

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript (*Anonimi i Elbasanit*), 1761, and the Struggle for an Original Albanian Alphabet

by ROBERT ELSIE (Olzheim/Eifel)

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

¹) cf. Elsie 1992.

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 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 was 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

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

³) cf. Elsie 1991.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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 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.

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.

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 Spyridōn

The 59 pages of biblical texts contained in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, a total of 6,113 words, 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: X [ch], Λ [l], Ν [n], Ο [o], Π [p], Θ [th], ζ [z], and a possibly Slavic flavour to others: И [i], С [s], most of the letters in this alphabet would seem to be new creations, uninfluenced by neighbouring languages and scripts⁵).

Alphabet of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

a	€	m	h
b		n	N
c	⌒	n(2)	q
ç		nj	⌒
d	⌒	o	o
(nd)	⌒	p	π
dh	∇	q	κ
e	z	r	4
ë	ç	rr	4̇
f	b	s	c
g	z	sh	⌒
g(2)	F*	t	v
g(3)	L**	th	θ
gj	φ	u	δ
h	ε	v	h
i	и, H	x	h (or nx?), rare
j	l	xh	⌒ rare
k	Γ	y	δ
x	X	z	ς
l	Λ	zh	y rare
ll	Λ̇		

* rare. Appears only in the loanword *igemoni*

** rare. Appears only in the personal name *Magdhalena*

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

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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.

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 Raj-

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.

⁶) cf. Hahn 1854, vol. 1, p. 280–300.

⁷) cf. Geitler 1883.

ko 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, 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 Gjirokastër 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 Gjirokastër 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 Gjirokastër, from the family of the Alisot

⁸⁾ cf. Nahtigal 1923.

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

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.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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* (*Iōannēs Bēlaras*). 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 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 abëtor shqip per djëlm 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

¹²⁾ cf. Jochalas 1985.

¹³⁾ cf. Qosja 1983.

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.

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.

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.

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.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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 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 *Shuteriqi*¹⁹ 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

¹⁶) cf. Petrotta 1932, p. 368–369.

¹⁷) Schmidt-Neke 1987, p. 347.

¹⁸) cf. Zamputi 1949 and 1951.

¹⁹) cf. Shuteriqi 1949.

²⁰) cf. Domi 1965.

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* (Γρηγόριος τοῦ Δυρραχίου), 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 Chalkeus*²²).

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

²¹) cf. Domi 1965 and Shuteriqi 1987.

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

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

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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 Hellēnikon Frontistērion was a centre of learning founded in 1744, similar to academies known to have existed in Bucharest, Iași, Constantinople, Metsovo, Janina (Iōannina), 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* (Γρηγόριος Τυπογράφος), 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* 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.

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

²⁵) cf. Domi 1965, p. 274–276.

²⁶) cf. Shuteriqi 1987.

The best documentary source of information on *Gregory of Durrës* is to be found in a work by his contemporary *Geōrgios 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 *Νέα Ἑλλάς ἢ ἑλληνικὸν θέατρον* (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, Klēmens, 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 *Iōakeim 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. 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.

²⁷) cf. *Zabiras* 1872, p. 236.

²⁸) cf. *Zabiras* 1872, p. 244.

²⁹) cf. *Domi* 1965, p. 277.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

If we accept the authorship of *Gregory of Durrës* and the accuracy of *Zabirras'* 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*

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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. ἀπόστολος
02.09 *upeshkëpintë* = the chief priest < Gk. ἐπίσκοπος
02.17 *mb[o]dhisnjënë* = hinder < Gk. ἐμποδίζω
03.07 *ergjand-* = silver coins. Neologism from Gk. ἀργυρία
03.18 *profitëvet* = of the prophets < Gk. προφήτης
04.01 *nomi* = the law < Gk. νόμος
05.06 *dhidhaskale* = teacher < Gk. διδάσκαλος
07.15 *parigori* = comfort < Gk. παρηγορία
13.11 *dhaskali* = teacher < Gk. δάσκαλος
16.18 *kustodhit* = the guards < Gk. κουστωδία
26.01 *stadhion* = stadium, furlong < Gk. στάδιον
29.02 *iġemoni* = the governor < Gk. ἡγεμών
33.01 *adhit* = of hell < Gk. ᾅδης
35.01 *laust* = the people < Gk. λαός
41.07 *kranio* = skull < Gk. κρανίον
42.02 *kalamt* = reed, stick < Gk. κάλαμος
43.09 *angjelli* = the angel < Gk. ἄγγελος
44.13 *korvanat* = treasury < Gk. κορβανᾶς < Hebrew
46.19 *çlamidhë* = robe < Gk. χλαμύς, χλαμύδος
48.01 *kliron* = lot < Gk. κλήρος
51.14 *marturi* = witness < Gk. μαρτύρια

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 *qutet* = *qytet*.

**Transliterated text of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript
and its translation**

Page 02

(Matthew 26:01–05 = 02.04–17)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>të shenjtënuashimenë të prem
ten e madhe. o të bekuam të kër
shtenë. thiri Krishti zoti ynë
apostojtë e ju dëftoi atë ditë</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> | <p>Holy Good Friday. Oh, blessed Chris-
tians. Christ, our Lord, called the
apostles and revealed to them that
day</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> |
|--|---|

Page 03

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>ta zanë Xrishnë ditën e pashkëvet
qi donjinë të hanjinë qegjnë qi
të ju dëvtet[nj]ë se zoti Xrisht ë
sht qegji i vërtetë qi donjënë</p> <p>05 të thernjënë çifutëtë më kryqt.
atëhereza Judha një 12 apostoj
shë qi ishte kusar ergjandashu[-]
nëgjoji se bujarëtë ishinë ndë
sarajet të Pilotit Kaijafë</p> <p>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</p> <p>15 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[-----]</p> | <p>to seize Christ on the day of the Pass-
over who wanted to eat the lamb to
show them that Christ, the Lord, is
the true lamb that the Jews</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> |
|---|---|

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 04

(freely adapted from Luke 22:04–06)

i nomit perëndisë erdha sot
përpara juve qi të shtëpoj gji
thë gjinnë prej rrenësiet të kë
tij njeriu. e e di se ju të perë
05 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
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
15 në më gazulim të math e ~~entanu~~
~~L-rgjande e atëhereza [-]th~~ kërkonjë
në koho [q]li të jua ja[pl]ë. e ju tha se
nesër dua të vinj mbë ju kur të jetë
[-----]nj ju qi ta zinite

In the name of God I have come to-
day before you to save the whole
world from the lies of this man. And
I know that you are of
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
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
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)

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 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
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
15 e atje bani gati. e tye votë
këta të dy apostoj e [ba]në si
i porositi Xrishti. prapësëri
u kthyenë ndë Vithanit [-----]

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 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 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
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

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.

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

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 mortisë sime, e ti

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 shkruam
 shpatë

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

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

10 that it is a fine thing and that all the
 sayings of the prophets must be ful-
 filled 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,

15 oh mother of mine, will have to suffer
 more than all women of this world so
 that the word of the holy father Si-
 meon be fulfilled, that a sword will

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

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

10 ime, sot dua të darkem me a
 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

15 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 gjo [-----]

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

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

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.

15 But take comfort in this, that I will
 rise on the third day, and then you
 will see me as a glorious and immor-
 tal king, where they sit

Page 08

PRDsha denj më gjunjë e ra për
 mys e zu fill e i thotë Xrishtit:

The Goddess fell to her knees, and
 was overwhelmed and began by

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- o biri im i ambli, zani yt e
vjalët e tua ma tun[n] zemë
- 05 rënë, e më vjene se shpirti im
iku preji meje. o i pafajçim
i biri perëndisë, qish bane
qi do të marr[ç] të vdeç këtë mort
të shëmtuam pafaj mbë kryqt?
- 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
- 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
- saying to Christ: Oh my sweet son,
your voice and your words have
shaken me to the heart.
- 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?
- 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
- 15 so that my heart also be soothed, lis-
ten 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

- 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. nesër
- 05 ke për ti pam mbuluam e të më
luanjënë të pabesët. kur të shof
ç këto, kij durim. shef njëme
faqenjë teme të ndrçime.
nesër ke për ta pam mbushun
- 10 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
- 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 [-----]
- enter the bones of my head. And
when you see me like this, have pa-
tience, as I must have. Look now at
my open eyes. Tomorrow
- 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. Tomor-
row you will see it covered
- 10 in spit. When you see this, have pa-
tience. Look now at my mouth so
sweet. Tomorrow you will see how
the faithless stuff me with a sponge
filled with
- 15 vinegar and spit. When you see this,
have patience. Look now at my un-
blemished palm. Tomorrow you will
see it

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,
- 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
të shofç këto, kij durim, o mama
- 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,
- 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 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
këto gjithë, ende tepër kij du
- 15 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

- 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?
- 10 si ta nëgjonjënë këto fjalë
amatë tjera mu më truanjë.
po i ambli biri im, këjo ësh
të të dashunit e të qielsë
prindit tyt, e yti, t'ap nde
- 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 qielsë,

- 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?
- 10 o sy të bekuam qi shifni perëdi,
si doni të shifni kaqë qen të
tërbuam përpara e kaqë shta
së t'egra përçark? o duar
fuqimëdha qi mbani gjithë

- 10 Now you can speak with me, but to-
morrow 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.
- 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

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,

- 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?
- 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
- 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.

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,

- 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?
- 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

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

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

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

kuami. njëme më dahetë shpirti
e zemëra prej meje. o helm i
math. o lot të panumura qi
ishinë atëhere m'atë shtëpi, më
05 nj'anë perëdesh me Marinë e Mar
thënë, më tjetër anë apostoit.
po Iudha zemërhekuri nuku
iu dhimti xiç të helmuamesë a
mën e Jisusit. qante Maydhali
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
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[-----]

my soul and heart are now leaving
me. Oh, great poison. Oh, countless
tears which were then [wept] in that
house, on
05 one side the Goddess with Mary and
Martha, on the other side the apos-
tles. But iron-hearted Juda had no
pity at all on the poisoned mother of
Jesus. Magdalene wept
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 com-
fort?
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)

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
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
hanë zë më këtë punë të frikshime.
10 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
mi, mjen njëme ha bukë me ju të
15 cë prapëmenë darkë sade s'jam
[m]unduam. pasandaj ncuar
[-----] lidh[-]një futë për mje

of mine, beg your teacher. Oh, suf-
fering mother of Jesus, into whose
hands will you deliver your son? Ju-
das betrayed him and you tell him to
take care
05 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.
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
15 the last supper [before] I suffer.
Thereafter he took off he
wrapped a towel around

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
gjeshun. e këtë e [b]ani qi ta dëf
05 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
këtë mrekuli të frikshime të
10 madhe qi të vinjë mbreti qi
el[s]jë 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 t e mia. mos dalë zjar prej
duarshi cë t[u] të më djegë. ti [je]
qi më ke krijuam [-----]
ti je dhaskal [-----]

[his waist] and he poured water into
a basin and began to wash the feet of
the apostles, and dried them with the
towel that he had wrapped around
himself. This he did
05 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,
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 lamenta-
ble state you find me, that you
should wash my
15 feet! 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-)

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

Mattheu
nesëret qi ishte pas cë
05 premtjet 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]
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
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

Mary in three months and returned
to her home *****
Matthew.
The next day, which was after
05 Friday, the chief priests and Phari-
sees 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
10 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 disci-
ples do not come at night and steal
15 it and tell the people that he has
risen from the tomb, and this last de-
ception will be [worse] than the first.
Pilate said to them: Take the guards,
go,

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 17

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

- | | | |
|---|------|---|
| e mbulli e shëkoni e gjifni vo
rre me kustodhit. | | seal [it], and look out and keep watch
over the tomb with the guards. |
| | Joan | John. |
| u grys nata nd'ato dit të një | | Night fell on that day, the first [day
of |
| 05 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 | 05 | 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 |
| 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. | 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 the
father has sent me, I am sending you. |
| 15 e këtë tha, e i la e ju tha atune:
merri frumënë shenj. kuja të
jua lini fajet, ja kam val uu.
kuja të [j]ua mbani, ja kam mbaj | 15 | And saying this, he [breathed upon]
them and said to them: Receive the
Holy Spirit. Of whomsoever you for-
give the sins, I have forgiven them.
Of whomsoever you retain them, I
have retained |

Page 18

(John 20:24–27)

- | | | |
|--|----|---|
| tun u. Thomai pre një tumbëdhje
tësh qi i thonë binjak nuku qe
me të kur erth Jisusi. thoshinë
tjerët të psuamë: pamë ZTnë. | | them. Thomas of the Twelve, whom
they call Twin, was not with them
when Jesus came. The other disciples
said: We saw the Lord. |
| 05 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 | 05 | And he said: Unless I see [in] his
hands the nail mark and put my fin-
ger on the nail marks and put my
hand in the marks, I will not believe.
And |
| 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: | 10 | eight days later the disciples were to-
gether and Thomas [was] with them.
Jesus arrived and the door was lock-
ed, and he stood among them and
said: Peace be with you. Then he says
to Thomas: |
| 15 bjerë gishnë tand këtu e shë
ko duart e mia, e ve dorënë
tande ebre e vene më brinjët | 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)

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| teme, e mos u ban i pabesë | | and be not unbelieving but believing. |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|

po me besë. u përgjeq Tho
 mai e tha: o ZT im e perëndi
 a im. tha atij Jisusi: si më
 05 pe, mbëbesite, lum kush
 s'më shef e mbëbeson. shumë
 këto ende tjera të gjoftu
 na bani Jisusi përpara
 psuamitvet tij qi s'janë
 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
 15 emënit të tij. *****

Thomas answered and said: Oh, my
 Lord and my God. Jesus said to him:
 Because you have
 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
 10 in this scripture. But these are writ-
 ten that you may believe that Jesus
 is Christ, the Son of God, and those
 who believe [may] have a long life in
 15 his name. *****

Page 20

(John 05:24–28)

Joan
 tha ZT atune qi vinjinë pas
 ci Judhinvet: amin amin
 si them u se ai qi nëgjon fjalë
 05 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
 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~~
 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]
 ë. mos mërexi më këtë se vjen[e]
 koha se të ~~vdekunit po q[...]~~
 20 gjithë ndë vorret

John.
 The Lord said to those Jews who
 came afterwards: Verily, verily, I say
 that whoever hears my
 05 word and believes him who sent me
 has eternal life and does not come
 into judgment, but has crossed after
 death into life. Verily, verily, I say
 that the time is coming
 10 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~~
 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 com-
 ing when ~~the dead~~
 all those in their graves

Page 21

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

~~të nëgjonjnë~~
 o grihenë të mirëtë të bam
 më të gritunit të jetësë,
 e fajbamt më të gritmit
 05 të gjuqit. s'mun u të baj në
 punën e tij asnjë. si nëgjoj,

~~will hear~~
 will rise, those who have done good
 will rise to live, those who have done
 evil will rise
 05 to be condemned. I can do nothing in
 his work. I judge only as I hear, and

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

	gjukoj. e gjuqja ime e dre jtë është, se u nuku kërkoj të tashmitë tem po të dashmit e	my judgment is just, for I seek not my will but the will
10	çuamit prindit im. <p style="text-align: right;">Ioani</p>	10 of the Father who sent me. <p style="text-align: right;">John.</p>
	nd'atë koho pa Jisusi se të gjithë dhanë janë prej prindit ndë dorë se prej	At that time Jesus saw that all things were given by the Father into his hands, that
15	perëndiet dual e ke pe rëndia vete. u gre prej darket e ngjeshi rrobe në e vu ujë ndë len b[]	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)

	e u nis të lanjë kambët e të psuamëvet e pshtual rrobenë qi kishte ngjeshun. e vjene ke Simon Petri	and began to wash his disciples' feet and dried [them with the] robe he had put on. And he comes to Simon Peter,
05	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	05 and the latter says to him: Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus an- swers and 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.
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	10 Peter says to him: Never wash my feet. Jesus answers: Unless I wash them, you have no part with me. Si- mon Peter says to him: Lord, not just
15	kambët, po nde duart e nde kryet. i thotë Jisusi: të la[f] nuk u duhetë po kambëtë,	15 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-)

	se ini pastrë gjithë ju pas trë ini, jo gjithë. shëkoni të tanënë, e këtë tha: jo gji thë pastrë ini.	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.
05	<p style="text-align: right;">Ioan</p> nd'atë koho qe sëmuni Llaza ri prej Vithaniet prej njij Mariet e Marthet të motra t e tij. qi Maria fërkoj ka	05 <p style="text-align: right;">John.</p> At that time there was a sick man, Lazarus, from Bethany, from the [vil- lage] of Mary and his sister Martha. It was Mary who rubbed the feet

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

10 of the Lord with ointment and who
wiped his feet at his command. Her
brother, Lazarus, became sick. His
sisters went to him and say to him:
Lord, your friend
15 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)

të lavdurohetë i biri pe
rëndisë [i] mbë të. i donte Jisu
si Marthën e motrën e tij
e Llazarininë. po qi nëgjo
05 i se sëmunë, atëhereza
mbet mb'atë ven du dit. pra
pasadaj i thotë të psuamëvet:
vemi ndë dhet të Jiudheivet.
i thonë atij të psuamitë:
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
15 tën nuku humb se dritën e
gjinvet ku shef. kush shëndrit
natën hum se mbë dritën nu[ku]

the Son of God may be glorified
through it. Jesus loved Martha and
his sister and Lazarus. When he
05 heard 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:
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? Who-
ever walks
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)

është. këtë tha e pasandaj
i thonë atij atij: Lazari,
miku yt, fjet, po të vemi
ta qojmë. i thonë të psuamit
05 atij: ZT, nd[ë] fjet, i shtëpuam
quhet. tha Jisusi për të fje
tunit të tij, ata mëlavdnë
se prej cë fjetunit të gjumit
tha. atëhereza ju tha atune:
10 pritni. Lazari vdiq, e nga
zullohem për ju qi të mbeso
ni se s'qesh atje. po ve mbë të.
i thotë Thomai i psuami: ve
mi nde na të vdesëmë me të.

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
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:
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.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

15 erth Jisusi e gjet katër dit
qi ishte ndë vorrt. ishte Vitha
nia afër prej Jieruaslimit

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)

stadhion pesëmbëdhjet,
e shumë prej Jitudheit qenë
votë ke Martha e Maria
qi ti dëftenjënë për të vë
05 lla të tij. Martha si e në
gjoi se se Jisusi vjene
i dual përpara. Maria
rrinte më shtëpi. i thotë
Martha Jisusit: ZT, të qen
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.
15 i thotë atij Martha: shof se ngr[i]
hetë më të gritmitë më të cë pra
pëmet ditë. i thotë Jisusi: u jam

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

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
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.
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)

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
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
10 n e tij. këtë i tha: psoisi ço
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
15 kë mbë të vend. shofënë Ma
rinë se rendë u nis e vje
ne. vote atynë e ju thotë:

the resurrection of life. Whoever be-
lieves in me will never die, but live,
and whoever lives and believes in
me, will never die.

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
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
15 in that place. They saw how Mary
quickly set off and comes. [She] went
to them and says to them:

Page 28

(Matthew 28:09–14)

e Jisusi u poq me ta e ju tha:
gazulloxi. ato vonë e

and Jesus met them and said to them:
Greetings. They came and fell to his

- i ranë ndë kambë e ju falnë
 atij. ju thotë atyne Jisusi:
 05 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 sheher qutet iu dëf
 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
 15 m[it e tij] natënë erdhnë e vodh
 në tue fjetun na. në qoftë
- feet and worshipped him. Jesus says
 to them:
 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
 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
 15 disciples came during the night and
 stole him away while we were sleep-
 ing. If

Page 29

(Matthew 28:14–20)

- qi të nëgjohet këjo prej i
 gëmonit, na kemi turp po
 ta bajmë kështu. e muarrë rgj
 andet e banë si e psuamë.
 05 e u shpall këjo fjalë përpa
 ra Jiudhejivet mjen këtë
 ditë. të nëmbëdhjetë psu
 amët vonë ndë Galilet,
 ndë malt qi i çoi Jisusi.
 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
 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.
- this is heard by the governor, we will
 be ashamed of acting thus. They took
 the money and did as they were in-
 structed.
 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.
 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
 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)

- Mattheu
 tha ZT gjithë ata qi më shpallnjën
 përpara gjinvet, e shpall
 nde u përpara prindi tim
 05 qi ë më qiell. e ata qi më sha
 njënë mu përpara gjinvet e
 shanj nde u përpara prindit
 tem qi ë më qiell. kush do at
- Matthew.
 The Lord said: Whoever acknowl-
 edges me before men, I will also
 acknowledge before my Father
 05 who is in heaven. And whoever in-
 sults me before men I will also insult
 before my Father who is in heaven.
 Anyone who loves his father and

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- e amë për mu nuku është i dretë.
- 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
- 15 qi i lashë gjithë e u gji[ç]ë me tyj. qish na gjet ne? JS ju tha atune: amin si them [u]
- mother more than me is not worthy [of me].
- 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
- 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)

- se ju erthtë e shkuaatë e pësëri baçi. kur të rrinjë i biri nje riut më shkam të lavdë tij, rrini nde ju më dymbëdhjetë
- 05 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
- 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
- 15 mitë të parë.
- 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
- 05 thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left his house, brother and sister, father and mother, or wife, children,
- 10 relatives for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will enjoy [eternal] life. Many who are first will be last and who are last
- 15 [will be] first.

Page 32

(Matthew 16:13–18)

- i Shë Petritit. Mattheu. nd'atë koho erth Jisusi mbë anë të Qesarisë të Filipit pyet të psuamit te tij thotë: kë më tho
- 05 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
- 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
- 15 i qiellsë. po unë të them se ti je Petre e mbi këtë gur të më ndërtojsh mu kishënë e duer
- of Saint Peter. Matthew. 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
- 10 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
- 15 Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock you will build my church and the gates

Page 33

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>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</p> <p>05 ç mbë dhet ë zgidhun më qiell
Luka
nd'ato dit dual urdhën prej
Qesarit Avgustit të shkru
hetë gjithë dheu. ai të shkruam</p> <p>10 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</p> <p>15 ret ndë Iudhet ndë qute
t të Dhavidhit qi e quajnë
Vithleem se ajo është shtëpi e</p> | <p>of Hades you must not allow to over-
come it. And I give you the keys of
the kingdom of heaven. Whatever
you bind on earth is bound in heav-
en; whatever you loose
05 on earth is loosed in heaven.
Luke.
In those days a decree was issued by
Caesar Augustus that all the country
should be registered. This registra-
tion
10 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,
15 to Judea, to the town of David which
they call Bethlehem, because he be-
longs to the house</p> |
|--|--|

Page 34

(Luke 02:04–10)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>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</p> <p>05 u mbushnë ditë të pjellë atë.
e puall të birn e saj të pa
rënë të pjellë, e e shpërğa
nisi atë e e mbuloi atë
ndë kashtë se nuku ishte</p> <p>10 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</p> <p>15 ta e u frikshuamë me frikë të
madhe. e na u gazuluamë me
gazulim të math qi është mbë</p> | <p>and line of David. He registered with
Mary whom he was to marry for she
was expecting a child. It came to
pass, while they were going there,
05 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
10 room because of the multitudes. For
there were shepherds in that town,
abiding and keeping watch over
their flocks for fear of night. The
angel of the Lord shone around
15 them and they were terrified. And we
rejoiced with great joy that is for</p> |
|--|--|

Page 35

(Luke 02:10–15)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>gjithë laust, se leu mbë ne
sot shtëpoçisi qi është Xrishti
ZTi mbë qutet të Dhavidhit.
e këjo mbë ne të qoftun është,</p> | <p>all the people, for unto us was born
today the saviour, who is Christ the
Lord, in the town of David. And this
will be a sign to us,</p> |
|---|---|

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- 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
10 i naltit perëndi. e më
dhet pushim njerëzevet ju
dëftoi. e u ba si votnë ata
më qiell engjitë e njerëzit
e kullotësit thoshinë shoq me
15 shoq: vemi mjen ndë Vithleem
e shofëmë këto fjalë të bame
qi zoti na dëftei ne. e vo
- 05 you will find the baby in cloths,
sleeping in straw. Together with the
angel there appeared a multitude of
the heavenly host, praising God and
saying: Glory
10 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 and the shepherds
said to one
15 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)

- në e ju falë e gjetnë Ma
riamnë me Jiosifnë e fosh
nja flinte ndë kashtë. e panë
e dëftuenë për këto fjalë
05 të fola për djalë. e gjithë sa
e nëgjuanë u mëryenë pr'a
to fjalë kullotësit mbë të.
e Mariami gjithë i pa këto
punë e i vu ndë zemërë të
10 saj. e u kthuenë kullotësit
tje lavdyryem e tue lu
tun perëndinë e gjithë sa
e nëgjuenë e panë si ju tha
atyne.
- they went and presented their greet-
ings and found Mary with Joseph
and the baby sleeping in straw. They
saw him and spread the word con-
cerning what had been
05 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.
10 And the shepherds returned, glori-
fying 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)

- Mattheu Ungjill
Shën Argjiret
nd'atë koço çoi Jisusi të dy
mbëdhjetët të psuamt e tij. ju
05 dha atyne urdhën mbë frumët
të paqëruame qi ti ncerënë
këta e ti ngjallnjënë prej gji
thë të patëdashunat e prej gji
thë të sëmunnë. këta i çoi Jisusi
10 i porositi atyne ju tha: mbë u
dhë të huaj mos vini e ndë qu
tet Samarin mos huni, e të vi
- Matthew Gospel.
The Destitute Saints.
At that time, Jesus called his twelve
disciples. He gave
05 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
10 and commanded them, saying: Do
not go on a foreign road and do not
enter a Samaritan town. Go to the

ni ju ndë dhen të humbun mbë
shtëpi të Jisrailit. tue votë
15 ju, tëvteni e thoni se u a
frua mbretëni e qiellsë.
të sëmune gjallnite, të fëlli

lost sheep in the house of Israel. As
you go,
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-)

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

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

Shënëdreut Ioan

Saint Andrew. John

05 nd'atë koço 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,
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
15 is, ku jet? thotë atune: e
ni shifni. e vonë e panë

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,
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,
15 where are you staying? He says to
them: Come [and] see. And they went
and saw

Page 39

(John 01:40-44)

ke i[sh]te, e pasandaj mbe
tnë ata ditë. si më dhjetë
sahat. qe Andhreu i vë
llai Simon Petrit një cë
05 dy qi nëgjuanë prej Jioa
nit e u ngjitrë me të. gjet
a[t]ë të parënë vëllan e tij
Simonë e i thotë atij: gjet
më Mesinë qi e quanë XC.
10 e vote ke Jisusi. e pa atë
Jisusi e tha: ti je Simoni
i biri Jionait. tyj të qu
ajshinë Qifa, qi do të the
të Petre. nesëret vote Ji
15 susi e huni ndë Galilet

të dielën e parë të kresh[mev]et tho-
het

where he was staying, and then spent
that day [with him]. It was about the
tenth hour. Andrew, Simon Peter's
brother, was one of
05 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.
10 And he went to Jesus. And Jesus
looked at him and said: You are Si-
mon, the son of John. You will be
called Cephas, which means Peter.
The next day, Jesus set off
15 and went into Galilee.

The first Sunday of the fasting
period is called

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 40

(John 21:09–14)

- am ende peshk shtruam ende
bukë. ju thotë atyne Jisusi:
bini aci peshku qi është një
me. u nis Simon Petri e ncy
05 ar rrjetënë mbë dhet plot pishq
të mëdhenj, një qin e pesëdhjet e
tri. e tjerë të shumë qi nuku
i ncinte rjeta. ju thotë a
tyne Jisusi: ecëni i mbëlidh
10 në. një të psuashimishit vote
e pa kush ë, e e pa se ZT është.
vote Jisusi e muar bukë e ju
dha atyne ende peshk ashtu.
këjo ëshë e treta qi u dëf
15 tue Jisusi të psuamevet
tij si u gre cë vdekuni[t].
- and fish lying on it, and bread. Jesus
says to them: Bring some of the fish
you have just caught. Simon Peter
set off and
05 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.
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
15 appeared to his disciples after he was
raised from the dead.

Page 41

(Mark 15:22?, 15:33–36)

- të shëtune të mishit
Marku
nd'atë koho trimatë muarrë
Jisunë e e shpunë ta kryq
05 zonjënë e e shpunë atë mbë
ven të Golgothasë qi do
të thetë vendi kranio. qe gja
shtë sahat e e kryqzuanë
atë. tye u bam sahati i gjash
10 të, errët u ba mbë gjithë dhet
mjën më sahat të nëndë. e mbë
sahat të nandë thirri Jisusi
me za të math e tha: eloi eloi
lima savaxthani? qi është me
15 thanë: perëndia im perëndia
im përse më harrove? e ca qi rri
njënë gjat nëgjaanë e thanë
se Ilinë thërret. vote një
- The Saturday of meat.
Mark.
At that time, the soldiers seized Jesus
and took him to crucify
05 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
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 sabach-
thani? which
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)

- 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]ë vjene Ilia ta zbre
- 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

05 së atë. e Jisusi lëshoi za të
math e u përfrym. e poshtë
të shkelunat e të kishës u da
më du pre nalti mjen poshtë.
e pa qinpari qi rrinte
10 dajhtë se ky thiri e u përfrym,
tha: vërtet ky [nj]jerë i biri i
perëndisë është. ishinë nde
gra cë largu shëkonjënë e i
shte Maria Makdhalina e
15 Maria, e Jakovit vogël
e Iosia e am e Salomit qi nde
kur qe ndë Galilet e u ngjitnë
me të e i shërbyenë atij. ende tje
va [-----]upnë me ta ndë Ieru[s]ali

05 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,
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 [a-
mong them] was Mary Magdalene and
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)

Jioan. hupi Jisusi
nd'atë koho ndë Ierosolimtë.
qi ë ndë Ierualimt mbë hurdhë
të deshvet, qi e quajnë e
05 vreisht Vithesdha, pesë të
çeluna kishte. mb'atë der
gjeshinë shumë të sëmuni:
të verbë, të çalë, të thatë,
qi mernjënë aci uji. angje
10 lli i perëndisë për vjetë
zbrite mbë hurdhët e përzien
te ujëtë, e e para qi bahej
pa cë përziemit të ujit
të shëdoshë baçishinë prej
15 gjithë të pafuqishit, si kurth
s'kishinë qenë. qe një njeri

John. Jesus went up at that time to
Jerusalem. Which was in Jerusalem
at a sheep pool, which in Hebrew

05 is called Bethesda. It had five porches.
In these languished many sick peo-
ple: the blind, the lame, the para-
lysed, who partook of the water. The
angel
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
15 all his diseases, as if they had never
existed. There was a man

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
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 fijyeshë. e i thanë: qish të

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

05 Pontius Pilate, the governor. Then
Judas, who had betrayed him, saw
that they condemned him, and re-
turned the thirty silver coins to the
chief priests and elders. I have sinned.
And they said: How does it happen

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- 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[e]
- 15 në e vonë e blenë e vonë e blenë arë në e tjugulavet për të vorruam të huajtë e e quajnë atë arë njëme
- 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
- 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)

- 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
- 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:
- 10 si thua. e nëgjamë 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
- 15 vjalë. u mërye iğemoni fort. mbë gjithë ç'të kremt ju linte iğemoni ju shtëponte nga një rop kë do njëne. kishinë atëhereza një të lidhunë qi e quanjënë Varavan
- 20 e ishinë mbëledhun [-----]
- 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
- 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:
- 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.
- 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.
- 20 and [when] they had gathered,

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
- 05 ġemoni ju tha: qish të keq ka bam? e të tepërmite thërrisnjin e thoshin: kryqzoje. pa Pilati se s'ka faj, po prej tjerëshit u ba. muar ujë
- 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.
- 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

- e lau duartë përpara gjinvet
- 10 e tha: dam të jem prej gjakut të këci. të drejmi ju merie. e u për gjeq gjithë gjinja thanë: gjaku i atij mbë ne e më fëmi tona. atë hereza e shtëpuanë Varavanë
- 15 e Isunë ta mundojnë e e muarr[ë] ta kruqzonë. atëhereza tri mat e iğemonit e muarë Jisunë më gjyq e u mbëlodhë më të gjithë tri matë e i veshnë atij rrobe çlami
- 20 dhë të kuqe e i vunë kunorë prej
- given to him by others. He took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd
- 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 Barab-bas,
- 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
- 20 and took a crown of

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 gjunjë përpara tij e e qeshnjinë e i thoshinë: gazulo
- 05 u o mbret i Iudheivet. e e pshtu njënë e e muarrë kalamnë e i ra në kresë atij. e kur e luajtjinë ja xveshnë çlamidhënë e i veshnë robet e tij. e e shpunë qi ta kru
- 10 qzonjënë. e tye votë gjetnë 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
- 15 në atij të pinjë uthul me tyme. nuku desh ta pinjë. tye kryqzu am i danë rrobot e tij, vunë kli ron qi të mbushetë fjal e profitit i danë rrobot e tij [-----]
- 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,
- 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
- 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
- 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-)

- mbë rrobe të mia vunë kliron. tye ndenjün e ruajtyn atë atje. e i vunë mbi krye të tij këtë të shkruame: ky është mbreti Iu
- my garments, they cast lots. Sitting down, they kept watch over him there. And they placed above his head this sign: This is the king of the

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- 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.
- 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
- 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

- 05 Jews. Then they crucified two rob-
bers 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.
- 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
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)

- konjënë e shanjënë i kërrusnjënjë
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
- 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
- 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
- 15 am me të e nimjinë 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

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

- 05 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
- 10 from the cross and we will believe
you. He trusts in God, let [God] res-
cue him now if he wants him, he who
said I am the Son of God. In the same
way, the robbers who were crucified
with him also heaped insults on him.
- 15 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)

ma savaxthani, qi ë perëndi
PRdi pëse më le. ca aty qi rri

lama sabachthani?, which means:
God, God, why have you forsaken

- njën nëgjonjënë e thoshinë se Ilinë
thërret ky. e vote një acish e muar
- 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 Ilija ta shtëponjë. Isu
si thiri pësëri me za të math e la
- 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 shenjtash
- 15 u gritnë e dual prej vorrit pas
cë gritmit të tij e hynë ndë shenj
t qytet e u dëftynë shymë.
e qinpari e tjerëtë shëkonjën JSu
në k[-----] tërmetnë qi u ba
- me? Some of those standing there
heard [this] and said that he was
calling Elijah. And one of them went
and took
- 05 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
- 10 his spirit. And the curtain of the tem-
ple was torn in two from top to bot-
tom. And the earth shook, the rocks
split, the tombs broke open, and the
bodies of many holy people who had
died
- 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,

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 premte, se ishte dite
- 05 e madhe ajo e shëtunë, pyetnë
Pilatnë ti thyejnë gjynjëtë
e u nisë. erdhë trimatë e të [p]a
rit i thyenë gjunjët ende tjetë
rit të kryqzuam me të. e mbë Ji
- 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
- 15 e vërtetë e tij. ca acish panë
se vërtet thotë qi nde ju besë
të kini. e u banë këto qi e
- 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
- 05 Saturday was a holy day, asked Pi-
late 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
- 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
- 15 saw it was true. Some of them saw
that he said it was true so that you
may also believe. These things hap-
pened so that

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

Page 52

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| shkruameja të mbushet: është në
mos përzihetë me të. e tjetëra[v]
e shkruameja thotë: pa një qi ruante.
ishinë atje gra shumë cë larg | 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 |
| 05 ruanjënë qi u gjitnë Jisusit
prej Galilejet qi i shëbenjën a
tij. acosh ishte Maria Maydha
lina e Maria e Jakovit e O
sia ama e e am e të birt Zeve | 05 from a distance who had followed
Jesus from Galilee, who were serving
him. Among them were Mary Magda-
lene and Mary, the mother of James
and Joses, and the mother of Zebe-
dee's |
| 10 dheut. u gryt 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 | 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 |
| 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 | 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 |
| 20 të vorrit votnë. e qenë atje Mari
a Ma[-----] e tjetëra [-] | 20 of the tomb [and] went away. And
Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
were |

Page 53

(John 09:01-08 = 53.03-)

- | | |
|--|--|
| Mari rrinte mbi vorrt.
e diela e qorrit pas pashkëvet.
Joan.
nd'atë koho tye shëdritun JSi pa | there sitting opposite the tomb. Blind
Sunday after Easter.
John.
At that time, as he went along, Jesus
saw |
| 05 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 | 05 a man blind from birth. His disciples
ask him and they say: Rabbi, what
sin did the parents of this man com-
mit that he was born blind. Jesus
answers: Neither this man nor his
parents sinned. |
| 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. | 10 [It is] so that the work of God be dis-
played 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. |

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>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</p> <p>20 e erth tye pam. gjënia e tij e</p> | <p>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</p> <p>20 and came back seeing. His family
and</p> |
|---|--|

Page 54

(John 09:08–16)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>ata qi e kishinë pam përpara
se verbëtë qe thoshinë: nuku është
ky qi rrinte e përderonte? tjerë
të thoshinë: ky është. tjerëtë thoshi</p> <p>05 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
ti syvet, e më tha: ecë ndë hur</p> <p>10 dhë të Siloamit e u laj. vojta e
u lashë e shof. i thonëta ata: ku
është ai? thotë ai: s'e pashë. u ndi
e këjo ndë Fariset qi qe përpara
verbëtë. ishte e shëtunë kur bani</p> <p>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</p> | <p>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:</p> <p>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</p> <p>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 Phar-
isees the man who had previously
been blind. It was a Saturday on
which</p> <p>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</p> |
|---|---|

Page 55

(John 09:16–19, 09:21–22)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>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</p> <p>05 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</p> | <p>from God for he does not keep Satur-
day [the Sabbath]. Others said: How
can a sinner do miracles? A division
was among them.</p> <p>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 be-
lieve that he had been blind and
could see</p> |
|---|---|

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- 10 mjen ke thirë gjënin e tij ta shofë
në. i pyesninë 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
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
- 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
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)

- krishnë, xcjerrë të jetë prej si
nagoiet. e prada gjëni e tij
thanë: ai di. atë pyetni. e py
etnë të dytënë herë atë njeri
05 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
10 të na qi ky verbëtë qe e njëme
shef. 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 nëgjoni?
- 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
- [him as] Christ would be put out of
the synagogue. And this is why his
family said: He knows. Ask him. And
a second time they asked the man
05 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,
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?
15 Do you want to become his disciples,
too? They were insulted and said:
You are his disciple. We are the dis-
ciples of Moses. We have not heard

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
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
10 kurrë s'ë nëgjua qi të çelnjë sy
të të verbëtë të jetë lem. po
me mos qenë i perëdisë, s'mun
- 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
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
10 never been heard of that the eyes of
a man born blind have been opened.
If he were not from God, he could

të bante gja kurrë. përgjegje
në e i thonë atij: me fajë ti
15 leve gjithë, e ti ne të na psojsh?
e nxuarrë këtë përjashta. e në
gjoi Isusi se e xuarë këtë për
jashta e gjet kë [-----]

never have done anything. They an-
swer and say to him: You were born
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)

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
05 e foli me tuj, ai ë ai tha: mbe
sit ZT e i falem atij.

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
05 have seen and who has spoken to
you. He said: I believe, Lord, and I
worship him.

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
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
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
15 të të mos vdesë? Jisusi pësëri
vote më vort. jishte një spell
gë e rrasë ishte mbi të. thotë Ji

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
05 had been here, my brother would not
have died. When Jesus saw her weep-
ing, he groaned. He asked her, say-
ing: Where have you buried him?
They say: Lord, come
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
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)

susi hiqni gurrë. i thotë
e motra e të vdekunit
Martha: ZT, mos se qelbe
të katër diç është. thotë

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

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- | | |
|---|--|
| 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 | 05 says: Did I not say that if you be-
lieved, [you would see] all the glory
of God? They took away the stone
where the dead man was lying. Jesus
raised his eyes |
| 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 | 10 and said: Father, I beg you to hear
me, though I know that you always
hear me, [but I said this] for the ben-
efit of the people standing here, that
they may believe that you sent |
| 15 am. e atë tha, me za të m[a]th
thiri: Llazar del jashtë. | 15 me. And saying this, he called in a
loud voice: Lazarus, come out. |

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 under-developed Albanians over a century before the Albanian national movement began to take form.

Bibliography

- Adhami, Stilian: Të dhëna rreth fizionomisë urbanistike dhe arkitektonike të qytetit mesjetar të Voskopojes, *Monumentet* 3 (Tiranë 1972), p. 95–118.
- Adhami, Stilian: Voskopoja në shekullin e lulëzimit të saj. Tiranë: 8 Nëntori 1989, 224 pp.

- Bernatzik, Hugo Adolf: Albanien. Das Land der Schkipetaren. Vienna: Anton Schroll ⁴1930, 96 pp., 93 fig., 1 map.
- Borgia, Nilo: Pericope evangelica in lingua albanese del secolo XIV da un manoscritto greco della Biblioteca Ambrosiana. Grottaferrata: Tip. Italo-Orientale S. Nilo 1930, 35 pp.
- Domi, Mahir: Rreth autorit dhe kohës së dorëshkrimit elbasanas me shqipërim copash të ungjillit, in: Konferenca e parë e Studimeve Albanologjike, Tiranë 1965, p. 270–277.
- Elsie, Robert: Dictionary of Albanian literature. New York & Westport: Greenwood 1986, 170 pp.
- Elsie, Robert: Albanian literature in Greek script. The eighteenth- and early nineteenth century Orthodox tradition in Albanian writing, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 15 (Birmingham 1991), p. 20–34.
- Elsie, Robert: Albanian literature in the Moslem tradition. Eighteenth and early nineteenth century Albanian writing in Arabic script, *Oriens* 33 (Leiden 1992), p. 287–306.
- Geitler, Leopold: Die albanesischen und slawischen Schriften. Vienna: Hölder 1883, 188 pp.
- Γεωργιάδης, Θεόφραστος: Μοσχόπολις. Αθήναι: Ἐκδ. Συλλόγου προς διάδοσιν των ελληνικών γραμμάτων 1975, 176 pp.
- Γκατσόπουλος, Στάυρος Μαθ: Μοσχόπολις. Ιωάννινα: Εκδ. Ιδρύματος Βορειοηπειρωτικών Ερευνών 1979, 108 pp.
- Γρηγόριος Μοσχοπολίτης: Ἀκολουθία τῶν ἁγίων ἑπταρίθμων ποιηθεῖσα παρὰ τοῦ ἐν ἱερομονάχοις Γρηγορίου Μοσχοπολίτου. Μοσχόπολις 1761.
- Hahn, Johann Georg von: Albanesische Studien. Jena: Friedrich Mauke 1854, reprint Karavias, Athens 1981.
- Hetzer, Armin: Das dreisprachige Wörterverzeichnis von Theodoros Anastasiu Kavalliotis aus Moschopolis, gedruckt 1770 in Venedig. Neu bearbeitet, mit dem heutigen Zustande der albanischen Schriftsprache verglichen, sowie mit Einführung und Register. Hamburg: Helmut Buske 1981 (*Balkan-Archiv*, N. F. Beihefte, Bd. 1.), 277 pp. [= Hetzer 1981a]
- Hetzer, Armin: Der sogenannte Kodex von Berat. Teil 1, *Balkan-Archiv*, N. F. 6 (Hamburg 1981), p. 125–195. [= Hetzer, 1981b]
- Hetzer, Armin: Griechisches in Südalbanien im Zeitalter der Aufklärung. Untersuchung zu der einem Priester namens Konstantin zugeschriebenen Berater Handschrift vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, *Münchener Zeitschrift für Balkankunde* 4 (Munich 1981–82), p. 169–218.
- Hetzer, Armin: Nachlese zu: Der sogenannte Kodex von Berat 1 (BA 6.125–195), *Balkan-Archiv*, N. F., 7 (Hamburg 1982), p. 57–75. [= Hetzer 1982a]
- Hetzer, Armin: Der sogenannte Kodex von Berat. II. Untersuchungen zu einer anonymen griechisch-albanischen Handschrift vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, *Südost-Forschungen* 41 (Munich 1982), p. 131–179 [= Hetzer 1982b]
- Hetzer, Armin: Zur Textüberlieferung des albanischen Gedichts “Maria vor dem Kreuz” aus der einem gewissen Konstantin zugeschriebenen anonymen Berater Handschrift, *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 22 (Berlin 1986), p. 11–36.
- Hetzer, Armin: Armenier und Albaner, *Balkan-Archiv*, N. F., 12 (Hamburg 1987), p. 29–148.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- Hetzer, Armin: *Maria vor dem Kreuz* (Παρισταμένη τῷ σταυρῷ). Die Textüberlieferung eines Gedichts als Beispiel für das Einwirken des byzantinischen Erbes in Südalbanien (Toskëria) über Venedig und seine griechischen Territorien (Kreta und Heptanēsos) am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, in: *Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et Studia IV*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press 1989, p. 275–287.
- Hoxha, Ibrahim D.: *Nëpër udhën e penës shqiptare. Nga historiku i ABC-së dhe i shkrimit shqip*. Tiranë: Libri shkollor 1986, 329 pp.
- Hysa, Mahmud: *Krestomaci e letërsisë së vjetër shqiptare*. Prishtinë: Enti i teksteve 1987, 317 pp.
- Janura, Petro: *Nga historia e alfabetit të gjuhës shqipe*. Skopje: Nova Makedonija 1969, 128 pp.
- Jireček, Konstantin: *Skutari und sein Gebiet im Mittelalter*, in: *Illyrisch-Albanische Forschungen*. Hrsg. von Ludwig Thallóczy. Munich 1916, p. 94–124.
- Γιοχάλας, Τίτος Π.: *Στοιχεία ελληνο-αλβανικής γραμματικής και ελληνο-αλβανικοί διάλογοι*. Ανέκδοτο έργο του Ιωάννη Βηλαρά. Φιλολογική έκδοσις από τον αυτόγραφο κώδικα της Εθνικής Βιβλιοθήκης των Παρισίων. Θεσσαλονίκη: Institute for Balkan Studies 1985, 317 pp.
- Kodra, Ziaudin: *Letërsia e vjetër shqipe dhe arbëreshe. Tekst për Kl. III-të të shkollave të mesme*. (Tiranë: Botim i dytë 1954).
- Λάμπρος, Σπυρίδων Π.: *Το Χριστός Ανέστη αλβανιστί, Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* (Αθήναι 1906), p. 481–482.
- Μαρτινιάνος, Ίωακείμ: *Η Μοσχόπολις 1330–1930*. Επιμ. Στύλπωνος Π. Κυριακίδου. Θεσσαλονίκη: Εταιρεία Μακεδονικών Σπουδών 1957 (Μακεδονική Βιβλιοθήκη 21), 366 pp.
- Μιχαλοπουλος, Φάνης: *Μοσχόπολις. Αι Αθήναι της Τουρκοκρατίας 1500–1769*. Αθήναι: Περιηγητικής Λέσχης 1941, 56 pp.
- Nahtigal, Rajko: *O elbasanskem pismu in pismenstvu na njem*, *Arhiv za arbanasku starinu, jezik i etnologiju* 1 (Belgrade 1923), p. 160–195.
- Nosi, Lef: *Dhaskal Todhri, Kopështi letrar. E përkohëshme e përmutëshme* (Elbasan 1918) Nr. 1, p. 13–14; Nr. 2, p. 13; Nr. 3, p. 8; Nr. 4, p. 11; Nr. 5, p. 2.
- Novaković, Stojan: *Prvi osnovi slovenske književnosti među balkanskim Slovenima*. Belgrade 1893.
- Osmani, Tomor: *Histori e alfabetit të gjuhës shqipe*. Tirane: Libri shkollor 1987, 295 pp.
- Pekmezi, Georg: *Vorläufiger Bericht über das Studium des albanesischen Dialekts von Elbasan*, *Anzeiger der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Philos.-hist. Cl. 38 (Vienna 1901) 9, p. 39–64
- Petrotta, Gaetano: *Popolo, lingua e letteratura albanese. 2a tiratura con aggiunte e correzioni*. Palermo: Pontificia 1932, 528 pp.
- Peufuss, Max Demeter: *Die Akademie von Moschopolis und ihre Nachwirkungen im Geistesleben Südosteuropas*, in: *Studien zur Geschichte der Kulturbeziehungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa*. Vol. 3. Wissenschaftspolitik in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Berlin 1976, p. 114–128
- Peufuss, Max Demeter: *Voskopojë und Wien. Österreichisch-albanische Beziehungen um 1800*, in: *Albanien-Symposium 1984. Referate der Tagung "Albanien. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Volkskunde, Geschichte und Sozialgeschichte"* am 22. und 23. November 1984 im Ethnographischen

- Museum Schloß Kittsee (Burgenland). (Kittseer Schriften zur Volkskunde. Veröffentl. des Ethnographischen Museums Schloß Kittsee. H. 3) Kittsee 1986, p. 117–132.
- Peyfuss, Max Demeter: Die Druckerei von Moschopolis 1731–1769. Buchdruck und Heiligenverehrung im Erzbistum Achrida (Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas 13). Vienna & Cologne: Böhlau 1989, 256 pp.
- Pogono, Bardhyl: Albanian writing systems. Unpublished dissertation. (Indiana University 1967).
- Pogoni, Bardhyl: Some comments on the writing system of the oldest Albanian text: Meshari, *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 8 (Berlin 1971/1972), p. 118–122.
- Qafëzezi, Ilo Mitkë: Theodor Kavalioti dhe Dhaskal Todri-Haxhifilipi, *Përpyjekja shqiptare* (Tiranë 1937) 11–12, p. 247–250.
- Qosja, Rexhep: Ëvetari (1845) i Naum Veqilharxhit. Dokument i rëndësishëm i Rilindjes kombëtare, *Gjurmime albanologjike. Seria e shkencave filologjike* 13 (Prishtinë 1983), p. 217–274.
- Radojičić, Djordje Sp.: Un poème épique yougoslave du XIe siècle. Les 'gestes' ou exploits de Vladimir, prince de Dioclée, *Byzantion* 35 (Brussels 1965), p. 528–535.
- Ressuli, Namik: Abecea e dorëshkimit beratas dhe abecea e Thodhër Haxhi Filipit, *Leka* 10 (Shkodër 1938), p. 181–185.
- Rrota, Justin: Per historin e alfabetit shqyp. Pasqyra e shembuj per shkolla të mjesme. Shkodër: Shtypshkroja Françeskane 1936, reprint Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1968, 93 pp.
- Schmidt-Neke, Michael: Entstehung und Ausbau der Königsdiktatur in Albanien (1912–1939). Regierungsbildungen, Herrschaftsweise und Machteliten in einem jungen Balkanstaat. (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 84). Munich: R. Oldenbourg 1987, 371 pp.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Anonimi i Elbasanit. Shkrimi shqip në Elbasan në shekujt XVIII–XIX dhe Dhaskal Todhri, *Buletin i Institutit të Shkencave* 1 (Tiranë 1949), p. 33–54.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Dhaskal Todhri, *Buletin i Institutit të Shkencave për Shkencat Shoqërore* 4 (Tiranë 1954), p. 35–55.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Shkrime të Dhaskal Todhri dhe të pasardhësve të tij elbasanas, shoqëruar me fjalorin e shkrimeve të Todhrit, *Buletin për shkencat shoqërore* 1 (Tiranë 1959), p. 165–198.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Dhaskal Todhri, in: Shuteriqi. Njëpër shekujt letrarë. Studime. Tiranë: Naim Frashëri 1973, p. 82–113.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Shkrimet shqipe në vitet 1332–1850. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave 1976, 316 pp.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Alfabeti i vjetër origjinal i Gjirokastrës, in: Shuteriqi. Autorë dhe tekste. Tiranë: Naim Frashëri 1977, p. 153–159.
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Një alfabet origjinal në Gjirokastrë, *Studime filologjike* 3 (Tiranë 1979).
- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Alfabetet e veçanta të shqipes, *Mësuesi*, Tiranë, 26 XI 1980.

The Elbasan Gospel Manuscript

- Shuteriqi, Dhimitër: Grigor Voskopojari, i quajtur i Durrësit, in: Shuteriqi. Marin Beçikemi dhe shkrime të tjera. Tiranë: Naim Frashëri 1987, p. 103–126.
- Σκενδέρης, Κωνσταντίνος Χ.: Ἱστορία τῆς ἀρχαίας καὶ συνχρόνου Μοσχολόλεως. Ἀθήναι: Ἰ. Βάτσος 1928, 135 pp.
- Skendi, Stavro: History of the Albanian alphabet. A case of complex cultural and political development, *Südost-Forschungen* 29 (Munich 1960), p. 263–284. (reprinted in: *Balkan Cultural Studies*, New York 1980)
- Snegarov, Ivan: Istorija na ohridskata arhiepiskopija-patriaršija ot padaneto i pod turcite do nejnoto uništoženie (1394–1767 g.). Sofia 1932.
- Ζαβίρας, Γεώργιος Ιωάννης: Νέα Ελλάς η ελληνικόν θέατρον. Ἐκδοθεν ὑπο Γεωργίου Π. Κρέμου. Ανέκδοτα συγγράμματα. Αθήναι: Τυπ. Εφημερίδος των Συζητήσεων 1872, reprint Αθήναι 1972, 561 pp.
- Zamputi, Injac: Disa shënime rreth alfabetit të dorëshkrimit të Anonimit elbasanas, *Buletin i Institutit të Shkencave* 1 (Tiranë 1949), p. 55–57.
- Zamputi, Injac: Dorëshkrimi i Anonimit t'Elbasanit. Transliterim, transkriptim dhe koment, *Buletin i Institutit të Shkencave* 3–4 (Tiranë 1951), p. 64–130.

Handwritten text in the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, 1761. The script is highly stylized and cursive, featuring many ligatures and unique characters. The text is arranged in approximately 20 lines, filling most of the page. The ink is dark, and the background is light, with some visible texture and slight discoloration, particularly at the top and bottom edges. The text is framed by a decorative border.

Fig. 1: A typical page from the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript, 1761.

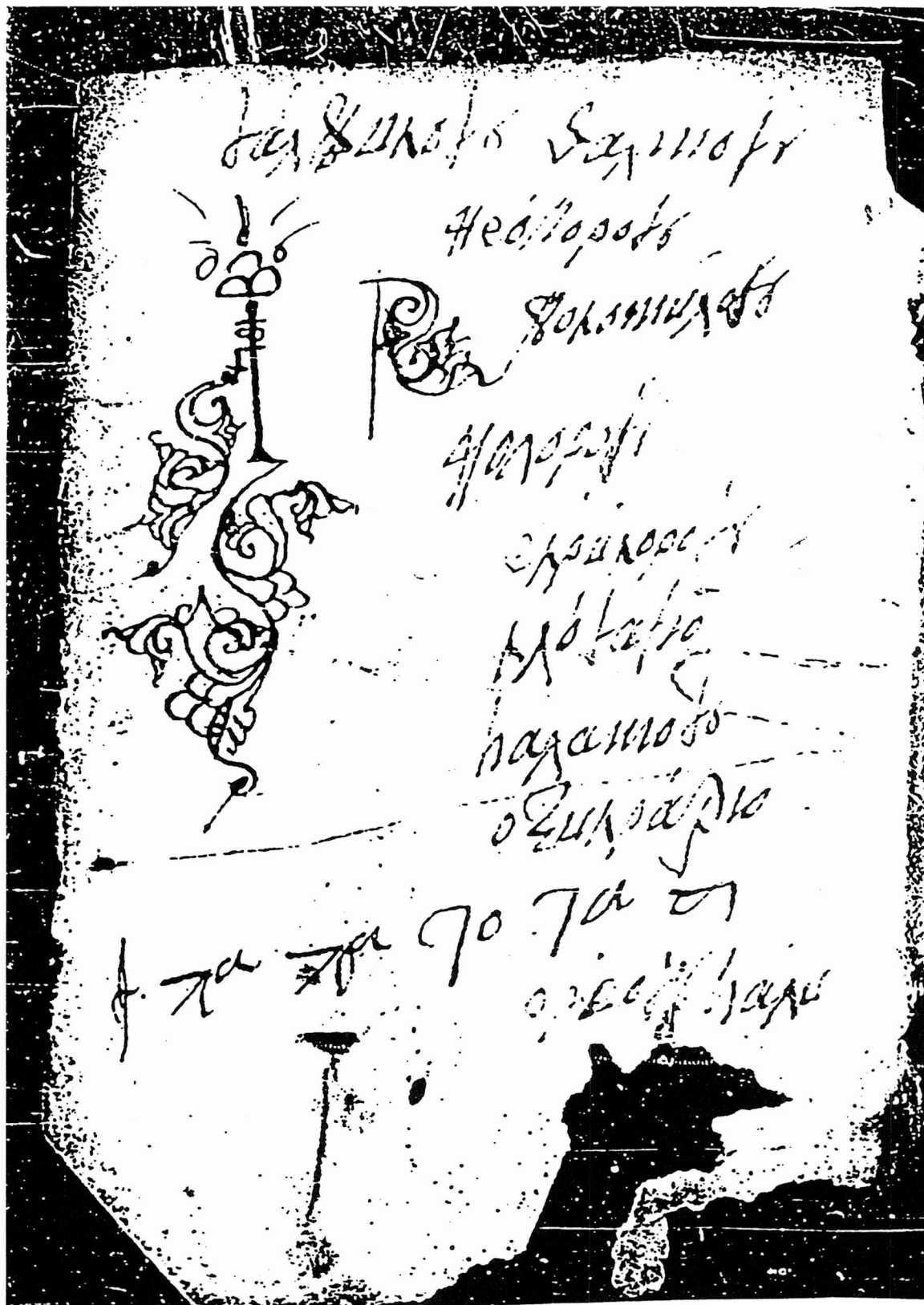


Fig. 2: The as yet undeciphered second script on the front page of the Elbasan Gospel Manuscript.

Ἰακὼβος Σαχμάτ
Ἡρόδοτος
Σολομῶνας
Ἡρόδοτος
Ἐρριχοροφί
Μότατρο
Ἡαχάμοβ
Ὀζμραβίω

κακα Ἰοῖασι
ορεοδὺχαλι

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

§. 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	griech. θ
2.	i	E	offen e	20.	ʃ	Rra	rr	38.	ʃ	Ba	b
3.	l	I	i	21.	ʒ	Fa	f	39.	ʒ	Mba	mb
4.	o	O	o	22.	ʒ	Δa	griech. δ	40.	ʒ	Pa	p
5.	o	U	u	23.	ʒ	Ma	m	41.	v	Na	n
6.	ʃ	Ū	ü	24.	ʃ	Ja	deutsch. j	42.	ʒ	Tscha	tsch
7.	ʃ	E	stumm e	25.	h	Gha	gh	43.	ʒ	Dscha	dsch
8.	ʒ	Sa	s	26.	h	Ngha	ngh	44.	ʒ	Ndscha	ndscha
9.	ʒ	ζa	griech. ζ	27.	ʒ	Gja	gj	45.	ʒ	Sta	st
10.	ʒ	Tsa	ts	28.	ʒ	Ngja	ngj	46.	ʒ	Scha	sch
11.	ʒ	Dsa	ds	29.	v	Γa	griech. γ	47.	ʒ	Ja	franz. j
12.	ʒ	Ndsa	nds	30.	ʒ	Psa	ps	48.	ʒ	Schta	scht
13.	ʒ	Wa	w	31.	ε	Ha	h	49.	ʒ	Te	te
14.	H	La	l	32.	X	Cha	dunkel ch	50.	v	Njan	nj
15.	ʒ	Lja	lj	33.	ʒ	Chja	hell ch	51.	v	As	as
16.	ʒ	Kja	kj	34.	ʒ	Ta	t	52.	ʒ	Ω	griech. ω
17.	c	Ka	k	35.	Λ	Da	d				
18.	8	Xan	x	36.	XX	Nda	nd				

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

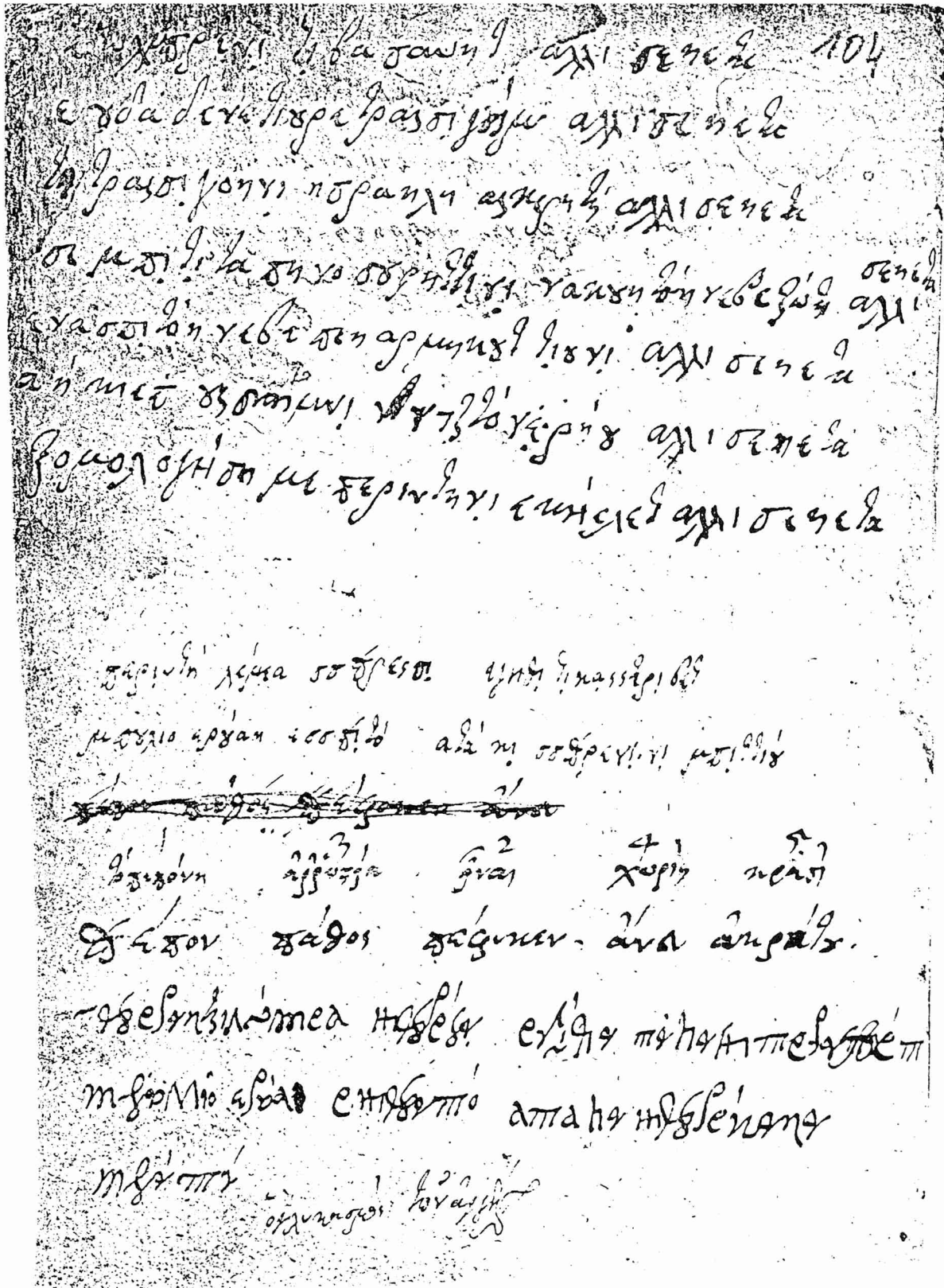


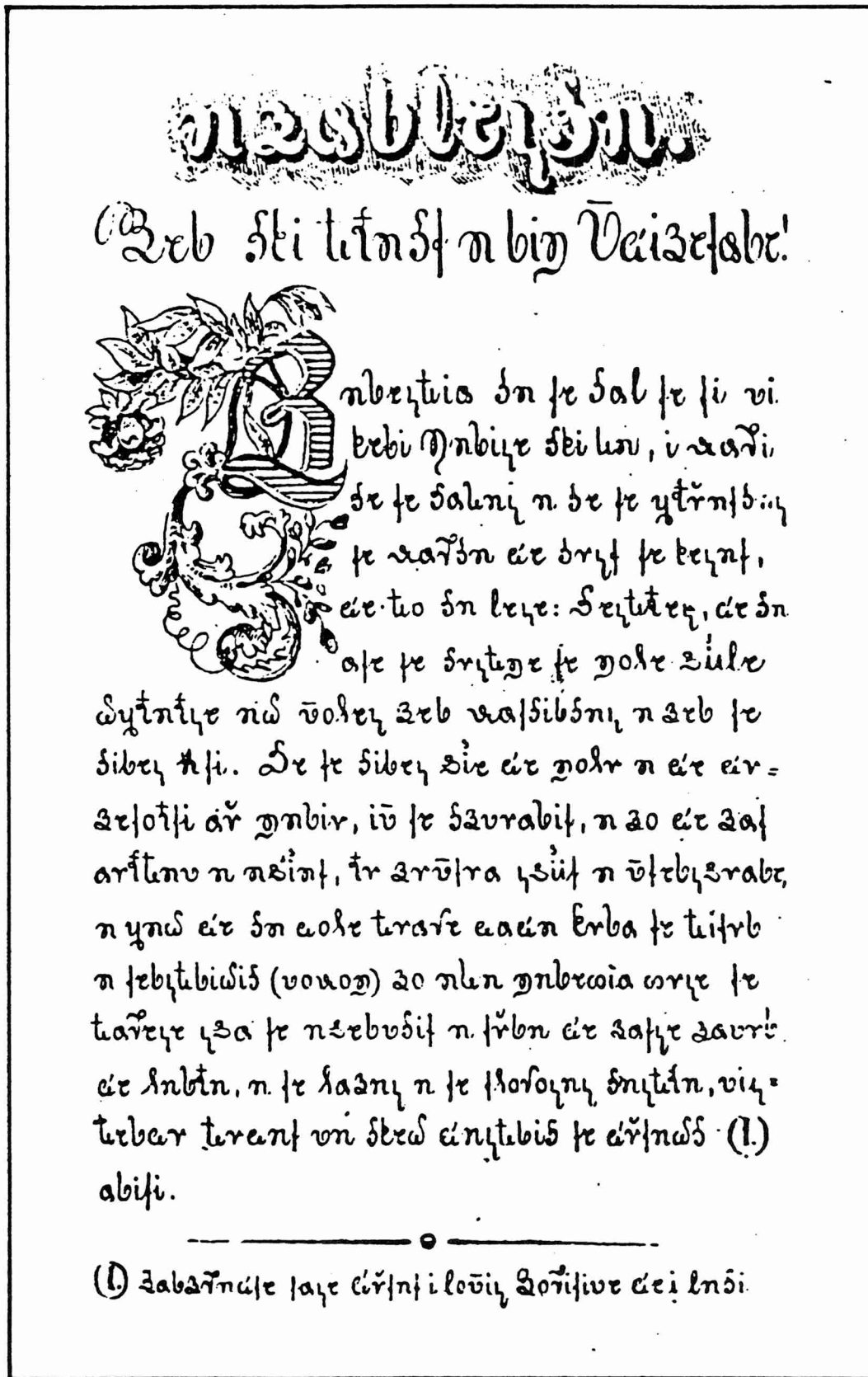
Fig. 6: The Berat alphabet together with text in Greek script from the so-called Codex of Berat.

H	δ	ϑ	ϐ	5	≡	≠	ρ	ι	ϑ	Δ
α	β	γ	δ	ε	ς	η	θ	ι	κ	λ
Ϟ	Λ	2	○	∩	∴	≡	⊥	⊙	Ϟ	3
μ	ν	ξ	ο	π	ρ	σ	τ	φ	χ	ψ

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

Են Կաճոյն ո՛նքս Են Տըրրո թաճթո . Ես պիւզաճս ես պի՛ն!
 Են ես/ են՝ Լինձե/թոյն ո՛գն՝ Կաճոյն ! Ա յայիս . յայիս Կ
 ս/սս են Լիյն . թայն Կըն՛/ սճնի ես/ի՛ Էն՝ Էն՝ Էն՝ թիւ .
 Մն՛ն/թիւ զօ՛ւի՛ Են Կս յաճեճ . պօթ Կս ճոյն Էն՛ն/թա պի՛ն .
 Թայն պի՛ն/թս . Մս ճո ո՛նքս սս ; Էն՛ն/թո թնձս Են Էն՛ն .
 Էն պսս/թոյն Են Են՛ն/թիւ . Կոսօ ո՛գն՝ թնձս ես Էն՛ն/թիւ .
 Են . Են Էնքս թթնթն ճո զօ ճո ես/ Են պի՛ն/թոյն ; ճնձս են
 Էն Էն՛ն/թոյն , ո՛նքս/թս . զի թս ես/ս ո՛նքս/թս ? Են՛ն/թս .
 Մն՛ն/թս Էնքս , Են՛ն/թոյն . Են՛ն/թո ճո Էնքս/թոյն , թիյն՛ն .
 Էն Էն թս/թս . թի թնձս պի՛ն/թն ? Էն Կս ճո են թնձս թոյն .
 Են , Են թոյն , Են Կս ճո Են թոյն Էնթս/ ես Էն՛ն/թն .
 Կոնքս թն՛ սս Են թնթս թոյն , Են թս , ո՛նքս/թս .
 Են Են թոյն .
 30 Ենթոյն/թն 1801 Էնթոյն/թոյն . Էնթ ճոյն
 Ենթոյն Էնթոյն .

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



ՄԱՅՆԵՐԻՑԱՆ

Յեւ ճի տնճի ու ից Մաշեթե:



նուշտիս ծո թե ծալ թե թի յի յի
 երևի Պոնուր ճեկաւ, ի առնի
 ծե թե ծաւուր ու ծե թե զտրոնծուր
 թե առնն աւ ծուր թե երկոյ,
 աւ տու ծո կուր: Տըլտըր, աւ ծո
 աւ թե ծուրը թե յոկը շիւր

ճըլտուր ու յոկը շեւ առնիծուր, ու շեւ թե
 ծիւրը թի. ծե թե ծիւրը շիւ աւ յոկը ու աւ աւ-
 շեթոյթի ա՛ր յոնուր, իւ թե ծարաւի, ու ծո աւ շախ
 առնու ու առնի, իր շրտրա զսիւր ու յտեղծրաւ
 ու զոն աւ ծո աոկը տրաւը առնն կըրա թե տիւր
 ու թեղտիւծիս (սուռ) ծո ուն յոնուրա աւր թե
 տա՛նը զա թե ուշեւծի ու իրն աւ շախ շարտ
 աւ հոնն, ու թե հաճուր ու թե իտօզուր ծուրտն, յիւ-
 տըրա տըրա յոն ծեւ աւրտիւծ թե ա՛րտն (1)
 աւի.

(1) Ճաւառնաւ թալը ա՛րտն ի Լուրի շո՛րիւրը աւ ի Լոնի.

Fig. 9: A page from the spelling book of Naum Veqilharxhi, 1844/1845.