

# The Iviron Monastery of Mount Athos in the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> C. History, Pilgrims, and Manuscripts

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Of the Georgian cultural centres functioning abroad, the Iviron Monastery on the Holy Mount Athos had the greatest importance for the development of Georgian culture. The first monks appear on Mount Athos from as early as the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries, and at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> c. the centre of the Greek monasteries also moved there (Beck 1959: 218-220). In 870 Ioane Kolovu founded one of the first monasteries, and in the subsequent period large-scale construction began, several significant monasteries sprang up, and Mount Athos was renamed the Holy Mountain.<sup>1</sup> Many Christian nations had their own monasteries on Mt. Athos and, naturally, the Georgians too. After the intensification of the political and ecclesiastic relations between Byzantium and Georgia in the 10<sup>th</sup> c., the Georgians began to settle on Mt. Athos. Reliable sources for the history of the establishment of the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos are the *Life of Ioane and Euthymius* (by Giorgi the Athonite), a hagiographic work composed at Iviron proper, and the Acts of the Iviron Monastery (see *Actes d'Iviron*, Illustr. 2). One of the founders of the Iviron Monastery, who was also a monk there, was in the past a great military commander: Tornike Eristavi. The foundation of the Monastery has the following history: in 961-1001, Bardas Scleros, a feudal lord of Asia Minor, rebelled against underage princes of Byzantium Basil and Constantine. The rebels occupied a great part of Asia Minor, thus endangering the central power of Byzantium. The Emperor's court turned for help to the King of Iberia David Kuropalates. A 12,000-strong army, headed by Tornike Eristavi, set off from Georgia to assist the princes. The Georgians played a significant role in the defeat of the rebellious lord

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<sup>1</sup> Previously 'The Holy Mountain' was the name of Mount Olympus (in Bithynia), and from the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> c. it came to refer to Mount Athos, see Uspenski 1901: 201.



(*Byzantium* 2010). By means of the reward granted to the Georgians after that battle, the construction of the Monastery of the Georgians began, which was completed in 983. The first abbot of the Iviron Monastery was monk Ioane, who arrived from Georgia. He became engaged energetically in strengthening the Georgian Monastery: he purchased lands, secured an income for the Monastery, etc. Through the efforts of Ioane and Tornike, with the assistance of the Byzantines and the fervent activity of the Athonite Georgians, by 985 Iviron became a strong monastery. Ioane and Tornike won the love and respect of the Byzantines as well as the Georgians, labouring on Mt. Athos. The acknowledgement of the builders' works is testified by the composition of the Athonite fathers' *Life* in Georgian and Greek, the epigram dedicated to Ioane the Georgian, written in Greek, etc. Over the centuries, the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos was the centre of Georgian-Byzantine cultural relations. From the '970s valuable manuscripts were created at Iviron (the Gospel-book studded and adorned with precious stones *Ath 83*, the calligraphic *Oktoekhos Ath 45*, etc.) and significant works of all genres of ecclesiastical literature (Biblical, exegetic, ascetic, polemical, liturgical) were composed and translated from Greek into Georgian. The first complete Georgian Bible (Ms. *Ath 1*) was copied precisely for Iviron. Among the men of letters labouring at the Georgian Monastery, mention should be made of the outstanding fathers Euthymius and Giorgi the Hagiorites. Euthymius translated and wrote original works in Georgian and Greek and translated from Georgian into Greek as well. Suffice it to recall *The Wisdom of Balavar*, a hagiographic ascetic-dogmatic work, widespread in the Middle Ages, translated into the Greek language by Euthymius. (Its Latin translation appeared soon, which was afterwards translated in many European languages) (Menabde 1982: 14-15). The literary-cultural activity continued busily at the Iviron Monastery in the 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> c. The main focus in the activity of the figures of this period, especially Euthymius and Giorgi the Hagiorites, Ioane Grdzelisdze and Arsen Ninotsmindeli, Priest Ioane (who copied numerous manuscripts in Georgian and Greek), and also Ioane Khatular, Ezra the Hymnographer, Stepane the Athonite, Basil, Archpriest Evstrati, Monk Zosima and others, was the literary work. By their creative work, fruitful translation activity and practical work, Iviron fathers made a great contribution to the treasury of the Georgian spiritual culture. Giorgi the Hagiorite struggled towards the force of the national-state and religious purity of the Georgians, the progress of national literature and the increase of the level of culture. From the day of its foundation, the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos was greatly assisted by the Kings of Georgia: David Kuropalates, Sumbat Kuropalates,



Bagrat IV, David the Builder, Queen Tamar. In the 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and also later, Iviron suffered from time to time the oppression of Greek monks. First, in 1019-1029 the Greeks began to outnumber the Georgians. The danger of losing Iviron appeared. Therefore the Georgians serving at the Monastery collected old documents and drafted new ones concerning the belonging of the Monastery to the Georgians, trying to defend their rights. A document concerning the relations between Georgians and Greeks on Mt. Athos was drafted, in which it was stressed that the Monastery belonged to the Georgians, the history of its founding and development was described, the contribution of the donors to the Monastery was shown (Menabde 1982: 18; *Monuments* 1967: 94-99). Certainly this testament could not have stopped the Byzantines' increase in number. The Athonite Georgians worked actively, the Iviron fathers acted energetically, Georgian kings, noblemen and outstanding church figures (such as Grigol and Abaz Bakurianisdzes, Nikoloz Gulaberisdze) granted them a generous support, but it became difficult to withstand the Greeks' force. Invasions of enemies were added to this. All this considerably weakened the Georgian Monastery.

From the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> c., when the political strength of Georgia was on the decline and the country could no longer grant assistance to the Monastery on Mt. Athos, the number of the Georgians at Iviron decreased considerably. The Greeks, whose number increased in the Monastery, began to act forcefully and by the decision of the Protos (the Governing Council of the monasteries of Mt. Athos) and Patriarch Kallistos of Constantinople (1350-1363) the main council church was taken away from the Georgians, they were prohibited to occupy official posts at the Monastery and a small church was assigned to them (Menabde 1980: 224). However, this was just a temporary loss of Iviron.

The history of Iviron developed otherwise after the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the invasion of the Turks.

After the Turks conquered Byzantium in 1453, in the 15<sup>th</sup> c. they also conquered the territory of Greece, occupied Mt. Athos as well and proclaimed its monasteries as the possession of the Sultan's mother (Uspenskij 1845: 177-178). Iviron too found itself in a difficult situation. It was obvious that without the support of fellow countrymen the Monastery could not exist. The Athonite Georgian monks arrived in Georgia in 1492, they visited Atabag Qvarqvar of Samtskhe (1451-1498) and informed him about the trouble of the Monastery. Samtskhe Atabags<sup>2</sup> made generous donations to the Iviron Monastery, and supported it in the subsequent period

<sup>2</sup> Samtskhe lies in the South of Georgia, where rich and influential feudal lords lived. Samtskhe feudal lords were called 'Atabags'.



as well. E.g., by the order of Atabag Mzechabuk, painter Ambrosi arrived on Mt. Athos and had the Icon of the *Portaitissa* richly enchased, built a tower to the church, a hospital and metokhion (Menabde 1980: 226). The support and donations of the Georgians improved the situation at Iviron by the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> c. Restoration-renewal of the ruined buildings started, after which the number of the Georgian monks began to increase. This was also facilitated by the fact that in that period (1511) Iviron had a Georgian abbot. (*ibidem*: 227). At that time a Georgian man of letters, Theodosios the Hieromonk, who worked at Iviron, wrote the history of the Georgian Monastery in the Greek language (1459-1514). This history was translated into Georgian in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.

The constructive activity of the Georgians was intensive throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> c. Kings Levan and Alexander of Kakheti (Eastern Georgia) made great donations to Iviron, and not only to this Monastery (see Illustr. 3). Through their donation, the Philotheou Monastery was also renewed, where images of the kings occur on the wall (*ibidem*: 228). No information has survived in written sources on the monks serving at Iviron in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. There are records of Mt. Athos in that period in travel journals, e.g., that of the French P. Belon, in 1553, and the Russian Ioakim, in 1561, but the Georgians are not mentioned. From the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> c. Russian donors appear in the history of Mount Athos, namely, Iviron. "The Russians had an idea that they were successors of the Greeks and their mission was to defend Christianity in the East. This explains the assistance of the Russian kings granted to the Iviron Monastery in 1584-1586" (Menabde 1980: 228). Along with the Russians and the Georgians, others also supported the Monastery, e.g., at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. the painter Mark painted murals at Iviron by the donation of Prince Michael II of Ungro-Vlahia (Menabde 1980: 229).

Such episodic assistance could not change the situation at Iviron. After Sultan Selim confiscated lands from Mt. Athos in 1568 (Uspenskij 1901: 951-961), the economic situation became unbearable at Iviron too. At that time, the King of Georgia Alexander sent again to the Monastery 12,000 gold coins and the monks rescued the Monastery from a "heavy debt" (Menabde 1980: 228).

It is obvious from the Iviron documents of the 17<sup>th</sup> c. that the restoration and building activities were underway almost throughout the century. "A new hospital was built, murals were painted, the communion altar, the church porch and vaults were made" (*ibidem*); a water-pipe and two springs were made; two chapels were painted, etc. These works were done mostly by the means received from Georgia.

The 17<sup>th</sup> c. is, to a certain extent, an outstanding period in the Iviron history. At that time the keen interest of Russian kings for it was noteworthy. In 1648



an exact copy of the icon of the *Theotokos* was moved to the Monastery of St. Nicholas in Moscow, and later this monastery was proclaimed a metokhion of Iviron (Menabde 1980: 228). In 1665 a Russian figure, Arsen Sukhanov, visited the libraries on Mt. Athos and took back home nearly 500 Greek manuscripts, among them 156 from the Iviron library. This fact demonstrates the richness and significance of the Iviron manuscript depository. The study of these manuscripts brought to light books from the library of the period of Euthymius the Athonite. It turned out that restoration of manuscripts was underway in the 17<sup>th</sup> c (Menabde 1980: 231).

From the 18<sup>th</sup> c. on, the interest of pilgrims and travellers in the monasteries of Mt. Athos, and in particular Iviron, increased. These journeys were of a different character.

Some of them only had a pilgrimage character and aimed at the veneration of holy relics, especially the miraculous Icon of Portaitissa. Among the travellers were Russians and Georgians, and their journals provide interesting information about the situation of Iviron in the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Among the foreign travellers, mention should be made of I. Komnin, who visited Iviron in 1701, and I. Vishnevski, visiting the Georgian Monastery in 1709. Their records contain information about the foundation of the Monastery and its donors and the structure of the main church. The *catholicon* and the library are described, the abundance and variety of manuscripts is noted, but the contents of manuscripts are not given. An article published in Venice in 1713 is noteworthy – *The Foundation of the Georgian Monastery on Mount Athos and the Wonderful Appearance of the Icon of the Blessed Virgin, Called Portaitissa* (see “Georgica” VIII, 1967: 257-270). It relates the history of the establishment of Iviron Monastery, the heroic deed of Tornike Eristavi, the translation and the literary work of Euthymius the Athonite, the history of the Icon of the *Theotokos*, etc. Europe got acquainted with the history of Iviron from this source (Menabde 1980: 231).

The famous Russian traveller V. Grigorovič-Barski visited Mt. Athos twice, in 1725 and 1744. He devoted a special attention in his records, after the Great Lavra, to Iviron. On the basis of various sources, he related the history of the foundation of the Monastery, noted that the Iviron book depository was one of the richest on Mt. Athos, and also noted the Georgians’ presence in the Philotheou Monastery.

The information on Iviron offered in the records of the above-mentioned travellers is almost identical. In all these sources it is noted that the architecture of the *catholicon* is beautiful, the library is rich and significant, etc.

Of the travellers visiting Iviron, the journey to Mt. Athos of the



Georgian pilgrim Timote Gabashvili<sup>3</sup> and his composition are especially noteworthy (See illustr. 4). Researchers refer to this work as a definite mixture of artistic-documentary prose and scholarly-historical work (Menabde 1980: 231). Gabashvili's narrative about Iviron is significant in many respects. The author offers not only a detailed description of the Georgian Monastery, but describes several other monasteries (the Great Lavra, Vatopedi, Hilandar, Philotheou), but the object of his special interest is precisely Iviron. The description of the *catholicon* of the Monastery is impressive: "The walls are of pure marble, the iconostasis is adorned with exotic flowers and weaving patterns in golden colour, the *ciborium* is overlaid with gold, windows are cut in the form of glass flowers, there is a large altar and excellently glazed icon lamps, it is a beautiful church" (Gabashvili 1956: 17).

In T. Gabashvili's work are gathered oral traditions about Iviron, existing at the time. Familiar with the Georgian manuscripts and historical documents preserved in the book depository of the Monastery, the *synodikon*, the traveller mostly relates information picked from manuscript colophons. He evokes in detail the history of the Georgians, still existing at the Monastery in his time. In particular, he mentions the buildings constructed by the donations of Georgian Kings Alexander I and Ashotan Mukhranbatoni. T. Gabashvili catalogued inscriptions confirming the activity of the Georgians at Iviron (Abbot Giorgi, the Icon of the *Portaitissa* and frescoes of Ashotan Mukhranbatoni, Catholicos Nikoloz. He also listed donations from Georgian noblemen (King Levan of Kakheti, King Simon, Queen Mariam, King Bakar and others) and, what is the most important, Gabashvili was the first to offer a precise list of the Georgian manuscripts preserved at Iviron. He noted that among the Monastery manuscripts there were many old Georgian books, e.g., a translation of the Genesis *Book of Paradise* by Sophronius of Jerusalem and a Gospel studded with precious stones donated by King Bakar (Gabashvili 1956: 23) T. Gabashvili was the first researcher of the Georgian manuscripts at Mt. Athos, this is confirmed by his numerous notes on Athos manuscripts, e.g., *Mss. Ath. 9, 25, 84*.

From T. Gabashvili's composition one learns that at Iviron in the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Georgian figures were celebrated with honour: Georgian kings, noblemen and all the Georgians who made donations to the Monastery were commemorated. It becomes clear from the same work that at the time of Gabashvili's visit to Iviron there were already no Georgian monks at the Monastery, so that the traveller expresses his heartache. He notes that the Lord made him worthy of

<sup>3</sup> Timote Gabashvili (1703-1764) was a Georgian traveler, diplomat, writer, cartographer, religious and public figure.



visiting the Monastery created by the ancestors' labour, from which Georgia was enlightened by the translation of books, and that at that time there were no Georgians left there (Menabde 1980: 234).

The oldest autograph manuscript of T. Gabashvili's *Journey* is preserved at the National Centre of Manuscripts – *Manuscript H 842*. This is undoubtedly an autograph, as it bears the following note: "I have written this modest report [on] the Georgians in a cell, during my pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain". This manuscript is a very significant source for the knowledge on Iviron in the 18<sup>th</sup> c. The manuscript contains an illustration of Iviron, drawn in Indian ink by T. Gabashvili himself.

The 19<sup>th</sup> c. proved hard and hopeless for Iviron. At the turn of the century, the Kingdom of Georgia lost its independence and was annexed to the Russian Empire. This was a hard blow for the Georgians and therefore the interest and attention given to Mt. Athos decreased. At that time the situation on Mt. Athos in general was no less difficult than in Iviron. The Turkish dominance compelled many Greek monks to leave the Holy Mountain. Few monks remained at Iviron. Among them were the monks Besarion (Benedikte) Kitishvili and Ilarion Qanchishvili. The latter was the father confessor of the last King of Western Georgia, (Imereti) Solomon II (1790-1815). After his country lost its independence, the king moved to Trabzon, and his father confessor accompanied him. After the king's death Ilarion settled at Iviron. The existence of the Georgian Monastery in the 19<sup>th</sup> c., preservation of the Georgian manuscripts, book binding and various kinds of restoration are linked to the names of these two figures. Their activity is confirmed by the notes in manuscripts *Ath 20, 39, 60, A 1103, A 1105, 1144* (Benedikte, illustr. 5), *Ath 5, Ath 9* (Ilarion). Ilarion copied at Iviron the *Teaching of the Fathers* (ms. *A 612*) and the *Teachings of Isaac of Syria* (ms. *H 1705*).

I. Qanchishvili worked quite fruitfully on Georgian manuscripts of Iviron. A representative of Iviron, Archimandrite Seraphim, commissioned him from Georgia to compile a catalogue of Georgian manuscripts. Father Ilarion fulfilled the task honestly, although, as he writes, "many manuscripts were scattered, worm-eaten and damaged. The Turks were in the Monastery for ten years and Greek and Georgian manuscripts were scattered, and many of them were not legible." (Menabde 1980: 238). Therefore, the catalogue compiled by him is not complete. Nevertheless, it is very significant, as it reflects the state of the Georgian manuscripts in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. Monk Ilarion is the first Georgian man of letters who preserved relatively full evidence concerning the Georgian manuscripts existing at Iviron. In the 1830s the Greeks finally drove away the Turks and monasteries of Mt. Athos again passed into the Greeks' hands. The latter then oppressed again the few



Georgians of Ivron and forced them to leave the Monastery. The cell of Prophet Elijah was assigned to Benedikte and some of his disciples. Monk Ilarion settled in solitude and continued his literary activity there.

One more traveller and researcher is Bishop Porfirij Uspenski, who visited the Athos monasteries, including the Monastery of the Georgians, and described in detail the location of Ivron, its structure, towers, big and small churches. It is worth noting that the descriptions of T. Gabashvili and P. Uspenski complement one another and offer a vivid picture of Ivron in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c.

I would like to devote a special attention to one more scholar and publicist, a figure of the 19<sup>th</sup> c., well-known in Georgia and Russia: Platon Ioseliani<sup>4</sup> (Illustr. 6). He visited Ivron in 1849 and he described the situation of Ivron in his travel notes. He worked productively especially in the depository of manuscripts, he studied Georgian manuscripts, copied the original hagiographic work *The Martyrdom of the Children of Kola* (Ms. S 530), unknown before that time, he took with him the Athos Bible for the purpose of copying and multiplication. It was reproduced in 3 copies for the large monasteries (Ms. S 422).

Ioseliani was highly esteemed in Russian scholarly circles and with their help he succeeded in writing to the Russian authorities. Through the intervention of the Russian Tsar's court, a greater attention was paid to the Georgian manuscripts at Ivron (Menabde 1980: 239). Ioseliani was an initiator of the restoration and the preservation of the collection of Georgian manuscripts at Mt. Athos. He bound and made covers himself for several manuscripts. He discovered, copied and brought to Georgia *akolouthia* (rite books) from the 18<sup>th</sup> c. The Greek hymn by Basil, dedicated to Euthymius the Athonite, was performed at Ivron on the commemoration day of one of the donors, an outstanding monk of Ivron. This manuscript is preserved nowadays at the National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi.

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<sup>4</sup> Platon Ioseliani was educated at the St Petersburg Theological Academy, he then taught physics and philosophy at the Tbilisi Theological Seminary and later worked in the office of the Viceroy of the Caucasus. His articles were regularly published in the Russian and Georgian press. From 1845 to 1856, he edited the Tbilisi-based periodical "Zakavkazsky Vestnik". In 1849 he took a trip to Greece and visited the medieval Georgian Monastery of Ivron on Mount Athos. He discovered and studied several old Georgian manuscripts, made substantial researches into the history of the Georgian Orthodox Church and published texts of medieval and early modern Georgian literature. Beyond that, Ioseliani was the first scholar to have embarked on a study of the evolution of urban settlements in Georgia. One of his last major works, concerning the reign of George XII (1798-1800), the last king of Georgia, was published posthumously in the Georgian magazine "Iveria", in 1880.



In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. the Georgians no longer enjoyed any rights at Iviron. The Georgians were not given the monastic food ration and no Georgian pilgrims were admitted there. In that period one more Georgian, Benedikte Barkalaia (Illustr. 7), came to Mt. Athos. He wished to become a monk on Mt. Athos, but was refused by the Greeks. Having returned to Georgia, he became a monk there and then together with several monks returned to Mt. Athos. By the donations collected in his homeland he established a new monastery near Iviron: the monastery of St. John the Theologian (Illustr. 8), and gathered there the Georgians that were scattered on Mt. Athos. He often addressed in writing the authorities of Georgia as well as those of Russia, requesting assistance for the Georgian monks, and the Georgian and Russian press permanently published materials about this matter. In spite of the support of Russia, it proved impossible for the Georgians to recover Iviron and strengthen their position. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. the Georgians finally lost the Monastery.

In spite of this sad ending and unbearable conditions, Georgian monks such as Father Pimen (Asatiani) copied and multiplied Georgian manuscripts at the Monastery of St. John the Theologian. He copied the *Ladder* by John of Sinai (Ms. A 1271), a collection of works by John Damascene, Ephiphanius of Cyprus and others (Ms. H 835).

From the 1880s the thorough study of Athos manuscripts began (a catalogue of Greek manuscripts compiled by S. Lambrosi). A serious research of the Georgian manuscripts of Iviron was initiated by Al. Tzagareli (Illustr. 9), who visited Iviron in 1883. He compiled the first complete catalogue of 86 entries of Georgian manuscripts, which is commonly used by Georgian scholars as well as foreign Kartvelologists<sup>5</sup>.

The study of Georgian antiquities of the Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos continued in the following century, and it continues to the present day.

In conclusion, I would like to sum up the above-mentioned. From the 15<sup>th</sup> c. to the 19<sup>th</sup> c. the situation of the Iviron Monastery changed according to the political situation of Greece and Georgia. After the fall of Byzantium the cultural and literary significance of the Monastery gradually decreased. In this period new literature was no longer translated, because the centre of Eastern Christendom, Byzantium, no longer existed and the cultural-educational stream no longer came from there. As demonstrated above, in the 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c. only manuscript copy-writing took place at Iviron, and most copies were made of those manuscripts which had survived in single copies and were

<sup>5</sup> The Georgian word *Kartveli* means “Georgian”, while ‘Kartvelology’ (‘Georgian Studies’) refers to the field of humanities covering Kartvelian (Georgian) history, language, religion, and culture. In a narrower sense, the term usually refers to the research activities outside Georgia that focus on these subjects.



necessary for the divine service. The only hagiographic work translated into Georgian in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c. is the *Life of Theodore the Fool-for-Christ*, with which the history of Georgian translated hagiography ended. In these centuries works of other genres might also have been translated, but they have not survived in the manuscript collection. But this is only an assumption. The manuscripts copied at the Ivron Monastery on Mt. Athos have survived in too small numbers, hard times destroyed many handwritten books. Of the 86 entries in the manuscripts collection of the Ivron Monastery, only a limited number are dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. These are mostly liturgical collections: Mss. *Menaion Ath 22* (Illustr. 10), *Ath 66*, *Ath 27* (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c.), *Paraklitike* (15<sup>th</sup> c.), *Ath 26*, *Triodion* (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c.), *Ath 38*, *Octoikhos* (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c.), *Ath 50*, *Heirmologion* (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> c.). Unlike older ones, these manuscripts are not written on a precious material and are plain in appearance, whilst the calligraphic hand is no longer discernible in them. All this demonstrates that these manuscript copies were made only for practical purposes.

The history of Ivron in the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c., records of Georgian and foreign pilgrims of that period and, what is most important, the preserved manuscripts show that this Monastery had a greater or a smaller significance for Georgia even during its hardest years. It should be noted that the study of the heritage of the Ivron Monastery has not lost its significance in contemporary days either and it is again urgent for Georgian as well as foreign scholars interested in this matter.

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“Georgica. Bizantieli mwerlebis snobebi saqartvelos shsaxeb” (Byzantine writers on Georgia), Tbilisi, 1967, t. VII.

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*A 1103, 1105, 1144; H 842, 1705, 835; S 530, 422* – Collection of the Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi

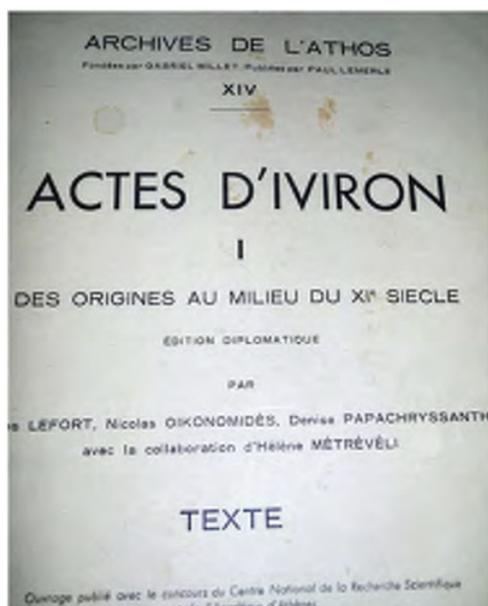
*Ath 5, 9, 22, 25, 26, 27, 38, 50, 66, 84* – Collection of the Georgian Manuscripts of the Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos



1. The Monastery of Iviron, Mount Athos (photo Luarsab Togonidze).



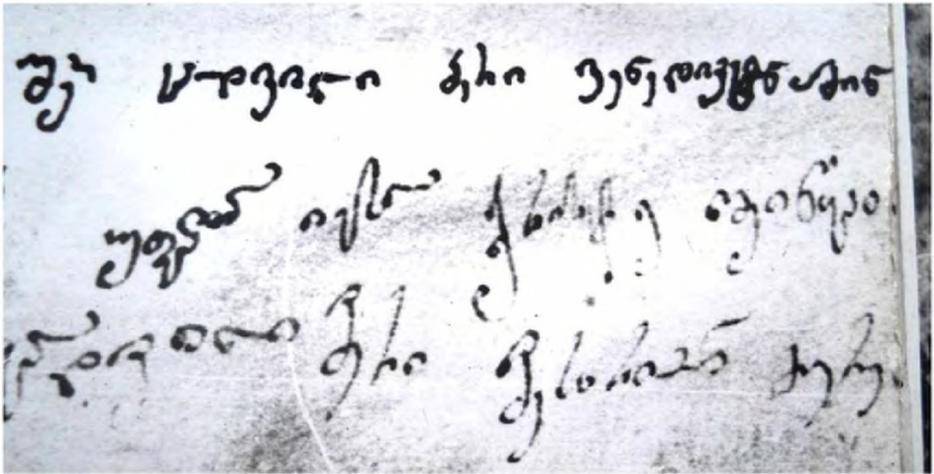
3. The Kings Levan and Aleksander, Philoteou Monastery, 16<sup>th</sup> c.  
(photo Luarsab Togonidze).



2. Actes d'Iviron, title page.



4. The Monastery of Iviron, drawing in Mimosvla by T. Gabashvili, 18<sup>th</sup> c.



5. Notes in one of Benedikte Barkalaia's manuscripts.



6. Platon Ioseliani (Archive of the National Centre of Manuscripts).



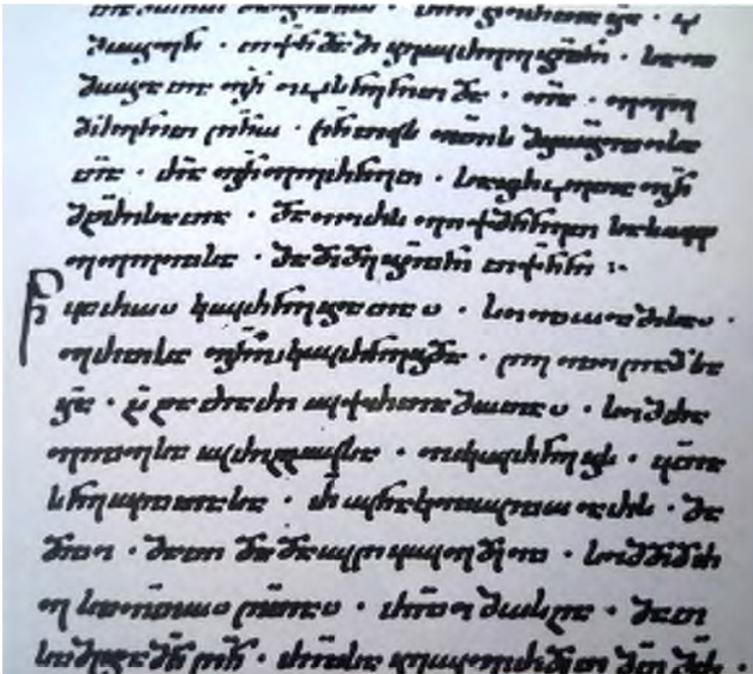
7. Monk Benedikte Barkalaja (from Luarsab Togonidze's photo collection).



8. The Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Mount Athos.



9. Alexander Tzagareli (Archive of the National Centre of Manuscripts).



10. Menaion, XVI<sup>th</sup> c. (Mss collection of the National Centre of Manuscripts).