame)d «deday čē·mi krist̄ianey i·qo da yscrapd·a r(ayt)amca· m·qo· me k(rist)iane a(rame)d šišisa- gan mepisa d·a mamisa· čēmisā ver šēowzlo qopad es·e :  my mother nevertheless was Christian and she strove to make me a Christian, but from fear of the king and my father she could not do this.	ἀλλ' ἡ μήτηρ μου χριστιανὴ ἐκοιμήθη, καὶ πολλὰ αὐτῇ σπουδὴ ὑπῆρχε γενέσθαι με Χριστιανόν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν φόβον τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ τοῦ πατρός μου, τοῦτο ποιῆσαι οὐκ ἴσχυσεν·  but my mother passed away as a Christian, and she was in great haste to make me a Christian myself; but because of the fear of the emperor and of my father, she could not do this,	et mater mea christiana defuncta est : et multa ei festinatio fuit : ut me christianum faceret : sed propter timorem patris mei uel Imperatoris hoc facere non potuit :  and my mother died a Christian, and she was in great haste to make me a Christian, but for fear of my father and of the emperor she could not do this,	sakayn mayrn im k'ristoneay ēr, ew p'oyt' yanjin kaleal zi arasc'ē zis k'ristoneay, ayl vasn ahi t'agaworin ew imoy hōrn, zays arnel oč' išxeac' :  However, my mother was Christian and she took it upon herself to make me a Christian, but because of the fear of the king and my father she was not able to do this.
4 a(rame)d ma·kows brzane- bayca «misga·n r(ayt)a ara·vin krist̄i·anetagan	καὶ ἔχω αὐτῆς ἐντολὰς μηδένα τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀνελεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ φίλον	et habeo praeceptum de ea neminem christia- num interficere. Ergo	Ew ard ownim znora patowēr, mī zok' i k'ristonēic' caxel, ayl

Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90, fols 6 <sup>v</sup> + 3 <sup>r</sup> , ll. 1–19	Acta Sanctorum, Junii, VII, p. 16, l. 49 to p. 17, l. 2	Sanctuarium, p. 536, ll. 5–13	Vark', 2, p. 410, ll. 15–26
<p><i>m-ovk'la a(rame)d r(ayt)a</i> <i>viqo me mo-qoware</i> <i>kristiāne-ta :</i></p> <p>But I have even the order from her that I shall not kill anyone of the Christians but that I shall become a friend <b>of the Christians</b>.</p>	<p>τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενέσθαι με ἡνάγκασεν.</p> <p>but I have her com- mand not to kill anyone of the Christians, and (lit. but) she has com- pelled me to become even a friend <b>of Christ</b>.</p>	<p><i>magis amicum dei me</i> <i>cogebat fieri :</i></p> <p>but I have the order from her not to kill anyone of the Chris- tians. Therefore, she compelled me rather to become a friend <b>of</b> <b>God</b>.</p>	<p><i>barekam ews K'ristosi</i> <i>harkaworēr zis linel.</i></p> <p>And I now have her order not to dispose of anyone of the Christians, instead (lit. but) she compelled me rather to become a friend <b>of Christ</b>.</p>
<p>5 <i>da vxedavde&gt; ac</i> <i>moqowedasa kristiānetasa</i> <i>owšowloysa&gt; mamis žmisa</i> <i>čemisagan da s-čk'ivis&gt;</i> <i>sowlsa čemsa mat-tws &gt;</i></p>	<p>Καὶ νῦν ὁρῶ τοὺς ἐμπίπτοντας Χριστιανοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ λυμεῶνος Σελήνου τοῦ ἐμοῦ θείου τιμωρουμένων, καὶ πάσχει μου ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς.</p>	<p><i>Et nunc uideo chris-</i> <i>tianos qui incedunt sic</i> <i>sine misericordia</i> <i>finiendos sub amarissi-</i> <i>mo Svleno auunculo</i> <i>meo : et patitur anima</i> <i>mea pro eis .</i></p>	<p><i>ew tesanam zi or 'i</i> <i>bowrn ankanin</i> <i>k'ristoneayk' anolorm</i> <i>caxin 'i žantē</i> <i>Siłowianosē.</i></p>
<p>And now I will see the annihilation of Christians by the faithless brother of (my) father, and it hurts my soul for them.</p>	<p>And now I see the Christians approaching, punished by the de- stroyer Selinus, my uncle, and my soul aches for them.</p>	<p>And now I see the Christians who ap- proach, (bound) to be put to an end without mercy by the cruel Sulenus, my uncle, and my soul suffers for them.</p>	<p>And I see that the Christians who have fallen into (his) hand will be disposed of unmercifully by the wicked Silvanus.</p>
<p>6 <i>da ac megowlebis r(ayt)a</i> <i>«r(ome)lśa» šeyq'robden</i> <i>kristianesa «idow»mal</i> <i>ganowtvebden mat ševr-</i> <i>dom&gt;admde q-elta mista</i></p>	<p>Τοῖνυν βούλομαι τοὺς ἐμπίπτοντας χριστιανοὺς λάθρα ἀπολύεσθαι, πρὶν ἢ παραπεσόντας ἀναρεῖσθαι κακῶς.</p>	<p><i>Volo autem christianos</i> <i>quos inueneris ut</i> <i>absconse dimittas eos :</i> <i>priusquam incedant ad</i> <i>interficiendum.</i></p>	<p><i>Ew ard kamim zi or 'i</i> <i>bowrn ankanin</i> <i>k'ristoneayk' Ireleayn</i> <i>arjakekic:</i></p>
<p>And now I wish that they secretly set free whichever Christian they capture before they fall into his hands.</p>	<p>Therefore, I want the approaching Christians to be secretly set free before they are killed badly while trying to escape.</p>	<p>But I want that you dismiss the Christians whom you find secret- ly before they are going to be killed.</p>	<p>And now I want that you silently release the Christians who fall into (his) hand.</p>

## 8 Conclusions

This paper's objective was to discuss the palimpsest Sin. georg. 84 + 90 with regard to palaeographic characteristics and peculiarities as well as textual characteristics. This discussion included its comparison with other relevant Georgian manuscripts containing the martyrdom, namely, Sin. georg. 6, KKNCM A-95, and Oxford georg. b.1. The most similar to the palimpsest turned out to be Sin. georg. 6, followed by Oxford georg. b.1, with these two also being most similar to each other. This conclusion is supported by a calculation of Levenshtein distances between the four text versions; the analysis was executed not only for the passage in Table 4 but the complete available text according to Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 and the other parallelised Georgian versions, which revealed KKNCM A-95 as the most divergent text version among the contrasted Georgian witnesses.<sup>50</sup>

A comparison with the Greek, Latin, and Armenian versions yielded several important differences for the text passage chosen from the Georgian palimpsest. The Greek text is more closely rendered in the later Georgian translation by Euthymius the Athonite (contained in KKNCM A-1769 + Ivir. georg. 79) than in the Sinai palimpsest; in contrast to this, Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 is more similar to the Latin version, at least for the chosen passage, whereas the Armenian translation stands farther apart, and even lacks the last part of the passage. Nonetheless, some similarities between the Armenian version and Sin. georg. NF 84 + 90 can be observed, such as in l. 3 in Table 5, where the Georgian and Armenian content is almost identical. Another interesting coincidence emerges in the representation of the name of Primus as Primen in l. 1, also in Table 5, which deserves further attention.<sup>51</sup>

For a complete evaluation of the Georgian palimpsest, a parallelisation of the whole text with the Greek, Latin, and Armenian versions will be necessary. Only then can a text-critical analysis shed more light on the interdependence of the given manuscripts and the question of which of the text versions can be regarded as the source text for the legend in Georgian.

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<sup>50</sup> See Kamarauli 2024 for details.

<sup>51</sup> For an analysis of name variations in the legend, see Kamarauli 2024.



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## Abbreviations

### Grammatical terms

adv = adverbial case

aor = aorist tense

dat = dative case

gen = genitive case

instr = instrumental case

irr = irreal particle

nom = nominative case

pl = plural

pres = present tense

pv = preverb

s = subject

sg = singular number

1/2/3 = 1st/2nd/3rd person

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*Acta Sanctorum* = *Acta Sanctorum, Junii*, vol. 7, Paris: Société des Bollandistes, 1867.

*BHG* = François Halkin, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, 3rd edn (Subsidia Hagiographica, 8a), Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1957; *Novum Auctarium* (Subsidia Hagiographica, 65), Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1984.

*BHL* = *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*, 2 vols, Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1898–1901, with a supplement by Henricus Fros, 1986.

*BHO* = Paul Peeters, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* (Subsidia Hagiographica, 10), Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910.

*CPG* = Maurits Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, vol. 2: *Ab Athanasio ad Chrysostomum*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1974.

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*Vark'* = [Ghevond Alishan (ed.)], *Vark' ew vkayabanowtiwnk' srboc'*, vol. 2, Venice: San Lazzaro, 1874.

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