

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript (Anonimi i Elbasanit), 1761, and the struggle for an original Albanian alphabet

by
Robert Elsie

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1. Early Albanian literature and the alphabet problem

Albania's national culture came into being at the crossroads of three great civilizations: that of Latin Catholicism from the West, that of Byzantine Greek Orthodoxy from the south, and that of Islam imported by the Ottoman Turks, who had invaded the country in the late 14th century and who ruled it until the declaration of independence in 1912. Early writing in this tiny Balkan country, very much a product of these three extremely diverse cultures, was as a result a hybrid creation.

The most spectacular achievements of early Albanian literature were produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the aegis of the Catholic Church. Primary among them are the so-called Missal (1555) of Gjon Buzuku, the first Albanian-language book, published no doubt in Venice; an Albanian translation of Jacob Ledesma's Christian Doctrine (1592) by the Sicilian Arbëresh cleric Lekë Matrënga or Luca Matranga (1567-1619); the religious prose and verse of Pjetër Budi (1566-1622), including an Albanian translation of St. Robert Bellarmine's Christian Doctrine (1618), the Rituale Romanum (1621) and the Speculum Confessionis (1621), adapted from the Specchio di Confessione of Emerio de Bonis; the Latin-Albanian dictionary (1635) of Frang Bardhi or Franciscus Blanchus (1606-1643); and, last but certainly not least, the Cuneus prophetarum (1685), an astounding work of original Albanian prose by Pjetër Bogdani or Pietro Bogdano (ca. 1630-1689). With the death of Bogdani, however, this current of Albanian literature withered and expired quite suddenly. Catholic resistance to Islam had all but collapsed.

With the conversion of much of the Albanian population to Islam after the incorporation of the country into the Ottoman Empire, a new Albanian literature came into being in Arabic script¹. The verse of the so-called Albanian Bejtexhinj is of thoroughly Oriental inspiration and is so pervaded with Arabic and Turkish vocabulary that it makes extremely difficult reading for most people today, even when transcribed into the Latin alphabet. The earliest datable Albanian

¹ cf. Elsie 1992.

poem in Arabic script is a hymn to coffee (1725) by one Muçi Zade. Among the foremost literary representatives of this 'Aljamiado' culture are Nezim Frakulla (ca. 1680-1760) and Sulejman Naibi (d. 1771).

With the exception of these Bejtexhinj and of some Italo-Albanian writers of talent, among whom the Sicilian Nicola Chetta (1740?-1803), author of the first Albanian sonnet (1777), and Giulio Variboba (1724-1788) from San Giorgio Albanese in Cosenza, author of the 4717-line 'Life of the Virgin Mary' (1762), the eighteenth century proved to be a period of virtual stagnation in Albanian writing. It was only with the rise of the nationalist movement in the second half of the nineteenth century that literature in Albanian began to flourish once again.

Though the Albanians had, and still have a remarkable folk culture and a wealth of oral literature, their being at the crossroads of these three cultures and the respective political forces which introduced them, long proved to be an impediment to the development and advancement of written literature. These cultures introduced a whole gamut of literary influences into Albania, but they also split the Albanian people into three different worlds.

Among the many literary problems which had to be tackled by Albanian intellectuals and which was not satisfactorily solved until the twentieth century, was reaching a consensus on a common alphabet for the Albanian language². Albanian Catholics, centred primarily in the mountainous north of the country, used the Latin alphabet which proved most suitable for printing. Orthodox Albanians in the south used the Greek alphabet in which a modest number of works were written³. Moslems of course regarded the Arabic alphabet, that of the Holy Koran, as the only viable alternative for a vernacular literature. Usage of any of these three alphabets implied a clear identification with the foreign culture and religion from which it derived, an identification which was unacceptable to Albanians of the other faiths.

With no cultural consensus on an alphabet, no national literature could arise. The stagnation of Albanian literature in the eighteenth century derives, in part at least, from this problem. The alphabet dilemma continued to plague Albanian intellectuals well into the twentieth century.

From the very first attempts to put the Albanian language to writing, clerics and intellectuals were very much aware that all the writing systems at their disposal were foreign. They also knew that the neighbouring peoples were in possession of distinct writing systems which had helped their respective cultures and literatures to advance more quickly. The Greeks had always had a distinct alphabet for their language and the Balkan Slavs had developed their own writing systems: Glagolitic and then Cyrillic, which first flourished at Ohrid, less than one hundred kilometers from Elbasan. The Turkish occupants had also introduced a distinct, new alphabet which they had themselves borrowed from their Arabic and Persian neighbours.

It was most certainly the wish of many Albanian intellectuals for their people to have a

² On the history of Albanian alphabets, cf. Rrota 1936, Skendi 1960, Janura 1969, Hoxha 1986, and Osmani 1987.

³ cf. Elsie 1991.

distinct writing system of their own, and it can come as no coincidence that the need to invent an original Albanian alphabet was felt most urgently in central Albania. The vascillating frontier between the Roman West and the Byzantine East, i.e. the cultural and linguistic border between Latin and Greek, was to be found over the centuries quite often somewhere in central Albania. A Catholic cleric from the northern highlands would perhaps not have questioned the necessity of writing Albanian in Latin script and an Orthodox priest from the extreme south would have written in Greek script as a matter of course. The central Albanians were logically more disoriented in view of the constant fluctuation of the cultural and political border. The imposition of Islam only made things more confusing. It brought a solution to the alphabet question only to those who accepted the tenets of the Moslem faith.

It is therefore from the central Albanian Christians that one would expect the first attempts at the creation of an original Albanian alphabet, and it was indeed by them that the first original alphabets were created in the period 1750 to 1850. The earliest of these original alphabets, and at the same time the best adapted of them all, was that created for the so-called Elbasan Gospel Manuscript.

2. The oldest original Albanian alphabet and the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript (1761).

The **Elbasan Gospel Manuscript**, known in Albanian for want of a better term as the Anonimi i Elbasanit (The Anonymous of Elbasan), is a tiny and quite unique manuscript now preserved at the State Archives in Tiranë which evinces a revolutionary attempt to solve the alphabet dilemma. This 10 x 7 cm. manuscript of historic significance, consisting of 30 unnumbered brown folios, records the earliest-known Albanian-language text in an original alphabet. With the exception of the short fifteenth-century Easter Gospel or Pericope⁴, it is the oldest work of Albanian Orthodox literature and the oldest Orthodox Bible translation of all.

The 59 pages of biblical texts contained in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, a total of 6,113 word, were written in an alphabet of forty letters. Thirty-five letters recur normally in the text and five letters can be considered rare or secondary. Though there is a distinctly Greek flavour to some of the characters and a possibly Slavic flavour to others, most of the letters in this alphabet would seem to be new creations, uninfluenced by neighbouring languages and scripts⁵.

⁴ The Easter Gospel or Pericope is a late-fifteenth century Albanian text consisting of fifteen lines in Greek script translated from the Gospel of St. Matthew (27: 62-66). It was discovered by the Greek historian Spyridôn Lampros (1851-1919) in 1906 in a Greek manuscript at the Ambrosian Library in Milan (Codex 133, f. 63). cf. Lampros 1906 and Borgia 1930.

⁵ Shuteriqi 1949, p. 38 and Domi 1965, p. 272, insist, however, on seeing a strong Slavic influence in the creation of this alphabet, a fact which they attribute to the dependence until 1767 of the Orthodox Church in Albania upon the Bulgarian Patriarch of Ohrid. In 1767, Ohrid was taken over directly by the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople.

The alphabet of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript is quite well suited to the Albanian language. Indeed, on the whole, one might regard it as better suited than the present-day Albanian alphabet, based on a Latin model. The Elbasan alphabet utilizes one character per phoneme, with the exception of n for which there are two characters and g for which there are three characters (two of which being restricted to specific Greek loanwords). The distinction between Albanian r and rr and between l and ll is created by a dot over the character. A dot over a d creates an nd. A spiritus lenis plus acute above the line, as in Greek, seems to be utilized on a sporadic basis to indicate word or phrase stress. On the whole, the writing system utilized in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript is clear, relatively precise, and appears to be well thought out by its inventor.

3. Other original Albanian alphabets (1761-1844)

The alphabet of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript [1] is not the only original Albanian alphabet to have come into being in central and southern Albania from the second half of the eighteenth century on. Indeed we have information about a total of seven original Albanian alphabets in this period.

On the front page of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript itself is a drawing and about a dozen words, perhaps personal names, written in a script [2] which differs completely from that of the rest of the manuscript. This writing system has as yet to be deciphered, although Elbasan scholar Dhimitër Shuteriqi (b. 1915) has made an attempt to read it, to which reference is made below.

Better known than these two writing systems is the so-called Todhri alphabet [3], attributed to Theodor or **Todhri Haxhifilipi** (1730-1805) of Elbasan, which has been the subject of numerous scholarly studies over the years. The Todhri alphabet was discovered by Johann Georg von Hahn (1811-1869), Austrian consul in Janina and the father of Albanian Studies. Hahn published what he regarded as 'the original' Albanian alphabet in his monumental Albanesische Studien (Jena 1854) and saw in it a derivative of ancient Phoenician script⁶. The study of this alphabet was subsequently taken up by Leopold Geitler (1847-1885) who regarded Todhri script as derived primarily from Roman cursive⁷, and by the Slovenian scholar Rajko Nahtigal⁸ (1877-1958). The Todhri alphabet⁹ is a complex writing system of fifty-two characters which was used sporadically for written communication in and around Elbasan from the late eighteenth century on. It does not conform adequately to the Albanian language,

⁶ cf. Hahn 1854, vol. 1, p. 280-300.

⁷ cf. Geitler 1883.

⁸ cf. Nahtigal 1923.

⁹ cf. also Nosi 1918, Qafëzezi 1937, Ressuli 1938, Shuteriqi 1949, 1954, 1959, 1973, and Hetzer 1987.

certainly not as well as the alphabet of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, to which it shows no relation.

Another original Albanian alphabet is that contained in the so-called Codex of Berat [4]. This 154-page manuscript, now preserved in the National Library of Tiranë, is in actual fact a simple paper manuscript and must not be envisaged as an illuminated parchment 'codex' in the Western tradition. It seems to have been the work of at least two hands and to have been written between the years 1764 and 1798. The manuscript is commonly attributed to one **Constantine of Berat** (ca. 1745 - ca. 1825), known in Albanian as Kostandin Berati or Kostë Berati, who is thought to have been an Orthodox monk and writer from Berat. Constantine of Berat is reported to have possessed the manuscript from 1764 to 1822, although there is no indication that he was its author. The Codex of Berat contains various and sundry texts in Greek and Albanian¹⁰: biblical and Orthodox liturgical texts in Albanian written in the Greek alphabet, all of them no doubt translated from Greek or strongly influenced by Greek models; a forty-four-line Albanian poem with the corresponding Greek text known as Zonja Shën Mëri përpara kryqësë (The Virgin Mary before the cross); two Greek-Albanian glossaries comprising a total of 1,710 entries; various religious notes; and a chronicle of events between 1764 and 1789 written in Greek. On page 104 of the codex, we find two lines of Albanian written in an original alphabet of 37 letters, influenced, as it would seem, by Glagolitic script. On page 106, the author also gives an overview of the writing system he created. It, too, is not well devised and does not seem to occur anywhere else.

From Gjirokaštër in the south, we have some information on another Albanian writing system which may derive either from the late eighteenth or from the first half of the nineteenth century. Like the Todhri alphabet, this Gjirokaštër alphabet [5], a writing system of twenty-two letters, was discovered and published by Johann Georg von Hahn¹¹. Hahn tells us: "Finally, another alphabet from southern Albania must be recorded here, one which the present author owes the discovery of to **Veso bey**, who is one of the most prominent chiefs of Gjirokaštër, from the family of the Alisot Pashalides. Veso Bey learned it in his youth from an Albanian hodja as a secret script which his family inherited, and used it himself for correspondence with his relatives."

Yet another original Albanian alphabet was invented and used in southern Albania, that of **Jan Vellara**¹² (1771-1823), known in Greek as Ioannis Vilaras (Iôannês Bêlaras). The son of a doctor, Vellara studied medicine in Padua in 1789 and later lived in Venice. In 1801, he became a physician to Veli, son of the infamous Ali Pasha Tepelena (1741-1822). Vellara is remembered primarily as a modern Greek poet and does not seem to have been a native Albanian speaker at all. He is the author of eighty-six pages of bilingual grammatical notes, dated 1801, which were designed no doubt to teach other Greek-speakers Albanian. The Albanian in question is a Tosk dialect written in an original alphabet of thirty letters [6] based on Latin and to a lesser

¹⁰ cf. Ressuli 1938, Shuteriqi 1976, p. 121-122, and Hetzer 1981b, 1981-82, 1982a, 1982b, 1986, 1989.

¹¹ cf. Hahn 1854, vol. 1, p. 297. cf. also Shuteriqi 1977 and 1979.

¹² cf. Jochalas 1985.

extent on Greek. The manuscript of the work was donated to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (supplément grec 251, f. 138-187) in 1819 by François Pouqueville (1770-1839), French consul in Janina during the reign of Ali Pasha Tepelena. Pouqueville was aware of the value of the work, noting: "Je possède un manuscrit, une grammaire grecque vulgaire et schype qui pourrait être utile aux philologues", but chose not to publish it in his travel narratives. Appendixed to the grammatical notes is also a letter dated 30 October 1801, written in Albanian in Vellara's handwriting from the village of Vokopolë, south of Berat, where the physician had been obliged to follow Veli during the latter's military campaign against Ibrahim of Berat.

The last independent writing system created for Albanian during this period was that invented by **Naum Veqilharxhi** (1797-1846), also known by his fuller name of Naum Panajot Haxhi Llazar Bredhi, a scholar from the Korçë region. Veqilharxhi invented a thirty-three letter alphabet [7] which he had printed in an eight-page Albanian spelling book in 1844. This little spelling book was distributed throughout southern Albania, from Korçë to Berat, and was received, as it seems, with a good deal of enthusiasm. In the following year, 1845, the booklet was augmented to forty-eight pages¹³ in a now equally rare second edition entitled Faré i ri abétor shqip per djélm nismetore (A very new Albanian spelling book for elementary schoolboys). However, the resonance of this original alphabet, which reminds one at first glance of a type of cursive Armenian, was in fact limited, due in part to the author's premature death one year later and in part no doubt to financial and technical considerations. In the mid-nineteenth century, when publishing was making great strides even in the Balkans, a script requiring a new font for printing would have resulted in prohibitive costs for any prospective publisher. As such, although reasonably phonetic and confessionally neutral, the Veqilharxhi alphabet never took hold.

With the rise of the Rilindja, i.e. nationalist movement, efforts to create an original Albanian alphabet gave way to the more realistic struggle to write and publish Albanian in the Latin, Greek and Arabic alphabets. No complete consensus on the alphabet question was attained before well into the twentieth century.

The hundred years between 1750 and 1850 constituted a period of astounding orthographic diversity in Albania. As we have seen, the Albanian language was then being written in no less ten different alphabets, i.e. the seven original writing systems mentioned above and the well-known adaptations of Latin, Greek and Arabic scripts. It is a wonder indeed that Albanian culture managed to survive such an age of literary schizophrenia.

4. History, authorship and language of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript derives from the famous Orthodox monastery of St. John Vladimir (Shën Jon Vlladimirit) in the village of Shijoni, a few kilometers northwest of Elbasan in central Albania.

¹³ cf. Qosja 1983.

Of the early history of the monastery itself, thought to have originally belonged to the Benedictine Order, we know the following. The Serbian prince, St. Vladimir, held his court in Krajina (now the southern Montenegrin coast) near a church dedicated to St. Mary, where he was buried after having been murdered in about 1016 on an island in Lake Prespa by John Vladislav, the last tsar of Ohrid. The bones of the prince are thought to have been removed from this church by the troops of Michael I, the Despot of Epirus, when they took the town of Shkodër from the Serbs for a time (ca. 1215), and were transported to Durrës. From the fourteenth century on, the corpse of the saint was preserved at the monastery of St. John Vladimir near Elbasan¹⁴. His feast day, 22 May, was celebrated well into the twentieth century¹⁵. After the destruction of the original monastery in an earthquake in 1380, Albanian prince Charles Thopia (1359-1388) had a church rebuilt in Byzantine style in 1381. An inscription to this effect, written in three languages (Greek, Serbian and Latin), is preserved in the National Museum in Tiranë. Five and a half centuries later, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) is said to have spent a night or two at St. John Vladimir during his unsuccessful military campaign against Greece in the Second World War. It was also during that war, on 14 March 1944, that the monastery burnt down, due not to combat apparently, but to the carelessness of the monks. The roofless building now stands in the middle of an Albanian military camp, but can, since the fall of the Communist dictatorship, be visited freely by interested travellers.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript was acquired at some point before or during the Second World War by Lef Nosi, an Elbasan scholar and collector of note. Lef Nosi had been one of the organizers of the Congress of Elbasan in August 1909 during which the Shkolla Normale (Normal School) was founded. He later became the director of this school and was responsible for the publication of its organ Tomorri from 25 March 1910 on. Under the provisional government set up after independence by Ismail Qemali bey Vlora (1844-1919), he occupied the position of Minister of Posts and Telegraph, and was subsequently made a member of the provisional government constituted by Turhan Pasha in Durrës on 25 December 1918. In 1919, he was selected to be a member of the Albanian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, headed by Msgr. Luigj Bumçi (1872-1945). Between the two world wars, Nosi published documents of interest on Albanian history¹⁶. He later joined and headed the anti-Communist Balli Kombëtar movement during the Second World War. In 1943, he was made president of the National Assembly during the German occupation and was elected to the Supreme State Council on 22 October 1943. After the Communist takeover, he was sentenced as a collaborator and executed ca. 1945¹⁷.

Lef Nosi was reputed to have possessed the second largest library in Albania, after that of Mid'hat bey Frashëri (1880-1949), another figure of the anti-Communist resistance. Both private libraries found their way into the hands of the state after the 'liberation'. Announcement of the

¹⁴ Novaković 1893, p. 182-217, quoted by Jireček 1916, p. 95-96. Cf. also Hahn 1854, vol. 1, p. 82-84, and Radojičić 1965. p. 530-531.

¹⁵ cf. photograph no. 45 in Bernatzik 1930.

¹⁶ cf. Petrotta 1932, p. 368-369.

¹⁷ Schmidt-Neke 1987, p. 347.

discovery of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript was first made by scholar Dhimitër Shuteriqi in the Communist Party newspaper *Zëri i Popullit* on 9 January 1949. The manuscript was initially transcribed and published by historian Injac Zamputi (b. 1910)¹⁸ and was subsequently the object of early scholarly articles by Shuteriqi¹⁹ himself and by linguist Mahir Domi (b. 1915)²⁰. Since that time, it has fallen into oblivion despite its continuing significance not only for the history of Albanian orthography but also for eighteenth-century Albanian literature and for the history of the Albanian language.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript contains 59 pages of biblical text including both Bible translations (primarily from St. Matthew and St. John) and original narrative prose on the passion of Christ, including a simple but moving dialogue between Jesus on the Cross and the Virgin Mary (pp. 6-14). The translations are in no particular order, though this may be due in part to the page sequence of the manuscript in our possession. Pages 60 and 61 would for instance normally follow page 27. One has the impression that the manuscript is more of an early experiment at translating Bible texts than a serious translation of the New Testament.

The translations in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript (St. Matthew 10, 16, 19, 26, 27, 28; St. Mark 15; St. Luke 2, 22, 23; and St. John 1, 5, 9, 11, 13, 19, 20, 21) which constitute the greater part of the text (p. 2, p. 5 and pp. 14-61) are, with the exception of the above-mentioned short fifteenth-century Easter Gospel or Pericope, the first Albanian translations made directly from the Greek, and the oldest Bible translations made in the Orthodox milieu. They are otherwise preceded in time only by the works of the Italian-influenced authors of the Catholic north, beginning with Gjon Buzuku (1555) whose so-called Missal comprises translations made from Latin, Italian and Serbo-Croatian.

There has been much speculation as to the author of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript. Most information we now have would seem to indicate that this eighteenth-century text is the work of Gregory of Durrës (Gk. *Grêgorios ho Dyrakhíu*), also known as Gregory of Voskopojë or Moschopolis²¹. Gregory was an Orthodox cleric who was appointed Archbishop (Metropolitan) of Durrës in 1768 and who died some time before May 1772. He is known to have made translations from the Old and New Testaments in an alphabet he invented himself, and most historical and linguistic evidence seems to point to him as the author.

We may assume that Gregory was born towards the end of the seventeenth century. Traces of him go back to the 1720s when he is said to have met the Serbian illuminist Parthen Pavlović in Berat. He is also said to have been a student of Ioannes Chalkeus²².

¹⁸ cf. Zamputi 1949 and 1951.

¹⁹ cf. Shuteriqi 1949.

²⁰ cf. Domi 1965.

²¹ cf. Domi 1965 and Shuteriqi 1987.

²² Ioannes Chalkeus of Voskopojë was director of the *Flaggineíos Scholê* in Venice during the years 1694-1703 and 1712-1716. cf. Peyfuß 1989, p. 81 (fn.).

Orthodox culture in eighteenth-century Albania is intimately linked to the rise of the city of Voskopojë²³, now a village of five hundred inhabitants in the mountains twenty-five kilometers west of Korçë. In the sixteenth century, Voskopojë, known in Greek as Moschopolis and in Aromunian as Moscopole, increased tremendously in size to become one of the largest cities in the Balkans and a flourishing centre of trade and urban culture. At its zenith, before the city was pillaged for the first time in 1769, it is said to have had a population of over 20,000, greater than Athens, Sofia or Belgrade at the time, with an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 buildings, including 24 churches, a hospital, an orphanage, a library, the only Greek printing press²⁴ in the Balkans, which published at least nineteen religious works, and the so-called 'New Academy'. The New Academy or Hellênikon Frontistêrion was a centre of learning founded in 1744, similar to academies known to have existed in Bucharest, Iasi, Constantinople, Metsovon, Janina (Iôannina), Mt. Athos and Patmos. Many Greek scholars of note came to teach at Voskopojë among the Aromunians, who made up the majority of the population, the Albanians and the Greeks. The New Academy was not an exclusively theological institution. It enjoyed a good reputation for its teaching in ancient Greek, philosophy, mathematics and physics, and produced many a writer and scholar of repute. Between 1769 and 1789, Voskopojë was pillaged several times and came to lose its vitality and significance as a commercial centre on the trading route between Constantinople and Venice. It was finally destroyed in 1916 in fighting during the First World War and, with the exception of four or five beautiful Orthodox churches, the historical buildings which did survive were tragically razed in partisan warfare during the Second World War.

It is thought that Gregory of Durrës, as a budding Orthodox scholar, arrived in Voskopojë by 1730 at the latest. Mahir Domi believes he was in Voskopojë from the time of the founding of the printing press (1730) until 1744 when the New Academy was established²⁵. He published his first work 'Life of St. Nikodemos' in 1741²⁶. Matters are substantially obscured by continuing confusion between our author and another Gregory of Voskopojë, also known as Gregory Constantinidhi or Gregory the Printer (Gk. Grêgorios Typografos), who ran the printing press in Voskopojë at the time.

In 1744, our Gregory was chosen as an assistant to the rector of the New Academy and edited two books there. He is said subsequently to have taken up residence at the above-mentioned Monastery of St. John Vladimir near Elbasan (ca. 1746-1772), although there is no documentary trace of him there. What is for certain is that Gregory was appointed Archbishop (Metropolitan) of Durrës in 1768 and died before May 1772 when he was succeeded by Metropolitan Krisanthi. The Orthodox archdiocese of Durrës was a recent creation when Gregory

²³ Much has been written on the history of Voskopojë, primarily in Greek and German. cf. Skenderês 1928, Michalopoulos 1941, Martinianos 1957, Adhami 1972, 1989, Geôrgiadês 1975, Peyfuss 1976, 1986 and 1989, Gkatsopulos 1979, and Hetzer 1981a p. 20-25.

²⁴ On the printing press of Voskopojë, cf. Peyfuss 1989.

²⁵ cf. Domi 1965 p. 274-276.

²⁶ cf. Shuteriqi 1987.

took it over. It had its headquarters not in Durrës itself, but at St. John Vladimir, where Gregory can logically be thought to have died. Gregory of Durrës was reputed to have been one of the most learned persons in southern Albania during the lifetime. Despite this fact, we know tragically little about him.

The best documentary source of information on Gregory of Durrës is to be found in a work by his contemporary Geôrgios Zabiras (1744-1804), a Greek merchant who lived in Budapest. Zabiras compiled material on Greek authors from the fall of Constantinople to his times, which was published posthumously in a work entitled Nea Hellas ê hellênikon theatron (Athens 1872). With reference to the year 1761, Zabiras notes:

"Gregory of Durrës, pupil of Ioannes Ch., wrote an akolluthia (biographical notes) on the 'seven saints', i.e. Kyrillos, Klêmens, Methodios and Naum... which was published in Voskopojë; [a liturgical work] on the days, months and years; a prayer canon for St. Naum; various writings; and translated the Old and New Testaments, [translations] which he wrote in an Albanian alphabet he invented himself²⁷."

For the year 1767, Zabiras adds:

"Gregory, Metropolitan of Durrës, who in the year 1767 signed at the synod on marriage in Constantinople, wrote several notes on his times which were published at the end of the epistolary of Korydaleos in the year 1768 in Halle in Saxony²⁸."

Another concurring piece of information on Gregory of Durrës is contained in a letter sent by Greek scholar Iôakeim Martinianos to his Albanian colleague Ilo Mitkë Qafëzezi (1889-1964) in which the former writes:

"Both Kavallioti and other scholars from Voskopojë who took up the study of the Albanian language had the holy Gregory as their teacher. [Gregory] lectured for thirty years in Voskopojë and was elected Metropolitan of Durrës in 1748 [sic]. He left much Albanian writing unpublished at the monastery of St. John Vladimir in Elbasan²⁹ ..."

Although the above information would suffice to suspect Gregory of Durrës as the instigator of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, Dhimitër Shuteriqi has proposed a different authorship. In his attempt to decipher the words on the first page of the manuscript, written in a different script, Shuteriqi came up with the reading Theodoros Bogomilos as well as with a Papa Totasi. As the leading literary historian of socialist Albania, Shuteriqi's writings have been of great influence, and as such, these two names have entered the annals of Albanian literature and Albanian schoolbooks in connection with the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript. Shuteriqi thus regards the author of the text to be one Theodoros Bogomilos, an Orthodox priest from the Shpati region, where remnants of a Bogomil sect were said to have survived up to the mid-seventeenth century.

²⁷ cf. Zabiras 1872, p. 236.

²⁸ cf. Zabiras 1872, p. 244.

²⁹ cf. Domi 1965, p. 277.

While there is no specific evidence to contradict this theory, there is no real evidence in support of it either. In addition, Shuteriqi's reading of the undeciphered script on the first page of the manuscript must be regarded as tentative to say the least.

If we accept the authorship of Gregory of Durrës and the accuracy of Zabiras' information, we can date the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript to the year 1761. Gregory would have been living at the Monastery of St. John Vladimir for about fifteen years at that time. Seven years after his Bible translations, he would, as we have seen, be appointed Archbishop of Durrës (1768). It is conceivable, however, that the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript in our possession is nothing but an experiment in translation for a subsequent, more ambitious, and as yet undiscovered translation from the Old and New Testaments which Gregory is said to have made. Our manuscript could then be dated somewhat earlier.

Independent attempts at dating the manuscript on the basis of purely linguistic considerations have been difficult since there are not enough non-Moslem texts from the period to serve as comparisons. There is no linguistic evidence in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript that would make the mid-eighteenth century inappropriate as the period of creation. Dhimitër Shuteriqi regards the language of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript as somewhat more archaic than that of the Todhri texts and sees a certain affinity to the Catholic authors of the north, i.e. he prefers to date it to the seventeenth century. Todhri Haxhifilipi, as we have seen, could have been active anywhere from 1750 to 1800. Any seemingly more archaic elements in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript can, however, easily be attributed to the difference of dialect between our manuscript and the Todhri texts.

The sub-dialect in which the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript was written has been another a point of contention. It is obvious that the translations were made in a southern Geg dialect, such as that of Elbasan, but there are also certain undeniable Tosk elements in the text which are foreign to the Elbasan dialect as we know it today.

The general Geg character of the manuscript can be seen in the lack of rhotacism: urdhën 'order', sëmunë 'sick', të lutuna 'prayers', shkruam 'written', pam 'seen', mbuluam 'covered', mbushun 'filled', ikun 'gone' for Tosk urdhër, sëmurë etc.; in the infinitive: me thanë 'to say' for Tosk për të thënë; and in the formation of the future tense: kini me gjetun 'you will find' for Tosk do të gjeni, etc. Typical of Elbasan dialect are lexemes such as: njëme 'now'. On the other hand, we encounter the Tosk është 'is' throughout the text instead of Geg asht. Also present are clear Tosk verbal forms such as të jeç 'may you be', and të diç 'may you know'. The negative nuku 'not' is definitely reminiscent of the Korçë (and Voskopojë) region. Shuteriqi regarded the mixture of Geg and Tosk elements as proof of an author from the dialectically transitory Shpati region south of Elbasan. Unfortunately, we know too little of central Albanian dialects before the nineteenth century to come to any definite conclusions. Nonetheless, it would seem very difficult to pinpoint the existence of any one specific Albanian dialect reflecting the language of the Elbasan Gospel texts. It is much more likely that the texts were written, consciously or unconsciously, in a mixture of dialects.

From the linguistic point of view, Gregory of Durrës would again seem to be an ideal candidate as author. Raised in central southern Albania (Berat and Voskopojë), he spent fifteen years in Elbasan before undertaking his Bible translations. It would not be surprising therefore if his Elbasan Albanian were still permeated with the more southern elements of his childhood and

younger years. Indeed, it is quite conceivable that he was making a conscious effort to write in a supra-regional language which could be understood and appreciated by Albanians from various areas.

What is also noticeable about the language is the exceptional purity of the Albanian used. Albanian has always been an eclectic language. Throughout its history, from the very start, it has accepted and absorbed many foreign influences and loanwords. Turkish and Arabic loans were ubiquitous in the language during the Ottoman occupation. This linguistic openness has nonetheless been counteracted from time to time by appeals and campaigns for linguistic purity, notably in periods during which Albanian nationalism was on the rise. One such period, for instance, was the Rilindja age of national rebirth at the end of the nineteenth century when many writers made a conscious effort to replace existing Turkish loanwords with terms of purely Albanian origin.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript is a text which itself shows a surprising lack of loanwords. This may be taken as an indication of the author's nationalist awareness, not only his rejection of Islam on the one hand, but also of his will to write pure Albanian in the original Albanian alphabet of his invention. In the whole manuscript there are only three Latin and seven Turkish loanwords:

Latin loanwords

02.10 letërorëtë = scribes < Lat. litterator

06.06 mort = death < Lat. mors, mortis

19.10 letër = scripture < Lat. littera

Turkish loanwords

02.10 sarajet = palace < Tk. saray

04.08 kabil = possible < Tk. kabil

14.07 dushmanëvet = of the enemies < Tk. düşman

28.09 sheher = town < Tk. şehir

39.03 sahat = hour < Tk. saat

44.14 paha = price < Tk. paha

53.02 qorrit = blind < Tk. kör

Even more surprising is that only twenty-one Greek loanwords occur in a text which was translated directly from New Testament Greek:

Greek loanwords

02.04 apostojtë = the apostles < Gk. apostolos

02.09 upeshkëpintë = the chief priests < Gk. episkopos

02.17 mb[o]dhisnjënë = hinder < Gk. empodizô

03.07 ergjand- = silver coins. Neologism from Gk. argyria

03.18 profitëvet = of the prophets < Gk. profêtês

04.01 nomi = the law < Gk. nomos

05.06 dhidhaskale = teacher < Gk. didaskalos

07.15 parigori = comfort < Gk. parêgoria

13.11 dhaskali = teacher < Gk. daskalos

16.18 kustodhit = the guards < Gk. kustôdia

- 26.01 stadhion = stadium, furlong < Gk. stadion
 29.02 igemoni = the governor < Gk. hêgemôn
 33.01 adhit = of hell < Gk. haidu
 35.01 laust = the people < Gk. laos
 41.07 kranio = skull < Gk. kranion
 42.02 kalamt = reed, stick < Gk. kalamos
 43.09 angjelli = the angel < Gk. aggelos
 44.13 korvanat = treasury < Gk. korban < Hebrew
 46.19 klamidhë = robe < Gk. khlamys, khlamydos
 48.01 kliron = lot < Gk. klêros
 51.14 marturi = witness < Gk. martyria

It must have required a constant effort on the part of a writer of Greek Orthodox faith to find and use native Albanian words for many of the New Testament Greek terms so intimately linked to the traditions of the Orthodox Church. The author's conscious effort to avoid loanwords, in particular Turkish loans, is particularly evident on page 28, line 09, where he translated the word 'town' with the above-mentioned Turkish term sheher. He then crossed this word out and replaced it with the native Albanian term qytet = qytet.

5. Transliterated text of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 02

(Matthew 26:01-05 = 02.04-17)

- të shenjtënuashimenë të prem
 ten e madhe. o të bekuam të kër
 shtenë. thiri Krishti zoti ynë
 apostojtë e ju dëftoi atë ditë
 02.05 qi donte të të kryqzohej, e ju tha:
 o bijt e mi të dashun, ta dini se pas
 dy diç bahetë pasxa e atëhere
 dua të epem të më kryqzonjënë.
 atëhere u mbëlodhnë upeshkë
 02.10 pinjtë e letërorëtë ndë sarajet
 të Kaijafësë upeshkëpit e kuvën
 duanë shoq me shoq qi ta zanë
 çefun Jisunë ta vrasënë. e thoshin:
 mos e zamëte njëme më ditë të krem
 02.15 tesë se ishte e shëtynë se mos ba
 hetë t[ë] [p]ë[r]ziem ndë gjin qe duan
 e na mb[o]dhisnjënë se aqë prej cë
 [-----] perëndisë deshmë

Page 03

ta zanë Xrishnë ditën e pashkëvet

- 03.05 qi donjinë të hanjinë qegjnë qi të ju dëvtet[nj]ë se zoti Xrisht ë sht qegji i vërtetë qi donjënë të thernjënë çifutëtë më kryqt. atëhereza Judha një 12 apostoj shë qi ishte kusar ergjandashu[-] nëgjoi se bujarëtë ishinë ndë sarajet të ~~Pilotit~~ Kaijafë
- 03.10 së mbëledhun, vu ndër men të ve një të ju apë Xrishtnë, e vote ndë ta ju fal e ju tha: o qoftë i lav duruam perëndia o bujarë qi me driti sot e e gjofta se jam rrenë më dhidhaskalit të Krishtit, e [p]rand[---]i i psu a i mirë qi jam i Moisiut e i profitëvet e i n[-----]
- 03.15

Page 04

(freely adapted from Luke 22:04-06)

- 04.05 i nomit perëndisë erdha sot përpara juve qi të shtëpoj gjì thë gjinnë prej rrenësiet të kë tij njeriu. e e di se ju të perë disë inë e me nder ruani nomnë, e doni ta vritni e s'kini si[t]. er dha ke ju të jua përjap. po unë jam njeri i vorfën. është kabil për këtë gazulim e të mirë
- 04.10 qi baj me ju e më gjint të më pa guani? e prandaj qish doni të më ni[p]ni qi të ju ap ndë dorë tuaj? nëgjonjënë këto fjalë upesh këpinjtë e bujarëtë. u gazulua në më gazulim të math e ~~entanu~~
- 04.15 L-rgjande e atëhereza []th kërkonjë në koho [q]i të jua ja[p]ë. e ju tha se nesër dua të vinj mbë ju kur të jetë [-----]nj ju qi ta zinite

Page 05

(Luke 22:09-13 = 05.06-17)

atë ditë darkoi zoti Krisht ndë Vithanit me apostojt më shtëpi të Marisë e Marthës me t'amë[n]ë. e desh të venjë tjetërënë ditë ndë Iero

- 05.05 solimt të kryqzohetë. i thoshinë
apostojtë: dhidhaskale, ku do të
bajmë gati për pashkë? e Krishti
ju tha: ecëni ndë Ierosolimt
e kini me gjetun një njeri ke bar
05.10 një shtambë me ujë. atini ju gjit
ni e i tho: ti Zot shtëpisë, ku është
vend qi kam për të bam pashkë
të me të psuamitë mi? e ai ju
ka për të ju dëftyam vend të math
05.15 e atje bani gati. e tye votë
këta të dy apostoj e [ba]në si
i porositi Xrishti. prapësëri
u kthyenë ndë Vithanit [-----]

Page 06

- e shkoi atë natë me të mëdha të
lutuna. e e gjofti ZTi Xrisht
se erth koha të dahetë prej kë
co gjinvet të venjë ke i ati.
06.05 e donte të vinte ndë Ierosolim
të marë me të dashunitë tij mort.
thirri t'amën e tij e i thotë: o e am[ë]
blë mama ime, të lutem të jeç
me durim të math, e ta diç bukur
06.10 se është e duhetë të mbarohenë
gjithë të thanët e fjalëparëvet
qi kanë shkruam për mu. e duhetë
të vdes për shëndet të farësë njeriut.
e njëme erth koha e mortsë sime, e ti
06.15 ke o mama ime të helmohesh tepër
mbi gji[thë] gra të jetësë qi të mba
rohetë fjala e shenjti plakut
S[im]eon [qi] ka për të shkuam shpatë

Page 07

- ndë mjedis të zemërësë sate.
o mama ime, të dhimtunit qi ke
për të marë për mort eme është
ajo shpatë qi do të shkonjë ndë ze
07.05 mër të shpirtit yt. me gjithë këtë
të dhimtunit është i math, ashtu
duhetë të kesh nde durim të math,
se duhetë të mbarohetë të da
shunit të prindit tim. o mama
07.10 ime, sot dua të darkem me a

07.15 postojt e mi të cë prapëme dar
kë. e ta dish se duanë të parë
t e çifutëvet të më kryqzonjë
në, e u shiçë për L rgjande. ma
kij këtë parigori, se kam për
t'u gritun të tretënë ditë, e a
tëhereza duhetë të më shofç
të lavdshim mbret t[ë] pavde
kun, ku rinë gjoi [-----]

Page 08

08.05 PRDsha denj më gjunjë e ra për
mys e zu fill e i thotë Krishtit:
o biri im i ambli, zani yt e
vjalët e tua ma tun[n] zemë
rënë, e më vjene se shpirti im
iku prejje meje. o i pafajçim
i biri perëndisë, qish bane
qi do të marr[ç] të vdeç këtë mort
të shëmtuam pafaj mbë kryqt?
08.10 përgjegjetë Xrishti e i tha:
o e dashuna mama ime, këjo ë
shtë të dashunit e prindit im,
të vdes u, e ti të jeç e ta dish
ende ti të çekunit tem. e të më
08.15 lenohetë ende mu zemëra. nëgjo
qi ç'kam për të çekun. shef njëme
kryetë tem qi nu[k]u gjit hekur
të vihetë. nesër ke për ta pam
[-----]ë kunorë prej drize

Page 09

09.05 hym mbrenda ndë eshtëna të kre
it tim. e kur të më shofç ashtu, kij
durim, si kam për të pasun u.
shef njëme syt e mi çelë. nësër
ke për ti pam mbuluam e të më
luanjënë të pabesët. kur të shof
ç këto, kij durim. shef njëme
faqenjë teme të ndrçime.
09.10 nesër ke për ta pam mbushun
me këlbazë. kur të shofç këto,
kij durim. shef njëme gonjënë
teme plot amblë. nesër ke
për ta pam të më konjënë të
pabesëtë me një sugjer mbu

09.15 shun uthul e pshtumë. [s]i të shofç
këto, kij durim. shef njëme pë
lambënë teme pa plagë. nesër
ke për ta pam m [-----]

Page 10

shofç këto, kij durim. shef një
me gjithë shtatnë tem shëndoshë.
nesër ke për ta pam përgjakun
e rrafun gjithë. si të shofç këto,
10.05 kij durim. shëko njëme si më për
qarkenë të psuamit e mi. ne
sër kanë për të ikun të gjithë e
një acish ka për të më dhanë. si
10.10 të shofç këto, kij durim, o mama
ime. njëme më kuvëndon, ma ne
sër ma s'munç të më gjoftsh. njëme
më shef shëndoshë, ma nesër ke për
të më pam vdekun. si të shofç
10.15 këto gjithë, ende tepër kij du
rim. errini koha, o mama ime,
të të laa. këjo është të dashuni
të tem e të prindit, qi të vde[s]
[-----]p më ende ti ur

Page 11

dhën e uratënë tande të vdes.
tye thanë këto fjalë ZT XSHT
s'amësë ju err e vote ndajtë,
e tye qam thoshte: o biri im i pa
11.05 fajçimi, qish fjalë është këjo
qi më flet të të ap urdhë të ve
tesh të kryqzohesh? cia amë
i ka dhanë urdhën të birt të vri
tet? qi të t'ap ende u tyj?
11.10 si ta nëgjonjënë këto fjalë
amatë tjera mu më truajnë.
po i ambli biri im, këjo ësh
të të dashunit e të qielsë
prindit tyt, e yti, t'ap nde
11.15 nu urdhëninë tem, biri im, të
kryqzohesh. t'ap uratënë te
me e të prindit tyt. qoftë
gjithë me tyj. at[-----]

Page 12

- shtiu duartë ndë qafë-e e pu
thi ndë qafë e i tha: o krye
i shenjtënuashim mbushun me
urtësit të perëndisë qiellsë,
12.05 si do të durojsh kunorë prej dr[i]
ze? o e bekuameja faqe qi sho
fënë engjit e gazulohenë,
si do të març cipër kaqë shë
plakë e të pëgame këlbazë?
12.10 o sy të bekuam qi shifni perëdi,
si doni të shifni kaqë qen të
tërbuam përpara e kaqë shta
së t'egra përqark? o duar
fuqimëdha qi mbani gjithë
12.15 gjindnë, si doni të duroni e të
ngozhdoçi mbë kryqt? o pëlamba
e gazuluashime qi ke gjithë gja
[-----]ë dorë, si do të shkonjë
[-----] o biri im i be

Page 13

- kuami. njëme më dahetë shpirti
e zemëra prej meje. o helm i
math. o lot të panumura qi
ishinë atëhere m'atë shtëpi, më
13.05 nj'anë perëdesh me Marinë e Mar
thënë, më tjetër anë apostoit.
po Iudha zemërhekuri nuku
iu dhimti çiq të helmuamesë a
mën e Jisusit. qante Maydhali
13.10 nia tepër mbë të gjitha e thosh
te: o dhaskali im i urti, ku ikën,
ku ve? ku ti nëgjojmë fjalët e
tua të qiellsë, të psuamitë
tand, të parigorismitë tan
13.15 d? atëhere u nis XS të ecinjë të
venjë ndë Ierosolimt e perë
desha e lakrishnë e kuvëndon
te me apostojtë e ju thoshte:
bijt e mi e të p[-----]

Page 14

- (Luke 22:15 = 14.14-16; John 13:04 = 14.16-17)
tim. lutni dhidhaskalë tuaj.
o e dhimpsun am e Isusit, ndë

- të kuja duar ep birnë tand?
Iudha e shiti e ti i thua atij ta
14.05 ruanjë. dashnë ep ndë dorë uku[t]
ta ruanjë. ku është bam këjo kështu
qi miku t'apë ndë dorë të dushma
nëvet mikn e tij? Erruodi e le O
14.10 hanë zë më këtë punë të frikshime.
pasandaj hun[i] ZTi XSHt ndë
kishë të faletë. e mbramanet
ndenj më tryesë me apostojt
e hagërrë darkë, e ju tha: o bijt e
14.15 mi, mjen njëme ha bukë me ju të
cë prapëmenë darkë sade s'jam
[m]undiam. pasandaj ncuar
[-----] lidh[-]një futë për mje

Page 15
(John 13:05-06)

- dis e vu ujë ndë lent e zu fil
të ju lanjë kambët e apostojvet
e i pshinte me futët qi kishte
15.05 gjeshun. e këtë e [b]ani qi ta dëf
tenjë vet'henë më t'ugjun. e zu
fil mbë Iudhënë. si i lau kambë
t e Iudhësë vote ke Petri t'i
lanjë kambët e tij. ai shëkon
15.10 këtë mreku të frikshime të
madhe qi të vinjë mbreti qi
el[s]ë t'i lanjë kambët i bal
tësë të gatuamit tij. thiri
e tha: ZT, o mjeri u, qish e keqe
më gjet; ti të më lajsh kambë
15.15 t e mia. mos dalë zjar prej
duarshi cë t[u] të më djegë. ti [je]
qi më ke krijuam [-----]
ti je dhaskal [-----]

Page 16
(Matthew 27:62-65 = 16.03-)

- Mariami me të tre muaj
e u kthe më shtëpi të saj

Matheu
16.05 nesëret qi ishte pas cë
premejet u mbëlodhë upesh
këpinjtë e Farisei ke Pilla

- ti e i thotë: ZT, përendi, ky rr[e]
[m]ës kur [→] qe gjal pas të t[re]
tët dit më gjini. e urdhëno t[ë]
16.10 mbullnjëmë vorrë mjen më t[re]
tët dit. më gjeni. e urdhëno
t'i gjofnjëmë vorë mjen
më të tretët dit, mos vinjën
psuamt te tij natën e vjedhë
16.15 atë e thonë gjinja se u gre pr[e]
j vorrit, e jet cë prapëm turp
tepër pëpara. ju tha ature
Pilati: merri kustodhit ec

Page 17

(Matthew 27:66 = 17.01-02; John 20:19-23 = 17.03-)

e mbulli e shëkoni e gjifni vo
rre me kustodhit.

Joan

- 17.05 u grys nata nd'ato dit të një
shëtunë e dera mbuln ke ishin
[t]ë psuamit mbulun për frikët
të Iudheivet, erth Jisusi e ndenj
dë mjedis e ju tha atune:
pushun mbë ju. e këtë tha, ju dëvte
17.10 i atune duartë e brinjën e tij.
u ngazuluanë të psuamit se
panë ZTnë. ju tha atune Ji
susi pësëri: pushim mbë ju. si
më çoi mu prindi, nde u ju çoj ju.
17.15 e këtë tha, e i la e ju tha atune:
merri frumënë shenjt. kuja të
jua lini fajet, ja kam val uu.
kuja të [j]ua mbani, ja kam mbaj

Page 18

(John 20:24-27)

- 18.05 tun u. Thomai pre një tumbëdhje
tësh qi i thonë binjak nuku qe
me të kur erth Jisusi. thoshinë
tjerët të psuamë: pamë ZTnë.
e tha aji: mjen ke të mos shof
duart e tij brimën e gozhdëz
e të ve gishtnë tem mbë brimët
të gozhdëz e të ve dorënë teme
më brimët të tij s'mbesonj. e
18.10 pas tetë diç ishi[në] psu[amët]

bashkë nde Thomai me ta. vjen[e]
Jisusi e dera ishte mbullun
e ndej ndë mjedist e tha: pu
shun mbë ju. pra i thotë Thomait:
18.15 bjerë gishnë tand këtu e shë
ko duart e mia, e ve dorënë
tande ebre e vene më brinjët

Page 19
(John 20:27-31)

19.05 teme, e mos u ban i pabesë
po me besë. u përgjeq Tho
mai e tha: o ZT im e perëndi
a im. tha atij Jisusi: si më
pe, mbëbesite, lum kush
s'më shef e mbëbeson. shumë
këto ende tjera të gjoftu
na bani Jisusi përpara
psuamitvet tij qi s'janë
19.10 shkruam ndë këtë letër. po
këto shkruajmë të mbesoni
se Jisusi është Xrishti i bi
ri perëndisë, e ata qi mbe
sonjnë jetën e gjatë kanë mbë
19.15 emënit të tij. *****

Page 20
(John 05:24-28)

Joan
20.05 tha ZT atune qi vinjinë pas
ci Judhinvet: amin amin
si them u se ai qi nëgjon fjalë
në teme e mbesit ti çuamit
tim ka jetë[n] e pasosun e
më gjuq nuku vjene, po vete
pas cë vdekun mbë jetën. a
min amin si them u se vjene
20.10 koha qi është njëme se të vde
kunit kur të nëgjojnë zanë
të bir të perëndisë, po qi ta
nëgjojnë, gjallen. se si ka pr[i]
ndi jetë mbë ta ashtu i dha
20.15 ashtu i dha ende tbirt e ka mbë
vete. e urdhën i dha nde at[ij]
e gjuq ban se i biri njeriu[t]

20.20 ë. mos mërexi më këtë se vjen[e]
koha se të vdekunit po q[]
gjithë ndë vorret

Page 21

(John 05:28-30 = 21.01-10; John 13:03-05 = 21.11-)

21.05 të nëgjonjë
o grihenë të mirëtë të bam
më të gritunit të jetësë,
e fajbamt më të gritmit
të gjuqit. s'mun u të baj në
punën e tij asnjë. si nëgjoj,
gjukoj. e gjuqja ime e dre
jtë është, se u nuku kërkoj të
tashmitë tem po të dashmit e
21.10 çuamtit prindit im.

Ioani

21.15 nd'atë koho pa Jisusi se
të gjithë dhanë janë prej
prindit ndë dorë se prej
perëndiet dual e ke pe
rëndia vete. u gre prej
darket e ngjeshi rrobe
në e vu ujë ndë len b[]

Page 22

(John 13:05-10)

22.05 e u nis të lanjë kambët e të
psuamëvet e pshtual
rrobenë qi kishte ngjeshun.
e vjene ke Simon Petri
e i thote ai atij: ZOT ti
mu të më lajsh kambëtë.
përgjegjetë Jisusi e i thotë:
unë baj ti nuku shef njëme
nuku ngje[f] më këto. i tho
22.10 të Petri: mos mi lavsh
kambëtë ti mu kurrë. për
gjegjet Jisusi: në mos i
lafsh mos maç pjesë me mu.
i thotë Simon Petri: ZOT jo po
22.15 kambët, po nde duart e nde
kryet. i thotë Jisusi: të la[f]
nuk u duhetë po kambëtë,

Page 23

(John 13:10 = 23.01-04; John 11:01-04 = 23.05-)

se ini pastrë gjithë ju pas
trë ini, jo gjithë. shëkoni të
tanënë, e këtë tha: jo gji
thë pastrë ini.

23.05 Ioan

nd'atë koho qe sëmunië Llaza
ri prej Vithaniet prej njëj
Mariet e Marthet të motra
t e tij. qi Maria fërkoj ka

23.10

mbët e ZTit me krezmë e i fër
koi kambët e tij me urdhën
të tij. i vëllai, Lazari, u së
mu. vonëte të motrat e tij

23.15

ke ai e i thonë: ZT, miku yt
u sëmu. e nëgjoj Isusi e tha:
ai të sëmunië s'ë për mort,
po për lav të perëndisë qi

Page 24

(John 11:04-10)

të lavdurohetë i biri pe
rëndisë [i] mbë të. i donte Jisu
si Marthën e motrën e tij
e Llazarininë. po qi nëgjo

24.05

i se sëmunië, atëhereza
mbet mb'atë ven du dit. pra
pasadaj i thotë të psuamëvet:
vemi ndë dhet të Jiudheivet.
i thonë atij të psuamitë:

24.10

ravi, [nj]ëme deshnë Iudhei
tyj me gurë të të vrasën
e pësëri ve atje? përgjegje
të Jisusi: jo dumbëdhjetë sa
hat të ditësë? kush shëndrit di

24.15

tën nuku humb se dritën e
gjinvet ku shef. kush shëndrit
natën hum se mbë dritën nu[ku]

Page 25

(John 11:11-17)

është. këtë tha e pasandaj
i thonë atij atij: Lazari,
miku yt, fjet, po të vemi
ta qojmë. i thonë të psuamit

- 25.05 atij: ZT, nd[ë] fjet, i shtëpuam
 quhet. tha Jisusi për të fje
 tunit të tij, ata mëlavdnë
 se prej çë fjetunit të gjumit
 tha. atëhereza ju tha atune:
- 25.10 pritni. Lazari vdiq, e nga
 zullohem për ju qi të mbeso
 ni se s'qesh atije. po ve mbë të.
 i thotë Thomai i psuami: ve
 mi nde na të vdesëmë me të.
- 25.15 erth Jisusi e gjet katër dit
 qi ishte ndë vorrt. ishte Vitha
 nia afër prej Jieruaslimit

Page 26

(John 11:17-24)

- stadhion pesëmbëdhjet,
 e shumë prej Jitudheit qenë
 votë ke Martha e Maria
 qi ti dëftenjënë për të vë
 lla të tij. Martha si e në
 26.05 gjoji se se Jisusi vjene
 i dual përpara. Maria
 rrinte më shtëpi. i thotë
 Martha Jisusit: ZT, të qen
 26.10 kshe këtu, vëllai im s'ki
 shte vdekun. po njëme pashë
 se sa të lupsh ti më perëdit
 t'ep tuj perëndia. i thotë asa
 j Jisusi: ngrihetë vëllai yt.
- 26.15 i thotë atij Martha: shof se ngr[i]
 hetë më të gritmitë më të çë pra
 pëmet ditë. i thotë Jisusi: u jam

Page 27

(John 11:25-31)

- të gritmit e jetësë. kush
 mbesit mbë mu kurrë z'vdes
 po rron, e kush rron e mbesit
 mbë mu, të vdekun s'ka ku
 27.05 rë. mbesoni këtë? thotë ai:
 ashtu ZT u mbesova se ti je
 XC i biri perëndisë, qi ndë
 gjin erdhe. e këta tha e u
 nis e thiri Marinë motrë
 27.10 n e tij. këtë i tha: psoisi ço

27.15 i e na thëret. si e nëgjoi, u gre shpejt e vote ke ai. ke vote Jisusi atje mbë ve nd, nde Iudhi i ishinë bash kë mbë të vend. shofënë Marinë se rendë u nis e vje ne. vote atynë e ju thotë:

Page 28

(Matthew 28:09-14)

28.05 e Jisusi u poq me ta e ju tha: gazulloxi. ato vonë e i ranë ndë kambë e ju falnë atij. ju thotë atyne Jisusi: mos frikoi, ecëni i porosit ni vëllazënet mi të vinjënë ndë Galilet të piqenë me mu. tye v[o]të ato, ca kustodh[i] tye votë ndë ~~shëher~~ qutet iu dëf

28.10 tei upeshkëpinjve gjithë ato qi u banë. e u mbëloth me priftënet e kuvëndu anë. rgjande shumë iu dh[anë] trimavet të thonë se të psua

28.15 m[it e tij] natënë erdhnë e vodh në tue fjetun na. në qoftë

Page 29

(Matthew 28:14-20)

29.05 qi të nëgjothet këjo prej i gëmonit, na kemi turp po ta bajmë kështu. e muarrë rgj andet e banë si e psuamë. e u shpall këjo fjalë përpara Jjudhejivet mjen këtë ditë. të nëmbëdhjetë psu amët vonë ndë Galilet, ndë malt qi i çoi Jisusi.

29.10 e e panë ata e ju falë. ju ap ju gjithë urdhën më qiellt e mbë dhet të vini të psoni gjithë gjuhut, të pakëzoni pr'emënit t'atët

29.15 e të biri e shpirtit shenjti, të psoni ndë ta gjithë sa ju urdhënova ju. se u me ju jam

më të gjitha dit mjen të fun
të jetës. amin.

Page 30

(Matthew 10:32-33, 10:37-38, 19:27-28)

Matheu

- 30.05 tha ZT gjithë ata qi më shpallnjën
përpara gjinvet, e shpall
nde u përpara prindi tim
qi ë më qiel. e ata qi më sha
njënë mu përpara gjinvet e
shanj nde u përpara prindit
tem qi ë më qiel. kush do at
e amë për mu nuku është i dretë.
- 30.10 kush do bir e bij për mu nuku
është i drejtë. kush nuku mer
kryqnë të vinjë pas meje s'ë
për mu i dretë. atëhereza
u përgjeq Petri i tha: [-]nje u
- 30.15 qi i lashë gjithë e u gji[ç]ë me
tyj. qish na gjet ne? JS
ju tha atune: amin si them [u]

Page 31

(Matthew 19:28-30)

- 31.05 se ju erthtë e shkua të e pësëri
baxi. kur të rrinjë i biri nje
riut më shkam të lavdë tij,
rrini nde ju më dymbëdhjetë
shqembe, gjukonj më të dymë
dhjetë gjuhuvet të Jisra
ilit. e gjithë kush ka la
në shtëpinë vëllan e motrë
at e amë ndo grua fëmijë
- 31.10 farë e fis pr'emënit tem
një qin pjesë tepër mer
e jetën e shëkuame gëzon.
shumë bahen e të parëtë
cë prapëm e të cë prapë
- 31.15 mitë të parë.

Page 32

(Matthew 16:13-18)

i Shë Petritit. Matheu.

nd'atë koho erth Jisusi mbë anë të

- 32.05 Qesarisë të Filipit pyet të
psuamit te tij thotë: kë më tho
në mu njerëzit? thonë për Jioan
Pakëzimnë. tjerë të thonë Ili
në, tjerë të thonë Jeremiu ndo
një fjalëparëshit. ju thotë aty
ne: ju kë më thonë? përgjegjetë
- 32.10 Simon Petri thotë: ti je XS i
biri perëndisë gjalit. për
gjegjetë Jisusi i thotë: lumthi
ti Simon Variona se shtat
e gjak s'ë mbë tyj, po prindi im
- 32.15 i qiellsë. po unë të them se ti je
Petre e mbi këtë gur të më
ndërtojsh mu kishënë e duer

Page 33

(Matthew 16:18-19 = 33.01-05; Luke 02:01-04 = 33.06-)

- 33.05 t e adhit të moss i lëshojsh ti. e
t'ap çelësitë të mbretënisë
qiellsë. qish të lith mbë dhet ësh
të lidhun më qiell. qish të zgith
ç mbë dhet ë zgidhun më qiell
Luka
- 33.10 nd'ato dit dual urdhën prej
Qesarit Avgustit të shkru
hetë gjithë dheu. ai të shkruam
përpara u ba mbë urdhën të Si
risë Qiriniu. e vonë gjithë
e shkruanë mjen m'atë dhe.
hupi ende Iosifi prej Ga
lilejet ndë qutet Naza
- 33.15 ret ndë Iudhet ndë qute
t të Dhavidhit qi e quajnë
Vithleem se ajo është shtëpi e

Page 34

(Luke 02:04-10)

- 34.05 prindit Dhavidhit. u shkrua
me Mnë qi kishte për të marrë
gruan e tij se e kishte palë
shuam. u ba mjen ke vo atje
u mbushnë ditë të pjellë atë.
e puall të birn e saj të pa
rënë të pjellë, e e shpërگا
nisi atë e e mbuloi atë

- 34.10 ndë kashtë se nuku ishte
vendë prej pylit. se kulo
tësitë ëshinë nd'atë katu
ndë kërkonjëne e ruanjëne për
frikë të natësë të kulosnjë
në. engjëlli i ZTit ndriti më
34.15 ta e u frikshuamë me frikë të
madhe. e na u gazuluamë me
gazulim të math qi është mbë

Page 35
(Luke 02:10-15)

- gjithë laust, se leu mbë ne
sot shtëpoxysi qi është Xrishti
ZTi mbë qutet të Dhavidhit.
e këjo mbë ne të qoftun është,
35.05 gjindetë foshnjë ndë shpërganë
flinte ndë kashtë. të përzi
el u ba me egjit e shumë udhë
tarë më qiel lushnjënë pe
rëndinë e thoshinë: lavdi
35.10 i naltit perëndi. e më
dhet pushim njerëzvet ju
dëftoi. e u ba si votnë ata
më qiell engjitë e njerëzit
e kullotësit thoshinë shoq me
35.15 shoq: vemi mjen ndë Vithleem
e shofëmë këto fjalë të bame
qi zoti na dëftei ne. e vo

Page 36
(Luke 02:16-20)

- në e ju falë e gjetnë Ma
riamnë me Jiosifnë e fosh
nja flinte ndë kashtë. e panë
e dëftuenë për këto fjalë
36.05 të fola për djalë. e gjithë sa
e nëgjuanë u mëryenë pr'a
to fjalë kulotësit mbë të.
e Mariami gjithë i pa këto
punë e i vu ndë zemërë të
36.10 saj. e u kthuenë kullotësit
tye lavdryem e tue lu
tun perëndinë e gjithë sa
e nëgjuenë e panë si ju tha
atyne.

Mattheu Ungjill

Shën Argjiret

- 37.05 nd'atë koxo çoi Jisusi të dy mbëdhjetët të psuamt e tij. ju dha atyne urdhën mbë frumët të paqëruame qi ti ncerënë këta e ti ngjallnjënë prej gji thë të patëdashunat e prej gji thë të sëmune. këta i çoi Jisusi
- 37.10 i porositi atyne ju tha: mbë u dhë të huaj mos vini e ndë qu tet Samarin mos huni, e të vi ni ju ndë dhen të humbun mbë shtëpi të Jisrailit. tue votë
- 37.15 ju, tëvteni e thoni se u a frua mbretëni e qiellsë. të sëmune gjallnite, të fëlli

qun i qëronite djemënitë e ncirnite. dhunëti muartë [dh]unëti epnite.

Shënëdreut Ioan

- 38.05 nd'atë koxo mbet Ioani ede të psuamt e tij du, e shofënë Jisunë ke ecënte thotë: shëko ni, qenji e perëndisë. e nëgju anë të dy të psuamit ke thoshte,
- 38.10 u ngjitrë me Jisunë. u kthu e Jisusi e shëkon ata qi u ngjit me ta i thotë atyne: kë kërkoni. i thonë ata: ravi, qi do të thotë dëfte
- 38.15 is, ku jet? thotë atune: e ni shifni. e vonë e panë

ke i[sh]te, e pasandaj mbe tnë ata ditë. si më dhjetë sahat. qe Andhreu i vë

41.15 mjen më sahat të nëndë. e mbë
sahat të nandë thirri Jisusi
me za të math e tha: eloi eloi
lima savaxthani? qi është me
thanë: perëndia im perëndia
im përse më harrove? e ca qi rri
njënë gjat nëgjaanë e thanë
se Ilinë thërret. vote një

Page 42

(Mark 15:36-41)

42.05 e mbushi sungjerrë me uthul e e
vu më kalamt e ja dha të pi
një atë e thoshte: lin[i]e të sho
fë[m]jë vjene Ilija ta zbre
së atë. e Jisusi lëshoi za të
math e u përfrum. e poshtë
të shkelunat e të kishës u da
më du pre nalti mjen poshtë.
e pa qinpari qi rrinte
42.10 dajtë se ky thiri e u përfrum,
tha: vërtet ky [nj]jjerë i biri i
perëndisë është. ishinë nde
gra cë largu shëkonjënë e i
shte Maria Makdhalina e
42.15 Maria, e Jakovit vogël
e Iosia e am e Salomit qi nde
kur qe ndë Galilet e u ngjitrë
me të e i shërbyenë atij. ende tje
va [-----]upnë me ta ndë Ieru[s]ali

Page 43

(John 05:01-05)

Jioan. hupi Jisusi

43.05 nd'atë koho ndë Ierosolimtë.
qi ë ndë Ierualimt mbë hurdhë
të deshvet, qi e quajnë e
vreisht Vithesdha, pesë të
çeluna kishte. mb'atë der
gjeshinë shumë të sëmune:
të verbë, të çalë, të thatë,
qi mernjënë aci uji. angje
43.10 lli i perëndisë për vjetë
zbritë mbë hurdhët e përziën
te ujëtë, e e para qi bahej
pa cë përziemët të ujit

43.15 të shëdoshë bajishinë prej
gjithë të pafuqishit, si kurth
s'kishinë qenë. qe një njeri

Page 44

(Matthew 27:01-08)

nd'atë koho të mbëledhunë banë
gjithë upekëpinjtë e pleqtë të gjin
së qi ta vrasënë, e e lithnë atë
e e shpunë e ja dhanë Pondiut Pi
44.05 latit, iğemonit. atëhere
pa Jiudha qi e dha atë se e gjuku
anë atë i kthei tridhjetë rgjan
detë të upeshkëpinjvet e të pleq
vet. u fjiyeshë. e i thanë: qish të
44.10 gjet qi u frike, e shtive rgjandetë
ndë kishë iku e vote e u vuar. e upesh
këpinjtë muarrë rgjandetë e thanë:
s'ë e drejtë t'i vemë [n]dë korvanat
se është pahaj e gjakut. e u mbëlodh[ë]
44.15 në e vonë e blenë e vonë e blenë arë
në e tjegulavet për të vorruam
të huajtë e e quajnë atë arë njëme

Page 45

(Matthew 27:08-17)

ar e gjakut mjen sot. atëhere u mbush
fjala e Jeremiut profitit qi tha:
e muarrë L rgjandet, pahanë t'asaj
paha për pahat të birtë Jisrai
45.05 lit e i dhanë ata më arëtë të tej
gulaxhivet si porositi Zoti.
e Jisusi ndenj përpara iğemonit
e e pueti atë iğemoni i thoshte:
ti je mbreti Iudheivet? e Isusi tha:
45.10 si thua. e nëgjyamë prej upeshkë
pinjvet e pleqvet, nuku u për
gjeq. atëhere i thotë ai Pilati:
nuku nëgjon sa mbë tyj shpallnjë
në? e nuku u përgjeq mb'ata asnjë
45.15 vjalë. u mërye iğemoni fort.
mbë gjithë ç'të kremt ju linte iğe
moni ju shtëponte nga një rop kë do
njënë. kishinë atëhereza një të
lidhunë qi e quanjënë Varavan
45.20 e ishinë mbëledhun [-----]

Page 46

(Matthew 27:17, 27:22-29)

- ju thotë atyne Pilati: cinë do
ni të ju lëshoj ju, Varavanë a Jisu
në qi e gjuajnë ~~qi e quajnë~~ XC?
i thoshinë gjithë atij: kruqzoje. i
46.05 ġemoni ju tha: qish të keq ka bam?
e të tepërmitë thërrisnin e thoshin:
kryqzoje. pa Pilati se s'ka faj,
po prej tjerëshit u ba. muar ujë
e lau duartë përpara ġinvet
46.10 e tha: dam të jem prej ġjakut të
këci. të drejmi ju merie. e u për
ġjeq gjithë ġjinja thanë: ġjaku i
atij mbë ne e më fëmi tona. atë
46.15 hereza e shtëpuanë Varavanë
e Isunë ta mundojnë e e muarr[ë]
ta kruqzonë. atëhereza tri
mat e iġemonit e muarë Jisunë më
ġjyq e u mbëlodhë më të gjithë tri
46.20 matë e i veshnë atij rrobe ħlami
dhë të kuqe e i vunë kunorë prej

Page 47

(Matthew 27:29-35)

- drize e ja vunë më krye të tij
e kalamnë ndë dorë të tij të djathët
e binjënë mbë ġjunjë përpara tij
e e qeshninë e i thoshinë: gazulo
47.05 u o mbret i Iudheivet. e e pshtu
njënë e e muarrë kalamnë e i ra
në kresë atij. e kur e luajtinë
ja xveshnë ħlamidhënë e i veshnë
robet e tij. e e shpunë qi ta kru
47.10 qzonjënë. e tye votë ġjetnë nje
ri Qirineon emënitë Simon.
atë zunë qi të shpjerë kryqnë.
e erdhë mbë ven qi i thonë Golgotha,
qi e quajnë vendi kraniu. i dha
47.15 në atij të pinjë uthul me tyme.
nuku desh ta pinjë. tye kryqzu
am i danë rrobet e tij, vunë kli
ron qi të mbushetë fjal e profitit
i danë rrobet e tij [-----]

Page 48

(Matthew 27:35-39 = -48.08; Luke 23:39-43 = 48.08-)

- mbë rrobe të mia vunë kliron.
tye ndenjun e ruajtyn atë atje.
e i vunë mbi krye të tij këtë të
shkruame: ky është mbreti Iu
48.05 dheivet. atëhereza kryq
zuanë me atë dy kysarë, një
më të djathëtë e një më të magjëtë.
e i vjerri përmys nimti atë. tha:
ndë je ti XC, shtëpo vet'henë e ne.
48.10 u përgjeq tjetëri e vdoi atë
i tha: s'ke frikë perëndinë
se u mkate? e na jemi të drejtë,
të drejtinë e fijuemë e muarmë.
ky asnjë faj s'ka bam. e i tha
48.15 Jisusit: ndiejmë, ZT, kur të veç
më mbretënit tande. e i tha a
tij: amin si të them, sot me mu
të jesh ndë parrist. e ata qi sh

Page 49

(Matthew 27:39-46)

- konjëne e shanjënë i kërusnjënjë krye
të e i thoshinë: ti qi prish kishënë e për
tri dit e ndërton shtëpo vet'henë. ndë
je i biri perëndisë, zbrit prej
49.05 kryqjet. ashtu nde upeshkëpinj
të e luanjinë me letërorët e pleq
t e Farisetë thoshinë: tjerë i shtë
pove e vet'henë s'munç ta shtëpoj
sh. ti o mbreti Israilit qi je, zbri
49.10 t prej kryqjet e të mbesonjëmë.
shpre më perëndinë të të shtëponjë
njëme ai ndë do, ai qi thua se i bi
ri perëndisë jam. jo po ata nde
po nde kusarëtë qi ishinë kryqzy
49.15 am me të e nimnjinë atë. prej gja
shtë sahaç errëtë u ba më gjithë më
gjithë dhet mjen më sahat t[ë] na
ndë. më sahat të nandë thiri Jisu
si me za të math e tha: i[li ili l]a

Page 50

(Matthew 27:46-54)

- ma savaxthani, qi ë perëndi
PRdi pëse më le. ca aty qi rri
njën nëgjonjënë e thoshinë se Ilinë
thërret ky. e vote një acish e muar
50.05 sygjer e mbushnë nd uthil e e vu
në mbë kalam e i dhanë të pinjë.
e tjerëtë thoshinë: lini të shofë
më vjene Ilia ta shtëponjë. Isu
si thiri pësëri me za të math e la
50.10 frymënë. e të shkelunat e kishës
u çanë mbë du prej nalt mjen po
shtë. e dheu u tund, gurëtë plas
në, vorrezetë u çelnë, e shumë
shtatëna të fjetuna shenjtrash
50.15 u gritnë e dual prej vorrit pas
cë gritmit të tij e hynë ndë shenj
t qytet e u dëftyenë shymë.
e qinpari e tjerëtë shëkonjën JSu
në k[-----] tërmetnë qi u ba

Page 51

(Matthew 27:54 = 51.01-02; John 19:31-36 = 51.03-)

- e u frinë fort thanë: vërtet pe
rëndisë bir ë ky. e Judheit mos
jesë më kryqt shtati të shëtynë,
se qe e premtë, se ishte dite
51.05 e madhe ajo e shëtunë, pyetnë
Pilatnë ti thyejnë gjynjë të
e u nisë. erdhë trimatë e të [p]a
rit i thyenë gjunjët ende tjetë
rit të kryqzuam me të. e mbë Ji
51.10 sunë erdhë. si e panë se ishte
vdekun, nuku ja thy[e]në atij
gjunjët, po një trimashit me
shtijë i ra ndë brinjë, e du
al [gja]k e ujë. e u pa marturi
51.15 e vërtetë e tij. ca acish panë
se vërtet thotë qi nde ju besë
të kini. e u banë këto qi e

Page 52

(John 19:36-37 = 52.01-03; Matthew 27:55-61 = 52.04-)

shkruameja të mbushet: eshtën të
mos përzihetë me të. e tjetëra[v]
e shkruameja thotë: pa një qi ruante.
ishinë atje gra shumë cë larg

- 52.05 ruanjënë qi u gjithë Jisusit
prej Galilejet qi i shëbenjën a
tij. acosh ishte Maria Mădha
lina e Maria e Jakovit e O
sia ama e e am e të birt Zeve
- 52.10 dheut. u grys nata. erth një njeri
i pëgatë prej Arimathiet
emënit Jiosif qi nde ai u psua
prej Jisusit. ky vote ke Pilati,
lypte shtatn e Jisusit. atëhe
- 52.15 re Pilati urdhënoi ta amënë
shtatnë. e muar shtatnë Jiosifi
e e pshtual ndë pëlhurë të pastrë
e e shtiu ndë vorr të rri qi goditi
prej guri e vunë gur të math më derë
- 52.20 të vorrit votnë. e qenë atje Mari
a Ma[-----] e tjetëra [-]

Page 53

(John 09:01-08 = 53.03-)

Mari rrinte mbi vorrt.
e diela e qorrit pas pashkëvet.

Joan.

- 53.05 nd'atë koho tye shëdritun JSi pa
njeri të verbët të lem. e pyet
njënë të psuamit e tit e i thonë: ra
vvi, qish faj ka bam gjënia e kë
tij qi verbët ë lem. përgjegjetë
Jsusi: as ky faj s'ka as gjëni e tij. po
- 53.10 të dëftohetë pun e perëndisë më të
se mu të më quhetë punë puna e atij
qi më ka çyam sa është dita. vjene
nata kur s'mun kush të punonjë. kur
jam ndë gjin, drita jam i gjinsë.
- 53.15 këtë tha e pshtyni mbë dhet e u ba bal
të prej p[sh]tymet e e leu baltën[ë]
më su të të verbëti. e i tha atij:
ecë u laj ndë hurdhë të Siloamsë
qi e quajnë e çuame. vote e u la
- 53.20 e erth tye pam. gjënia e tij e

Page 54

(John 09:08-16)

ata qi e kishinë pam përpara
se verbëtë qe thoshinë: nuku është
ky qi rrinte e përderonte? tjerë

- 54.05 të thoshinë: ky është. tjerëtë thoshi
në: i gjan atij. ai thoshte: se unë
jam. i thonë atij si tu çelë sytë?
përgjegjetë ai e thotë: NJRi qi e
quajnë JS baltë bani e ma gji
54.10 ti syvet, e më tha: ecë ndë hur
dhë të Siloamit e u laj. vojta e
u lashë e shof. i thonëte ata: ku
është ai? thotë ai: s'e pashë. u ndi
e këjo ndë Fariset qi qe përpara
verbëtë. ishte e shëtunë kur bani
54.15 baltënë JSi e i çeli syt e tij. pë
sëri e puesnjënë Farisei si tu ç
lë sytë. ai ju thotë atune: baltë
më vu më syt e u lashë e shof. i thonë
prej farisheishit ca: ky njeri s'ë

Page 55

(John 09:16-19, 09:21-22)

- 55.05 shtë i perëndisë qi të shëtu
nënë s'e shëkon. tjerëtë thoshi
në: si mun njeri fajtuar kë
të të gjoftuna të banjë? e mbë
ni ishinë mb'atë. i thonë të ver
bëtit pësëri: ti qish thua për
të qi të çeli sytë? thotë ai se
fjalëparë qe. s'mbesitnë Iudhe
it mbë atë se verbëtë qe e shef
55.10 mjen ke thirë gjënin e tij ta shofë
në. i pyesnjinë ata e ju thoshinë:
ky është biri juaj qi thoni ju se
verbëtë leu? si njëme shef? s'e
pamëte. kush ja çeli sytë? na s'e
55.15 pamëte. ai di. atë pyetni. ai
mbë vet'he le të flasë. këto tha
në gjëni e tij se kishinë frikë
prej Iudheivet nde këtë medo
njënë Iudheitë se ai q[---]të shpal

Page 56

(John 09:22-29)

- 56.05 krishnë, xcjerrë të jetë prej si
nagoiet. e pradaj gjëni e tij
thanë: ai di. atë pyetni. e py
etnë të dytënë herë atë njeri
qi qe verbëtë. thotë ai: dha la[v]

- di perëndisë. na s'e pamëte
se ky njeri fajtyar është. përgje
gjenë ata e thanë: na fajtyar
s'e dimëte se është, po këtë dimë
56.10 të na qi ky verbëtë qe e njëme
shëf. i thonë atij pësëri: qish ba
ne? si t'u çelë sytë? përgjegje
të ai: unë juve ju them e ju s'nëgjo
ni. përse pësëri do të nëgjon?
56.15 mos ju të psuamit e tij doni të
baçi? u jdhënuanë ata e thanë
ti je i psuam i tij. na të Moiseut
jemi të psuam. na s'kemi nëgjuam

Page 57

(John 09:29-35)

- se Mosinë thirri perëndia. kë
të na s'e dimëte gëha është. për
gjegjetë ai njeri e ju thotë aty
ne: më këtë mërehem nde u se ju
57.05 s'e patë gëha ë e më çeli sytë.
shof se fajtuar perëndia nu
ku nëgjon, po kush është i der
shimi i perëdisë e urdhënim
n e tij ban, atë nëgjon. se
57.10 kurrë s'ë nëgjua qi të çelnjë sy
të të verbëtë të jetë lem. po
me mos qenë i perëdisë, s'mun
të bante gja kurrë. përgjegje
në e i thonë atij: me faje ti
57.15 leve gjithë, e ti ne të na psosh?
e nxuarrë këtë përjashta. e në
gjoi Isusi se e xuarë këtë për
jashta e gjet kë [-----]

Page 58

(John 09:35-38)

- ti mbesit mbë të bir të perë
disë? përgjegjetë ai e tha:
kush je ti ZT qi të mbesit mbë
të? i thotë atij Jisusi: qi pe ti
58.05 e foli me tuj, ai ë ai tha: mbe
sit ZT e i falem atij.

Page 59

PA PA T[-]

Page 60

(John 11:32-39)

se vetë më vor të qaj atje.
e Maria si erth ke ishte Ji
susi, e pa atë e i ra ndë
kambë e ji thoshte: ZT të qen
60.05 kshe këtu s'kishte vdekun
im vëlla. Jisusi si e pa
se qan, pshanëtini. i pue
ti e ju tha: ku e kini mbu
luan. thonë ata: ZT eja
60.10 e shëko. lotoji Jisusi. tho
shinë Jiudheit: shëkoni si
e dashka atë. një acish tha:
nuky mun ku të çelnjë sut e
te vdekunit të banjë nde kë
60.15 të të mos vdesë? Jisusi pësëri
vote më vort. jishte një spell
gë e rrasë ishte mbi të. thotë Ji

Page 61

(John 11:39-43)

susi hiqni gurrë. i thotë
e motra e të vdekunit
Martha: ZT, mos se qelbe
të katër diç është. thotë
61.05 Jisusi nuku tha[t]ë qi të
mbesoni më gjithë laf të
perëndisë? e gritinë gu
rrë ke flinte i vdekuni.
Jisusi griti sutë nalt
61.10 e tha: prindë të lutem tuj
tyj të më nëgjojsh se u shof
se më gjithë më nëgjon nde
për këtë qi dergjetë këtu
qi të mbesojnë se ti më ke çu
61.15 am. e atë tha, me za të m[a]th
thiri: Llazar del jashtë.

6. Translation of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 02

(Matthew 26:01-05 = 02.04-17)

Holy Good Friday.
Oh, blessed Christians.
Christ, our Lord, called
the apostles and revealed to them that day
02.05 that he wanted to be crucified, and said to them:
Oh, my beloved sons, as you know,
the Passover is two days away and then
I want to give myself up so they can crucify me.
Then the chief priests and the scribes
02.10 assembled in the palace
of the high priest Caiaphas and conferred
with one another to arrest
Jesus secretly and kill him. They said:
Let us not arrest him now on the days
02.15 of the feast, for it was Saturday, so that
he not be surrounded by crowds who want
to hinder us for so much of
..... of God wanted

Page 03

to seize Christ on the day of the Passover
who wanted to eat the lamb
to show them that Christ, the Lord,
is the true lamb that the Jews
03.05 wanted to slaughter on the cross.
Then Judas, one of the 12 apostles,
who was a robber of money,
heard that the elders were gathered
in the palace of Pilate
03.10 Caiaphas, [and] decided to
go and betray Christ to them, and he went
to them, greeted them and said to them: Glory
be to God, oh elders,
who has enlightened me today and I have realized
03.15 that I have been deceived by the teachings of
Christ, and therefore, good
disciple that I am of Moses and of
the prophets and

Page 04

(Freely adapted from Luke 22:04-06)

In the name of God I have come today
before you to save the whole
world from the lies of this
man. And I know that you are of
04.05 God and adhere with honour to the laws,
and you want to kill him and don't know how.
I have come to you to hand him over to you. But
I am a poor man. Is it possible
for this joy and good deed
04.10 that I do for you and for the world that you pay
me? And therefore what do you want
to give me if I hand him over to you?
The chief priests and elders listened
to these words. They rejoiced
04.15 greatly and ~~gave him~~
~~30 silver coins and then~~ they suggested
a time for him to be handed over. And he said
to them that he would come the next day to them when
..... for you to seize him

Page 05

(Luke 22:09-13 = 05.06-17)

That day, Christ, the Lord, dined
in Bethany with the apostles at the house of
Mary and Martha with the mother. And he wanted
to go the next day to Jerusalem
05.05 to be crucified. The apostles
said to him: Teacher, where shall
we prepare for the Passover? And Christ
said to them: Go to Jerusalem
and you will meet a man carrying
05.10 a jar of water. Follow him
and say to him: Owner of the house, where is
the room for me to celebrate the Passover
with my disciples? And he will
show you a large room
05.15 and you make preparations there. These two
apostles set off and did as Christ
had told them. Thereafter
they returned to Bethany

Page 06

And he went that night with ~~great~~
prayers. And Christ the Lord recognized
that the time had come for him to bid farewell
to this world and to go to his father.

06.05 And he wanted to go to Jerusalem
to find [his] death among his followers.
He called his mother and said to her: Oh my
sweet mother, I beg you to be
of great patience, and to know
06.10 that it is a fine thing and that
all the sayings of the prophets must
be fulfilled which they have written about me. And
I must die for the sake of mankind.
And now the time for my death has come, and you,
06.15 oh mother of mine, will have to suffer more
than all women of this world so that the
word of the holy father Simeon
be fulfilled, that a sword will

Page 07

be thrust into the midst of your heart.
Oh mother of mine, the pain that
you will suffer because of my death
is that sword which will be thrust
07.05 into the heart of your soul. Although
this suffering is great, still
you must have great patience,
for the will of my Father
must be fulfilled. Oh mother
07.10 of mine, today I want to have
the last supper with my apostles.
And you must know that the elders
of the Jews want to crucify me,
and I have been sold for 30 silver coins.
07.15 But take comfort in this, that I will
rise on the third day, and
then you will see me
as a glorious and immortal king,
where they sit

Page 08

The Goddess fell to her knees, and
was overwhelmed and began by saying to Christ:
Oh my sweet son, your voice
and your words have shaken me to the heart.
08.05 I feel as if my soul has
abandoned me. Oh, innocent
Son of God, what have you done
that you should die such a horrid
death, innocent upon the cross?

08.10 Christ answers and said:
Oh, my dear mother, this is
the will of my Father,
that I die, and that you live and
that you, too, know of my suffering. And
08.15 so that my heart also be soothed,
listen to what I have to suffer. Look now
at my head which has borne no iron.
Tomorrow you will see it
..... crown of thorns

Page 09

enter the bones of my head.
And when you see me like this, have
patience, as I must have.
Look now at my open eyes. Tomorrow
09.05 you will see them closed and [see] how
the faithless will mock me. When you see
this, have patience. Look now
at my shining face.
Tomorrow you will see it covered
09.10 in spit. When you see this,
have patience. Look now at my
mouth so sweet. Tomorrow you
will see how the faithless
stuff me with a sponge filled with
09.15 vinegar and spit. When you see
this, have patience. Look now
at my unblemished palm. Tomorrow
you will see it

Page 10

see this, have patience. Look now
at all of my healthy body.
Tomorrow you will see it completely
bloody and beaten. When you see this,
10.05 have patience. Look now at how
my disciples surround me. Tomorrow
they will all be gone and
one of them will betray me. When
you see this, have patience, oh mother of mine.
10.10 Now you can speak with me, but tomorrow
you will no longer be able to recognize me. Now
you see me healthy, but tomorrow you will
see me dead. When you see
all this, have even more patience.

10.15 The time has come, oh mother of mine,
for me to leave you. This is the will
of my Father, that I die.
..... [give] me your

Page 11

permission and blessing, too, for me to die.
While Christ the Lord was saying these words to his mother, she became
distressed and went and sat down,
and said, weeping: Oh, my innocent son,
11.05 what talk is this, that you say
to me that I should give you permission to go
and be crucified? What mother has [ever] given
her son permission to be killed?
And I should give it to you?
11.10 When they hear these words,
the other mothers will curse me.
Yes, my sweet son, this is
the will of your heavenly
Father, and of you, that I now
11.15 give you my permission, my son,
to be crucified. That I give you
my blessing and that of your Father. May
all be with you.

Page 12

stretched her arms around ~~his neck~~ and
kissed him on the neck and said to him:
Oh, holy head filled with
the wisdom of God in heaven,
12.05 how will you endure a crown of
thorns? Oh, blessed face which the
rejoicing angels look upon,
how will you put up with so many
blows and filthy spit?
12.10 Oh, blessed eyes which look upon God,
why do you wish to see all those rabid dogs
in front of you and all those wild
animals around you? Oh, mighty
hands which hold the whole
12.15 world [in them], how will you endure
being nailed to the cross? Oh,
joyous dove who have all things
..... hand, how will you go
..... Oh, my blessed son,

Page 13

my soul and heart are now
leaving me. Oh, great poison.
Oh, countless tears which
were then [wept] in that house, on
13.05 one side the Goddess with Mary and
Martha, on the other side the apostles.
But iron-hearted Juda had no
pity at all on the poisoned mother
of Jesus. Magdalene wept
13.10 more that anyone else and said:
Oh, my wise teacher, where are you going,
where are you off to? Where shall we hear
your divine words, your teachings,
your words of comfort?
13.15 Christ then set off walking and
went to Jerusalem and
the tearful Goddess spoke
to the apostles and said to them:
My sons and

Page 14

(Luke 22:15 = 14.14-16; John 13:04 = 14.16-17)
of mine, beg your teacher.
Oh, suffering mother of Jesus, into
whose hands will you deliver your son?
14.05 Judas betrayed him and you tell him to take care
of him. You are delivering the sheep into the hands
of the wolf to be taken care of. Where has it ever
been done that a friend delivers his friend into
the hands of enemies? Herod made John
famous with that horrible deed.
14.10 Then, Christ the Lord entered into
a temple to pray. And in the evening
he sat at the table with the apostles
and had dinner, and said to them: Oh my
sons, now at last I eat with you
14.15 the last supper [before] I
suffer. Thereafter he took off
..... he wrapped a towel around

Page 15

(John 13:05-06)
[his waist] and he poured water into a basin
and began to wash the feet of the apostles,

15.05 and dried them with the towel that he had wrapped around himself. This he did to show himself as humble. And he began with Judas. When he [had] washed the feet of Judas, he went to Peter to wash his feet. He looks upon this great and terrible miracle,

15.10 that the king of heaven should come and wash his feet of the mud of his own creation. He cried out and said: Lord, oh poor me, in what a lamentable state you find me, that you should wash my feet!

15.15 May no fire come out of your hands and burn me. You are the one who created me
You are the teacher

Page 16

(Matthew 27:62-65 = 16.03-)

Mary in three months
and returned to her home

Matthew

16.05 The next day, which was after Friday, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together at Pilate's and says to him: Sir, Lord, that deceiver [said] while he was alive: after the third days you will find me. Give the order for the tomb to be sealed until the third day. You will find me. And give the order for the tomb to be watched until the third day, so that his disciples do not come at night and steal

16.10 it and tell the people that he has risen from the tomb, and this last deception will be [worse] than the first. Pilate said to them: Take the guards, go,

16.15

Page 17

(Matthew 27:66 = 17.01-02; John 20:19-23 = 17.03-)

seal [it], and look out and keep watch over the tomb with the guards.

John

17.05 Night fell on that day, the first [day of the] week, and the door was locked where

the disciples were, locked for fear
of the Jews. Jesus came and stood
among them and said to them:
Peace be with you. And saying this, he
17.10 showed them his hands and his side.
The disciples were overjoyed that
they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them
again: Peace be with you. As
17.15 the father has sent me, I am sending you.
And saying this, he [breathed upon] them and said
to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. Of whomsoever
you forgive the sins, I have forgiven them.
Of whomsoever you retain them, I have retained

Page 18
(John 20:24-27)

them. Thomas of the Twelve,
whom they call Twin, was not
with them when Jesus came. The other
disciples said: We saw the Lord.
18.05 And he said: Unless I see
[in] his hands the nail mark
and put my finger on the nail
marks and put my hand
18.10 in the marks, I will not believe. And
eight days later the disciples
were together and Thomas [was] with them. Jesus
arrived and the door was locked,
and he stood among them and said: Peace
be with you. Then he says to Thomas:
18.15 Put your finger here and look
at my hands, and reach out your hand
and put it into my side,

Page 19
(John 20:27-31)

and be not unbelieving
but believing. Thomas answered
and said: Oh, my Lord and my
God. Jesus said to him: Because you have
19.05 seen me, you have believed. Blessed is he
who does not see me and believes. Jesus
did many such and other miracles
in the presence of his disciples
which are not written
19.10 in this scripture. But these

19.15 are written that you may believe
that Jesus is Christ, the Son
of God, and those who believe
[may] have a long life in
his name. *****

Page 20
(John 05:24-28)

John

20.05 The Lord said to those Jews who came
afterwards: Verily, verily,
I say that whoever hears my
word and believes him who sent me
has eternal life and
does not come into judgment, but has crossed
after death into life. Verily,
20.10 verily, I say that the time is coming
and has now come when the
dead will hear the voice
of the Son of God, and if they
hear it, they will live. For as the Father
has life in himself, ~~so has he granted~~
20.15 so has he also granted the Son to have [life]
in himself. And he has given him authority
and he judges because he is the Son of Man.
Do not be amazed at this, for a time
is coming when ~~the dead~~
20.20 all those in their graves

Page 21
(John 05:28-30 = 21.01-10; John 13:03-05 = 21.11-)

~~will hear~~
will rise, those who have done good
will rise to live,
21.05 those who have done evil will rise
to be condemned. I can do nothing
in his work. I judge only
as I hear, and my judgment is
just, for I seek not
my will but the will
21.10 of the Father who sent me.

John

At that time Jesus saw that
all things were given by
the Father into his hands, that

21.15 he came from God and was
returning to God. He got up from
the meal and put on his robe
and poured water into a basin

Page 22

(John 13:05-10)

and began to wash his disciples'
feet and dried [them with the]
robe he had put on.

22.05 And he comes to Simon Peter,
and the latter says to him: Lord,
are you going to wash my feet?
Jesus answers and says to him:
[what] I am doing, you do not see now,
you do not know. Peter says

22.10 to him: Never
wash my feet. Jesus
answers: Unless I wash them,
you have no part with me.

22.15 Simon Peter says to him: Lord, not just
my feet, but my hands and my
head as well. Jesus says to him: A person
who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet,

Page 23

(John 13:10 = 23.01-04; John 11:01-04 = 23.05-)

for you are completely clean, you are
clean, [but] not all of you. He looked at the one
who was going to give him up and said: not all
of you are clean.

23.05 John

At that time there was a sick man, Lazarus,
from Bethany, from the [village]
of Mary and his sister Martha.

23.10 It was Mary who rubbed the feet
of the Lord with ointment and who wiped
his feet at his command.

Her brother, Lazarus, became sick.

His sisters went to him

23.15 and say to him: Lord, your friend
is sick. Jesus heard this and said:
The sickness will not end in death,
but for God's glory so that

Page 24

(John 11:04-10)

the Son of God may be glorified
through it. Jesus loved
Martha and his sister
and Lazarus. When he heard
24.05 that [the latter] was sick, he stayed
in that place for two days. Thereafter,
he says to the disciples:
Let us go to the land of the Jews.
The disciples say to him:
24.10 Rabbi, the Jews recently tried
to kill you with stones
and yet you are going there? Jesus
answers: Are there not twelve
hours of daylight? Whoever walks
24.15 by day will not stumble, for he sees
[by] this world's light. Whoever walks
by night stumbles, for there is no light

Page 25

(John 11:11-17)

in him. He said this and then
they say to him, to him: Lazarus,
your friend, has fallen asleep, but let us go
and wake him up. The disciples say
25.05 to him: Lord, if he sleeps,
he can be considered saved. Jesus spoke
of him falling asleep [for good], they thought
that he had spoken of him [simply]
sleeping. Then he said to them:
25.10 Wait. Lazarus is dead, and I am glad
for your sake that you believe
that I was not there. But let us go to him.
Thomas the disciple says to him: Let us
also go that we may die with him.
25.15 Jesus arrived and found that he had been
in his tomb for four days. Bethany was
close to Jerusalem

Page 26

(John 11:17-24)

by fifteen furlongs,
and many of the Jews had
come to Martha and Mary
to comfort them about

26.05 his brother. When Martha
heard that Jesus was coming,
she went out to meet him. Mary
stayed at home. Martha
says to Jesus: Lord, had you been
26.10 here, my brother would not
have died. But [even] now, I have seen
that whatever you ask of God,
God gives it to you. Jesus
says to her: Your brother will rise.
26.15 Martha says to him: I see that
he will rise in the resurrection of the
last day. Jesus says to her: I am

Page 27

(John 11:25-31)

the resurrection of life. Whoever
believes in me will never die,
but live, and whoever lives and believes
in me, will never die.
27.05 Do you believe this? He says:
Yes, Lord, I have come to believe that you are
Christ, the Son of God, who has come
into the world. This she said and
went back and called Mary, his
27.10 sister. This she said to her: the teacher
is here and calls us. When she heard this,
she got up quickly and went to him.
Jesus went there to the place,
and the Jews were together
27.15 in that place. They saw how
Mary quickly set off and comes.
[She] went to them and says to them:

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(Matthew 28:09-14)

and Jesus met them and said to them:
Greetings. They came and
fell to his feet and worshipped
him. Jesus says to them:
28.05 Do not be afraid. Go and tell
my brothers to come
to Galilee to meet me.
While [the women] were on their way, some of the guards,
going into the city, reported
28.10 to the chief priests everything

that had happened. And they met
with the elders and discussed.
They gave much money
to the soldiers to say that his
28.15 disciples came during the night and stole
him away while we were sleeping. If

Page 29

(Matthew 28:14-20)

this is heard by the
governor, we will be ashamed of
acting thus. They took the
money and did as they were instructed.
29.05 And this report has been spread among
the Jews to this very
day. The eleven disciples
went to Galilee,
to the mountain where Jesus sent them.
29.10 And they saw him and worshipped him.
I give you all authority in
heaven and on earth to go
and teach all the nations,
to baptize in the name of the Father
29.15 and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,
to teach them everything I have
commanded you. For I am with you
all the days until the end
of life. Amen.

Page 30

(Matthew 10:32-33, 10:37-38, 19:27-28)

Matthew

The Lord said: Whoever acknowledges me
before men, I will also acknowledge
before my Father
30.05 who is in heaven. And whoever
insults me before men
I will also insult before my Father
who is in heaven. Anyone who loves his father
and mother more than me is not worthy [of me].
30.10 Anyone who loves his son and daughter more than me
is not worthy [of me]. Anyone who does not
take up the cross and follow me
is not worthy of me. Then
answering, Peter said to him: Behold, I
30.15 who have left everything and have followed

you. What will there be for us? Jesus said to them: Verily, I say

Page 31

(Matthew 19:28-30)

31.05 that you came and departed and again were revived. When the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31.10 And everyone who has left his house, brother and sister, father and mother, or wife, children, relatives for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will enjoy [eternal] life.

31.15 Many who are first will be last and who are last [will be] first.

Page 32

(Matthew 16:13-18)

of Saint Peter. Matthew.

32.05 At that time [when] Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asks his disciples, saying: Who do the people say I am? Some say John the Baptist. Others call you Elijah. Others call you Jeremiah or one of the prophets. He says to them: Who do you say I am? Simon Peter answers, saying: You are Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus replies, saying: Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood is not [have not revealed it] to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock you will build my church and the gates

32.10

32.15

Page 33

(Matthew 16:18-19 = 33.01-05; Luke 02:01-04 = 33.06-)

of Hades you must not allow to overcome it. And I give you the keys of the kingdom

- of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth is bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth is loosed in heaven.
- 33.05 Luke
- In those days a decree was issued by Caesar Augustus that all the country should be registered. This registration first took place under the rule of the Syrian, Cyrenius. And everyone went and was registered in his [own] land. Joseph also went up from Galilee to the town of Nazareth,
- 33.10 to Judea, to the town of David which they call Bethlehem, because he belongs to the house
- 33.15

Page 34
(Luke 02:04-10)

- and line of David. He registered with Mary whom he was to marry for she was expecting a child.
- 34.05 It came to pass, while they were going there, that the days for her to give birth were fulfilled. And she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him in cloths and covered him in straw, for there was no room because of the multitudes. For there were shepherds in that town, abiding and keeping watch over their flocks for fear of night.
- 34.10 The angel of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified.
- 34.15 And we rejoiced with great joy that is for

Page 35
(Luke 02:10-15)

- all the people, for unto us was born today the saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the town of David.
- 35.05 And this will be a sign to us, you will find the baby in cloths, sleeping in straw. Together with the angel there appeared a multitude of the heavenly host, praising

35.10 God and saying: Glory
to God in the highest, and on
earth peace to the men he revealed [himself to].
And it happened that when the angels
departed from them into heaven, the people
35.15 and the shepherds said to one
another: Let's go to Bethlehem
and see this thing which has happened,
which the Lord has told us about. And

Page 36
(Luke 02:16-20)

36.05 they went and presented their greetings and found
Mary with Joseph and the baby
sleeping in straw. They saw him
and spread the word concerning what had been
told them about the boy. And all who
heard it were amazed at what
the shepherds said to them.
And Mary saw all these things
and pondered them in her heart.
36.10 And the shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising
God and all the things
they had heard and seen, which were just
as they had been told.

Page 37
(Matthew 10:01, 10:05-08)

Matthew Gospel.
The Destitute Saints.

37.05 At that time, Jesus called his
twelve disciples. He gave
them authority over evil
spirits to cast them out,
and to heal them of every
disease and of every
illness. These [disciples] Jesus sent out
37.10 and commanded them, saying: Do not
go on a foreign road and
do not enter a Samaritan town.
Go to the lost sheep in the
house of Israel. As you go,
37.15 preach and say that the kingdom
of heaven is near.
Heal the sick, cleanse

Page 38

(Matthew 10:08 = 38.01-03; John 01:35-40 = 38.05-)

the unclean, drive out
the demons. Freely you have received,
freely give.

Saint Andrew. John

- 38.05 At that time, John was there
with two of his disciples. And seeing
Jesus pass by, he says: Look,
the lamb of God. The two
disciples heard what he said,
38.10 they followed Jesus. Jesus
turned around and saw them
following him and says to them:
What do you want? They say to him:
Rabbi, which means Teacher,
38.15 where are you staying? He says to them:
Come [and] see. And they went and saw

Page 39

(John 01:40-44)

- where he was staying, and then
spent that day [with him]. It was about
the tenth hour. Andrew,
39.05 Simon Peter's brother, was one of
the two who heard [this] from
John and who followed him. He
first finds his brother,
Simon, and says to him: We have
found the Messiah whom they call Christ.
39.10 And he went to Jesus. And Jesus
looked at him and said: You are Simon,
the son of John. You will be called
Cephas, which means
39.15 Peter. The next day, Jesus set off
and went into Galilee.

The first Sunday of the fasting period is called

Page 40

(John 21:09-14)

and fish lying on it, and
bread. Jesus says to them:
Bring some of the fish you have

- 40.05 just caught. Simon Peter set off and dragged the net ashore full of large fish, one hundred and fifty and three, and many others, though the net was not torn. Jesus said to them: Come and gather together.
- 40.10 One of the disciples went and saw who it was, and saw that it was the Lord. Jesus went and took some bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This is the third time that Jesus
- 40.15 appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Page 41

(Mark 15:22?, 15:33-36)

The Saturday of meat.

Mark

- 41.05 At that time, the soldiers seized Jesus and took him to crucify him and led him to a place called Golgotha which means the Place of the Skull. It was the sixth hour and they crucified him. At the sixth hour
- 41.10 darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice and said: Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which
- 41.15 means: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And some of those standing near heard this and said that he was calling Elijah. One man went

Page 42

(Mark 15:36-41)

- 42.05 and filled a sponge with vinegar and put it on a stick and gave it to him to drink, and he said: Leave him alone and let us see if Elijah comes to take him down. And Jesus let out a loud cry and breathed his last. And below, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. A centurion, who was standing by,

42.10 saw him cry out and breathe his last,
[and] said: Surely this man is the Son
of God. There were also some
women watching from a distance. And
[among them] was Mary Magdalene and
42.15 Mary, the mother of James
the younger and Joses and Salome who,
when he was in Galilee, followed
him and served him. And others
came up with him to Jerusalem

Page 43
(John 05:01-05)

John. Jesus went up
at that time to Jerusalem.
Which was in Jerusalem at a sheep
pool, which in Hebrew
43.05 is called Bethesda. It had
five porches. In these
languished many sick people:
the blind, the lame, the paralysed,
who partook of the water. The angel
43.10 of the Lord from time to time
would come down to the pool and stir up
the waters, and the first one who bathed
after the stirring up of the water
would be cured of
43.15 all his diseases, as if
they had never existed. There was a man

Page 44
(Matthew 27:01-08)

At that time, all the chief priests and
the elders of the people gathered
to put him to death, and they bound him
and led him away and handed him over to
44.05 Pontius Pilate, the governor. Then
Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that they
condemned him, and returned the thirty silver
coins to the chief priests and elders.
I have sinned. And they said: How does it happen
44.10 that you are afraid? And he threw the coins
into the temple. He left and he went away and hanged
himself. The chief priests took the coins and said:
It is against the law to put this into the treasury
since it is blood money. And they took counsel

44.15 and went and bought the field
of the pots to bury the foreigners,
and they now call that field

Page 45

(Matthew 27:08-17)

the Field of Blood to this very day. Then the word
of Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled who said:
They took 30 silver coins, the price
set on him by the sons of Israel
45.05 and they used them [to buy] the potters'
field, as the Lord commanded.
And Jesus stood before the governor
and the governor asked him, saying:
Are you the king of the Jews? And Jesus said:
45.10 As you say. And accused by the chief
priests and elders, he gave no answer.
Then Pilate said to him:
Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing
against you? And he gave no word of reply.
45.15 The governor was greatly amazed.
At all the feasts, it was the governor's
custom to release the prisoner they
wished. There was then
a prisoner whom they called Barabbas.
45.20 and [when] they had gathered,

Page 46

(Matthew 27:17, 27:22-29)

Pilate said to them: Which one do you
want me to release to you, Barabbas or Jesus,
whom they call Christ?
They all said to him: Crucify him.
46.05 The governor said to them: What evil has he done?
And all the more they cried out, saying:
Crucify him. Pilate saw that he bore no guilt,
that it was given to him by others. He took water
and washed his hands in front of the crowd
46.10 and said: May I be innocent of this man's
blood. You bear the responsibility. All the
people answered saying: Let his blood
be on us and on our children. Then
they released Barabbas,
46.15 and they flogged Jesus and took him
to be crucified. Then the
governor's soldiers took Jesus

to trial, and all the soldiers gathered
and put a scarlet robe on him
and took a crown of

Page 47

(Matthew 27:29-35)

thorns and set it on his head,
and [put] a staff in his right hand
and knelt in front of him
and mocked him and said: Hail,
47.05 king of the Jews. And they spat
on him and took the staff and struck
him on the head. And when they finished playing,
they took off the robe and put his
own clothes on him. And they led him away
47.10 to crucify him. As they were going, they met
a man from Cyrene, named Simon.
They forced him to carry the cross.
They came to a place called Golgotha,
which means the Place of the Skull. They gave
47.15 him vinegar with gall to drink.
He refused to drink it. While crucifying
him, they divided up his clothes, they cast lots
that the word of the prophet be fulfilled:
They divided his garments

Page 48

(Matthew 27:35-39 = -48.08; Luke 23:39-43 = 48.08-)

my garments, they cast lots.
Sitting down, they kept watch over him there.
And they placed above his head this
48.05 sign: This is the king of the
Jews. Then they crucified
two robbers with him, one
on his right and one on his left. And
the criminal who hung there hurled insults at him.
He said: If you are Christ, save yourself and us.
48.10 The other one replied and rebuked him,
saying: Don't you fear God
since you have sinned? And we are [punished] justly,
we are getting what our deeds deserve.
This man has done nothing wrong. And he said
48.15 to Jesus: Forgive me, Lord, when you come
into your kingdom. And he said
to him: Verily, I say to you, today you will be
with me in paradise. And those who

Page 49

(Matthew 27:39-46)

- 49.05 passed by hurled insults at him and shook their heads and said: You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross. In the same way, the chief priests mocked him with the scribes and elders and Pharisees, and said: You saved others and cannot save yourself. Oh, you who are the king of Israel, come down from the cross and we will believe you.
- 49.10 He trusts in God, let [God] rescue him now if he wants him, he who said I am the Son of God. In the same way, the robbers who were crucified
- 49.15 with him also heaped insults on him. From the sixth hour darkness came over all, over all the land until the ninth hour. At the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice and said: Eloi, Eloi,

Page 50

(Matthew 27:46-54)

- 50.05 lama sabachthani?, which means: God, God, why have you forsaken me? Some of those standing there heard [this] and said that he was calling Elijah. And one of them went and took a sponge and filled it with vinegar and put it on a stick and gave it to him to drink. And the rest said: Leave him alone, let us see if Elijah comes to save him. Jesus cried out again in a loud voice and gave up
- 50.10 his spirit. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And the earth shook, the rocks split, the tombs broke open, and the bodies of many holy people who had died
- 50.15 were raised to life, and came out of the tombs after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared to many people. And the centurion and the others watching Jesus, [when they saw] the earthquake which took place,

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(Matthew 27:54 = 51.01-02; John 19:31-36 = 51.03-)

were terrified and said: Surely he is
the Son of God. As it was Friday,
the Jews, so that the body not remain
on the cross on Saturday since
51.05 Saturday was a holy day, asked
Pilate to have the knees broken
and [the bodies] taken away. The soldiers came
and broke the knees of the first man and
of the other crucified with him. And they came
51.10 to Jesus. When they saw he was
dead, they did not break his
knees, though one of the soldiers
pierced his side with a spear, and
blood and water came out. And a witness
51.15 saw it was true. Some of them saw that he said
it was true so that you may also believe.
These things happened so that

Page 52

(John 19:36-37 = 52.01-03; Matthew 27:55-61 = 52.04-)

the scripture would be fulfilled: Not one
of his bones will be broken. And another
scripture says: he looked on the one who was
watching. Many women were there watching
52.05 from a distance who had followed Jesus
from Galilee, who were serving
him. Among them were Mary Magdalene
and Mary, the mother of James and Joses,
and the mother of Zebedee's
52.10 sons. Night fell. There came
a rich man from Arimathea
named Joseph who had himself become a disciple
of Jesus. This man went to Pilate
[and] asked for the body of Jesus. Then
52.15 Pilate ordered that the body be brought
[to him]. And Joseph took the body
and wrapped it in a clean cloth
and put it in a new tomb he had cut out
of a rock and placed a big stone at the entrance
52.20 of the tomb [and] went away. And Mary
Magdalene and the other Mary were

Page 53

(John 09:01-08 = 53.03-)

there sitting opposite the tomb.
Blind Sunday after Easter.

John.

- 53.05 At that time, as he went along, Jesus saw
a man blind from birth. His disciples
ask him and they say: Rabbi,
what sin did the parents of this
man commit that he was born blind. Jesus
answers: Neither this man nor his parents sinned.
53.10 [It is] so that the work of God be displayed in him,
for I must do the works of the one
who has sent me as long as it is day. Night
is coming when no one can work. While
I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
53.15 This he said and spat on the ground and made some
mud from the saliva and washed [with] the mud
the eyes of the blindman. And he said to him:
Go wash in the Pool of Siloam,
which means Sent. He went and washed
53.20 and came back seeing. His family and

Page 54

(John 09:08-16)

- those who had seen before
that he was blind said: Isn't this
the man who used to sit and beg? Some
said: It is he. Others said:
54.05 He looks like him. He said: I am he.
They say to him: How were your eyes opened?
He replies and says: The man
they call Jesus made some mud and put it
on my eyes. And he said to me: Go to the
54.10 Pool of Siloam and wash. I went and
washed and could see. They say to him: Where
is this man? He says: I don't know.
They brought to the Pharisees the man who had
previously been blind. It was a Saturday on which
54.15 Jesus had made the mud and opened his eyes.
Again the Pharisees asked him how his eyes
were opened. He says to them: He put mud
on my eyes and I washed and could see. Some
of the Pharisees say: This man is not

Page 55

(John 09:16-19, 09:21-22)

from God for he does not keep

Saturday [the Sabbath]. Others said:
How can a sinner do miracles?
A division was among them.
55.05 They say to the blindman again:
What have you to say of the one
who opened your eyes? He says that
he was a prophet. The Jews did not believe
that he had been blind and could see
55.10 until they called his family to have a look.
They asked them and said:
Is this your son whom you say
was born blind? How he can see now? We
don't know. Who opened his eyes? We don't
55.15 know. He knows. Ask him. Let him
speak for himself. His family
said this because they were afraid
of the Jews, for the Jews had decided
that anyone who acknowledged

Page 56
(John 09:22-29)

[him as] Christ would be put out of
the synagogue. And this is why his family
said: He knows. Ask him. And
56.05 a second time they asked the man
who had been blind. He says: Give glory
to God. We do not know
if this man is a sinner. They
answer and said: Whether he is a sinner or not
we don't know, but this we know,
56.10 that this man was blind and now
he can see. They say to him again: What
did he do? How did he open your eyes? He
answers: I have told you and you do not
listen. Why do you want to hear it again?
56.15 Do you want to become his disciples, too?
They were insulted and said:
You are his disciple. We are the disciples
of Moses. We have not heard

Page 57
(John 09:29-35)

that God called Moses. [As for] this
man, we do not know where he comes from.
This man answers and says to them:
I am surprised at this, that you do not

57.05 know where he comes from and he opened my eyes.
I know that God does not listen
to sinners, but listens
to the godly man who does
his will. For it has
57.10 never been heard of that the eyes
of a man born blind have been opened.
If he were not from God, he could
never have done anything. They answer
and say to him: You were born
57.15 wholly in sin. How dare you lecture us!
And they threw him out. And Jesus
heard that they had thrown him
out and found him

Page 58
(John 09:35-38)

Do you believe in the Son of
God? He answers and said:
Who are you, Lord, that I may believe in
you? Jesus says to him: He is [the one] whom you
58.05 have seen and who has spoken to you. He said: I
believe, Lord, and I worship him.

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Page 60
(John 11:32-39)

that she was going to the tomb to mourn there.
And when Mary arrived where Jesus
was, she saw him and fell to his
feet and said to him: Lord, if you
60.05 had been here, my brother would not
have died. When Jesus saw her
weeping, he groaned. He asked her,
saying: Where have you buried
him? They say: Lord, come
60.10 and see. Jesus wept.
The Jews said: See how
he loved him! One of them said:
Could not he who opened the eyes
of the dead man keep this man
60.15 from dying? Jesus once more
went to the tomb. There was a cave

and there was a stone on it. Jesus

Page 61

(John 11:39-43)

- says: Take away the stone. Martha,
the sister of the dead man,
says to him: Lord, do not, for he
has been rotting for four days. Jesus
- 61.05 says: Did I not say that if
you believed, [you would see] all the glory
of God? They took away the
stone where the dead man was lying.
Jesus raised his eyes
- 61.10 and said: Father, I beg you
to hear me, though I know
that you always hear me, [but I said this]
for the benefit of the people standing here,
that they may believe that you sent
- 61.15 me. And saying this, he called
in a loud voice: Lazarus, come out.

7. Summary

The eighteenth-century Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, fifty-nine pages of biblical texts in a southern Geg dialect of Albanian, written in an original alphabet, is of significance to the development of Albanian culture for a number of reasons. The work would seem to offer the oldest example of an original Albanian alphabet, i.e. the first attempt ever made to create a writing system specifically designed for the Albanian language. The manuscript also contains the first sizeable biblical translations from Greek into Albanian as well as the earliest original Albanian prose text from the Orthodox milieu. Given the paucity of Albanian-language writing in the eighteenth century, the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript is of significance both to the development of early Albanian literature and to our knowledge of the Albanian language in that period.

Evidence would seem to indicate that the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript was the work of Gregory of Durrës (d. 1772), remembered as one of the most learned men of his age. His Albanian-language Bible translations have long been considered lost. The author's invention of an original alphabet, his careful avoidance of foreign loanwords throughout the text, and possibly his conscious utilization of a supra-regional dialect are also of significance. They offer sufficient proof that a spirit of national awareness existed among the much-oppressed and vastly underdeveloped Albanians over a century before the Albanian national movement began to take form.

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Akoluthia tôn hagiôn heptarithmôn, poiêtheisa para tu en hieromonakhois Grigoriu Moskhopolitu.
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Fig. 2: The as yet undeciphered second script on the front page.

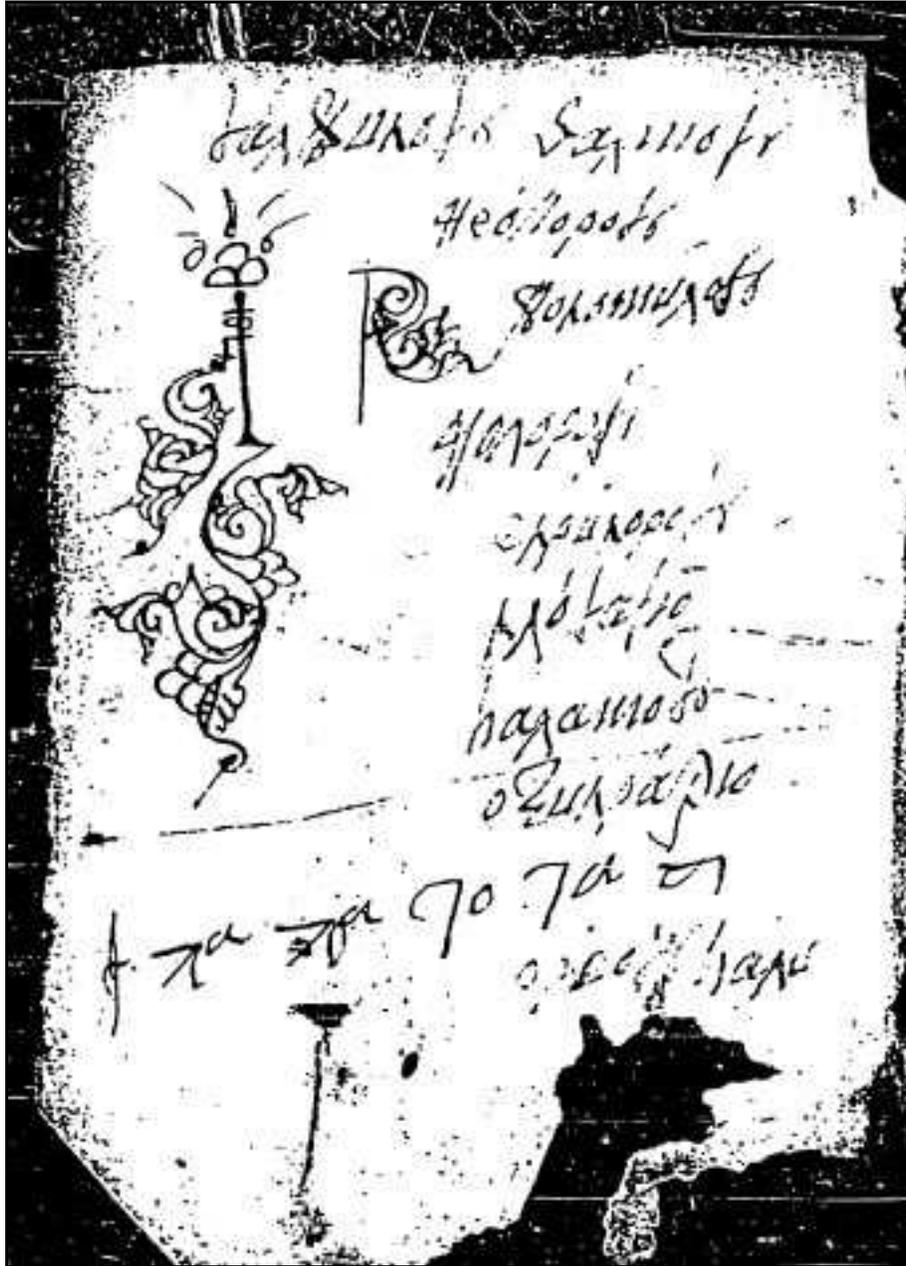


Fig. 3: Attempted retracing of the second Elbasan script after detailed examination.

θαλ δειλοφο Σαχιστη
θεοποροφο
δολομιλαθη
μολορονη
εμπελοροφη
μολοφο
παχαμοφο
οζμραρω

κακα ποτασι
ορεοθηαλι

Fig. 5: The Todhri alphabet as interpreted by Hahn, 1854, p. 280.

§. 1. Das Alphabet.

| Nr. | Zeichen. | Benennung. | Werth. | Nr. | Zeichen. | Benennung. | Werth. | Nr. | Zeichen. | Benennung. | Werth. |
|-----|----------|------------|--------|-----|----------|------------|---------|-----|----------|------------|--------|
| 1. | V | A | a | 19. | ʃ | Ra | r | 37. | ʒ | θa | pink θ |
| 2. | I | E | ea e | 20. | f | Rra | rr | 38. | ʃ | Ba | b |
| 3. | i | I | i | 21. | 6 | Fa | f | 39. | 6 | Mba | mb |
| 4. | O | O | o | 22. | tb | da | pink θ | 40. | ts | Pa | p |
| 5. | O | U | u | 23. | č | Ma | m | 41. | v | Na | n |
| 6. | č | Č | č | 24. | ɔ | Ja | pink j | 42. | q | Tscha | tseh |
| 7. | ʃ | E | pink e | 25. | h | Gha | gh | 43. | g | Dscha | dseh |
| 8. | z | Sa | s | 26. | k | Ngha | ngh | 44. | gʃ | Ndscha | ndseh |
| 9. | ʃ | Ca | pink c | 27. | b | Gja | gj | 45. | 5 | Sta | st |
| 10. | l | Taa | ta | 28. | 5 | Ngja | ngj | 46. | ʃ | Scha | sch |
| 11. | ʃ | Daa | da | 29. | v | Γa | pink γ | 47. | ʃ | Ja | pink j |
| 12. | ʒ | Ndaa | nda | 30. | ts | Paa | pa | 48. | ʃ | Schta | seht |
| 13. | č | Wa | w | 31. | € | Ha | h | 49. | v | Te | te |
| 14. | H | La | l | 32. | X | Cha | pink ch | 50. | v | Njan | nj |
| 15. | q | Lja | lj | 33. | ɔ | Chja | pink ch | 51. | v | Aa | aa |
| 16. | ʃ | Kja | kj | 34. | ʃ | Ta | t | 52. | ʃ | Q | pink q |
| 17. | c | Ka | k | 35. | Λ | Da | d | | | | |
| 18. | 8 | Xan | x | 36. | XX | Nda | nd | | | | |

Fig. 6: The Berat alphabet together with text in Greek script from the so-called Codex of Berat.

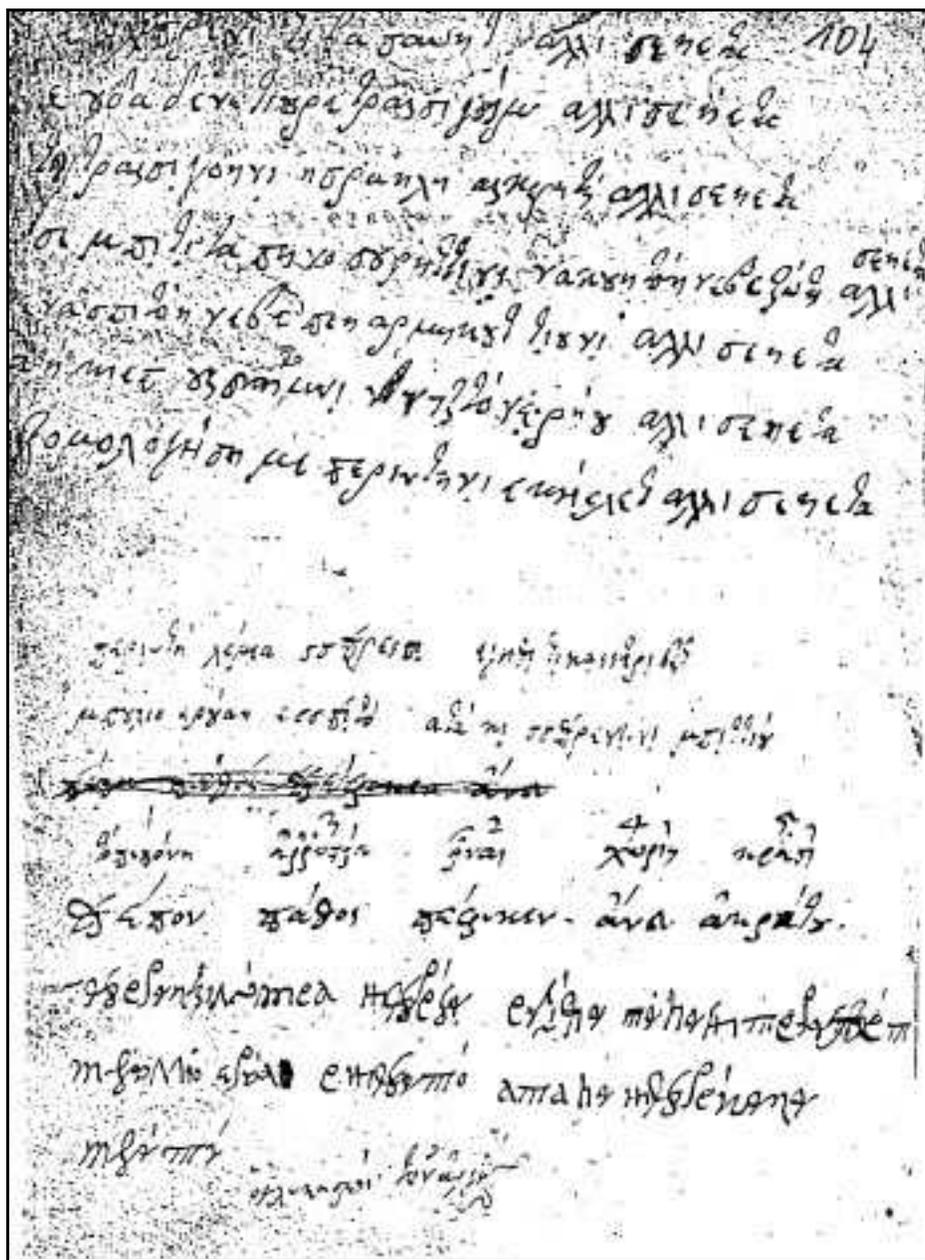


Fig. 7: The Gjirokaštër alphabet as published by Hahn, 1854, p. 297.

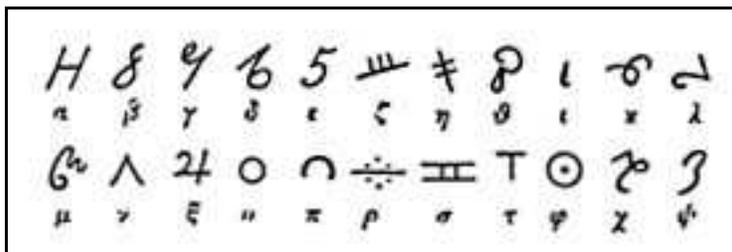


Fig. 8: A letter written in 1801 by Jan Vellara in a script of his own invention.

ba yubnyu nactu ba dggg pufjn . bu uyiquata bu uyit!
 Di buf va lknkufjijja ngn yubnyu ! U juuyju . juuyju ya
 ujsu ba fijn . puja ycinj uaii bafi caa cyhfiu .
 Uifnyju qadi ta ya suubn ; ujab ju anjnyu kinknfn uai
 puja uydrfu . Wu za anuua uya ; kinknfn fndu ta ki
 kn uyuyjnyu ta ddfny . Gnao ngn fnda ba vpsni rldi
 ju . Da vnuua pprfn sa ga sa buf ta yffnyu ; saku ba
 ca caktu . n dknfu . gi pu bufu n bufau .? fkuu .
 Va kkn kuki , va anuyjny . duf ga ta unyky . fi jn
 uyi ya puju . fi fnyji uyidkn ? Va ya saku fndu qny .
 Ji , ta qiza , va ya ga ta jnyji vifpuj bu udfndnf .
 Guinyu fa uya ta qibu quny . ta puu . n gada puu .
 pu ta foi .
 30 Gpduyafid 1801 Cuyfobokju . uyif kuyju
 Jusfoi Kinknfn .

