

CAUCASIAN ALBANIA

AN INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK

Edited by Jost Gippert and Jasmine Dum-Tragut



Jost Gippert and Jasmine Dum-Tragut (Eds.)

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DE GRUYTER

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Preface

The background of the present Handbook

In Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, the Southern Caucasus was divided into three countries, Greater Armenia, Iberia (Eastern Georgia, *Kartli*) and the so-called Caucasian “Albania”. These three countries formed an ethnic, linguistic and religious conglomeration which bordered both geographically and culturally with South-Eastern Europe and Western Asia. Their official Christianisation began as early as the 4th century, leaving a lasting mark on the entire region. In the following centuries, it became a well-connected and strategically important buffer zone for Byzantine, Persian, Arab, Turkic, and Mongol powers. And although the borders constantly shifted, the ancient countries of the Southern Caucasus formed a geographical and historical unity that was diverse in itself, yet sharing not only the same history but also common cultural traits.

For both Armenians and Georgians, history and culture of their countries are well known through their own languages, which have been written continuously since the 4th century CE. In contrast to this, Caucasian Albania with the peoples inhabiting it, its history and culture and, ultimately, its “disappearance” have remained by and large obscure, due to the scarcity of autochthonous sources.

Nevertheless, interest in the ancient state of Caucasian Albania has been revived on a large scale, especially in recent years. After the Second Karabakh War in autumn 2020 and the ceasefire agreed between Armenia, Azerbaijan and the (internationally unrecognised) Republic of Artsakh in November 2020, massive media attention was paid to this historical region and especially to “supposedly” Albanian monuments such as churches and monasteries which are now under the administrative control of Azerbaijan. In particular, the Azerbaijani government and scientists affiliated to it have most intensively promoted a theory which, put simply, relates the history of the Azerbaijanis back to the Albanians, thus putting the state of Azerbaijan on a similar historical footing as Armenia and Georgia which can both demonstrate their millennia-long existence on the basis of textual, archaeological and architectural monuments. The “Albanianising” approach, first put forward by the Soviet-Azerbaijani historian Ziya Bunyatov in the 1950s and 60s, has now acquired new topicality by being instrumentalised in abnegating the Armenian background of the disputed territory of Karabakh, even though international scholars such as Nora Dudwick and Harun Yilmaz have argued against this theory in several academic publications since the late 1980s, already during the outbreak of the First Karabakh War, and declared it politically motivated, as a form of historical revisionism that is based on nationalist attitudes.

Since the end of the Second Karabakh War in November 2020, the Azerbaijani government, falling back on the “Albanianising” theory, has quickly started to classify medieval Armenian sites in Karabakh as Albanian, even demonstrably removing Armenian inscriptions. Armenia, in turn, refers to its strong ecclesiastical links with Caucasian Albania which are believed to have brought the country very close to the Armenian culture. However, all this is often built upon distorted, media-spread but not scientifically substantiated ideas about who the “Albanians” really were, and thus on the fact that many things have for long been – and are still being – misinterpreted, willingly or unwillingly, following various hypotheses that are not based on up-to-date, scientifically substantiated facts. Several traditional assumptions, even though outdated and obsolete, are mixed with manipulated narratives and historical claims as well as an inconsiderate and often erroneous exploitation of still understudied, newly discovered material.

There are indeed several competing theories about what happened to the Albanians after the Middle Ages, whether they were absorbed into the Armenian, Georgian, Iranian or, lastly, Turkish population of the region. To shed light on this debate, which seems to have been fought mostly on the backs of the Armenians with their long-lasting presence, historically irrefutable, in the disputed region of Karabakh, and on that of the Udi people who are now being talked up as the true successors of the Caucasian Albanians, supported (if not directed) by the Azerbaijani government in a new post-Soviet “ethnogenesis”, we deemed it overdue to counter the (definitely not harmless) myths on Caucasian Albania that are swirling around today, with scientifically sound and proven facts. For this purpose, a group of internationally acknowledged scholars and distinguished representatives of their scientific fields have agreed to compile the present Handbook, bringing together in a neutral way up-to-date accounts of the historical realities of Caucasian Albania, based on their own research into the textual and archaeological sources available. The Handbook thus reflects the present state of scientific knowledge on ancient medieval Caucasian Albania, including the most recent findings.

The interdisciplinary nature of the Handbook, which spans a wide range from historical, linguistic-philological, archaeological, church and art historical up to ethnological and sociological contributions, warrants a comprehensive picture of Caucasian Albania and its inhabitants. It was by no means compiled to support nationalistic or revisionist points of view but aims solely at a clear and neutral, scientific presentation of the existing facts. It is obvious that one or the other piece of the “puzzle” that Caucasian Albania presents is still missing if we intend to provide a complete, truly coherent and yet scientifically sound image. No doubt, much more research needs to be undertaken in this area in order to get rid of insubstantial national, political and territorial disputes and claims. But even now we may underline an important result of this Handbook, which lies so

to say in the heart of the puzzle: it is clear now that Armenians, Georgians, and a multitude of Caucasian and other peoples have lived together on the territory of ancient and medieval Caucasian Albania since Antiquity, leaving their traces in the history, culture and language of Caucasian Albania as one of the ancient states of the Southern Caucasus.

Content and contributors

All in all, the Handbook comprises 16 Chapters contributed by 15 different authors. In Chapter 1 (Caucasian Albania in Greek and Latin Sources), **Marco Bais**, Faculty member of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome as an expert of Oriental Ecclesiastical Sciences, evaluates with a special focus on the methodology of historical research the information on Albania and the Albanians that is provided by authors of Classical Antiquity, thus illustrating the oldest witnesses of the country that are known. In Chapter 2 (Caucasian Albania in Medieval Armenian Sources), **Jasmine Dum-Tragut**, specialist for Armenian studies, linguistics and equine sciences at the Center for the Study of the Christian East, Paris-Lodron University in Salzburg, and **Jost Gippert**, comparative linguist and Caucasiologist now working at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, University of Hamburg, provide an overview of the historiographical accounts of Albania in Armenian language, covering the period from the 5th to the 13th century; the Chapter largely builds upon previous work by Zaza Aleksidze, who unfortunately did not live to see the present volume published, and Jean-Pierre Mahé, whose readiness to support the Handbook is greatly acknowledged.

The following three Chapters are devoted to the written heritage of the Albanian language. In Chapter 3 (The Textual Heritage of Caucasian Albanian), **Jost Gippert** summarises the present knowledge on the textual remains in Albanian, i.e., the fragments of Bible translation that were found in palimpsest manuscripts with Georgian overwriting in St Catherine's monastery on Mt Sinai, as well as the few inscriptions that have been detected so far. Chapter 4 (The Language of the Caucasian Albanians), co-authored by **Jost Gippert** and the late **Wolfgang Schulze**, up to his untimely decease in April 2020 teaching as a linguist at the universities of Munich and Banská Bystrica and one of the leading specialists of East Caucasian languages, provides a comprehensive description of the Albanian language as preserved in the textual witnesses, taking into account the many amendments that have become possible by the utilisation of new imaging methods in analysing the palimpsests. Chapter 5 (Caucasian Albanian and Modern Udi), again co-authored by **Wolfgang Schulze** and **Jost Gippert**, outlines the mutual relationship of the Albanian language and that of the Udi people of today,

which is regarded as its successor. In an appended Chapter (5A: The Udis' Petition to Tsar Peter), **Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev**, historian with a focus on the Caucasus and the ancient Near East, until recently working at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, University of Hamburg, explains the background of a petition translated by him, which was sent by Udis to Tsar Peter in 1724.

The next three Chapters deal in more detail with the Albanian Church and questions of its relation to the surrounding Christian Churches. In Chapter 6 (Albanians, Armenians and Georgians: a Common Liturgy), **Charles Renoux** OSB, Orientalist formerly of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique and the leading scholar on the Christian rite of Jerusalem, evaluates the liturgical information that is contained in the Albanian palimpsests with regard to their connection with the early Armenian and Georgian lectionaries. In Chapter 7 (One or two? On Christological and Hierarchical Disputes and the Development of the "Church of Albania"), **Jasmine Dum-Tragut** summarises the knowledge on the interrelation of the Albanian Church with those of the Armenians and the Georgians, illustrating the developments between the 4th and the 8th century along the track of the relevant ecumenical and inner-Caucasian councils. In an appended Chapter (7A: The Holy Covenant), **Armenuhi Drost-Abgaryan**, Armenologist at the Seminar for the Christian East and Byzantium, University of Halle-Wittenburg, thematises the "Holy Covenant" that was struck up by Armenians, Georgians and Albanians in their common war of defence against Sasanian Iran in the 4th century. In Chapter 8 (Albanians in the Holy Land – Absence of Archaeological Evidence or Evidence of Absence?), **Yana Tchekhanovets**, archaeologist and specialist for the ancient Near East at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, discusses the question as to whether the Albanians possessed monasteries of their own in Jerusalem and around.

Three more Chapters are concerned with archaeological remnants that have been related to the Caucasian Albanians and their Church. In Chapter 9 (Urban Planning and Architecture of Caucasian Albania. Main Monuments and Trends of Development), **Armen Kazaryan**, director of the Institute of Architecture and Urban-Planning of the Moscow State University of Civil Engineering, provides an overview of the cities, fortresses and other fortifications as well as churches and other monuments that have been associated with the Albanians. In Chapter 10 (The Ensemble of the "Seven Churches" – an Ecumenical Monastery Ahead of Time?), **Patrick Donabédian**, specialist of Early and Medieval Islamic art and architecture of Aix-Marseille University, Aix-en-Provence, scrutinises the architectural properties of the ruined ensemble of churches named *Yeddi Kilsə* in North-west Azerbaijan and its architectural relations to the neighbouring regions. In Chapter 11 (Tigranakert in Artsakh), **Hamlet Petrosyan**, historian, archeologist and anthropologist of the Department of Cultural Studies, Yerevan State Universi-

ty, and the Institute for Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan, gives a comprehensive account of the present state of the excavations undertaken at the site of Tigranakert in Northeast Karabakh, with special emphasis on the reforms of the Albanian king Vachagan III manifesting themselves there.

The final five Chapters of the Handbook are devoted to ethnic, religious and social issues of Caucasian Albania, from Late Antiquity up to the present day. In Chapter 12 (The Ethnic Situation in Antique and Medieval Caucasian Albania), **Aleksan Hakobyan**, renowned historian specialised on the Christian East at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan, examines the question whether the late antique state of Albania was ethnically homogeneous and traces the emergence of an Albanian “meta-ethnos” through the centuries. Chapter 13 (The Rebels of Early Abbasid Albania) by **Alison Vacca**, historian of early Islam working on the caliphal provinces Armenia and Caucasian Albania at Columbia University in the City of New York, analyses the Arabic sources concerning rebellions in and around Albania during the Abbasid era (c. 566–809 CE) and the information these sources provide as to the inhabitants of the Caucasian provinces under Arab rule and their relation to the Caliphate. In Chapter 14 (“You say Albanian, I say Armenian”: Discourses of Ethnicity and Power Around an Albanian King of Armenia), **Sergio La Porta**, specialist on Near Eastern Languages and Civilisation in the Armenian Studies Program of California State University, Fresno, investigates the identity and positionality of a local king of the 11th century named Senekerim and ideologies of kinship manifesting themselves in contemporary and later discourses. In Chapter 15 (Between the Planes and the Mountains: the Albanian-Armenian Marches in the 12th Century and David of Gandzak), **Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev** studies the relation of Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the city of Ganja/Gandzak during the rule of the Kurdish Shaddadids and the first decades of the Turkic colonisation of the south-eastern Caucasus, with a focus on the “Admonitory Exhortations” of the Christian Armenian author David son of Alavik (c. 1065–1140) which mirror this relation. In an appended Chapter (15A: The Gate of Ganja), **Jost Gippert** provides a short account of the iron gate of Gandzak which was transferred as booty to Georgia by king Demetre after capturing the city in 1139. Lastly, Chapter 16 (Reverse Engineering: A State-Created “Albanian Apostolic Church”) by **Hratch Tchilingirian**, researcher on the sociology of minorities and inter-ethnic conflicts in the Caucasus at the Oriental Institute of the University of Oxford, examines the way how Azerbaijan is constructing an “Albanian Apostolic” or “Udi Orthodox Church” as part of a new narrative that connects the modern state to ancient peoples, cultures and early Christianity in the Caucasus.

Structural preliminaries

Due to its broad historical scope, the Handbook deals with original sources in various languages and scripts, from (Caucasian) Albanian via Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Middle Persian, Parthian, and Russian up to Syriac. Given the chaos of different systems of transcription that are spread over the scholarly literature, we decided to use a simplified English transcription throughout the main text of the Handbook, thus rendering it as easily readable as possible. This accounts for all kinds of names and terms which are known from, or identifiable via, English reference works, but also for author's names, which are resolved in their original spelling in the bibliographical references. Non-Latin scripts are usually only reproduced as such in quotations from original texts; the same is true for scientific transcription systems, which are here and there used in rendering names and special terms, especially when the actual sounding is thematised. In these cases, the transcription systems are those applied in the first edition of the Albanian palimpsests of Mt Sinai (Gippert et al. 2008) for Caucasian languages, Hübschmann-Benveniste for Armenian, DIN for Arabic, and Orientalists' systems for other languages; Greek remains untranscribed.

To help our readers cope with the wide range of publications referred to, many of which are hard to find in public or scientific libraries, we have added links to online representations (mostly in PDF format) wherever possible. In some cases, access will be limited to certain persons or institutions, and sometimes it will depend on fees; we hope that this will not result in severe problems for anybody. We have added links to Google Books only if it provides at least partial access to the contents of a given book or source, and we have refrained from linking to booksellers as we do not regard commercial support as our task. Publications that are only available online are labelled as such.

Acknowledgements

As editors, we are extremely grateful to the contributors of the Handbook who, alongside their many other duties, were ready to provide their Chapters in a remarkably short period of time so that the volume can now go into the press just one and a half year after the first online meeting of its participants. Beyond the authors of the Chapters, we wish to express our thanks to several other colleagues who have supported the publication with help and advice. Besides the late Zaza Aleksidze and Jean-Pierre Mahé, who generously let us make use of their introduction to the first edition of the Albanian palimpsests, this is true for the team of the Sinai Palimpsests Project (Claudia Rapp, Michael Phelps, Keith

Knox, Robert Easton and various other members of the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library, EMEL, as well as Dawn Childress and other members of the staff of the library of the University of California at Los Angeles, UCLA), who made excellent multispectral and transmissive light images available and thus facilitated a thorough re-analysis of the only manuscript remnants of the Albanian language. We are further grateful to many people who generously shared photographs and drawings with us; this is true, first of all, for the participants of the Artsakh archaeological expedition of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia, but also for Arshak Banouchyan, Andranik Kekishyan, Timur Maisak, Slava Sargsyan, Jon Seligman, Nikolaus von Twickel, and several online users who share their images via the internet. Our thanks are also due to a lot of librarians world-wide who undertook the efforts of digitising manuscripts, microfilms, and ancient and rare books which we needed for our research; in place of all, let us name the staff of the Matenadaran (Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts named after Mesrop Mashtots) and the Tache and Tamar Manoukian Library of the Mother See of St Ejmiatsin in Armenia, and Emzar Jgerenaia and Nineli Mikadze of the National Parliament Library of Georgia as well as Maia Machavariani and Temo Jojua of the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, who helped us searching for old journals and manuscripts and identifying unknown authors.

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Salzburg, 28. 2. 2023
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I **Caucasian Albania in Foreign Sources**

Marco Bais

1 Caucasian Albania in Greek and Latin Sources

Abstract: The present Chapter surveys the different kinds of Greek and Latin sources on Caucasian Albania, including documents such as the *Tabula Peutingeriana* and inscriptions such as, e.g., the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. Greek and Latin sources help to shed light on some aspects of Albanian political history, particularly in the period between the 1st century BCE and the 2nd century CE, but they are also central for a better understanding of questions crucial to the history of ancient Albania, such as ethnic and geographical issues. The occasional contradictory nature of these sources and their fragmentation should not hinder the historians' attempt to outline the main features of Albanian history.

1 Present and past

Interest in Caucasian Albania has been rekindled after the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War in October 2020, producing heated debates and renewing the focus on the history of the Southern Caucasus and the fate of the cultural heritage of the region. This impulse to the investigation of the past, imparted by events of the present, is not surprising, “for, whether it likes it or not, it is according to its present needs that [history] systematically collects, and then classifies and groups the facts of the past. It is in function of life that it gathers the testimony of the dead [...] Organising the past in relation to the present: this could be called the social function of history”.¹ The dynamics between present events and the understanding of the past, perhaps inherent to human psychology,² is one of the main stimuli for reflection on the past. In the case of Caucasian Albania, for example, Russian penetration into the Caucasus was the spur that led to the rediscovery of this ancient country from the 19th century onwards, also encouraging the publication of studies based on the ancient sources that preserved evidence of it.³ Even in the 20th century and at the beginning of the present millennium, a number of studies was fostered by nationalistic tensions in the South Caucasus, without in

1 Febvre (1949: 245–246).

2 Cf. Ong (2005: 46–48) and the literature quoted therein.

3 Kruse (1835), Yanovskiy (1846), Dorn (1875). See Bais (2001: 149–151) and, more recently, Fabian (2020: 11–15).

any way detracting from the role of chance as in the case of the discovery of the “Albanian” alphabet in 1937,⁴ of “Albanian” inscriptions between 1946 and 1953,⁵ and, more recently, of “Albanian” palimpsests in 1996:⁶ all fortuitous cases that have renewed interest in studies on Caucasian Albania.

2 Conspectus of the Greek and Latin sources

2.1 Historiography

The attention paid to Albania by Greek and Latin authors largely responds to a logic of this kind, too. They, in fact, began to deal with Albania when the territories of the South Caucasus became the theatre of the Mithridatic Wars, shortly before the middle of the 1st century BCE, thus marking the entry of Albania into Rome’s geographical and political horizon. From that moment on and for several centuries to follow, the narration of the military operations carried out by Lucullus and Pompey in the Caucasus (75–63 BCE) and the campaigns of the first Roman emperors to the eastern borders of the empire were the context in which a series of rapid references to Albania and the Albanians found their place. The information conveyed is sometimes limited to the mere mention of a few names or episodes of warfare, which in any case testify to the role of Albania in the strategies implemented by Rome to control and consolidate the eastern *limes* of its dominion.⁷

Despite the loss of the work of Theophanes of Mytilene (1st century BCE), a direct witness to Pompey’s exploits in the East, information about Albania and the Albanians at the time of the Mithridatic Wars has been handed down by various authors such as Titus Livius (1st century BCE – 1st century CE), who mentioned them in one of his lost books of which only a short summary survives (*Periocha* 101). More detailed are the accounts of Plutarch (1st–2nd century CE) in the *Vitae* of Lucullus (chapter XXVI, 4) and Pompey (XXXIV–XXXV; XXXVIII), and those of Appian (2nd century: *Mithridatic Wars* 103) and Dio Cassius (2nd–3rd century: *Roman History* XXXVI, 54; XXXVII, 1–5). In contrast to these, little more than

4 Abuladze (1938), Shanidze (1938). See Gippert et al. (2008: II-1–4), and Chapters 3 (Gippert), 1.1 and 4 (Gippert and Schulze), 2.1 of this Handbook for details.

5 See Gippert et al. (2008: II-85–95) and Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1.2 and 4. for details.

6 See Gippert et al. (2008), Gippert (2010) and Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1.3 for details.

7 For a reconstruction of these events, see in particular Bais (2001: 67–101).

hints are to be found in Velleius Paterculus (1st century BCE – 1st century CE: *Roman Histories* II, 40.1) and in the *Stratagems* (II, 3.14) of Frontinus (1st century CE), as well as in the works of later historians, epitomators and compilers such as Florus (1st–2nd century CE: *Epitome* I, 40.21; 28); Justin, who, perhaps in the 3rd century, summarised the *Philippic Histories* of Pompeius Trogus (XLII, 3); the *Breviaria* of Eutropius (VI, 14.1) and Festus (16.3), both from the 4th century; the *Res Gestae* by Ammianus Marcellinus (XVIII, 6–7; XIX, 2.3; XXIII, 5.16; XXIII, 6.13; XXVII, 12.17), also from the 4th century; and the *Histories against the Pagans* (I, 2.36; 39; 50; VI, 4.8) by Paulus Orosius, composed at the beginning of the 5th century.

A few decades after the end of the Third Mithridatic War, it was the military operations conducted by Publius Canidius Crassus in Armenia and the Caucasus, particularly against Iberia (Eastern Georgia) and Albania, in preparation for Mark Antony's Parthian campaign (37–36 BCE) that kept the spotlight on Albania. Again, the work of the most direct witness to the events, Quintus Dellius, a friend of Mark Antony, has been lost. Albania and the Albanians are named in connection with those events by Plutarch in the *Vita* of Mark Antony (XXXIV, 10) and by Dio Cassius (XLIX, 24), while the Emperor Augustus mentions in his *Res Gestae* the request for friendship sent to Rome also by the ambassadors of the kings of Albania and Iberia (§ 31).

In the following decades and centuries, the tensions between Rome and the Iranian world, sometimes resulting in conflicts on the Armenian plateau, gave rise to a renewed attention to the peoples of the South Caucasus, including the Albanians, occasionally mentioned under the reigns of Tiberius (14–37) and Nero (54–68) in the *Antiquities of the Jews* (XVIII, 97) by Flavius Josephus (1st century CE) and in the *Annals* (II, 68; IV, 5; VI, 33–35; XII, 45; XIII, 41) by Tacitus (1st–2nd century CE). In his *Histories* (I, 6), the latter also mentions Nero's plan of an expedition *in Albanos*.⁸ The Parthian campaign undertaken by Trajan (97–117) in the last years of his reign provides Eutropius (VIII, 3.1) and Festus (20.2) with an opportunity to recall, using almost the same words, the reassertion of Roman authority over the South Caucasus, including Albania. Emperor Hadrian (117–138) is said to have maintained good relations with Albanians, Iberians, Armenians and other eastern peoples, showering their kings with benefits, despite their refusal to meet him (*Augustan History, Life of Hadrian* 21.8).⁹ Under Hadrian, both Dio Cassius (LXIX, 15.1) and Themistius (4th century CE: *Oration* 34, 8; 32) mention

⁸ On the possible interpretations of this passage, see Bais (2001: 86–87) and, more recently, Hajiev (2007), Greatrex (2007: 137–139), and Preud'homme (2021: 157) and the literature cited in these studies.

⁹ Bais (2001: 94) with bibliography, Braund (1991) and especially Giardina (1996: 108–119).

an incursion of Alans which caused damage to Albania and Media and reached as far as Armenia and Cappadocia, then governed by Arrian, author of the *Anabasis of Alexander* in which the Albanians are mentioned (III, 8.4; 11.4; 13.1), perhaps anachronistically, among the allies of the Persians already at the time of the battle of Gaugamela (331 BCE).¹⁰

Thereafter, the already scarce mentions of Albania and the Albanians in Greek and Latin sources become even more sparse and, where they do resurface, it is always in connection with the troubled relations between the Romans and the Sasanians. Until about the mid-3rd century, Albania is absent from the texts that have come down to us. It is referred to in the *Augustan History (Life of Valerian 4.1)*, which speaks of the loyalty of the Iberians, Albanians and other peoples to Emperor Valerian (253–260) after he has been taken prisoner by the Iranian king of kings, Shapur I. Similarly, the *Life of Aurelian* reports the veneration enjoyed by Emperor Aurelian (270–275) among the Albanians and other eastern peoples (41.10). Despite the fact that the 3rd century ended with the reassertion of Roman power in the East, sanctioned by the Treaty of Nisibis in 299, the gradual disappearance of Albania from Greek and Latin sources seems to be a symptom of the removal of this country from the Romans' political horizon. Indeed, some sixty years later, Ammianus Marcellinus (*Res Gestae* XVIII, 6–7; XIX, 2.3), a contemporary of the events narrated, presents an Albania openly siding with Persia at the time of the Persian occupation of the fortress of Amida in Mesopotamia (359).

Tensions on the eastern *limes* of the Romano-Byzantine Empire and relations with the Sasanians are the context for a number of cursory mentions of Albania also in some Byzantine historians and chroniclers. Procopius of Caesarea (6th century) names the Albanians only in his description of the west-east trend of the Taurus range (*Persian War* I, 10.1). Yet, the way his narrative unfolds leaves the doubt that he meant to allude to the Alans instead, an altogether different people settled in the Northern Caucasus. Procopius refers to the Alans also in his overview of the Caucasus (*Gothic War* VIII, 2–3), where there is no mention of the Albanians, despite the fact that the historian, whose focus lies on the western part of the isthmus, cursorily hints at the eastern Caucasian regions as well. Menander the Guardsman (6th century), on the other hand, records two invasions by the generals of the Caesar Tiberius (574–578) in Albania (frg. 18.5–6),¹¹ which is referred to as the theatre of Byzantine-Persian clashes in the early years of Emperor Maurice's reign (582–602) by both Theophylact Simocatta (6th–7th cen-

¹⁰ Cf. 3. below for more details.

¹¹ Blockley (1985: 162–166).

ture: *History* III, 6–7) and Theophanes the Confessor (8th–9th century).¹² The latter also mentions Albania during the Caucasian campaign of Heraclius (610–641)¹³ and refers to it, as well as to Iberia and other countries, at the time of the confrontation between the Byzantine Empire and the Caliphs, in the early years of Emperor Justinian II (685–695 and 705–711).¹⁴ Even a later author such as John Zonaras (12th century), drawing extensively from earlier sources, names Albania several times, both in connection with Pompey’s expedition to the Caucasus (*Epitome* X, 4.7; 18)¹⁵ and with the Alans’ raid recorded by Dio Cassius (XI, 24.2),¹⁶ and in relation to the reign of Justinian II (*Epitome* XIV, 22.11; XV, 1.14),¹⁷ again showing a tendency to confuse the Albanians with the Alans.¹⁸

2.2 Geography and ethnography

The Roman expansion in the East fostered interest in the new lands not only in historians who dealt with Rome’s political and military affairs. The military campaigns were in fact accompanied by the exploration of the regions traversed by Roman armies with the consequent creation of maps.¹⁹ This knowledge flowed into the works of geographers, ethnographers and naturalists that are among the most interesting and extensive Greek and Latin accounts of Albania and the Albanians.

Among these works, the *Geography* of Strabo (1st century BCE – 1st century CE) stands out for the richness and variety of information conveyed. Strabo, a native of Amaseia in the Pontus, not far from the Caucasus, does not limit himself to geographical notations but also makes considerations on the economy, political and social structure, religion and customs of the Albanians (XI, 4). While drawing on the tradition of earlier geographers such as Eratosthenes (3rd–2nd century BCE), he points to Iberia and Albania as examples of recently explored countries for which he could rely on new sources (II, 5.12), one of which is certainly Theophanes of Mytilene, mentioned together with Metrodorus of Scepsis (2nd–1st century BCE) and Hypsicrates of Amissus (1st century BCE) in a passage about the

¹² de Boor (1883: 262).

¹³ de Boor (1883: 308–309).

¹⁴ de Boor (1883: 363).

¹⁵ Pinder (1844: 309).

¹⁶ Pinder (1844: 519).

¹⁷ Pinder (1897: 229, 251).

¹⁸ See Fabian (2020: 13–14, n. 20; 22, n. 51).

¹⁹ Sherk (1974), Greatrex (2007: 131–142).

Amazons (XI, 5.1).²⁰ Quintus Dellius was also known to Strabo, who records him as a friend of Mark Antony and author of a history of his Parthian campaign (XI, 13.3).

Strabo is not the only author to touch on social and economic aspects of Albania. A rather vague and incidental hint of these aspects can also be found in a passage of the *Preparation for the Gospel* (VI, 10.31) of Eusebius of Caesarea (3rd–4th century), inspired by Bardaisan's *Book of the Laws of the Countries* (2nd–3rd century). Eusebius lists Albania and other countries such as Alania, Otene, Sarmatia and Scythia, among the lands where one does not meet bankers, painters, architects, geometers, masters of declamation, etc.

The *Geography* by Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century CE) is a description of the world known in his time that shows the borders of the different countries, records the names of the peoples and contains long lists of settlements, rivers, mountains, etc., identified by means of precise coordinates. Accordingly, Albania extended from 77° to 87° (longitude) and from 44° to 47° (latitude) in the Ptolemaean grid of parallels and meridians; cf. his “Third map of Asia” as designed on the basis of the Latin translation by Jacopo d'Angelo in 1467 and its excerpt showing Albania (Figures 1–2).²¹ The *Geography* thus constitutes our main source for the toponymy of Albania: most of the ancient Albanian place names we know are attested only in this work (V, 11).²² Ptolemy does not give much information about his sources but it seems that, in addition to previous geographical works, he also made use of maps, *itineraria* and exploratory reports by merchant travelers and seafarers.²³

Pliny the Elder (1st century CE) discusses the Caucasus in the first part of Book VI of his *Natural History* (VI, 29; 38–39), which closes the section of the work devoted to geography and ethnography. The type of information conveyed is essentially of a geographical and ethnographic nature, presenting the orohydrographic and ethnic characteristics of various regions. The author does not neglect to point out cases in which information from the ancients can be supplemented and sometimes corrected by data provided by contemporaries. Thus, we know that, as far as the Caucasus is concerned, Pliny saw the maps made during Corbulo's Parthian campaigns shortly after the mid-1st century BCE and criticised them for confusing the *Portae Caucasiae* (i.e. the Darial Gorge, also known as the Gate

20 For the *status quaestionis* regarding the sources of Strabo's Book XI, see Lasserre (1975: 7–28).

21 Ptolemy, *Geography*, Ἀσίας πίναξ γ'. For other maps based on Ptolemy cf. Gippert et al. (2008: II-98–100) and <https://www.peopleofar.com/2013/10/22/16th-century-maps-of-the-caucasus/>.

22 See Gippert et al. (2008: II-98–100).

23 Stückelberger & Graßhoff (2017: 16–20).



Fig. 1: Albania in Ptolemy's Third Map of Asia.



Fig. 2: Same, detail.



Fig. 3: Armenia, Iberia and Albania in the Tabula Peutingeriana.

of the Alans) with the *Portae Caspiae* (the Caspian Gate or Gate of Derbent, also known as the Gate of Alexander; VI, 40).²⁴

Pomponius Mela's *Description of the World* (*De chorographia* or *De situ orbis*, 1st century CE), organised on the model of the ancient *periploi* from which, however, it departs due to the almost total absence of numerical data, gives an extensive description of the Caucasian isthmus, citing many ethnic names, along with oronyms and hydronyms (III, 39).

Information on the ethnic groups, settlements and communication routes of the south-eastern Caucasus is also found in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a medieval copy (12th–13th century) of a cartographic representation of the known world dating back to the Roman era (3rd or 4th century CE; cf. Fig. 3),²⁵ and in the cosmography compiled by an anonymous Ravennate around the 8th century, known as *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia* (I, 12).²⁶

2.3 Mythological contexts

The progress in the knowledge of an unknown land is sometimes associated with the paradoxical narration of mirabilia, such as the news from Isigonos of Nicaea

²⁴ Braund (1994: 225–226); Bais (2001: 87, n. 360); Preud'homme (2021).

²⁵ Bosio (1983: 149–162). The dating problem remains open: whereas Talbert (2010: 7; 135–136; 149–153) thinks more or less of this period, Emily Albu in various articles and especially in Albu (2014) considers the map a product of the Carolingian world (c. 800). On this and other problems concerning the *Tabula*, see Rathmann (2015).

²⁶ Schnetz (1940: 11–12).

(1st century BCE), taken up by Pliny (*Natural History* VII, 12) and Aulus Gellius (2nd century CE), who relates it this way: “it was handed down by tradition that in a distant land called *Albania* men are born whose hair turns white in childhood and who see better by night than in the daytime”.²⁷ We find the same tradition, expressed in almost the same words, in Solinus (3rd century CE) who, however, makes explicit the paretymological link between the ethnic name and the colour of the hair, joining *Albanus* ‘Albanian’ with *albus* ‘white’: “the colour of the head gave name to the people”.²⁸

The recourse to the language of mythical imagery is not infrequently bent to the service of political propaganda.²⁹ A noteworthy case is the mention of the Amazons among the adversaries faced by Pompey during the Mithridatic Wars, suggesting a comparison between the exploits of the Roman general and mythical heroes such as Hercules and Theseus, as well as great figures of the past such as Alexander the Great.³⁰ The Roman presence in the Caucasus also offers reason to recall the myth of Jason, the hero who led the Argonauts to the conquest of the Golden Fleece. Pliny (*Natural History* VI, 38) and Solinus (*Collection of Curiosities* 15.5) hint at a supposed descent of the Albanians from Jason, while according to Justin’s epitome of Pompeius Trogus (XLII, 3.4) they would have entered into a pact with the Greek hero.³¹ With regard to their origin, Justin/Trogus says they came from Mount Albano in Italy, from where they are said to have followed Hercules when he travelled the peninsula after stealing the catkins from Geryon. This is perhaps a tradition reflecting Pompey’s use of kinship diplomacy in the Caucasus.³²

This use of myth as an ideological key is particularly revealing of how much the present can influence the historians’ gaze on the past and how much the events of the time in which the ancient (but also modern!) historians find themselves living constitute one of the motives for their investigation. The intrusion of the present brings with it all the conditionings – personal convictions, ideological

27 Gellius, *Attic Nights* IX, 4.6: ... *traditum esse memoratumque in ultima quadam terra, quae Albania dicitur; gigni homines, qui in pueritia canescant et plus cernant oculis per noctem quam interdiu* (Rolfe 1927: 164).

28 Solinus, *Collection of Curiosities* 15.5: *capitis color genti nomen dedit* (Mommsen 1895: 83).

29 Braund (1986).

30 There is large literature on the influence of the Alexander myth on Roman politics and Pompey’s activities. Recent publications include Kopij (2017), who insists on Pompey’s Mithridatic campaign as the starting point of the general’s *imitatio Alexandri*; cf. Kühnen (2008: 53–75) and Barnett (2017: 15–21) and the literature cited therein.

31 Bais (2001: 61, n. 237).

32 Patterson (2002); cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut and Gippert), 1.1 with n. 3 as to Justin’s account.

perspectives, prejudices, etc. – that act on historians,³³ establishing between them and their object of study an empathy which may perhaps be mitigated, but which can hardly be eliminated. This must be borne in mind when using the testimonies of ancient authors, but also modern historiographical production, and it should also alert us to our own work as historians. For while we aim for as neutral a representation of our object of study as possible, we are also aware of the impossibility of completely detaching ourselves from our subjectivity in order to aspire to absolute objectivity.³⁴ This does not mean that the work of historians is condemned to relativism or to an irredeemable subjectivism. From these risks we can be saved precisely by the awareness that “[w]e cannot be impartial. We can only be intellectually honest: that is, to be aware of our passions, to guard against them, and to warn our readers against the dangers of our partiality. Impartiality is a dream, probity is a duty”.³⁵ Nevertheless, it can happen that historians fail in their duty as well, particularly when directly involved in identity issues or territorial disputes that feed on distortions, reinterpretations, downsizing and denials of history.³⁶ But if it is grave that those who are directly affected by these issues can indulge more or less deliberately in instrumental and sectarian reconstructions, I believe it is even more grave and dangerous that the very object of research is perceived – or is made to be perceived – as so contaminated and so dangerous for anyone who approaches it, merely because it has been used to fuel a nationalistic diatribe. This is the case with two questions crucial to the history of ancient Albania, the ethnic issue and the geographical and territorial issue, for which the classical sources are pivotal.

3 Ethnic issues

In the 60s of the 1st century BCE, during the Mithridatic Wars, we find the Albanians under the leadership of Oroises/Oroizes (Οροίσης/Οροίζης), their chief (βασιλεύς), allied with the Iberians against Pompey, to whom they would later submit.³⁷ Plutarch considers them, together with the Iberians, the most important

³³ Topolski (1997: 69–70; 131–139).

³⁴ However, absolute objectivity would be so aseptic and sterile as to be regarded as “eunuchisch[e] Objektivität” (“eunuchic objectivity”; Droyßen 1977: 236).

³⁵ Salvemini (2017: 3).

³⁶ Among the many examples that could be cited, see those examined by Hewsen (1982) and cited in Fabian (2020: 16, n. 26). Traina (2002: 228) notes “a certain ‘political’ use of sources” also in Hakobyan (1987).

³⁷ Appian, *Mithridatic Wars* 103; Dio, *Roman History* XXXVII, 4–5; Plutarch, *Pompey* XXXIV–XXXV.

people among all those settled in the vicinity of the Caucasus and crossed by Pompey in pursuit of Mithridates (*Pompey* XXXIV, 2), thus hinting at the existence, next to the Iberians and Albanians, of other Caucasian tribes that came into contact with the Romans on that occasion.

Other Caucasian peoples are also mentioned by Dio Cassius when he states that, after concluding peace with the Albanians, Pompey received messengers from some tribes living along the Caucasus as far as the Caspian Sea with whom he made peace agreements (*Roman History* XXXVII, 5.1). Thus, along the slopes of the Caucasus there lived tribes that had probably participated in the struggle waged by the Albanians and Iberians against the Romans but were not part of either the Albanian or the Iberian state and had sufficient political autonomy to be able to negotiate peace directly with the Roman general.

The names of these peoples are mostly unknown to us, but Plutarch and Appian give some clues in the passages mentioned above, while speaking of the Amazons who allegedly sided with the Albanians (*Pompey* XXXV) or with the Albanians and the Iberians (*Mithridatic Wars* 103) against the Romans. Appian doubts that these Amazons are to be considered a neighbouring nation,³⁸ wondering whether this might rather be a generic designation by which the barbarians generally called warriors “women”.³⁹ Plutarch, on the other hand, specifies that they do not border on the Albanians but are divided by them from the Gelae and Leges,⁴⁰ just as we read in Strabo, according to whom it was Theophanes of Mytilene who said that between the Amazons and the Albanians live the Scythian Gelae and Legae.⁴¹ Therefore, Gelae and Legae must have been peoples neighbouring the Albanians, but distinct from them, possibly related to those nomads who, according to Strabo, join with the Albanians in war against the outsiders, just as they do with the Iberians, and for the same reasons.⁴²

Florus is the only historian to mention “Caspians” in the context of the Mithridatic Wars, stating that “Iberians, Caspians, Albanians and both Armenias” were dragged into ruin by Mithridates.⁴³ A few centuries later, in 363 CE, Emperor

38 Appian, *Mithridatic Wars* 103: ἔθνος γειτονεῖον (Viereck & Roos 1962: 513).

39 Appian, *Mithridatic Wars* 103: τινὰς πολεμικὰς ὄλως γυναικᾶς (Viereck & Roos 1962: 513).

40 Plutarch, *Pompey* XXXV, 6: οὐχ ὁμοροῦσαι τοῖς Ἀλβανοῖς, ἀλλὰ Γέλαι καὶ Λήγας οἰκοῦσι διὰ μέσου (Sintenis 1869: 226).

41 Strabo, *Geography* XI, 5.1: μεταξὺ τῶν Ἀμαζόνων καὶ τῶν Ἀλβανῶν φησι Γήλας οἰκεῖν καὶ Λήγας Σκύθας (Meineke 1877: II, 707).

42 Strabo, *Geography* XI, 4.5: τούτοις δὲ συμπολεμοῦσιν οἱ νομάδες πρὸς τοὺς ἔξωθεν, ὡσπερ τοῖς Ἴβηρσι, κατὰ τὰς αὐτὰς αἰτίας (Meineke 1877: II, 705). This is Strabo's text. Traina's translation “Si uniscono a loro anche i nomadi contro nemici esterni, come gli Iberi, e per cause comuni” (Nicolai & Traina 2000: 103) is wrong at this point.

43 Florus, *Epitomes* I, 40.21: *Itaque conversus ad proximas gentes totum paene orientem ac septentrionem ruina sua involvit. Hiberi, Caspii, Albani et utraeque sollicitantur Armeniae, per quae omnia decus et nomen et titulos gloriae Pompeio suo Fortuna quaerebat* (Forster 1947: 184).

Julian exhorted his soldiers before the confrontation with the Persians by recalling previous Roman campaigns in those regions and mentioning Lucullus and Pompey “who, passing through the Albanians and the Massagetæ, whom we now call Alans, broke into this nation also and saw the Caspian Sea”.⁴⁴

Apart from the problems connected with the Caspians of Florus⁴⁵ and the Massagetæ mentioned by Julian in Ammianus Marcellinus, who records an ethnopolitical situation of the eastern Caspian coast subsequent to the time of the Mithridatic Wars,⁴⁶ the accounts describing the victory of Pompey in 61 BCE mention only the main peoples over whom Pompey celebrated his triumph, such as the Albanians and the Iberians,⁴⁷ passing over in silence the possible presence of other (minor) Caucasian tribes close to them that enriched the ethnic landscape in which the Albanians and Iberians were placed, unless we want to recognise in the Scythian women paraded in triumph⁴⁸ the Amazons mentioned in the sources, as some scholars do.⁴⁹

The geographers are more prodigal with information on the ethnic context of the Albanians. According to Strabo, the Iberians and Albanians almost completely fill the Caucasian isthmus (*Geography* II, 2.19) and occupy a territory that lies on the southern edge of the regions inhabited by the Maeotic Sauromatians, the Scythians, Achæi, the Zygi, and the Heniochi (II, 5.31). The section of his *Geography* devoted to Albania (XI, 4) opens by recalling the proximity of the Albanians to the nomadic peoples:⁵⁰ “The Albanians on the other hand are more

44 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestæ* XXIII, 5.16: *qui per Albanos et Massagetas, quos Alanos nunc appellamus, hac quoque natione perrupta, vidit Caspius lacus* (Gardthausen 1968: 319).

45 About the Caspians and the Caspians (ἡ Κασπιανή) see Bais (2001: 51–52).

46 On the Massagetæ see Bais (2006; 2014: 276–279); Hajiev (2021b).

47 Pliny, *Natural History* VII, 98; Plutarch, *Pompey* XLV (followed by Zonaras, *Epitome* X, 5); Appian, *Mithridatic Wars* 116–117. Diodorus Siculus (*Historical Library* XL, 4) mentions an inscription that recorded Pompey’s achievements in Asia, as well as the fact that he gave protection (ὑπερασπίσας), among others, to Armenia, (Scythian) Achaia, Iberia and Albania, and brought into subjection (ὑποτάξας), among others, the king of the Iberians, the Achæi, the Iozygi, the Soani, the Heniochi “and the other tribes along the seacoast between Colchis and the Maeotic Sea, with their kings, nine in number” (καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ φύλα τὰ μεταξύ Κολχίδος καὶ Μαιώτιδος λίμνης τὴν παράλιον διακατέχοντα καὶ τοὺς τούτων βασιλεῖς ἑννέα τὸν ἀριθμὸν; Walton 1984: 286).

48 Plutarch, *Pompey* XLV, 4 (Σκυθίδες γυναῖκες); Appian, *Mithridatic Wars* 117 (Σκυθῶν βασίλειοι γυναῖκες).

49 See e.g. Östenberg (2009: 148–149) who does not neglect to highlight that the ideological significance of the Amazons’ presence in this context evokes a link between Pompey and his enterprise and mythical figures such as Hercules and Theseus and great figures of the past such as Alexander the Great (cf. 2.3 with n. 30 above).

50 See Bais (2001: 59–60), considerations later taken up by Traina (2015: 45). See now Fabian (2020: 24–26).

inclined to the shepherd's life and closer akin to the nomadic people, except that they are not savages, thus they are moderately warlike".⁵¹ Strabo insists on this closeness, spatial as well as cultural, emphasising the double-edged character of the Albanians also by means of clichés known to ancient ethnography: they benefit from the fertility of their land without having to work too hard at farming (XI, 4.3); they lack mercantile spirit, are unfamiliar with accurate weights and measures, and ignorant of numbers over a hundred; they do not use money but practise bartering, and so on (XI, 4.4). Strabo also mentions some physical characteristics of the Albanians declaring them to be unusually handsome and large (XI, 4.4) and recalls their respectful attitude towards the elderly and some features of their funeral practices (XI, 4.8). He also dwells on some aspects of their religious (XI, 4.7) and political life. In this regard, he states that "the kings also are distinguished. Now, in truth, one rules all [the tribes], whereas before, each [tribe] had its own king according to its language. They have twenty-six languages because of the fact that they have no easy means of intercourse with each other".⁵²

According to Pliny's account, "from the border of Albania the whole face of the mountains is occupied by the wild tribes of the Silvi and further down by those of the Lupenii, and afterwards by the Diduri and Sodi".⁵³ Besides, those entering the Scythian Gulf⁵⁴ have on the right "the Udini, a Scythian tribe, then along the coast the Albanians descended from Jason, as people say, whereby the part of the sea at that point is called 'Albanian'. This nation, scattered across the Caucasus Mountains, comes down, as previously stated, as far as the river Cyrus (Kur), which forms the boundary of Armenia and Iberia. Beyond the coastal regions of this (nation) and the nation of the Udini lie the Sarmatae, the Uti, the

51 Strabo, *Geography* XI, 4: Ἀλβανοὶ δὲ ποιμενικώτεροι καὶ τοῦ νομαδικοῦ γένους ἐγγυτέρω, πλὴν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄγριοι· ταύτη δὲ καὶ πολεμικοὶ μετρίως (Meineke 1877: II, 704).

52 Strabo, *Geography* XI, 4.6: Διαφέρουσι δὲ καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς· νυνὶ μὲν οὖν εἰς ἀπάντων ἄρχει, πρότερον δὲ καὶ καθ' ἑκάστην γλῶτταν ἰδίᾳ ἐβασίλευοντο ἑκαστοί. γλῶτται δ' εἰσὶν ἕξ καὶ εἰκοσὶν αὐτοῖς διὰ τὸ μὴ εὐεπίμικτον πρὸς ἀλλήλους (Meineke 1877: II, 706); cf. also Chapter 12 of this Handbook (Hakobyan), 1.

53 Pliny, *Natural History* VI, 29: *ab Albaniae confinio tota montium fronte gentes Silvorum ferae et infra Lupeniorum, mox Diduri et Sodi* (Rackham 1942: 358).

54 One of the gulfs that formed the Caspian Sea. Pliny follows the theory of Eratosthenes, but probably already of Hecataeus of Miletus, according to which the Caspian Sea was not an inland sea but rather an inlet from the northern Ocean. The hypothesis that it was, instead, an enclosed sea was supported by Herodotus (*Histories* I, 202.4) and Aristotle (*Meteorology* II, 1.354a) and was later accepted by Ptolemy (*Geography* VII, 5.4); see the classic histories of ancient geography on this point: Bunbury (1879: I, 222; II, 592–593); Tozer (1961: 136, 345); Thomson (1948: 79–86); and, more recently, Gehrke (2015: 91–93) on the role of Alexander the Great's enterprise in reinforcing the idea of the open sea.

Aorsi, the Aroteres, and in their rear the already mentioned Amazons and Sauromatides”.⁵⁵

Pomponius Mela, too, conceives the Caspian as an open sea composed of three gulfs – the Hyrcanian, the Scythian and the Caspian – and, listing the peoples living on the coasts, he states that “inland, on the Caspian Gulf there are the Caspians and the Amazons, but those they call Sauromatides; on the Hyrcanian Gulf the Albanians, the Moschi and the Hyrcani; on the Scythian Gulf the Amardi and Pestici and, already near the strait, the Derbices”.⁵⁶

Ptolemy, more concisely, states that Albania is bordered in the north by Sarmatia, in the west by Iberia, in the south by Armenia and in the east by the Hyrcanian Sea (*Geography* V, 11.1) and, indicating the location of certain peoples of Asiatic Sarmatia, he states that along the Pontus are settled Achaei, Cercetae, Heniochi and Suannocolchi and above Albania the Sanaraei (*Geography* V, 8.13).

These testimonies give us an idea of the rich ethnic context in which Albanians and Iberians are immersed, but from which they stand out as two of the most important peoples both in terms of number and because they appear to be organised in a state structure headed by a chief (βασιλεύς). Moreover, Strabo’s depiction of the Albanians as a people with distinctive physical traits and shared customs and religious institutions would make one think of them as a strongly cohesive people. This image, however, is shattered in the paragraph in which Strabo speaks of the Albanians as a conglomeration of 26 tribes, distinct on a linguistic basis, whose achieved political unity – that is, the fact of having only one king, and this is the situation that the sources describe at the time of Pompey’s campaigns – has not yet resulted in a true fusion of the different ethnic segments, which, due to the difficulty of mutual contacts, maintain their individuality and continue to speak 26 different languages.

Strabo’s description of the Albanians gives rise to a series of questions with which historians have to deal and which are partly related to the way we interpret the geographer’s passage. Should we take it as referring to the first step of a process that should have led to the formation of an Albanian “ethnos”, or does it instead depict the formation of that confederation of tribes, the Ἀλβανοί/*Albani*

55 Pliny, *Natural History* VI, 38–39: ... *Udini Scytharum populus, dein per oram Albani, ut ferunt, ab Iasone orti, unde quod mare ibi est Albanum nominatur. haec gens superfusa montibus Caucasus ad Cyrum amnem, Armeniae confinium atque Hiberiae, descendit, ut dictum est. supra maritima eius Udinatorumque gentem Sarmatae, Uti, Aorsi, Aroteres praetenduntur, quorum a tergo indicatae iam Amazones et Sauromatides* (Rackham 1942: 364–366 with the reading *Utidororsi* instead of *Uti Aorsi*).

56 Pomponius Mela, *Description of the World* III, 39: *Intus sunt ad Caspium sinum Caspii et Amazones sed quas Sauromatidas adpellant, ad Hyrcanium Albani et Moschi et Hyrcani, in Scythico Amardi et Pestici et iam ad fretum Derbices* (Parthey 1867: 70–71).

with which the Roman generals in the 1st century BCE were confronted?⁵⁷ The presence in the text of the adverb νυνί ‘now’, as opposed to πρότερον ‘before’, suggests that the situation described by the sentence “now, in truth, one rules all [the tribes]...”, refers to a period shortly before the account was written. In fact, the presence of a single leader (βασιλεύς) at the head of the Albanians is what we find at the time of the Mithridatic Wars. Therefore, this situation dates back to a period roughly contemporary to Strabo and certainly contemporary to his source, if we assume that this passage goes back to Theophanes of Mytilene who took part in Pompey’s military operations. The fact that Strabo then goes on in the present tense: “They have twenty-six languages...”, suggests that this variety was still under the eyes of the Romans at the time of Pompey. It would thus seem reasonable to conclude that Strabo’s passage describes the presumably recent formation of a confederation of tribes.

If the territory called Ἀλβανία/*Albania* was inhabited by 26 different linguistic communities shortly before the mid-1st century BCE, the Ἀλβανοί/*Albani* against whom Pompey fought according to the ancient sources cannot possibly be an “ethnos”. It seems more likely that ancient authors used that name to designate the ethnically diverse population that inhabited the territory of the Albanian state over which political control was exercised by a single leader. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that Ἀλβανοί/*Albani* was originally the name – most likely as an exoethnonym, corresponding to a different endoethnonym unknown to us – of the leading ethnic group of this set of tribes, perhaps the same ethnic group that supplied the leader for the entire confederation. If so, one might go so far as to imagine an Albanian ethnos pre-existing the Albanian state as the Romans knew it at the time of the Mithridatic Wars, and one might ask whether the testimony of Arrian (*Anabasis of Alexander* III, 8.4; 11.4; 13.1) who, writing in the 2nd century CE, mentions the Albanians among the allies of the Persians against Alexander the Great at Gaugamela (331 BCE), is to be considered an anachronism or, instead, a trace of the existence of this ethnos already a few centuries before our first accounts on Albania. In this perspective, even the episode of the dogs presented by an Albanian king to Alexander the Great⁵⁸ could be read in a different light.⁵⁹

Furthermore, if the Ἀλβανοί/*Albani* met by Pompey were a conglomeration of tribes, what was the relationship between them and the numerous peoples

⁵⁷ Bais (2001: 60, 70–71).

⁵⁸ Pliny, *Natural History* VIII, 149–150; Solinus, *Collection of Curiosities* XV, 7. Pliny lists Albania among the countries crossed and subjugated by the Macedonian armies (*Natural History* IV, 39).

⁵⁹ In Bais (2001: 69) it is considered a variation of the similar episode involving an Indian king (Strabo, *Geography* XV, 1.31; Diodorus Siculus, *Historical Library* XVII, 92), but see the considerations of Traina (2003: 318–319).

settled in their vicinity according to the sources? This question has come to the fore again, especially after the recent advances in the knowledge on the ancient “Albanian” language, which have revealed beyond doubt its close connection to modern Udi,⁶⁰ which Akaki Shanidze had already assumed.⁶¹ What relationship exists between the modern Udis and the ancient Udini and Uti mentioned in our sources? And between the Gargarians (Γαργαρεῖς), neighbours of the Amazons,⁶² and the *Gargarac’ik’* that some Armenian authors relate to the language of their neighbours converted by Mesrop Mashtots?⁶³ And between these peoples and the Albanians?⁶⁴ These are complex issues that also involve reflecting on what kind of ethnicity is implied by an ethnonym of Classical times.⁶⁵ Of course, attempting to answer these questions requires that we also take into consideration the data from the other sources available, particularly the Armenian ones, which, although later, confirm the intricacy of the ethnic landscape of the Eastern Caucasus and hand down ethnyonyms that are sometimes difficult to compare with those attested in Greek and Latin sources. However, it must never be forgotten that half a millennium elapsed between the information reported by the Classical sources and that conveyed by the Armenian texts,⁶⁶ not to mention the data obtainable from the Albanian palimpsests, and thus they cannot provide us with homogenous data.⁶⁷

As can be seen, ethnic issues are of great relevance and scholars continue to grapple with them, both because a widely accepted reconstruction of the facts has not yet been achieved, and because advances in our knowledge of ancient Albania are gradually raising new problems, which sometimes require a reinterpretation of our data. Despite this, these themes have sometimes been regarded with suspicion, as if they were in themselves indicative of a nationalistic drift in historiographical reconstruction.⁶⁸ While it is true that interest in questions of

⁶⁰ Cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook (Schulze and Gippert) for details.

⁶¹ Shanidze (1938).

⁶² Strabo, *Geography* XI, 5.1.

⁶³ Movses Khorenatsi, *History of the Armenians* III, 54 and, based on him, Movses Kalankatuatsi/Daskhurantsi, *History of the Country of the Albanians* II, 3.

⁶⁴ See e.g. Gippert et al. (2008: II-95–102); Schulze (2015; 2018).

⁶⁵ See the considerations in Schulze (2018: 275–281).

⁶⁶ Cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut and Gippert) for a survey of relevant Armenian works.

⁶⁷ Cf. Chapter 12 of this Handbook (Hakobyan) for further reflections on the issue of the ethnic diversity of Caucasian Albania.

⁶⁸ See, for example, the criticism levelled by Traina (2002: 231) on the treatment of these issues in Bais (2001): “B[ais] while keeping his distance from the heated debate that often shifts, more or less inadvertently, from philology to politics, allows himself to be conditioned by the terms of the debate, and ends up considering ethnogenesis as the dominant element”. An odd remark

identity and ethnogenesis becomes central in a historiography tinged with nationalistic tendencies,⁶⁹ we must prevent the degeneration of historiographical debate into political diatribe from polluting even the debated topics, to the point of tabooing them. Such attitudes are pernicious because they can hinder independent research, leaving these topics to those who make instrumental use of them. Criticism should therefore be directed at the way in which certain topics are treated, and not at the fact that they are treated.

4 Geographical and territorial issues

Issues related to the geographic location of the Albanians and the territorial extent of the Albanian state can also easily fuel the nationalistic debate,⁷⁰ but that is not why they should be ignored. On the contrary, it is among the historians' preliminary tasks to understand in which geographical area the object of their research lies. It is therefore not surprising that attention was paid to these issues already in the first studies devoted to Albania in the 19th century.⁷¹ Indeed, already some years before that century the Mekhitarist historian Mikayel Chamchean had dealt with the border between Armenia and Albania.⁷² Nor should it surprise us that interest in the historical geography of Albania has remained constant over time. As with ethnic questions, nationalistic distortions have hindered the construction of a shared vision of the historical geography of Albania, but this should not lead us to distance ourselves from these issues. On the contrary, it is precisely the risk of sectarian reconstruction that should incite greater rigour in historical investigation.⁷³

Greek and Latin sources play an important role in this debate. For the earliest period, up to around the 3rd century CE, they offer valuable and, at times, unique, albeit sketchy information.

indeed, given that my interpretation of Strabo's passage is not ethnogenetic since I consider it rather a description of a stage in the development of the Albanian state; see Bais (2001: 70–71). Curiously enough, it is Traina himself who insists on the concept of ethnogenesis even when speaking of the formation of an Albanian state (2002: 232).

⁶⁹ See, by way of example, Eriksen (2010); Kohl (1998); and the studies of Victor A. Shnirelman, among which Shnirelman (2001) is dedicated to Transcaucasia.

⁷⁰ See Fabian (2020: 16, particularly notes 26 and 28).

⁷¹ Cf. Bais (2001: 149–153); Fabian (2020: 15–17) and the literature cited therein.

⁷² See e.g. Chamchean (1784: 565–566).

⁷³ For these reasons, I do find it meaningless to speak of a “calcified discourse” when talking about Albanian historical geography, just as there is no point in defining it a “popular” subject among the 19th-century scholars that has remained so to this day (Fabian 2020: 15).

Strabo (*Geography* XI, 4.1) and Ptolemy (*Geography* V, 11.1) give us an overall territorial definition of Albania, i.e. with respect to all four cardinal points, and use both geographical objects (seas, mountains, rivers) and Albania's neighbouring peoples as landmarks. Other authors, such as Pliny, provide scant geographical references, and so the location of the Albanians must be inferred mainly from their proximity to other ethnic groups (*Natural History* VI, 28–29; 39). Historians, finally, yield even more fragmentary pieces of information, such as incidental remarks generally linked to descriptions of troop movements during this or that military operation. But it is precisely the use of geographical data as points of reference – either to locate a certain war event, or to explain the tactical choices of a general – that confers great reliability and value to this kind of testimony. Therefore, geographical information dating back, for example, to the Caucasian expeditions of the Romans must not be debased in view of the fact that “the aim [of the Romans] was the pursuit of the king of Pontus Mithridates, and not the study of Albania”.⁷⁴ In doing so, due account is not taken of the dialectical relation – inevitable in the case of military campaigns in remote and little-known regions – between strategy formulation and territorial exploration.⁷⁵ Nor should one be seduced by the chimera of spatial contiguity that extols the reliability of the first-hand knowledge of authors born in or around the Caucasus, thereby persuading “to give preference, among sources from different languages and periods, both ancient and late (Arabic and Persian), to local sources (Albanian, Armenian and Georgian)”.⁷⁶ To do so means to avoid making an overall assessment of the geographical information that can be found in classical authors without, however, precluding the possibility of occasionally resorting to it in order to draw arguments in support of this or that thesis. This leads to a devaluation of the evidence of authors who, although distant in space, are incomparably closer in

74 Mamedova (1986: 119): “... чьей целью было преследование понтийского царя Митридата, а вовсе не изучение Албании”; cf. also Mamedova (2005: 277) where, furthermore, the scholar clearly states: “It seems to us that we should not overestimate the data of ancient authors on the issue we are interested in, because their information was occasional, contradictory and perhaps even inaccurate” (“Нам представляется, что не следует переоценивать данные античных авторов в интересующем нас вопросе, ибо их информация носила случайный, противоречивый характер и вполне могла быть не точной”).

75 Giardina (1996: 90–91).

76 Mamedova (1986: 88): “... из разноязычных и разновременных источников как античных, так и поздних арабских, персидских, предпочтение отдать местным источникам – албанским, армянским и грузинским”. This methodological approach is evident right from the presentation of the sources, which are divided into “Albanian” (actually works of Armenian literature such as Movses Kałankatuatsi/Daskhurantsi's *History* and Mkhitar Gosh's *Chronicle*) and Armenian, see Mamedova (1986: 5–42 and 42–54) where we do not find a word about the classical sources. A similar attitude can be found in Mamedova (2005: 277–278).

time, with the risk of anachronistically attributing to an ancient period a later political balance.⁷⁷ This attitude has favoured the development of a static view of the Albanian territorial extension, which would have remained substantially unchanged over the centuries: “taking stock of the investigation of the political boundaries of Albania over a long period of a thousand years (from the 3rd century BCE to the 8th century), it must be noted that the territorial limits of the Albanian state remained more or less stable”.⁷⁸ On the contrary, the inclusion of the data handed down by the classical sources in the assessment of Albania’s territorial extent is crucial for formulating a dynamic model of the political balances in the Eastern Caucasus, according to which the area called Albania by the sources varied over the centuries.⁷⁹

An element of ambiguity is certainly represented by the use in the sources of the ethnonym Ἀλβανοί/*Albani*, which designates an anthropic element that is not easily definable, along with the choronym Ἀλβανία/*Albania*, which instead refers to a territorial and political entity. Indeed, the ethnic boundary does not always coincide with that of a state formation created or determined by a given ethnic group, provided one manages to define the ethnic value of the ethnonym in question, which is not easy as we have seen above. It is imperative to escape the suggestion of the nation-state concept, in which political boundaries tend to be also ethnic and cultural boundaries. Ἀλβανία/*Albania* was rather a confederation of tribes or, if one prefers, a multi-ethnic entity: one thing is the ethnos, another is the state that theoretically may coincide with the territory inhabited by an ethnos, but may also be larger or smaller. Therefore, the alternation of ethnonym and choronym in ancient sources does not entitle us to speak of “the borders of the Albanian people” when discussing the political borders of the Albanian state,⁸⁰ unless we have previously defined “the Albanian people” as the population living within the borders of Albania at a given time.⁸¹

Of course, we should not overlook the possibility that the boundaries of these ancient territorial entities had a different nature than those that define today’s states. Today, distinct political entities are physically in contact with each other,

⁷⁷ See the remarks of Bais (2001: 153–155).

⁷⁸ Mamedova (1986: 143–144): “Подводя итоги исследования политических границ Албании за длительный период в 1000 лет (III в. до н. э. по VIII в. включительно) можно сказать, что территориальные пределы Албанского государства были почти стабильными”. This view also remains unchanged in Mamedova (2005: 273–307). See also maps 6–12 at the end of the same book.

⁷⁹ See Bais (2001: 152–153; 156–184).

⁸⁰ As we read for instance in Mamedova (1986: 87: “пределы албанского народа”). The risk of overlap between the ethnic and the territorial levels is also evident in Mamedova (2005: 244).

⁸¹ See Bais (2001: 34–35).

delimited only by a border line, but this may not necessarily have been the case for the ancient states as well. In some cases, in fact, they may have been separated by border zones, which mediated the contact by making it less direct and continuous.⁸²

Even when the sources indicate the borders of Albania by means of geographical coordinates, the historians' task is not easy. Sometimes, in fact, the identification of the geographical objects mentioned in the sources (rivers, mountains, etc.) with the elements of the actual landscape is not simple and requires recourse to other disciplines.⁸³ In other cases, the sources may be contradictory. It may even happen that the same author provides pieces of information that appear to be at odds with each other.⁸⁴ Despite these difficulties, the contribution of classical sources to a better understanding of Albanian historical geography is out of question⁸⁵ and they cannot be mistrusted just because of their fragmentary or occasionally contradictory nature, nor because of the fact that they may lend themselves to misinterpretations or to partial and tendentious reconstructions. Stating, rather ambiguously, that “[a]s Hewsens rightly pointed out, the modern questions about ancient borders ‘will not be settled by scholars rummaging about in the fragments of data which have come down to us on the ethno-history of southeastern Caucasia two millennia ago’”⁸⁶ means to contribute to debasing the classical sources by using Robert Hewsens's authority. However, Hewsens's studies on the historical geography of Armenia and the Caucasus, in line with the teachings of his master, Cyril Toumanoff, prove exactly the opposite, namely how important he considered it to have knowledge of the historical geography of a given region and how fundamental and indispensable the testimonies of ancient authors are for acquiring such a knowledge. On the other hand, the problems concerning the ancient borders, whether ethnic or political, in the Caucasus is a “modern question”, at least in the sense that it cannot be neglected by today's historians dealing with the ancient Caucasus. And this is precisely because we are still far from a shared reconstruction of the historical events.

⁸² See Bais (2001: 149). See also the discussion on this issue in Greatrex (2007: 105–113).

⁸³ This is e.g. the case of the eastern Albanian border. Ptolemy (*Geography* V, 11.1) makes it coincide with a section of the Caspian littoral whose identification would be made easier by assuming a change in the level of the Caspian Sea; see Murav'ev (1983; 1991); Hewsens (1990). The variations of the Caspian with respect to climate models suggest caution with respect to this hypothesis (see Kislov, Panin & Toropov 2014) which, anyway, should also be investigated on an archaeological basis.

⁸⁴ See e.g. the data on the Armenian-Albanian border analysed in Bais (2005), an attempt to overcome inconsistencies by looking beyond the complicated *Quellengeschichte* of many ancient works, which is often believed to be the reason of the contradictions found in them.

⁸⁵ Bais (2001: 150–151).

⁸⁶ Fabian (2020: 17).

Having clarified this, we may state that Hewsen's words can in no way be related to the problem of the geographical location of ancient Albania but rather refer to the recognition of Karabakh as an autonomous *oblast'* within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan. He wrote: "Whether this is just or unjust need not detain us here, for this is a political question rather than an academic one and will doubtless be resolved, if it ever is, on the basis of political considerations. It will not be settled by scholars rummaging about in the fragments of data which have come down to us on the ethno-history of southeastern Caucasia two millennia ago".⁸⁷ Hewsen thus meant to emphasise the mistake that is made "in placing scholarship at the service of political concerns, which is another matter altogether, and we are reminded, once again, that when such tendentiousness enters the historical arena, scholarship quickly departs".⁸⁸ In ancient sources, therefore, we cannot find answers to political questions, but we can certainly search solutions for scholarly questions.

5 The mosaic and the tile: disintegration of history

The fragmentary nature of the sources on Caucasian Albania and the awareness of the conditionings that affect every historian, ancient and modern, have probably favoured a new approach to these sources that tends to emphasise the "view" or "image" or "representation" of Albania handed down by this or that author or historiographic tradition.⁸⁹ Each author treats a certain subject in a way that reflects not only his knowledge of it, but also the circumstances in which he writes, the sources he uses (if any), his way of seeing the world, the political ideology that inspires him, etc. All this affects the writing of his historical narrative to varying degrees, contributing to organising the data he has at his disposal in a certain order and establishing between the events certain causal links that respond to his interpretation of those events. To a certain extent, therefore, consciously or unconsciously, the historian manipulates these data. Thus, ancient authors left us with their idea of Albania or with what they wanted their readership or posterity to know about Albania. In this respect, these authors and historical traditions must be considered not only as mere testimonies of past events, but also in themselves, as mediators, if not creators, of a certain view of the past.

⁸⁷ Hewsen (1982: 35).

⁸⁸ Hewsen (1982: 35).

⁸⁹ Traina (2015); Fabian (2020); Rapp (2020).

It therefore appears necessary to disassemble our sources, to deconstruct them and analyse the conditions under which they were produced,⁹⁰ in order to shed light on the reasons why a certain author adopted a given perspective rather than another. This kind of analysis helps to grasp a better knowledge of the author in question, of his ideology, of his cultural context, of the logic of power balances and of the political dynamics of his time, and so on. Ultimately it allows to expand the exploitation of the sources, enabling the historian to draw from them new data that will foster a better understanding of his subject.

It is nothing new that our sources give a picture of the past which is partial and cannot in itself be considered a photograph of how things were, assuming that a photograph constitutes an objective representation of reality (which of course it does not). Therefore, caution should be exercised when contrasting a historiography attentive to the cultural and political influences that affected the ancient authors, with a historiography indulging in a “positivistic” approach to the sources which, instead, considers them as a mere “compendium of neutral data points that have happened to survive the vicissitudes of history and are ready to be strung into a representative whole”.⁹¹ Besides, accusations of a positivistic use of sources addressed generically to the “scholarship on Albania”⁹² or to the “historiography on Albania”⁹³ discredit the entire historiographic production dealing with Albania and give the impression that all previous historians have acted with full confidence in the information provided by the sources according to the most blatant positivistic attitude, considering the sources as a wardrobe containing ready-made garments to be chosen and matched in the way most pleasing them.

Apart from this unpleasant and vaguely pretentious attitude, one can see an even more serious risk precisely in the tendency to present “views”, “images” or “representations” of the past. When the analysis of the sources and their deconstruction is taken to extremes, they can lead to the disintegration of the historical discourse: “The ‘views from the west’ in antiquity are a particular piece of the puzzle of ancient Albania’s history. Moving beyond the tempting desire to string them together into a cohesive narrative, we reach a more comprehensive understanding of Albania if we instead appreciate them for their ambiguity and fragmentation”.⁹⁴ There is no doubt that the historians must be aware of the ambiguity and fragmentary nature of the information conveyed by the classical sources

⁹⁰ Le Goff (1982: 443–455); Topolski (1997: 125–127).

⁹¹ Fabian (2020: 17).

⁹² Fabian (2020: 10).

⁹³ Traina (2015: 42).

⁹⁴ Fabian (2020: 26–27).

on Albania, yet they cannot merely take note of this state of affairs. Instead, they must try to explain this ambiguity and to overcome this fragmentation, also with the help of other sciences ancillary to history, such as archaeology, which may supplement or correct the testimony of ancient authors. Otherwise, they will be simply abdicating the role of the historian, whose work includes the analysis and interpretation of the sources, the collection of data, but also the organisation of the various pieces of information in an overall picture, proposing hypotheses and conjectures to fill the gaps due to lack of information. Only in this way can the historian give a representation of events that approaches the complexity of the reality, going beyond the mere listing of data by reconstructing processes. In other words, through the ancient historians' gaze on Albania, the modern historians must cast their gaze on that particular historical object, in order to give their own representation of it in turn. And in doing so, the historians must strive to give an overall picture and not limit themselves to illustrate the individual pieces of the puzzle, "for history does not present men with a collection of isolated facts. It organises these facts. It explains them".⁹⁵

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Picture credits

Figures 1–2: <https://www.peopleofar.com/2013/10/22/16th-century-maps-of-the-caucasus/>, modified Jost Gippert

Figure 3: <https://omnesviae.org/viewer/>, modified Jost Gippert

Jasmine Dum-Tragut and Jost Gippert

2 Caucasian Albania in Medieval Armenian Sources (5th–13th Centuries)

Abstract: The present Chapter¹ gives a concise account of the Armenian historiographical sources (5th–13th centuries) that refer to Caucasian Albania, its people and its religious and administrative setting. As the primary source on Caucasian Albania and its inhabitants, it deals with the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, attributed to a certain Movses Kalankatuatsi or Daskhurantsi, which was written in Armenian between the 7th and 10th centuries on the basis of a wide variety of sources, both older Armenian accounts and local, presumably also oral, traditions that are otherwise unattested. We first summarise the information given by the Armenian historiographers of the 5th–8th centuries that may have served as sources for the *History* and then provide an overview of how the *History* itself has left its traces in the Armenian historiography of the subsequent times (up to the end of the 13th century). To illustrate this, we compare the narratives about the three most salient figures relating to the time of the Christianisation of Albania, viz. St Elisaeus, St Grigoris and King Urnayr, thus establishing the co-existence of two versions of the respective legends in the *History*, their provenance and their later exploitation.

1 Introduction: Albania and its neighbours

1.1 The names of Albania

Caucasian Albania used to be called Ἀλβανία/*Albania* or, more rarely, Ἀλβανίς by Greek and Roman authors.² According to Marcus Iunianus Iustinus (c. 3rd century CE), the Albanians as the inhabitants of the country were supposed to have come along from Mt Albano in Southern Italy together with Hercules when he drove

¹ The Chapter largely builds upon contents of the introduction to the first edition of the Albanian palimpsests of Mt Sinai by Zaza Aleksidze and Jean-Pierre Mahé (in Gippert et al. 2008: I, vii–xxiv). With their kind permission, the information they had gathered was restructured, updated and extended to meet the requirements of the present Handbook.

² Cf. e.g. Plutarch, *Pompey* XLV, 1; Pliny, *Natural History* VII, 98; Dio Cassius, *Roman History* XXXVI, 54; XLIX, 24. Cf. Chapter 1 of this Handbook (Bais) for more details on the classical sources.

the cattle of Geryon from Spain to the Caucasus,³ thus suggesting an etymology of their name. This, however, is anything but probable; instead, the name *Albani(a)* together with its Armenian counterpart *Ałowank'*, which is fairly close to it,⁴ is likely to reflect an Iranian designation of the region at issue. It is true that Albania is not mentioned in the Old Persian list of countries subdued by the Achaemenid king Dareios which is contained in the monumental inscription of Behistun of 522 BCE, in contrast to Armenia which does show up as *Armina* (cf. Table I).⁵ However, the Parthian name form *Ardān* which appears, as the equivalent of Greek Ἀλβανία, in the trilingual inscription of Shapur I in the Ka'ba-i Zardusht at Naqsh-e Rostam (c. 245 CE, cf. Table II and Figures 1–2) suggests an older form **aldwān* that may have led to **alban-* / **alwan-* as well as Middle Persian *A(r)rān*, which yielded Syriac *Aran*, Arabic *al-Rān* (metanalysed from *Arrān*) and, depending on the latter, Georgian *Ran(i)*.⁶ The origin of Georgian *her-ni* 'Albanians' and, derived from it, *Her-eti* 'Albania' remains obscure.

Tab. I: Armenia in the Old Persian inscription of Dareios.

θāti : Dārayavauš : xšāyaθiya : imā : dahyāva :	Speaks Dareios the King: "These are the countries that have come unto me, by the favour of
tayā : manā : patiyāiš : vašnā : Auramazdāha :	Ahuramazda I have been their king: Persia,
adam-šām : xšāyaθiya : āham : Pārsa : Ūja :	Susa (Elam), Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt,
Bābirauš : Aθurā : Arabāya : Mudrāya : tayai :	those by the Sea, Sardis (Lydia), Ionia, Media, Ar-
drayahyā : Sparda : Yauna : Māda : Armina :	menia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria,
Katpatuka : Parθava : Zraka : Haraiva :	Chorasnia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Scythia,
Uvārazmī : Bāxtriš : Suguda : Gadāra : Saka :	Sattagydia, Arachosia, Maka: all in all, 23 coun-
Θataguš : Harauvatīš : Maka : fraharavam :	tries."
dahyāva : 23 :	

³ Justin, *Epitome of the Philippic History* XLII, 3: *Cum Albanis foedus percussit, qui Herculem ex Italia ab Albano monte, cum Geryone extincto armenta eius per Italiam duceret, secuti dicuntur; quique memores Italicae originis exercitum Cn. Pompei bello Mithridatico fratres salutavere* (Seel 1972: 285) – "With the Albanians he formed an alliance, a people who are said to have followed Hercules out of Italy, from the Alban mount, when, after having killed Geryon, he was driving his herds through Italy, and who, remembering their Italian descent, saluted the soldiers of Pompey in the Mithridatic war as their brothers" (Watson 1853: 279–280). Cf. Patterson (2002) for the context, and Aleksidze and Mahé in Gippert et al. (2008: I, vii), Braund (1994: 20 with n. 83), and Chapter 1 of this Handbook (Bais), 2.3 for this and other myths concerning the Albanians.

⁴ As a plural formation, Armenian *ałowank'* is primarily the designation of the people which was secondarily transferred to the country.

⁵ DB I, 13–17 (transcription and translation Jost Gippert); cf. the diplomatic edition in Schmitt (1991: 27) as well as the phonemic transcription and English translation (ibid.: 49).

⁶ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-102) for a discussion and Toumanoff (1963: 62) for various etymological hypotheses.

Tab. II: Albania in the trilingual inscription of Shapur I.⁷

Middle Persian (trl. / trs.)	Parthian (trl. / trs.)	Greek / English
[W-YHSNNm] štry p'isy plswby [hwcstn myš'n 'swrstin nwthštrkn *'rb'ystn 'twrp'tkn 'l'mny wlcw'n syk'n *'ld'n bl'sk'n OD pl'c OL *kpy *kwy W-'l'n'n BBA W-hmky *'plšhw'ly *kwy]	W HššWm hš'tr p'irs [p'r]w hwzstn myš'n 'šwrsstn ntwš'rk'n *'rb'ys]tny 'š'r]wpt'kn 'r'mny wyrš'n sykn 'rd'n bl'skn HIN prhš OL kpy ΘWRA W 'l'n'n TROA W hmk pryšhwr ΘWRA	καὶ κατέχευ εἶθνη· Περούδα,· Παρθαίαν, Οὐζηλήν,· Μησαυηνήν,· Ἀσσυρίαν,· Ἀδια- βηνήν,· Ἀραβίαν,· Ἀδουρβαδηνήν, Ἀρμενίαν,· Ἰβηρίαν,· Μιχαελουίαν, Ἀλβανίαν, Βυρ[ισαφ(?)]- γηνήν, [ἔως ἐπι]ρ[ισαθεν] Κατ· ὄρους καὶ πυλῶν [Ἀλαβινῶν, καὶ ὅλον τὸ Πρεσοουαρ ὄρος· And I hold the (following) nation(s): Persia, Parthia, Khuzistan, Meshan, Assyria, Adiabene, Arabia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iberia, Makhelonia, Albania, Burāsagān up to the Caucasus and the Alan Gate, and all the mountain (chain) of Parišxwār (Elburz).
[ud dārēm] šahr Pārs, Pahlaw, [Xūzestān, Mēšān, Asūrestān, Nōdširagān, Arbāyestān, Ādurbāyagān, Armin, Wiruzān, Sīgān, Ar(r)ān, Balāsagān tā frāz ō Kaf kōf ud Alānān dar, ud hamag Parišxwār kōf]	ud dārām [šahr P]ars, *[Par]šaw, Xūzestān, Mēšan, Ašūrestān, Nōdširagān, Arbāyestān, Ādur[bādegān, Armin, Wirzān, Sīgān, Ardān, Balāsagān yad fraxš ō Kaf kōf ud Alānān bar, ud hamag Parišxwār kōf	

⁷ Restorations after Huyse (1999: 22–23); cf. also Sprengling (1953: 1–35). Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-101).



Fig. 1: Albania (*Ardān*) in the Parthian version of the trilingual inscription of Shapur I at Naqsh-i Rustam.



Fig. 2: Albania (Αλβανία) in the Greek version of the trilingual inscription of Shapur I at Naqsh-i Rustam.

The earliest attestation of the Armenian name form *Ałowank'* is found in the work of the historian Agathangelos (5th century), in a passage as well referring to pre-Christian times. Here we learn that the Albanians shared a brotherhood in arms with their neighbours, Armenians and Georgians, in the emerging war of 227 CE between the Armenian king Khosrov (II) and the Sasanian ruler Ardashir (I):

But at the start of the next year Khosrov king of Armenia began to raise forces and assemble an army. He gathered the armies of the Albanians and the Georgians, opened the gates of the Alans and the stronghold of Derbent (Chor), brought through the army of the Huns in order to marauder the Persian regions and invade the regions of Assyria as far as the gates of Ktesiphon.⁸

An autochthonous name of Albania has not come down to us.

⁸ Agathangelos, *History of the Armenians* 19: Արդ, ի միև ես ի գլուխ տարսոյն սկսանէր խորով թագաւորն Հայոց գունդ կազմել եւ զօր բովանդակել, գումարել զգօրս Արուանից եւ Վրաց, եւ բանալ զղրունս Ալանաց եւ զձորայ պահակին, հանել զգօրս Հոնաց, ասպատակ դնել ի կողմանս Պարսից, արշաւել ի կողմանս Ատրեստանի, մինչև ի դրունս Տիսբոնի: (Ter-Mkrtrchean and Kanayeants 1909: 16); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1976: 37).

1.2 Albania and its neighbours

The Christianisation of the South Caucasus in the first half of the 4th century brought the three neighbouring kingdoms of Armenia, Iberia (i.e. East Georgia) and Albania even closer together, both strategically and culturally, and thus also determined their common history in the following centuries. This is especially true of the easternmost Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik which, after the partition of Armenia by Sasanian Iran and Byzantium in 387, were separated from the Armenian Kingdom and incorporated by the Persians into a new administrative unit, the so-called “Marzpanate of Albania”, which apart of the former state of Albania between the Kura River and the Greater Caucasus also included the tribes living along the Caspian coast. For Albania and Armenia, and to some extent also for Iberia, this meant the beginning of a long epoch of shared history of foreign domination, of constant struggles for liberation from the mostly non-Christian foreign rulers and, not least, of internal quarrels among their own noble families and the leading clergy, for power and supremacy in the South Caucasus and for the “ethnicisation” of specific cultural traditions.

Thus, Albania and the Albanians also came into the focus of Armenian chroniclers who, often from their own point of view, emphasised the influence of the Armenians on the Albanians, politically, ecclesiastically and culturally. Indeed, there can be no doubt that Armenian politics, culture and civilisation played a decisive role in the entire history of Caucasian Albania.⁹ On the other hand, Albania, too, had an impact on the culture, the Church and the political autonomy of the Armenians, as Armenian historiography reveals.

It is therefore not surprising that the most important and comprehensive medieval historical source about the Albanians, the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, usually attributed to a certain Movses Daskhurantsi or Kałankatuatsi, was written in Armenian. This text, which can be dated between the 7th and 10th centuries, has, on the one hand, incorporated the Armenian chroniclers from the 5th–8th centuries, blending their information with surviving oral narratives. On the other hand, it has lastingly shaped later Armenian historiography concerning Albania. Therefore we will put the *History* in the centre of the present Chapter, after introducing the Armenian chroniclers Movses used as his sources; in doing so, we will focus in particular on willful distortions or “ethnicising” changes of narratives and traditions.

⁹ Hewsen (1982: 27–40); cf. Chapters 3 and 4 of this Handbook (Gippert and Schulze) as to Armenian influences on the Albanian language, literacy, and ecclesiastical literature.

2 The early Armenian historiographers (5th–8th centuries)

One of the most famous medieval Armenian chroniclers, Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1200–1271), provides what is probably the best and shortest summary of Armenian historiography:

Now, the Armenian historians have produced quite a number of works. Among them are the venerable and brilliant Agathangelos [...] who, at the order of the mighty, brave king Trdat, put down the details of events which transpired among the Armenians by the hands of St Gregory the Parthian, the confessor of Christ: deeds, miracles and wonders, and the circumstances of the illumination of the land of Armenia, all in a beautiful and clear narration. After Agathangelos came Movses Khorenatsi, richer in knowledge and wisdom than many holy men of God, who composed the history of the Armenians concisely and carefully beginning with the first man and including the affairs, works and deeds of many peoples from the days of Trdat and St Gregory to the death of St Sahak, patriarch of the Armenians. He concludes with pronouncing a lament over the land of Armenia. After Khorenatsi came the blessed Elishe who narrated the brave deeds of Vardan, St Sahak's grandson, and his companions who in the hope of Christ gave themselves up to death and were crowned by Christ. [...] And then there was the rhetorician, Łazar Parpetsi, who begins with the days of St Sahak and narrates events in the same style. And following him Faustus of Byzantium, who relates what transpired in Armenia between the Iranians and us. And the history of Heraclius, written by bishop Sebeos. And the history of the wonderful Koryun. And Khosrov. And the history of the priest Lewond which is about what Muhammad and his successors did all over the world and especially among the Armenian people. [...]. And Movses Kałankatuatsi, the historian of Albania. And Ukhtanes, bishop of Urfa, who wrote about the separation of the Georgians from the Armenians by Kyrion. And the *vardapet* Stepannos, surnamed Asolik. And the *vardapet* Aristakes called Lastivertsi. And Samuel, the priest from the cathedral of Ani. And the learned and brilliant *vardapet* called Vanakan.¹⁰

10 Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *History of the Armenians*, Introduction: Իսկ հայոց ազգի պատմագիրք յոլովք ցուցին աշխատութիւն, որպէս սքանչելի . կորովամիտն Ագաթանգեղոս, որ թարգմանի բարի հրեշտակ, որ եցոյց հրամանալ մեծագոր և քաջ արքային Տրդատայ զհանգամանս իրաց եղելոց առ հայս ի ձեռն սրբոյն Գրիգորի Պարթևի և խոստովանողի Գրիստոսի, զգործս նշանաց և արուեստից և սքանչելագործութեանց, և զպաճառս լուսաւորութեան Հայոց աշխարհիս, գեղեցիկ և պայծառ պատմութեամբ ակարտէ: Եւ զկնի նորա ամենահարուստն գիտութեամբ և մեծն իմաստութեամբ քան զյորովս սուրբ այլն աստուծոյ Մովսէս խորենացի, որ զՀայոց պատմութիւնն շարագրեաց բազմահանճար և յոգնադուռատ բառիւք. համարտս պատմութեամբ և ընդարձակ մտօք ի նախնի մարդոյն սկսեալ՝ զյոլովից ազանց իրս և զգործս և զարարս, բերեալ մինչև յաւուրս Տրդատայ և սրբոյն Գրիգորի և անտի մինչև ցկատարումն սրբոյն Սահակայ հայոց հայրապետի, և զորքն ասացեալ ի վերայ աշխարհիս Հայոց՝ անդանօր դադարեցուցանէ: Եւ յետ նորա սուրբն ելիչէ, որ պատմի զքաջութիւն Վարդանայ, թողին սրբոյն Սահակայ, և զընկերաց նորա, որք յուսովն Գրիստոսի գանձինս ի մահ եղին և պատկեցան ի Գրիստոսի, և զարիական մահ սրբոց Յովսեփեանցն, և զկամաւ տալն գանձինս ի կապանս արքունի նախարարացն հայոց վասն յուսոյն, որ ի Գրիստոս, և զհամբերող նահատակութիւն սրբոցն խորհնայ և Աբրահամու, զոր ստուգութեամբ ցուցանէ այլն սքանչելի: Եւ

On the Kingdom of Albania and the Albanians, the early Armenian chroniclers listed by Kirakos provide only sporadic information, and if they do, they usually refer to the same events or persons with more or less variation in their respective accounts. Their testimonies are summarised below in chronological order.

2.1 The individual authors and their testimonies

2.1.1 Agathangelos

Narrating the life of St Gregory the Illuminator, the *History* by Agathangelos (5th century) is of utmost importance for the later traditions and legends about the saint who converted Armenia to Christianity. Albania is mentioned right in the first chapter, in the passage quoted in Section 1.1 above concerning the struggle of the Armenian king Khosrov against the Sasanian ruler Ardashir. Indirectly, the Albanians are also implied in book III, chapter 120 according to which Christianity was spread by St Gregory as far as to the territories of the “Massagetae, to the gates of the Alans, to the borders of the Caspians and to Paytakaran, the city of the Armenian kingdom”.¹¹

2.1.2 Koryun

Koryun (5th century), who between 443 and 451 wrote down the *Life* of his teacher Mesrop Mashtots, recorded that in about 422, under the reign of an Albanian king

ապա Ղազար փարպեցի ճարտասան, սկսեալ յաւուրցն սրբոյն Սահակայ, գնոյն ոճ պատմէ: Եւ զկնի նորա փաւստոս Բիւզանդ, որ զեղեալ իրս պատմի Հայոց աշխարհիս ընդ պարսիկս և ի նոցանէ ընդ մերս: Եւ Հերակլն ի Սեբիոսէ եպիսկոպոսի ասացեալ: Եւ Պատմութիւնս սքանչելի առն Կորեան: Եւ Խոսրով: Եւ Ղևոնդ երիցու Պատմութիւն, որ զոր ինչ գործեցին Մահմետ և աթուակալք նորա ընդ աշխարհս ամենայն և առաւել ևս ընդ ազգս Հայոց: Եւ Թովմայ վարդապետն, պատմագիր տարն Արծրունեաց: Եւ Շապուհ Բագրատունի: Եւ տէր Յովհաննէս կաթողիկոս Հայոց: Եւ Մովսէս Կաղանկատուացի, պատմագիր Արուանից: Եւ Ուխտանէս եպիսկոպոս Ուռհայի, որ զրեաց զբաժանումն վրաց ի Հայոց ի ձեռն Կիւրիոնի: Եւ Ստեփաննոս վարդապետ մականուն Ասողիկ: Եւ Արիստակէս վարդապետ, կոչեցեալն Լաստիվերտցի: Եւ Մատթէոս վանաց երէց Ուռհայցի: Եւ Սամուէլ քահանայ կաթողիկէին Անուոյ: Եւ ապա մեծիմաստ և հանճարեղ վարդապետն անուանեալն Վանական: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 6–8); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 3–5).

¹¹ Agathangelos, *History* 842: ի սպառ ի սահմանս Մասքթաց, մինչև ի դրունս Ալանաց, մինչ ի սահմանս Կասպից 'ի Փայտակարան քաղաք արքայութեանն Հայոց: (Ter-Mkrtchean and Kanayeants 1909: 439); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1976: 377).

named *Arsual(ēn)*,¹² son of Vachagan II, Mashtots created the Albanian script and had the Bible translated into Albanian with the help of an Albanian cleric named Benjamin, by whom he was taught the sounds and words of the foreign language he did not speak.¹³ In Albania, Mashtots met the bishop of the Albanians, Jeremiah, and their king who both accepted his script, and “bishop Jeremiah soon began the translation of the divine books”.¹⁴ We should notice that Mashtots carefully surrounded himself with local collaborators at each stage of his endeavour. Since Koryun was not aware of the linguistic diversity of Albania, he simply spoke of *Ałowan* as if it were a unified language. In fact, although this was obviously not the case, king Arsuałen and bishop Jeremiah likely imposed their own vernacular as the official language on the court and the Albanian Church.

2.1.3 Faustus of Byzantium

It is mainly due to the testimony of Faustus of Byzantium¹⁵ (5th century) that the Albanians became part of the history and tradition on the Christianisation of Armenia. Several, presumably oral, narratives around the Christianisation of Albania are fully integrated into his *History of the Armenians*. This includes the person and the work of St Gregory the Illuminator, but also of his grandson Grigoris, the “Catholicos of the regions of the Georgians (*virk*) and Albanians (*ałowan*)”,¹⁶ in particular his martyrdom. Of special significance is Faustus’ detailed account of the battles of Dzirav (or Bagawan, 371) and Gandzak (also 371) where the Albanian king Urnayr fought on the side of the Sassanid ruler Shapur (II) against a Roman-Armenian alliance including the controversial Armenian

12 Koryun, *Life of Mashtots*, ch. 17: տեսանէր զսուրբ եպիսկոպոսն Աղուանից, որում անուն էրեմիա կոչէին. եւ զնոցին թագաւոր՝ որում Արսուաղէն անուն: (Ananean 1964: 60) – “He saw the saintly Bishop of the Albanians whose name was Jeremiah, and their King, whose name was Arsvagh” (Norehad 1985: 41). The king’s name is rendered as *Arsval* (with a variant reading *Arsvalē*) in the edition by Abeghyan (1941: 70); it reappears in the form *Արսւաղէն (Arsvatēn)* in Movses Khorenatsi’s *History of the Armenians* in book III, ch. 54 (1865: 248), as *եսուաղէն (Esuatēn)* in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* (book I, ch. 15; Emin 1860a: 32 / Thomson 2006: 317), and as *եսվաղէն (Esvatēn)* in the *Chronography* by Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi; cf. 4.1.7 below.

13 Koryun, *Life of Mashtots* 16 (Ananean 1964: 57); for the passage in question cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1. Cf. Mahé (2005–2007: 81); Winkler (1994: 108–109).

14 Koryun, *Life of Mashtots* 17 (Ananean 1964: 62); for the passage in question cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1. Cf. Mahé (2005–2007: 82–83); Winkler (1994: 109–110).

15 The actual meaning of *Buzandaran*, the epithet of P’awstos, is highly debated; cf. Russell (1999: 449).

16 Faustus, *History* III, 6: որ Կաթողիկոսն էր կողմանցն Վրաց և Աղուանից: (1832: 13); cf. the English translation by Garsoian (1989: 72).



Fig. 3: Urnayr and Shapur in the Battle of Dzirav (ms. Berlin, SBB, Or. quart. 805, fol. 212r).

King Pap and the heroic Armenian commander Musheł. Faustus reports: “Then the *sparapet* and commander-in-chief of Armenia, Mušeł, collected the entire Armenian army, more than ninety thousand [men], and made it ready. Now Urnayr, king of Ałuank’, was with the Persian king at the time that Šapuh king of Persia was disposing his forces against Armenian realm and the Greek army”.¹⁷ The scene is depicted in a miniature of the 16th-century manuscript Or. quart. 805 of the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, fol. 212r (see Fig. 3).¹⁸

2.1.4 Movses Khorenatsi

The *History of the Armenians* compiled by Movses Khorenatsi (5th century)¹⁹ consists of three parts. While the first one largely concerns legendary events of the prehistory of Armenia, the second relates to the period from 149 CE until the death of St Gregory the Illuminator in about 331 CE, and the third part extends up to the fall of the Armenian Arsacid dynasty in the year 428. In this work, we are told in book II, ch. 84 about a stay of King Trdat in Albania; in III, 3 about the martyrdom of St Grigoris (see below for more details); and in III, 54 concerning the creation of the Albanian script by Mashtots. Khorenatsi’s accounts sometimes contradict those provided by Koryun and other historiographers of the 5th century. Best known is the peculiar information on the creation of the Albanian script he provides; Movses writes: “With their help he created letters for that guttural, harsh, barbarous and even rough tongue of the *Gargarac’ik*”.²⁰ The name *Gargarac’ik* is far from being clear in this context. Khorenatsi himself mentions a “plain of the *Gargarac’ik*” where King Trdat IV once fought against the

17 Faustus, *History* V, 4: Ապա զօրավարն սպարապետն Հայոց Մուշեղ ժողուէր զամենայն զօրսն Հայոց աւելի ևս քան զընսուն հազար, և կազմէին պատրաստութեամբ: Իսկ իբրև զորահատուցն առնէր Շապուհ Պարսից թագաւորն զզօրս իւր ՚ի վերայ աշխարհին Հայոց և ՚ի վերայ զօրացն Հունաց, Ուռնայր արքայ Աղուանից անդ էր առ թագաւորին Պարսից: (1832: 192); English translation by Garsoïan (1989: 189). Cf. 3.2.2 below for more details as to the battle.

18 Ms. Or. quart. 805 is a miscellany containing 319 folios with 18 different text parts. The miniature pertains to part IX (folios 202–222), “On the Descendants of St Gregory the Illuminator and King Trdat”, which also reports about the heroic deeds of the Armenian general Musheł. The miniature refers to his narrative. Cf. Assfalg and Molitor (1962: 93–96).

19 The actual date of the compilation is much debated; cf. Thomson (2006: XVII), Mahé (1993: 13), Sargsyan (1991: 58–59), Topchyan (2006: 33–35).

20 Movses Khorenatsi, *History* III, 54: Որովք ստեղծ զնշանագիրս կոկորդախօս աղխազուր խժական խեցեկագունին այնորիկ զարգարացուց լեզունին: (1865: 247); English translation by Thomson (2006: 317).

“nations of the north”.²¹ The author seems to have located this plain on the left bank of the Kura; however, with *Gargarac’ik* he probably refers not to one particular tribe of Albania but to all the inhabitants of that region. In his book III, ch. 37, Movses further mentions Urnayr, the King of the Albanians, in connection with the battle of the Romans and Armenians against the Sasanian ruler Shapur (II) at Dzirav/Bagawan (cf. 2.1.3 above): “Thus, strengthened by help from above, the Greek and Armenian armies in concert filled the entire plain with corpses of the enemy and pursued all the fleeing survivors. Among these was Urnayr, king of the Ałuank’; he had been wounded by Musheł, son of Vasak Mamikonean, and they removed him from battle”.²²

2.1.5 Ełishe

In his *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, Ełishe (5th century) describes the struggle of the Armenians fighting together with the Georgians (Iberians) and the Albanians for their common faith against Sasanian Iran (449–451), a war which culminated in the Battle of Avarayr (451). The three southern Caucasian Christian peoples, led by the Armenian noble Vardan Mamikonean, appeared united against the reintroduction of Zoroastrianism imposed by the Persian king Yazdegerd II (438–457). Such wars of faith were repeatedly conducted on Albanian territory, and the Albanian nobility repeatedly opposed the Sasanian tyranny. Worth mentioning is the narrative of an unnamed Albanian king who, although forcibly converted to Zoroastrianism and tied to the Sasanian royal house as the son of Yazdegerd’s sister and by marriage with the sister or niece of King Peroz (I), even allied with the Massagetae in the fight against the Sasanian king. As Ełishe writes, “[t]he Persian king sent another message to him: ‘Have my sister and my niece sent out, for they were originally magi and you made them Christians. Then your country will be yours.’ Now this wonderful man was not fighting for power but for piety. He sent off his mother and wife, completely renounced

21 Movses, *History* II, 85: Իսկ թագաւորն Տրդատ ամենայն Հայաստանօք իջեալ 'ի դաշտ զարգարացոց, պատահէ Հիւսիսականացն ճակատու պատերազմ'ի: (1865: 168) – “King Trdat with all the Armenians descended into the plain of Gargar, and met the northern people in battle” (Thomson 2006: 233).

22 Movses, *History* III, 37: Եւ այսպէս 'ի վերին օգնականութենէն զօրացեալ Հասարակ զօրքն Յունաց և Հայօց, դիտակամբք թշնամեաց լցին զդաշտն ամենայն, և զմնացորդսն ամենայն 'ի փախուստ չրջեալ հալածեցին: Ընդ որս և զմուռնայր Աղուանից արքայ, խոցոտեալ 'ի Մուշեղայ որդույ Վասակայ մամիկոնենի, հանին 'ի պատերազմէն: (1865: 226–227); English translation by Thomson (2006: 293). Cf. 3.2.2 below for more details concerning the Battle.

the world, took the Gospel and wished to leave his country”.²³ According to Elishe, the unexpected resistance and later abdication of the Albanian king prevented the Persian king Peroz from earlier releasing the Armenian nobles he had taken prisoner. Elishe’s account thus shows for the first time the emergence of legends about Christian Albanian kings.²⁴

2.1.6 Łazar Parpetsi

The *History of Armenians* by Łazar Parpetsi was written at the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century. Its first book follows Faustus of Byzantium, with the division of Armenia into a Byzantine and a Sasanian part in 387, describes the creation of the Armenian script (the Albanian script is not mentioned here) and the end of the Armenian monarchy in the Sasanian-ruled eastern part of the country (428); it ends with the death of Catholicos Sahak (439). Book II refers mainly to the Battle of Avarayr (451) and often mirrors Elishe’s account. Book III proves that the Albanians (as well as the Georgians) remained faithful allies of the Armenians in spirit and Christian faith, also during another anti-Sasanian uprising (481–484) which was targetted mainly against the harsh religious policies of Yazdegerd II (438–457) and his *hazarapet* (chiliarch) Mihrnerseh. In a one-to-one meeting with Yazdegerd, the latter emphasises the unity of the three Christian Caucasian peoples but concedes the leadership to the Armenians, to be exerted by another member of the Mamikonean family, Vahan. According to Łazar, Mihrnerseh said: “Thereafter that land [Armenia] will be firmly bound to us in affection and unity. When the hearts of the Armenians belong to us, [those of] the Iberians and Albanians will also be ours”.²⁵ Parpetsi thus underlines the impres-

23 Elishe, *History* 7: Յղեաց առ նա դարձեալ թագաւորն Պարսից: «Զգուրդ իմ, ասէ, և զկեռորդիդ ի բաց տուր ածել, ցի ի բնէ մոգք էին և դու քրիստոնէայ արարեր, և աշխարհդ քեզ լիցի:» Իսկ սքանչելի ալըն ոչ ի տէրութեանն վերայ կրուէր, այլ յաստուածապաշտութեանն: Զմայրն և զկիինն ետ տանել, և զաշխարհն բովանդակ ի բաց եթող. և ինքն զաւետարանն առ և յաշխարհէն ի բաց կամէր գնալ: (Ter-Minasean 1957: 198–199); English translation by Thomson (1982: 243).

24 The same account is also found in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* (book I, ch. 10) where in contrast to Elishe, the king is named (Vache II): Ապա յղեաց առ Վաչէ թագաւորն Պերոզ՝ «զքորդ իմ, ասէ: և զքեռաւորդիդ ՚ի բաց տուր ածել, զի ՚ի բնէ մոգ էին և դու քրիստոնեայ արարեր, և աշխարհդ քո քեզ լիցի:» (Emin 1860a: 13) – “Then King Peroz sent a message to Vače, saying: ‘Send my sister and my sister’s child back to me, since they were originally Magians, and it was you who made them Christians; then your kingdom shall be yours’” (Dowsett 1961a: 10).

25 Łazar Parpetsi, *History* II, 11: Եւ լինի այնուհետեւ աշխարհն ընդ մեր սերտ սիրով և միաբանութեամբ: Եւ յորժամ Հայք սերտիւ մեր լինին՝ Վիրք եւ Արուանք այնուհետեւ մեր իսկ են: (Ter-Mkrtchian and Malkhasean 1904: 43); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1985: 69).

sion, already prevailing in Elishe’s account, of common Armenian-Georgian-Albanian efforts under Armenian leadership against forced Zoroastrianisation and subjugation to the Sasanian rulership of both the nobility and the clergy.²⁶

2.1.7 Sebeos

The *History* of Sebeos (7th century) contains detailed accounts of the period of the Sasanian supremacy in Armenia up to the Arab conquest in 661. It is historically significant for the information it provides on the history of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (610–641), which is divided into two narratives, one on the Byzantine-Sasanian wars (602–628) and one on the Byzantine-Arab conflicts of the 7th century. In these conflicts, Armenia and Albania were not only theatres of war and the bone of contention between the foreign powers but also allies on one or the other side. Among other facets of the “evil that occurred in the time of Peroz”, Sebeos reports on the “Greek raid into Atrpatakan, their plunder and booty and return through P’aytakaran; the coming of the Persian army from the east to attack them; the battle which [took place] in the land of Ałuank’; the emperor’s return to the city of Nakhchawan and the battle of Archēsh, the return of the emperor back to his own territory; yet another attack against Khosrov; the battle at Nineveh; the raid to the city of Ctesiphon; the return to Atrpatakan; the death of Khosrov; the reign of Kawat; the treaty between the two kings; the abandoning of Greek territory; the return of the divine Cross to the holy city”.²⁷ In detail Sebeos narrates how Heraclius decided to spend the winter in Albania, arriving from Atrpatakan in 624. On the orders of Khosrov, the Albanian nobles were obliged to abandon Partaw in order to entrench themselves in fortified positions. Heraclius pitched his camp in the province of Utik, and the Persian generals took their stand. In the following battle Heraclius gained advantage. A second time Albania is mentioned for the year 626 when the Khazars, who had just concluded an alliance with Heraclius, threatened to invade the country. Another important account is that of the Arab conquest and the military and cultural-religious pressure they exerted in the region: “They ravaged all the land of Armenia, Ałuank’, and Siwnik’, and stripped all the churches. They seized as hostages the leading

²⁶ Cf. Chapter 7A of this Handbook (Drost-Abgaryan), 9. as to the “Holy Covenant” stroke up by the three Christian peoples in the period in question.

²⁷ Sebeos, *History* 7: *Բայց զայն ամենայն, որ ի Պերոզի ժամանակն եղեալ չարութիւն (...) Զասպատակն Յունաց յԱտրպատական, զառ և զաւար, և զբարձն ընդ Փայտակարան. Զեկ զաւրացն Պարսից յարեւելից զղիմի հարկանել նմա. Զպատերազմն որ յաշխարհին Աղուանից: (Abgaryan 1979: 65); English translation by Thomson (1999: 2–3).*

princes of the country, and the wives, sons, and daughters of many people”.²⁸ By about 640, Armenia already witnessed the impact of expanding Islam and took account of the immense military potential of the Arab caliphate. The early Arabs followed the practice of their Iranian predecessors in consolidating most of the southern Caucasus into a large administrative unit called *Arminiya*, which contained Greater Armenia, Iberia and Albania.

2.1.8 Anania Shirakatsi

Despite the fact that Anania Shirakatsi (7th century) was not a historian in the narrow sense, his *Geography*, the *Ašxarhaç’oyc’* (lit. ‘Guide of the World’), which was for long attributed to Movses Khorenatsi, provides a significant description of the historical territories and demarcations of the Southern Caucasus in the pre-Arab period. It presents detailed information about Armenia and the neighbouring territories, Albania, Iberia, and Iran. Anania outlines the Kingdom of Albania as follows: “The twenty-first country, Albania, which is, *Ahuank’*, is east of Iberia bordering Sarmatia along the Caucasus and [extending] to the frontier of Armenia along the River Kur. From there [Armenia] to the Kur, all the borderlands have been taken from Armenia”.²⁹ It is clear that *Albania* here refers to regions north of the river Kura. However, this “heartland” must have extended to regions that were originally associated with the twelfth province of Armenia, *Uti*, as Anania indicates: “Uti is west of the Arax between Arc’ax and the River *Kur*. It has seven districts, which are in the possession of the Albanians”.³⁰

2.1.9 Łewond

The text that describes in most detail the geopolitical, cultural and religious changes under Arab rule is the *History of the Armenians* by Łewond (8th century).

28 Sebeos, *History* 46: և կողոպտեաց զամենայն երկիրն Հայոց, զԱղուանս, զՍիւնիս, և մերկացոյց զամենայն եկեղեցիս: Եւ կալաւ պատանդ զգլխաւոր իշխանս աշխարհին և զկանայս և զուստերս և զղստերս բացմաց: (Abgaryan 1979: 153); English translation by Thomson (1999: 150).

29 Anania Shirakatsi, *Geography* IV: ԽԱ. Աշխարհ՝ Աղբանիա, այսինքն Աղուանք, յելից Վրաց, յերի Սարմատիաոյ առ Կաւկասով, մինչեւ ցՀայոց սահմանաւ, առ Կուր գետով: Թէպէտ եւ աստի ցԿուր զամենայն սահմանս հանեալ է՝ ի Հայոց: (Soukry 1881: 28–29); English translation by Hewsen (1992: 57).

30 Anania Shirakatsi, *Geography* V: Ժբ. Ուտի առ մտից կա երասխայ ընդ մէջ Արցախայ և Կուր գետոյ: ունի գաւառս զոր Աղուանք ունին: եւթն: (Soukry 1881: 33); English translation by Hewsen (1992: 65A). This information is only provided in the “Short version” of the *Geography*; cf. Hewsen (1992: 65 s. v. xb).

Starting with events that are already mentioned by Sebeos, this account covers the period from c. 632 to 788, including descriptions of the Arab invasions of Armenia in the mid-7th century, the wars fought by the Caliphate against Byzantium and the Khazars, the settlement of Arab tribes in Asia Minor and the Caucasus, and the overthrow of the Umayyads, as well as information on Arab tax policies, the status of the Armenian Church, and the relation of the Armenian and Arab nobilities. Due to the subject and the period it focuses on, Lewond's *History* does not comprise the narratives from the time after Christianisation that are most relevant for the present Chapter; nevertheless, it vividly describes how the Christian peoples of the South Caucasus suffered under Arab-Muslim oppression and the constant threat of foreign peoples invading. In the context of the inner-Arab war under the Umayyad caliph Abd-al Malik in 686, Lewond states: "During the war which broke out among the Tajiks (Arabs), the Armenians, Georgians and Albanians ceased to pay tribute to them, having been tributary for thirty years. This rebellion lasted for three years".³¹ For the South Caucasian peoples, the only way to survive was to steadfastly adhere to their faith and stand together against the foreign powers which threatened them. This was not only true for the Arabs but also for the Khazars who united with them, as Lewond notes: "But it happened that after a short while, the shadow [of the Khazars] which had darkened the country of the Albanians dispelled and [the Khazar leader himself] united with the caliph and [even] sent his son as a hostage to the land of the Syrians".³²

2.2 General observations

As we have seen, the authors of the first four centuries of Armenian literacy clearly depict Albania as a partner and ally of its neighbours, Armenia and (Georgian) Iberia, and yield important insights into its history. At the same time, one can hardly overestimate the historical impact of the geopolitical changes that occurred after the division of Greater Armenia between Byzantium and the Sasa-

31 Lewond, *History* 4.: եւ ի ժամանակի պատերազմի որ ի մէջ Տաճկաց՝ դադարեցին ի հարկատուութենէ նոցա Հայք, Վիրք, Աղուանք, ծառայել նոցա ամս ր: եւ երեւ աւուրք ապրստամբութեան նոցա ամք Գ: (1887: 15); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (2006: 6).

32 Lewond, *History* 31.: Իսկ ապա յետ սակաւ ինչ ժամանակի հատուածեալ նոյն վիրադն, որ էած ստուերածս ի վերայ երկրին Աղուանից՝ դայր միաբանել ընդ իշխանին իամայելի. Իսկ ապա յետ սակաւ ինչ ժամանակի հատուածեալ նոյն վիրադն, որ էած ստուերածս ի վերայ երկրին Աղուանից՝ դայր միաբանել ընդ իշխանին իամայելի: Լ յղեալ յաշխարհ Ասորոց պատանի գորդի իւր՝ ինքն վաղվաղակի վախճանէր սրով մերձ ի դրունս Աղուանից: (1887: 133); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (2006: 30).

nian empire and the following installation of the so-called “Marzpanate”, which implied the extension of Albania by the former Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik. Already in 384–387, the two north-eastern provinces of the Armenian kingdom were incorporated into Albania. As to Utik, several documents such as the *Gahnamak* compiled between 387 and 428, a list of Armenian bishops of the same period transmitted in the *History* by the 10th-century bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia (I, 70; see 4.1.2 below), as well as the earlier testimonies by Koryun (18, 1) and the *History of the Country of the Albanians* (III, 60) seem to prove that it remained part of the Persarmenian kingdom up to the suppression of the Arsacid Armenian kingdom in 428.³³ However, after 428, Albania proper, Artsakh and Utik were definitely combined into a new Sassanid administrative unit which persisted up to 591, the “Marzpanate of Albania” or Aran, even though Artsakh was probably not incorporated in this administrative province until 451 if Elishe can be trusted who still treats it separately for that time.³⁴

Moreover, the ethnic and linguistic structure of the country gradually changed. Between the 2nd century BCE and the 4th century CE, Armenians who had settled on the right bank of the Kura spread their language over the region. Albanian kings of the 5th century such as Vache II (458–463) and Vachagan the Pious (485–510) were speakers of Armenian and had close relationships with Armenian nobles. During the 8th century, Armenian was imposed as the liturgical language on the Church of Albania. Thus it happened under the caliphate that the southern part of Albania, which neighboured Armenia, remained Christian and Armenian-speaking whereas the northern part, on the left bank of the Kura with easy access to Persia along the Caspian Sea, was finally Islamised.

3 The *History of the Country of the Albanians* (7th–10th centuries)

3.1 The work and its author(s)

The palimpsest fragments in Albanian script and language, detected by Zaza Aleksidze in 1996 in St Catherine’s Monastery on Mt Sinai,³⁵ contain no historiographi-

³³ Cf. Hakobyan (1987: 111–113).

³⁴ Elishe, ch. 4: *Սոյնպէս առնէր և ընդ ամենայն կողմանս ամրականաց աշխարհին, ի Տմորիսն և ի Կորդիսն, յԱրցախ և յԱղուանսն, ի Վիրս և յաշխարհն Խաղտեաց* (Ter-Minasyan 1957: 94) – “He acted likewise with the garrisons in all regions of the country, in Tmorik’ and in Kordik’, in Arts’akh and in Albania, in Georgia and in the land of Khaltik’” (Thomson 1982: 146).

³⁵ Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert) for details.

cal data on the Christianisation or the early Christian centuries of Albania. Therefore, except for the scarce indications scattered about the writings of the Armenian authors of the 5th–8th centuries listed above, the Armenian compilation entitled *History of the Country of the Albanians* must serve as the primary source of information on the socio-political, cultural and ecclesiastical history of Caucasian Albania, covering the period from the Christianisation of the country in the 4th century onwards and its relation to Armenia, Georgia, and other surrounding countries under the rule of Byzantium, Sasanian Iran, and the Arab Caliphate. Its importance notwithstanding, this source remained anonymous up to the beginning of the 13th century when it was ascribed to a certain Movses Daskhurantsi by the Armenian scholar Mkhitar Gosh and a disciple of his named Vanakan Vardapet;³⁶ however, they do not explain the origin of the compilation or of its author's name. In the same century, the historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1200–1271) in his *History of the Armenians* (written between 1241 and 1265) provides a different name for the author, viz. Movses Kałankatuatsi.³⁷ A few decades later, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi (1230/35–1297/1300) in his *History of the Armenians* of c. 1289 mentions the author once as “Movses from Albania” (in his list of “Chroniclers”) but later on also as Movses Kałankatuatsi.³⁸

The latter name most likely derives from the episode of Heraclius' campaign against the Persians in c. 626, which is reported in book II, ch. 11 of the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. Fleeing from the Khazars, who were allied with

36 Mkhitar Gosh, *Chronicle* (see 4.1.5 below): երկրորդ, զի թէ ոք յօժարեսցի գրել պատմութիւն զկնի գրեցելումն պատմութեանն Մովսեսի Դասխուրանեցոյն՝ որ զբովանդակ պատմէ զտանս Աղուանից, զիւրին լիցի յայտմանէ զչար Հայրապետացն առնուլ. զի ոչ գամենեցուն անուն ի նորայն գտցէ պատմութեան, բայց զայնոցիկ զորոց գրեաց. զի յայն ժամանակէ մինչեւ ցայժմ՝ ոչ ոք գրեաց. եւ թէ պատահի ոք՝ յոյժ հարկաւոր է: (Alishan 1901b: 338) – “... secondly, so that whosoever may be inclined to write continuing the history written by Movsēs Daxsurancī, who gives a full account of the House of Albania, may conveniently take the list of patriarchs for he will not find all their names in his [Movsēs'] History, but only those about whom he wrote. For from that time until the present nobody has written, and should somebody come forward, this list will be very necessary” (Dowsett 1958: 476; cf. Bedrosian 2007a: 1). Cf. Arakelyan (1983: 350) and Manandyan and Acharyan (2014b: 605a) who provide the name form Դասախուրանեցի (*Dasaxowranec'i*).

37 Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *History*, Introduction: եւ Մովսէս Կաղանկատուացի, պատմագիրն Աղուանից (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 7) – “And Movses Kałankatuatsi, the historian of Albania” (cf. Bedrosian 1986: 5). Cf. 4.2 below as to further details.

38 Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, *History*, Patmagirk': Մովսէս Աղուանից (Emin 1860b: 23). Ayrivanetsi puts Movses in his list of chroniclers ahead of Łewond and Ukhtanes; later on, however, he dates him between 981–1001 just like the latter and Gregory of Narek: Աստ Աղուանից պատմագիրն Մովսէս Կաղանկատուցի և Գրիգոր Նարեկացի և Ուխտանէս պատմագիր: (Emin 1860b: 57 with the name form Կաղանկատուցի, i.e. *Kałankatowc'i*) – “Here the chronicler of the Albanians, Movses Kałankatuatsi, and Grigor Narekatsi and Ukhtanes the chronicler”.

the Byzantines, the inhabitants of Partaw took refuge in the mountains of Ar-tsakh. However, “[w]hen the enemy became aware of what had happened, they pursued them and overtook a group of them at the foot of the mountain opposite the large village of Kaghankatuk which is in the same province of Uti where I too am from”.³⁹ This sentence is ambiguous: did the narrator originate from the district of Uti at large or more precisely from a place named Kalankatuk? If we accept the latter interpretation, we might also ask who is speaking here: is he the (final) compiler of the three books of the *History* or the author of one of its sources? Being an episcopal see, Kalankatuk had grown into an important locality by the time in question. Most often its name appears in different lists (of rulers, church dignitaries, religious buildings) that are inserted into the *History of the Country of the Albanians*.⁴⁰ The only passage where the toponym occurs in a narrative part is the one cited above where the narrator talks about his own origin. This might be regarded as an indication that he is not the compiler of the whole book but only the author of the source of the given chapter (II, 10–11).⁴¹

There is further some evidence that the compiler of the work was Catholicos Movses IV of Albania (987–993), whose name is the last included in the list of Albanian patriarchs that is attached to the end of the *History*. This elusive mention, which closes the list, might somehow be understood as the compiler’s signature. It would, however, not account for either one of the epithets, Daskhurantsi and Kalankatuatsi, for Movses IV is simply introduced as “from the priory of the monastery of Parisos”⁴² and not as a native of a village named Daskhuran/Daskhuren or Kalankatuk.⁴³

None of the 13th-century designations – Movses of Albania, Daskhurantsi, or Kalankatuatsi – seems to have gained full recognition throughout Armenian history. Stepanos Orbelian, who completed his *History of the Province of Siwnik* in 1298, still treats the *History of the Country of the Albanians* as anonymous.⁴⁴ It

39 *History of the Country of the Albanians* II, 11: Իբրև իրազգած եղեն թշնամիքն եղելոցն՝ պնդեցան զհետ փախստէից և հասնալ ՚ի մասն ինչ նոցա առ ստորոտով լերինն՝ որ է յանդիման գեղջն մեծի Կարանկատուաց, որ ՚ի նմին յուտի գաւառի՝ յորմէ և ես (Emin 1860a: 107); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 84).

40 Book I, ch. 26; II, 52; III, 8; and III, 10 (Emin 1860a: 65; 227; 241; 244; Dowsett 1961a: 51; 185; 194; 197–198). Cf. 6.1 (Appendix) with Table III below for a comparison of the list of catholicos with those from Mkhitar Gosh’s *Chronicle* and Kirakos Gandzaketsi’s *History*.

41 For the much debated question of Movses’s authorship cf., among others, Svazyan (1972).

42 *History of the Country of the Albanians* III, 23: Տէր Մովսես, ամս վեց, յառաջնորդութենէն փարիսոյ վանաց: (Emin 1860a: 278); cf. the English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 231).

43 Cf. Dowsett (1961a: XIX)

44 Stepanos Orbelian, *History*, 25: Զորոյ գորպիսութիւն անցիցն և զպատճառս բանիցն, որպէս վերագրյն խոստացաք, բացայայտեցից սակաւութեք, որպէս հաւաստի ուսաք ի սրբոյն Ուխտանէսէ՝ Սեբաստացւոց եպիսկոպոսէ, և ի սրբոյն Սաղօմօնի՝ Մաքենոցաց առաջնորդի թղթոյն, որ կարգեալ է

seems that even the manuscripts of the work itself do not contribute to a clarification.⁴⁵ The oldest preserved witness, ms. 1531 of the Matenadaran, Yerevan (dated 1289), does not name the author at all.⁴⁶ The earliest mention of Movses Kalankatuatsi as an author can be found in ms. 2646 of the Matenadaran, written by a scribe named Ghunkianos in Ejmiatsin.⁴⁷ Some thirty years before, manuscript 75 of the Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias (dated to c. the 18th century) still avoids any precise ascription; however, it surprises with its textual completeness and the lack of any additions or changes to the text.⁴⁸

The *History of the Country of the Albanians*, consisting of three books, follows the model of the historiographies of its time, beginning in its first book (30 chapters) with the creation of Adam and extending up to the 5th century CE. It contains some chapters on the spread of Christianity in Albania, the deeds of King Vacha-

յԱղվանից պատմութեանն ի միջին հատորն, և ի սրբոյն Մաշտոցի թղթոյն, զոր գրեալ է ի Տեառն Գէորգեայ կաթողիկոսի խնդրոյն: (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 142) – “I shall briefly summarise the facts and causes of these developments, as I promised, relying on the accurate [writings] of the blessed Ukhtanes, bishop of Sebastia, the letter of blessed Solomon, leader of the Makenots [monastery] which we found in the middle volume of the *History of the Albanians*, and from the letter of the blessed Mashtots written at the request of the catholicos Lord Georg” (cf. Bedrosian 2015: 55).

45 For an overview of the manuscripts available at their time, cf. Dowsett (1961a: XI–XIII) and Arakelyan (1983: XXXV–XLIII).

46 Cf. Yeganyan (2009: 355–366): M1531, Miscellany, 1289, Hovhannavank, folios 231a–377a. The scribe’s main colophon, added on behalf of the manuscript’s restauration in 1676, just mentions an *Աղուանից Պատմագիր*, i.e., a “Chronicler of the Albanians” (fol. 377a). Cf. Arakelyan (1983: XXXV).

47 Cf. Ter-Vardanean (2012b: 915–920): M2646, Movses Kalankatuatsi’s *History of the Albanians*, Ejmiatsin, 1760–61, scribe Ghunkianos Dpir for Catholicos Jakob. The main colophon on fol. 165b reads *Պատմութեանն Աղուանից աշխարհին, զոր շարադրեալ է քաջ գիտնական եւ գերիմաստ վարդապետն Մովսէս Կաղանկատեցի* – “*History of the Country of the Albanians*, which was composed by the strong scholar and ingenious vardapet Movsēs Kalankateci” (sic!). Cf. Arakelyan (1983: XXXVII).

48 Cf. Arakelyan (1983: XXXVI). Arakelyan refers to a microfilm (no. 180) obviously of ms. 54 from Surmėyan’s catalogue of manuscripts from the Church of the 40 Martyrs and private holdings in Aleppo, compiled in 1835–36 (Surmėyan 1836: 150–151). According to Arakelyan, the anonymous and undated manuscript, which can be dated to the 18th century, was later brought to the Library of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias, where it was included in the catalogue of Armenian manuscripts of 1984 under number 75 (Danielean 1984: 294). Somewhat confusing is the slightly different description of the manuscript given by Arakelyan from both catalogues; according to fol. 48a it is a copy of a “History of the Eastern state of Albania” (*պատմութիւն արեւելիցս Աղուանից նահանգիս*) copied by an anonymous scribe for, as stated on fol. 47b, “the fortunate patriarch Tēr Abraham, Catholicos of all Armenians” (*երջանիկ հայրապետն Տէր Արքահամ կաթողիկոսն ամենայն Հայոց*; Danielean 1984: 294). Due to the fact that in the 18th century there were two catholicos named Abraham, Abraham II Khoshabetsi (1730–1734) and Abraham III Kretatsi (1734–1737), Arakelyan dates the manuscript between 1730 and 1737.

gan III the Pious, and the canons promulgated at the Council of Aḡuen.⁴⁹ Book II (52 chapters) covers the period between the mid-6th and mid-7th centuries and refers to events such as the Khazar invasions, the Byzantine-Persian wars, and the establishment of new rulers and dynasties in Albania, all of which can be considered reasonably authentic. It also contains the narrative about the Albanian prince Juansher and the funeral elegy written for him by the poet Dawtak Kertol. Book III tells almost exclusively about the Arab invasion and extends into about the middle of the 10th century.⁵⁰

Trying to fit the events that are depicted in the *History* into the actual historical framework may reveal certain discrepancies between the individual books and chapters – and thus perhaps between different authors.⁵¹ The last chapters of the *History* recall events of the first half of the 10th century such as King Smbat I of Armenia's martyrdom in 914/5 or the Russian attack launched on Partaw in about 944.⁵² The mention of (Yovhannes) Senekerim, son of Sewaday (Ishkhan) and king of Siwnik in the second half of the 11th century (1072–1096), in book III, ch. 22⁵³ must clearly be considered a later addition to the compilation if it was completed before 1000.⁵⁴ Similarly, the patriarchal list was eventually updated by Mkhitar Gosh, an author of the 12th–13th centuries.⁵⁵ In contrast to all this, it seems that the first two books of the *History* date back to the 8th century and not to the 10th.⁵⁶

It has sometimes been proposed that the earliest sources of the *History* might be based on fragments of a historiographical work in Albanian that was translated into Armenian.⁵⁷ This is especially true for the *Life of Vachagan the Pious*,⁵⁸ which seems to be the most ancient core of book I comprising its chapters 15–

49 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 3.2 for details as to the council.

50 Hacikyan (2002: 170).

51 Cf. Thomson (2014: 307): “But insight into the problematics of authorship where such complexities of variant traditions exist has not been rigorously applied elsewhere. The compilation of the traditions that form the *History of the Aḡuank'* attributed to Movsēs Kalankatuac'i, or Dasxuranc'i, for example, poses not dissimilar problems”.

52 Cf. Emin (1860a: 269–270), Dowsett (1961a: 223–224). For the historical sources on the martyrdom of the Armenian king Smbat cf. Garsoġan (1997b: 157).

53 Cf. Emin (1860a: 273); Dowsett (1961a: 227). For further information on king Senekerim of Siwnik cf. Minorsky (1953: 72) and Chapter 14 of this Handbook (La Porta).

54 Cf. Dowsett (1961a: 227 n. 1) with reference to Brosset (1864 :183).

55 Cf. Arakelyan (1983: 350–357)

56 Aleksidze and Mahé (in Gippert et al. 2008: I, xi) second the conclusions of C. Zuckerman (2007: 399–432).

57 Cf. Hakobyan (1987: 150–258); Hewsen (1982: 27–40).

58 Vachagan III the Pious was the last Arsacid king of Albania; cf. Hakobyan (2021b: 239–248).

26⁵⁹ and must have been written after the death of this famous king of Albania, i.e. after 510. However, like his grandfather Vache II (457–463), Vachagan's reign was characterised by a gradual Armenisation of his kingdom. Thus, it seems plausible that this narrative was written in Armenian right from the beginning.⁶⁰ The sources of book II are even later: the *History of Catholicos Viroy* in ch. 14–15⁶¹ must have been completed by about 640; *Juansher's Panegyric*, ch. 18–28,⁶² cannot go back beyond 670, i.e. ten years before the murder of this prince (the compiler even inserted the *Lamentation* which was written for his funeral by the poet Dawtak); and the mission of Bishop Israyel of the Huns, ch. 29–45,⁶³ cannot have taken place before 684. Moreover, the first two books of the *History* must have had common sources such as the *Life of Bishop Israyēl* which appears in both of them (book I, ch. 27–30 and book II, ch. 29–45). In contrast to this, book III is quite independent from the two previous books.

We might thus wonder whether the final composition of books I–II should at all be ascribed to the same author as that of book III or whether another chronicler had written books I–II earlier by combining local sources of the 6th–7th centuries with various materials borrowed from Armenian historians. The systematic use of the work of Movses Khorenatsi, e.g., suggests that the chronicler of the two initial books had completed his work by the 8th century. On the other hand, we might notice that, according to Stepanos Orbelian's account, an excerpt from the *History of the Albanians* which matches book I, ch. 9 of the latter work, was read publicly in the presence of the prince of Khachen in c. 949 by the Armenian Catholicos Anania I Mokatsi (949–968).⁶⁴ Similarly, in ch. LXIV of his own work,

59 Emin (1860a: 32–69); Dowsett (1961a: 24–54).

60 Cf. Chapter 11 of this Handbook (Petrosyan), 4. as to the reforms initiated by Vachagan the Pious.

61 Emin (1860a: 92–131); Dowsett (1961a: 92–104).

62 Emin (1860a: 136–160); Dowsett (1961a: 109–130).

63 Emin (1860a: 160–211); Dowsett (1961a: 130–171).

64 Stepanos Orbelian, *History*, 52: *Խնդրէր ապա կաթողիկոսն Անանիա զպատմութիւնն Աղվանից զի գիտասցեն զորպիսութիւնն Աղվանից ամբողջապէս, և նոքա թաքուցեալ ամենևին ոչ ցուցանէին: Ապա ըստ վերին խնամոցն, ի գիշերի պաշտամանն դնէ եկեղեցապանն Գանձասարու գիրք մի որպէս թէ Յովհաննու Ոսկեբերանի է. եւ մեծարեն զկաթողիկոսն յընտեռնուլ. զոր եւ բացեալ եգիտ զոր խնդրէրն, զի էր պատմութիւնն Աղվանից. եւ էր ի նմա գրեալ ամենայն ճշդիւ զի առաջին եպիսկոպոս յԱղվանս ի սրբոյն Գրիգորոյ՝ Հայոց լուսաւորչեն, լինէր ձեռնադրեալ ի խնդրոյ Ուռնայրի՝ Արքային Աղվանից: (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 22). – “Catholicos Anania requested the *History of the Albanians* so that they might observe the status of the Albanian pontiffs. But they resolutely hid [this book] from him and would not show it. However, through providence from the Highest during the evening service, the warden of Gandzasar brought forth a book as though it were of John Chrysostom, and they invited the Catholicos to read it. Now when he opened it, he found that it was the book he had requested, namely, the *History of the Albanians*. In it everything was accurately recorded about how the first bishop of the Albanians received ordination from*

Ukhtanes (writing c. 987) repeats information from book II, ch. 47 of the *History of the Country of the Albanians*.⁶⁵ We thus arrive at the second half of the 10th century as a *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of the initial books; a date that does not differ from that assumed for the completion of book III. The question of both the authorship and the dating must therefore remain open.

3.2 Accounts of the Christianisation of Albania in the *History*

Just as the other two kingdoms of the Southern Caucasus, Armenia and Iberia, Albania is believed to have undergone two successive stages of Christianisation: a first one in the apostolic age and a second one in the 4th century.⁶⁶ However, those remote times are not documented as such in our historical sources, being only dimly evoked in the background of more recent events. On the one hand, the preserved texts briefly sum up hagiographic legends known by oral tradition; on the other hand, they revise these legends in accordance with Armenian historiography. In order to illustrate the interweaving of older Armenian chroniclers' accounts with important socio-historical and ecclesiastical changes and, at the same time, ethnicising tendencies in both written and oral traditions, the following discussion will focus on the information of the *History of the Country of the Albanians* about three important persons from the early Christian history of Albania, regardless of whether they are legendary or historically verifiable: the “apostle” St Elisaeus, King Urnayr of Albania, and the first Catholicos, St Grigoris.

3.2.1 Two versions of the legend of St Elisaeus

The first illuminator of the Albanians is supposed to have been St Elisaeus (*Elišē* or *Eliša*), who is reported to have been sent to Albania from Jerusalem by James,

St Gregory, the Illuminator of the Armenians, at the request of King Urnayr of the Albanians, and how for 440 years they obeyed the occupants of the see of the Armenians [and] how the Albanian Catholicos received ordination from the Armenians” (cf. Bedrosian 2015: 146). Cf. Dowsett (1961a: XV); Akinean (1953: 13–15).

⁶⁵ Ukhtanes, *History* 64: *Իսկ ապա նոցա տեսալ զԱղուանս միաբան ընդ Հայոց ի հաւատս ուղղափառութեան ի սկզբան սրբոյն Գրիգորէ և այսր: Քանզի խնդրեալ էին իւրեանց Առաջնորդ գերանելին Գրիգորիս ի զարմից սրբոյն Գրիգորի: (1871: II, 121) – “They further realized that the Albanians were united with the Armenians in the profession of the orthodox faith, which was formerly received from St. Gregory and was being held up to this time, since they had asked the blessed Grigoris, a descendant of Gregory, to become their prelate” (Arzoumanian 2008: 123).*

⁶⁶ Mahé (2002: 118–121).

the brother of the Lord.⁶⁷ There are two different versions of the story, however. The first one is mentioned only incidentally in the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, on the occasion of an epistolary debate involving the Armenian Catholicos Abraham (607–615) about the nine hierarchical ecclesiastical ranks. The first attestation of this hierarchical system of the Armenian Church is found in a quotation from a Letter of Solomon Makenatsi,⁶⁸ which is mentioned in book II, ch. 48 of the *History*⁶⁹ and is repeated later in the work of Stepanos Orbelian.⁷⁰ This letter presents a clear picture of the degrees which the Armenians had supposedly established under the pontificate of Abraham I at the beginning of the 7th century in response to the claim of the Greeks that the leader of their Church was not authorised to bear the title of a patriarch.⁷¹ In reaction, the Albanians defend the supremacy of their own patriarchate, which Catholicos Abraham had already mentioned in his circular letter,⁷² referring to “a certain apostle who came in ancient times to Albania, Eliša by name, one of the disciples of the Lord who was consecrated by James, brother of the Lord, and who preached there and built a church before there was one in Armenia, namely, the church of Gis, the first mother church of the east. Putting their trust in him, the Albanians turned from the Armenians in order to be subject to no one’s authority”.⁷³ Other brief mentions of the same version of the legend can be found in book I, ch. 28 and book II, ch. 42 of the *History*.⁷⁴

In the second version of the legend, which was obviously elaborated under Armenian influence quite some time later than the first one, Elisaeus is a disciple of the apostle (Jude) Thaddaeus. This version can be read in book I, ch. 6 of the *History*:

He sent his holy and beloved disciples as preachers throughout the world, and the holy apostle Thaddaeus was appointed for us easterners. He came to the Armenian canton of Artaz and there suffered martyrdom at the hands of Sanatruk, king of Armenia, and his disciple St. Eliseus returned to Jerusalem and related the enviable martyrdom of his fellow

67 Cf. Garsoian (1999: 286–287).

68 A learned Armenian clergyman of the 7th–8th century who founded the monastic school of Makenyats; cf. Van Esbroeck (1969: 33–44).

69 Emin (1860a: 215–219); Dowsett (1961a: 175–176).

70 Cf. note 44 above for the quotation.

71 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 5.1.

72 Encyclica of Catholicos Abraham, cf. *Girk* (1901: 189–195).

73 *History*, book II, ch. 48: Զայլ ոսն՝ երևեցուցին կանխաւ առաքեալ եկեալ յաշխարհն Աղուանից: եղիչէ անուն, յաշակերտաց Տեառն՝ ձեռնադրեալ ՚ի ձեռանէ Յակոբու եղբոր Տեառն. Բարոզեալ անդ և եկեղեցի շինեալ նախկին քան ՚ի Հայոս, առաջին մալր եկեղեցեացն արևելից՝ գոհսոյ եկեղեցին նորին հիմադրեալ և զինքեանս նմա աւանդեալ՝ դարձան ՚ի Հայոց առ ինքեանս՝ շինելով ընդ ումեք իշխանութեամբ: (Emin 1860a: 218); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 176–177).

74 Emin (1860a: 72; 207); Dowsett (1961a: 56; 168).

apostle. Thereupon he was ordained in the Holy Spirit by St. James, the brother of Our Lord, who was the first patriarch of Jerusalem. He received the east as his diocese, travelled from Jerusalem via Persia, and escaping from the Armenians, penetrated among the Mask'ut'k'. He commenced his preaching in Čolay, and attracting many disciples in many different places, announced the Salvation. From there he arrived at the town of Srhařn in the province of Uti with three disciples, some of whose wicked brothers had pursued them. One of the disciples was martyred by them and the other two deserted the blessed Eliseus and followed the murderers, but the holy patriarch came to Gis, he founded a church there and offered up bloodless sacrifices. This place was the original source of all the churches and cities and the conversion of us easterners. From there he crossed the plain of Zargun to the site of the sacrificial altars of the heathen idolaters and there he received the martyr's crown. It is not clear who did the deed. The murderers threw the holy remains into a ditch in the place called Homenk', where they lay hidden for a long time.⁷⁵

Both narratives agree that Eliseus had been consecrated in Jerusalem by James, the Lord's brother, and founded the mother church of Gis as the first patriarch of Albania. This is the fixed part of the tradition: the fact was so notorious that it could not possibly be altered or denied. However, according to the first version, the illuminator of the Albanians was a disciple of Christ himself and was sent to the East directly from the Holy Land. Thus he would not owe anything to the Armenians. On the contrary, in the second variant, Eliseus first becomes a disciple of Thaddaeus in Armenia and an eyewitness of his teacher's martyrdom before he receives apostolic unction. As a result, the Christianisation of Albania no longer depends on Jerusalem directly but is a mere consequence of Thaddaeus' preaching in Armenia. Accordingly, the Albanian church, as a daughter of the Armenian one, can only be a tributary of her mighty neighbour.

While the first version only specifies the start and end points of Eliseus's mission – from Jerusalem to Gis –, the second one describes a tortuous itinerary

⁷⁵ *History* I, 6: *Եւ զսուրբ և զցանկալի աշակերտս իւր առաքեաց քարոզս տիեզերաց, որով և մերոզս արևելեաց վիճակցաւ սուրբ առաքեալն թաղեոս: Սա եկեալ 'ի Հայս յԱրտագ գաւառ՝ անդ առնու զվախճան մարտիրոսութեան 'ի Սանատրկոյ արքայն Հայոց: Եւ աշակերտ նորա սուրբն եղիչս դառնայ յերուսաղէմ և պատմէ ըզտեռչալի նահատակութիւնն առաքելակցացն նորա: Անդանօր յազգմանէ Սուրբ Հոբոտչն ձեռնադիւ եղիչս 'ի ձեռաց սրբոյն Յակոբայ եղբոր Տեառն, որ էր առաջին հայրապետ երուսաղէմի: Եւ վիճակ առեալ իւր զԱրևելս՝ ճանապարհ արարեալ յերուսաղէմէ ընդ Պարսս, մտնաէ 'ի Մացքուլթրս՝ խոյս տուեալ 'ի Հայաստանեայց, և սկիզբն առնէ քարոզութեան 'ի Չողա. և 'ի տեղիս տեղից զբազումս աշակերտեալ՝ ծանօց զիրկութիւն: Անտի եկեալ յուտի գաւառ 'ի Սրհառն քաղաք երևք անձամբք աշակերտելովք, որոց ահօրէնք ոմանք զկնի եկեալ՝ մի յաշակերտացն ընկալաւ 'ի նոցանէ զնահատակութեան վախճան, և երկուցն թողեալ զերանելին եղիչս գնացին զկնի խողխողիչ արանցն: Իսկ սուրբ հայրապետն՝ եկեալ 'ի Գիս, կանգնեաց զեկեղեցի և մատուց զանարիւն պատարագն: Եւ անտի անցեալ ընդ դաշտակն Զերգուտի՝ ի տեղի զոհարանի դիւցամուկ կոսպաշտիցն՝ անդ էառ զնահատակութեան պսակն: Եւ անյայտ իմն է, եթէ յորում եղև ելք իրացն: Եւ անդէն 'ի գուր մի մահապարտաց ընկեցան պատուական նշխարքն և ծածկեցան 'ի տեղոջն, որ կոչի Հոմէնք, 'ի բազում ժամանակս: (Emin 1860a: 8–9); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 5–6).*

from Artaz to Jerusalem, then to the land of the Mazkut, Choł (Derbent), the district of Uti, the city of Srharn, and finally Gis in the plain of Zargun (Zergoyñ) where the apostle was martyred. In the first case, we receive the impression that Albania is Christianised at once, as a homogeneous country; in the second the complexity of the route suggests a heterogeneous territory, a conglomerate of distinct provinces that were quite different from one another. Similarly, the list of Albanian patriarchs in book III, ch. 23, which must have been compiled after the death of Movses IV in 993, introduces Elisaeus as the illuminator not only of the Albanians but of no less than three different “countries”, Choł (Chor), that of the Lpink (Lupineans), and Albania.⁷⁶ The first two territories are clearly located north of the Kura, at the Caucasian limits of the ancient Albanian kingdom. In the 10th century, however, what is still called “Albania” is located south of the Kura and consists of several principalities submitted to the Catholicos of Albania. The second variant of Elisaeus’s legend must all the more be recent as it was adapted to the geopolitical changes of 428, 451 and later. Indeed, the mention of Uti shows that the tradition was elaborated at a time when this district had already been annexed to Albania, i.e. after 428.⁷⁷ Moreover, James is labelled “the first Patriarch of Jerusalem” here, a title which did not exist before 451.

3.2.2 The conversion of Urnayr, king of the Albanians

A “long time after” the alleged martyrdom of the apostle Elisaeus in the early 2nd century, Albania was Christianised “a second time” by King Urnayr, an event that is usually dated to 313. This tradition is particularly widespread throughout the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. We first read about it in book I, ch. 11, in a letter sent in c. 463 by the Armenian patriarch Giwt Arahezatsi (461–478) to King Vache II of Albania:

I begin where it is meet to begin, namely, with an account of how first of all love of Christ dwelt in your forefather Urnayr who vied in heavenly zeal with Trdat, king of Armenia, and who, when he heard of the great miracles of God, the signs and wonders which were performed by St. Gregory in the land of the Armenians who straightway turned from the

⁷⁶ *History* III, 23: Սուրբն եղիշա՛յ՝ աշակերտ սուրբ առաքելո՛յն թաղէսոսի, որ ձեռնադրեցաւ յերուսալէմ՝ 'ի ձեռաց Յակոբայ: Սա եկն լուսաւորիչ երից աշխարհացս՝ Չորայ, Լփանց և Աղուանից, և 'ի սուն կատարեցաւ վկայութեամբ: (Emin 1860a: 274) – “The first cause of our illumination was St. Elishay, a disciple of the holy apostle T'adeos, who was consecrated in Jerusalem by St. James; he came as the illuminator of three countries – Chołay, Lp'ink', and Albania – and was martyred in the last country” (Dowsett 1961a: 228).

⁷⁷ Cf. 2.2 above as to details.

paths of error and in true knowledge of God threw off the burdensome yoke of the heathens and were alleviated and awakened, and spreading their wings, soared up to Heaven. Hearing of this, the brave Urnayr did not hesitate; the great king sent no messenger, but went in person accompanied by his grandees and nobles and numerous forces, arrived in Armenia and came into the presence of the king of gigantic strength. He received him in brotherly love and friendship, placed himself at his disposal, and revealed to him the inward and outward mysteries in the company of St. Gregory and the whole Armenian army. Your king humbled himself, falling down and embracing their hands and feet, and related all the errors of the heathens and confessed his own past sins committed in ignorance. St. Grigorios encouraged him with the coming of the Incarnation of the Son of God, who came to forgive and not to judge, to give life and not to bring death, and promised life to those who had passed from the earth. When your king heard all this, he and his soldiers imposed upon themselves a forty-day fast, renouncing their former blameworthy deeds. On the fiftieth day, when they had rejected Satan and all his works and confessed the Holy Trinity, the king descended into the most holy water and all his soldiers with him. And when the chief priest had performed over them the rite of rebirth in the Heavenly Trinity, all emerged accompanied by the Holy Ghost. On the same occasion there was given to them a blessed man consecrated bishop from the city of Rome (Constantinople) who had come with King Trdat. With these heavenly gifts King Urnayr came back to the land of the Albanians, and taught and confirmed them through the apostolic canons; all received the heavenly seal [of baptism] and were inscribed in the Book of Life.⁷⁸

78 *History I*, 11: ... և սկսանիմ՝ ուստի արժանն է սկսանել: Որպէս յառաջագոյն սէրն Քրիստոսի բնակեաց 'ի նախնին ձեր մուռնայր, նախանձ երկնատր եբեր ընդ Տրդատայ Հայոց արքայի՝ իբրև լուսա գեթաբեծ սքանչելիսն Աստուծոյ, որ 'ի ձեռն Սրբոյն Գրիգորի նշանք և արուեստք գործեցան յաշխարհին Հայոց՝ դառնալ վաղվաղակի սոցա 'ի բազում շաւղաց մոլար ճանապարհին առ ճշմարիտն Աստուած, որոյ ծանօթութեամբ և բարեկամութեամբ 'ի բաց ընկեցին զծանրատաղտոկ զլուծն հեթանոսաց. թեթևացան, թօթհախեցան, թևակոխեցան, թռեան և յերկինս ճարեցին: Զայս լուեալ քաջին Ուռնայրի ոչ գլացաւ և ոչ դադարեաց և ոչ 'ի ձեռն ծառայկան հրեշտակի, այլ ինքնին մեծ թագաւորն մեծամեծօք, նախարարօք և բազմագունդ զօրաւք գալլո հասանէր յաշխարհ Հայոց, յանդիման լինէր հսկալագօր թագաւորին: Իսկ նորա եղբայրաբար սիրով և բարեկամութեամբ ընկալեալ՝ զբոլոր զինքն առաջի առնէր նմա, զներքին և զարտաքին խորհուրդս մերկանայր և դէնէր առաջի նոր հանդերձ սրբովն Գրիգորի և ամենայն բազմութեամբ զօրացն Հայոց: Խոնարհէր թագաւորն ձեր, անկանէր և պատէր զսոտիւք և զձեռօք, պատմէր զամենայն մոլորութիւնս հեթանոսաց և խոստովան լինէր վասն սօգիտագործ մեղացն անցելոց: Քաջալերէր զնոսս սուրբն Գրիգորիոս՝ ի գալուստ մարմնատրութեան Որդուս Աստուծոյ, որ 'ի թորութիւն եկն և ոչ 'ի դատապարտութիւն, 'ի կեցուցանել և ոչ 'ի մեռուցանել, և յառաջանցելոցն 'ի հորոյ կեանս խոստացաւ: Զայս ամենայն իբրև լսէր թագաւորն ձեր՝ ինքն և ամենայն զօրքն որ ընդ նմա գաւուրս քառասուն պահոց ասանդէին զանձինս իւրեանց, 'ի բաց հրաժարելով յառաջին ըստ գտանելի գործոց: Եւ յաւուրն յիսներորդի իբրև ուրացան 'ի սաստանայք և յամենայն գործոց նորա և խոստովանեցան զՍուրբ երրորդութիւնն՝ էջ թագաւորն յամենասուրբ Յուրսն և ամենայն Զօրքն ընդ նմա: Եւ կատարեաց զնոսս քահանայապետն 'ի վերստին ծնունդ յերկնատր յորդեգրութիւնս. և ելին ամենեքեան լցեալ Հոգւովն Սրբով: 'ի նմին ժամնակի չնորհեցաւ նոցա այր մի երանելի՝ ձեռնադրեալ յեպիսկոպոսութիւն՝ 'ի Հռովմ քաղաքէ, որ եկեալ էր ընդ Տրդատայ արքային: Այսու երկնատր բարեօք լցեալ՝ եկն Ուռնայր արքայ եմուտ յաշխարհ Արդանից, ուսոյց և կատարեաց զնոսս առաքելական կանոնօք. ընկալան ամենեքեան զբրոշմն երկնատր և գրեցան 'ի ժառանգութիւն երկնատր: (Emin 1860a: 15–16); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 11).

There is no reason to challenge the authenticity of this letter. The author swamps Urnayr's story with rhetorical expressions which seem quite consonant with Łazar Parpetsi's portrait of Catholicos Giwt, who was "full of science in Armenian and even more in Greek".⁷⁹ It does not matter here whether it was written before or after Vache abdicated the throne and retired as a monk in 463. The text sounds more like a paraenesis than a precise request: the Armenian Catholicos does not aim at extending the jurisdiction of his national Church onto Albania. He does not even try to encourage Vache or to comfort him. He just exalts his heroism as an example for all the Christians of the Caucasus.

Long before the compilation of the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, Armenian chroniclers of the 5th century narrate about king Urnayr in a somewhat historically more tangible way. In about 451, Agathangelos reports in his *History* that Trdat had spread out Christianity far beyond his own kingdom "to the very borders of the Massagetae, to the gates of the Alans, to the borders of the Caspians".⁸⁰ On this basis, it was perhaps tempting for later chroniclers to conclude that Urnayr, the first Christian king of Albania, had been Trdat's contemporary. Historically unfounded, the legend of Urnayr and Trdat seems to draw its origin from the mention of "a holy man (named) Thomas, from the small city of Satala", whom Gregory the Illuminator sent to Albania according to the *Life of Gregory*,⁸¹ which was likely written between 405 and 428 by order of Patriarch Sahak Partew to justify his new fitting out of the churches in Vagharshapat.⁸² Since Satala was a city of Armenia Minor, it belonged to the suzerainty of the Romans. Therefore the anonymous "blessed man from Rome" of Giwt's letter may well be Thomas of Satala. It should be noted, however, that our source does not style him a "bishop" but simply a "holy man".

Relying on the information given by Faustus of Byzantium in his book V, ch. 4, it rather seems that Urnayr was a contemporary of King Pap of Armenia (370–374/5), who reigned four generations after Trdat IV (298–330) had been converted by St Gregory.⁸³ Indeed, in about 371 the Albanian king took part, on the

79 Łazar Parpetsi, *History* 62: այր լի գիտութեամբ հայրիս եւ առաւելեալ յունիսն (Ter-Mkrtschean and Malkhasean 1904: 110); English translation by Thomson (1991: 162).

80 Agathangelos, *History* III, 120.8; cf. n. 11 above for the quotation. Cf. Aptsiauri (1987).

81 *Vita graeca* 170 (Garitte 1946: 102).

82 Cf. Mahé (2007: 163–212). From Sebēos (Abgaryan 1975: 121; Thomson 1999: 76–66) we know that Sahak rebuilt the chapel of St Hripsime. Since the real location of this monument coincides with the site of Gregory's vision (*Vita graeca* 77–82; Garitte 1946: 58–60), we should conclude that the *Life of Gregory* containing the text of the vision was written after the new building of the chapel had been completed.

83 Cf. 2.1.4 with n. 17 above for the quotation. For a discussion of the historical dating cf. Garsoïan (1997a: 90–91).

Persian side, in the battle of Dzirav/Bagawan near Mt Npat and asked king Shapur II (309–379) for the favour of fighting personally with the Armenian king. Informed by Meruzhan Artsruni, the Armenian general-in-chief, Musheł Mami-konean “struck frightful blows at the Persian forces; he lay in wait for the contingent of the Ałuank’, encountered and annihilated their entire army. And he caught up with Urnayr king of Ałuank’, who was fleeing, and struck him over the head with blows of the shaft of his lance, saying: ‘Be grateful that you are a king and wear a crown, for I will not kill a king, even though great harm come to me’. And he allowed him to escape with eight horsemen and to go the realm of Ałuank’”.⁸⁴

If Urnayr, who seems to have been allied with Shapur II as early as 359 in the siege of Amida/Diyarbakır,⁸⁵ remained faithful to the Persians until 371, we

84 Faustus, *History* V, 4: եւ Մուշեղ սպարապետն Հայոց հարկանէր զգօրսն Պարսից ՚ի հարուծս անհնարինս. սպաս արարեալ և դիպէր գնդին Աղուանից. և առ հասարակ զամենայն զգօրսն ստատկէր: եւ հասանէր Ուռնայրի արքային Աղուանից ՚ի փախստեանն, և նիզակաբնաւն ՚ի կառափն մատուցեալ ծեծէր բազում, ասելով՝ թէ այլմ՛ շնորհս կալ, զի այլ թագաւոր ես, և թագ ունիս. ես ոչ սպանից զայլ թագաւոր, թէ կարի նեղ հասցէ ինձ: եւ ութ հեծելով թոյլ ետ նմա փախչել երթալ գնալ յաշխարհ Աղուանից: (1832: 198); English translation by Garsoian (1989: 191). Cf. 2.1.4 above for more details concerning the Battle.

85 Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* XVIII, 6.22: *Ibi morati integrum biduum. cum sol tertius afflisset, cernebamus terrarum omnes ambitus subiectos, quos ὀρίζοντας appellamus, agminibus opletos innumeris, et antegressum regem vestis claritudine rutilantem. Quem iuxta laevus incedebat Grumbates, Chionitarum rex nervositate quidem media rugosisque membris, sed mente quadam grandifica, multisque victoriarum insignibus nobilis; dextra rex Albanorum, pari loco atque honore sublimis; post duces varii, auctoritate et potestatibus eminentes, quos ordinum omnium multitudo sequebatur, ex vicinarum gentium roboribus lecta, ad tolerandam rerum asperitatem diuturnis casibus erudita.* – “There we stayed for two full days, and at dawn of the third day we saw below us the whole circuit of the lands (which we call ὀρίζοντας) filled with innumerable troops with the king leading the way, glittering in splendid attire. Close by him on the left went Grumbates, king of the Chionitae, a man of moderate strength, it is true, and with shrivelled limbs, but of a certain greatness of mind and distinguished by the glory of many victories. On the right was the king of the Albani, of equal rank, high in honour. After them came various leaders, prominent in reputation and rank, followed by a multitude of every degree, chosen from the flower of the neighbouring nations and taught to endure hardship by long continued training” (Rolfe 1935: 446–449). – XIX, 2.3: *Persae omnes murorum ambitus obsidebant. Pars, quae orientem spectabat, Chionitis evenit, qua funestus nobis ceciderat adulescens, cuius manibus excidio urbis parentari debebat, Geloni meridiano lateri sunt destinati, tractum servabant septentrionis Albani, occidentali portae oppositi sunt Segestani, acerrimi omnium bellatores, cum quibus elata in arduum specie elephantorum agmina rugosis horrenda corporibus, leniter incedebant, armatis onusta, ultra omnem diritatem taetri spectaculi formidanda, ut rettulimus saepe.* – “The Persians beset the whole circuit of the walls. The part which faced the east fell to the lot of the Chionitae, the place where the youth so fatal to us was slain, whose shade was destined to be appeased by the destruction of the city. The Gelani were assigned to the southern side, the Albani guarded the quarter to the north, and to the western gate were opposed the Segestani, the bravest warriors of all. With them, making a lofty show, slowly marched the lines of elephants, frightful with

should probably admit that he was still a pagan by then. Therefore his conversion must have taken place more than fifty years after the retreat of St Gregory the Illuminator in about 320. Should we assume that there were two homonymous kings Urnayr of Albania, one who was baptised by the Illuminator and another one who was allied with Shapur against King Pap of Armenia? This seems most unlikely, first of all because it would be difficult to understand how a pagan Urnayr of 371 could be a descendant of the supposedly Christian Urnayr of 314–320. Moreover, the list of the Albanian kings in book I, ch. 15 of the *History*,⁸⁶ beginning with Vachagan I the Brave at the verge of the 4th century and ending up with Vachagan III the Pious, who died by 510, contains only one Urnayr, as the successor of Vache I (c. 330) and the predecessor of Vachagan II (c. 400).

We are thus tempted to conclude that the assumption of either Trdat IV or Gregory the Illuminator having exerted any influence on the conversion of King Urnayr is historically impossible – and that again we have two opposing versions in the *History of the Country of Albanians*, one being based on the information given by the chroniclers of the 5th century and the second, on both oral traditions and legends and later adaptations.

3.2.3 The legend of St Grigoris, the grandson of the Illuminator

In one version of his legend, which we find in book I, ch. 9 of the *History*, St Grigoris becomes the successor of the “Roman” bishop after the death of Urnayr: “After his death the Albanians asked for the young Grigoris to be their catholicos, for our king Urnayr had asked St. Gregory to consecrate him bishop of his country”.⁸⁷ The main concern of the indirect connection between Urnayr and Grigoris established in this part of the *History* is to argue that since, by decision of the first

their wrinkled bodies and loaded with armed men, a hideous spectacle, dreadful beyond every form of horror, as I have often declared” (Rolfe 1935: 476–477).

⁸⁶ *History* I, 15: Վաչագան քաջ, Վաչէ, Ուռնայր, Վաչագան, Մերհաւան, Սատոյ, Ասայ, Եսաւէն, Վաչէ, ապա բարեպաշտն Վաչագան՝ արկայ Արուանից (Arakelyan 1983: 41) – “Vačagan the Brave, Vačë, Urnayr, Vačagan [II], Mrhawaw, Satoy, Asay, Esualën, Vačë [II], then Vačagan [III] the Pious, king of Albania” (Dowsett 1961a: 24). The edition by Emin (1860a: 32–33) adds ordinal numbers and gives slightly different name forms (*Vač'akan*, *Mrhawaw*). Cf. Toumanoff (1990: 91–92; 568) and Hajiev (2020b) concerning the list and further 6.2 below for a comparison with that of Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi.

⁸⁷ *History* I, 9: Իսկ զկնի սորին մահուանն խնդրեցաւ յԱրուանից մանուկն Գրիգորիս ի կաթողիկոսութիւն իրեանց, զի Ուռնայր արքայի մեր խնդրեաց ՚ի սրբոյն Գրիգորէ նորին ձեռնադրութեամբն լինել Եպիսկոպոս աշխարհին իւրոյ: (Emin 1860a: 12); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 8).

Christian king Urnayr, two successive bishops of Albania had been consecrated by St Gregory the Illuminator; it had become a canonical rule that every Albanian catholicos in the future should ask Gregory's successors for patriarchal consecration.⁸⁸ This information on St Grigoris again contrasts with an earlier version which, as the first written account of the saint's martyrdom, is contained in Faustus' *History* (book III, ch. 6). Here Grigoris appears not as a bishop sent to Albania but directly as the "Catholicos of the regions of Iberians and Albanians".⁸⁹ Not content with preaching within his own diocese, the young catholicos embarked on missionary activities: "And when he had restored and renewed all the churches of those regions he came to the camp of the Aršakuni king of the Mazk'ut'k', whose name was Sanēsan".⁹⁰

The Arsacid king of the Mazkut, whose realm was not necessarily bordering the Armenian province bearing their name, is called Sanesan by Faustus but Sanatruk by Movses Khorenatsi.⁹¹ This difference suggests that the latter author did not borrow it from the former's account, both rather depended directly on the same (Parthian) oral tradition. The anthroponym *Snysrk(n)* / *Sanēsarakan* attested in a 2nd–3rd-century inscription of Dura-Europos might explain the two variants.⁹²

The account of the martyrdom of St Grigoris is given in book I, 14 of the *History* according to which the saint was put to death by the king of the Mazkut, Sanesan/Sanatruk, of Arsacid descent,⁹³ and his men: "They then persuaded the king to listen to their wives, tied the young Grigoris to the tail of a mettlesome

88 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 2.1.

89 Faustus, *History* III, 6: որ կաթողիկոսն էր կողմանցն Վրաց և Աղուանից: (1832: 13); cf. the English translation by Garsoïan (1989: 72).

90 Faustus, *History* III, 6: եւ իբրև ողիեաց և նորոգեաց զամենայն եկեղեցիս կողմանցն այնոցիկ, եհաս նա մինչև 'ի ճամբար բանակին արչակունւոց արքային Մազքթաց, որոյ անուն իւր Սանէսան կոչէր: (1832: 14); English translation by Garsoïan (1989: 72).

91 Movses Khorenatsi, *History*, III, 3: հանդերձ Սանատրկու ոմամբ յիւրմէ ազգէն արչակունեաց (1865: 189) – "In the company of a certain Sanatruk of his own Arsacid family" (Thomson 2006: 253). Another difference in Khorenatsi's version, which should not be overlooked, is that he substitutes the Mazkut of Faustus by Albanians (ibid.): 'ի դաւելոյ նորին Սանատրկոյ և այլոց ոմանց հանապազատուտ արանց արուներից (1865:189) – "the same Sanatruk and some men among the ever-faithless Albanians" (Thomson 2006: 253). Cf. the preceding note concerning Faustus, *History* III, 6. 92 Benveniste (1966: 106).

93 *History of the Country of the Albanians* I, 14: Սանատրկայ՝ թագաւորին Մասքթաց, համատոհմին Արչակունեաց (Emin 1860a: 30). Here the edition by Emin differs from that of Shahnazareants (1860: I, 126) and the critical edition by Arakelyan (1983: 38) in that the latter name the King of the Mazkut *Sanesan* in contrast to Emin's *Sanatruk*: Սանեսանայ թագաւորին Մասքթաց, համատոհմին Արչակունեաց. Cf. the translation by Dowsett (1961a: 22), which is primarily based on Shahnazareants's edition: "Sanesan, king of the Maskut'k', who was of Arsacid family".

steed, and released it to the Vatnean plain. Thus was the saint martyred. His disciples retrieved his body and took it to the comopolis of Amaras in the province of Haband”.⁹⁴

According to Movses Khorenatsi’s version of Grigoris’ martyrdom (in his book III, ch. 3), which is otherwise mainly based on Faustus, Sanatruk was a relative of Trdat commissioned to escort Grigoris to his distant diocese. Being informed that the Armenian king had been murdered, he revealed himself as a traitor by killing his young master and trying to usurpate the throne of Armenia. Quite differently, Faustus had styled Sanesan not an Armenian but a Parthian Arsacid who had only a remote kinship to Trdat. His camp was pitched in the “plain of Vatneay [...] along the shore of the great Northern Sea”;⁹⁵ Movses Khorenatsi, however, locates it in the “Vatnean plain, near the Caspian Sea”.⁹⁶ South of this plain, on the right bank of the Kura, Sanesan/Sanatruk captured the Armenian city of Paytakaran where he concentrated his troops in order to invade Armenia.

Therefore, following the oldest witnesses, Grigoris’ martyrdom is likely to have taken place in 334, on the eve of the barbarian invasion of Sanesan/Sanatruk, either close to Paytakaran or more in the north, on the left bank of the Kura, in a district which cannot have been part of the old Albanian kingdom because its borders did not reach to the Caspian shore. The corpse of the saint was eventually brought back to Armenia by people of his retinue. However, they did not go as far as Gugark but stopped in the nearest province, Artsakh, and chose their native soil of Miws Haband to bury him in Amaras.

Some decades later, Artsakh and Utik were joined to the “Marzpanate of Albania” and Amaras became an Albanian city. As a result, in 489, when the Armenian-speaking king of the country, Vachagan the Pious, discovered the bones of the saint and solemnly transferred them into a mausoleum, Grigoris was regarded as the true Illuminator of his kingdom as a whole. Part of his relics were given to each of the bishops so that they might share them among their dioceses. But the larger part remained in Amaras.⁹⁷ This last part of the narrative about

94 *History of the Country of the Albanians* I, 14: Ապա և զԹագաւորն ևս խոնարհեցուցեալ յիւրեանց ամենաչար կեղծաւորութիւնն՝ կայեալ զմանուկն Գրիգորիս ընդ ամեհի ձիոյ կապէին ընդ ազի և արձակէին 'ի դաշտն Վատնեայ. և այսպէս պտակէր սուրբն: Զոր բարձեալ աշակերտացն՝ բերէին յԱմարաս գիւղաքղաքն, որ էր 'ի գաւառին Հաբանդայ: (Emin 1860a: 30); English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 23).

95 Faustus, *History* III, 6: ընդ ծովեզեր դաշտին հիւսիսական ծովուն մեծի [...] 'ի դաշտին Վատնեայ: (1832: 14); English translation by Garsoian (1989: 73).

96 Movses Khorenatsi, *History*, III, 3: 'ի Վատնեան դաշտին, մերձ 'ի կասբիականն կոչեցեալ ծով: (1865: 189); English translation by Thomson (2006: 253).

97 *History of the Country of the Albanians*, I, 23: Աստանոր հրամայէր Թագաւորն տալ մասն իւրաքանչիւր եպիսկոպոսաց, առ 'ի բաշխել վիճակելոց իւրեանց, և մեծագոյն ինչ մասն յԱմարաս

Saint Grigoris and his relics, but also some hagiographic details in the account of his martyrdom, which were not mentioned anywhere before, point to later traditions.

3.3 Conclusions

By comparing the different versions of traditions on St Elisaeus, King Urnayr, and St Grigoris as they have been handed down to us through the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, with reports of earlier Armenian historiographers, we can draw the following conclusions as to the authors involved in the compilation of its three books and the different periods of the emergence and revisioning of individual chapters:

a) the narratives and legends concerning concerning **St Elisaeus** are not yet found in the older historiographies. Nevertheless the *History of the Country of the Albanians* offers two versions: according to **Version 1** (I, 28; II, 2; and, in particular, II, 48), Elisaeus is a disciple of the Lord, consecrated by James, His brother, in Jerusalem, from where he comes to Albania; he builds the first church in Gis. In **Version 2** (I, 6), Elisaeus is a disciple of the apostle (Jude) Thaddeus and witnesses his martyrdom. After returning to Jerusalem, he is consecrated by James, brother of the Lord; he comes back to Albania through Persia and builds the first church in Gis, being the first patriarch of Albania;

b) concerning **King Urnayr's conversion**, the *History of the Country of the Albanians* again provides two accounts: in **Version 1** (I, 15), Urnayr is an ally of king Shapur against the Armenian king Pap and his commander Mushel during the battles of Dzirav/Bagawan and Gandzak (371), and there is no reference to Urnayr being a “Christian king”; chronologically he is positioned between Vache I (until 350) and Vachagan II (from 375). This version agrees with Faustus of Byzan-

Հրամայելը թողուլ 'ի նշխարացն և զալսն մեծաւ գգուչութեամբ և զանազան սպասուք պահելը թագաւորական կնքովն կնքեալ: եւ 'ի վերայ գերեզմանին Հրամայելը Հիմն արկանիլ մատուան և փութապէս աւարտել և անուանել մատուան սրբոյն Գրիգորիսի: եւ այնուհետև ոտանաւոր տքնութեամբ անձանպաշտ լեալ արքայն զեպիկոպոսունս՝ ցնծալից ուրախութեամբ պաշտելը զհամայն ժողովն և 'ի ձայն քաղցր յերգս սաղմոսաց յորդագոյնս 'ի բարեբանութեան Աստուծոյ ելանէր բանակն: (Emin 1860a: 62). – “The king ordered each of the bishops to be given part of the relics to share out among their dioceses, and the larger part was to be left in Amaras; the other parts he carefully stored in diverse vessels sealed with the royal seal. He ordered a chapel to be constructed above the tomb, to be quickly completed and named the chapel of St. Grigoris. Then the king stood in vigil and worshipped the bishops and the whole assembly in great joy to the sound of the sweet singing of many psalms in praise of God” (Dowsett 1961a: 46). Cf. Chapter 11 of this Handbook (Petrosyan), 3.3. as to the sepulchre of St Grigoris in Amaras.

tium (several chapters in book 5) and Movses Khorenatsi (III, 7). In **Version 2** (I, 11), which relates to c. 313, Urnayr comes to Armenia, meets Trdat and St Gregory, is baptised after fifty days and returns to Albania to have his people baptised and Christianised;

c) concerning **St Grigoris**, the information in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* is drawn from various sources, again permitting to establish two versions: in **Version 1** (I, 9 and I, 14), Grigoris comes to Albania on request of the Albanians (after Urnayr's death) and is consecrated (as the successor of a "bishop of Rome") at the age of 15 as the catholicos of both Georgians and Albanians. He is put to death by the Arsacid king Sanesan/Sanatrak of the Mazkut and buried in Amaras (Haband). Except for some hagiographical details which may pertain to the later version, this one matches the older accounts by Faustus (III, 6) and Movses Khorenatsi (III, 3). **Version 2** (I, 20–23) adds information from currently unknown sources, probably reflecting a local tradition, especially on the finding of the saint's relics; this also includes the listing of St Grigoris as the 8th patriarch of Albania (I, 23).

4 The later Armenian historiographers (10th–13th centuries)

We will now briefly turn our attention to the major Armenian historiographies that emerged at the same time as the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and after it, i.e. the chronicles of the 10th–13th centuries. This is essential, on the one hand, in order to trace the influence of the *History* on subsequent generations of historiographers and, on the other hand, to investigate how the different versions of the traditions about St Eliseus, King Urnayr, and St Grigoris were adopted in subsequent generations.

4.1 The later historiographers in chronological order

4.1.1 Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi

Catholicos Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (825–929), who narrates the history of Armenia up to his lifetime, draws on the historiographical sources known to him, i.e. the classical Armenian chroniclers up to the middle of the 9th century, especially Movses Khorenatsi. For times later than that, he narrates what he has heard or personally witnessed. The focus of his *History* lies on the events during the

Umayyad yoke in the middle of the 9th century. The legend of St Grigoris, whom he labels “Bishop of Albania”,⁹⁸ as well as the brief mention of the creation of the Albanian script by Mashtots, clearly rely upon the classical Armenian sources.

4.1.2 Ukhtanes

Bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia (935–1000) wrote a three-part *History of the Armenians*, in the first part of which he narrates the history of Armenia from its beginnings to the adoption of Christianity, relying mainly on Movses Khorenatsi as his predecessor. He also accounts for the evangelisation activities of St Gregory the Illuminator outside of Armenia, i.e. in Iberia and Albania, referring to “the holy and true faith which the great Gregory had established in these Caucasian countries”.⁹⁹ The second part concerns the schism between the Georgian and Armenian Churches at the beginning of the 7th century, for which Ukhtanes extensively exploits the correspondence of the Armenian and Georgian clergy and leaders, drawing substantially on the *Book of Letters*¹⁰⁰ and also somewhat “manipulating” one or the other source.¹⁰¹ Concerning the role of the apostle Elisaeus, there are parallels to the older version of the legend in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* (book II, ch. 48), partly even with very similar wording; Ukhtanes writes:

Although [the Albanians] were saying that it was another person named Elisha, one of the disciples of the Savior, of whom we made mention above, ordained by James the Brother of the Lord, who first came to the country of Albania and preached there, where he also

98 Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, *History X: Ըստ ամբարիշտ հրամանի նորա բարբարոս հիսխական ազգքն այնոքիկ զսքանչելի մանուկն Գրիգորիս, զոր եպիսկոպոս Աղուանից կացուցեալ էին՝ ի սոհմէ սրբոյն Գրիգորի՝ սպանանենն ձիախրոխտ ընթաղբութեամբ ՚ի Վասնեան դաշտին. և տարեալ հանգուցանենն զսուրբ մարմինն նորա ՚ի գեօղն Ամարաս, որ ՚ի Փոքր Սիւնիս*: (1912: 42–43) – “At his ungodly order the barbaric tribes of the north put the wonderful youth Grigoris, who had been appointed bishop of Albania from the house of Saint Grigor, to death in the Vathean plain by means of the trampling hoofs of horses. They buried his saintly body in the village of Amaras in Lesser Siwnik” (Maksoudian 1987: 82).

99 Ukhtanes, *History II*, 17: *Յիշեցուցանելով սուրբ և զուրիղ հաւասան՝ զոր մեծին Գրիգորի սահմանեալ էր յայս Կաւկասային կողմանս* (1871: II, 33); English translation by Arzoumanian (2008: 62).

100 This refers to 26 letters written by Catholicos Movses Elivardetsi, Vrtanes Kertol, Bishop Movses of Tsuravt, Catholicos Kyryon of Iberia, Catholicos Abraham (I), Smbat of Hyrcania and, in the last chapters, partly the encyclica of Catholicos Abraham; cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 5.1 for more details.

101 On Ukhtanes’s *History* and his “manipulations” cf. Mahé (1996: 927–961).

built a church before the conversion of the Armenians, known as the mother church of Gis, located on the skirts of Amaras, in the district called Gorozu, near the plain of the city of Partaw, called P'aytakaran. He died, [they say], secretly and no one knew how his life came to an end.¹⁰²

The “Albanian apostle” is first introduced in Ukhtanes’s preceding chapter: “The Albanians, then, gave no consent to what was said, and introduced another apostle, Elisha by name, who had come earlier to the land of the Albanians, and of whom I want to speak first. [Elisha] was one of the Savior’s disciples and was ordained by James, the Brother of the Lord”.¹⁰³ In particular in his chapter 65, Ukhtanes goes into detail about the tradition on Elisaeus, definitely drawing on the second, “Armenianised” version of his narrative.¹⁰⁴

4.1.3 Stepanos Taronetsi

Stepanos Taronetsi (10th/11th century), who was also named Asolik, wrote a *Universal History* upon order by Catholicos Sargis I Sevantsi. His work consists of three books; in the first two, he presents quite concisely the history of Armenia in the context of world history from ancient times up to the middle of the 9th century, mainly referring, as he writes in his own words, to the known classical sources and to more recent authors such as Shapuh Bagratuni and Yovhannes (Draskhanakertsi),¹⁰⁵ but without including the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and

¹⁰² Ukhtanes, *History* 64: Այլ թէպէտ և նոքա զայլ ոմն ասէին կանխաւ եկեալ աշխարհն Աղուանից եղիչէ անուն, զոր վերագոյնդ յիշեցաք. յաշակերտաց փրկչին ձեռնադրեալ ի սրբոյն Յակոբայ յեղբօրն Տեառն, և քարոզեալ անդ, և եկեղեցի շինեալ նախ քան զլուսարուրթիւնն Հայոց, որ է մայր եկեղեցեացն Գեսու եկեղեցին այն առ ստորտով Ամարասու՝ ի գաւառին՝ որ կոչի Գորագու՝ մերձ ի դաշտ Պարտաւ քաղաքի, որ կոչի փայտակարան: և ինքն մեռանի անյայտաբար ի մարդկանէ՝ ոչ գիտելով յումեքէ լեալ ելք կենաց նորա: (1871: II, 121); English translation by Arzoumanian (2008: 123–124). For the wording of the *History of the Country of the Albanians* (II, 48) cf. n. 73 above.

¹⁰³ Ukhtanes, *History* 63: Որում ոչ հաւանեալ Աղուանից, զայլ ոմն երեւեցուցանեն կանխաւ եկեալ առաքեալ յաշխարհն Աղուանից՝ եղիչայ անուն. Զորոյ որպիսութիւնն ասել կամէի զատաջին: Սա լեալ յաշակերտաց փրկչին ձեռնադրեալ (ի) Յակոբայ յեղբօրն Տեառն (1871: II, 120); English translation by Arzoumanian (2008: 123).

¹⁰⁴ Ukhtanes, *History*, 65 (1871: II, 122–124); Arzoumanian (2008: 124–125).

¹⁰⁵ Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* I, 10–14: ... քաջն Ագաթանգեղոս, որ նորասքանչ հարչից եւ չարչարանաց սրբոյն Գրիգորի եւ աստուածածանաւթութեանն մ'երոյ է պատմիչ: Եւ զնկի մեծն Մովսէս, հանգոյն եւսեբեայ, որ քերթողացն անուանի հայր: Եւ ապա եղիչ վարդապետ, որ վասն Վարդանանց եւ սուրբ քահանայիցն չարչարանաց եւ կատարման: Եւ զկնի՝ Ղազարու փարբապետ, ճարտասանի պատմութիւն. Եւ փաւստոս, որ եւ Բիւզանդ եւ պատմութիւն Հերակլի, որ ի Սեբէոսէ եպիսկոպոսէ ասացեալ. Եւ պատմութիւն Ղեւոնդ երիցու, որ ինչ վասն Ֆանկաց ելիցն եւ անցից Հայոց ի նոցունց բռնութեան: Հուսկ յետոյ ի վերջին աւուրս պատմութիւնք Շապհոյ Բագրատունույ եւ Տեառնն Յովհաննիսի Հայոց կաթողիկոսի, որք առ ժամանակաւքն Աշոտայ եւ Սմբատայ, առաջին թագաւորացն

Ukhtanes. Regarding St Grigoris, he briefly retells the classical version of the traditions, mainly mirroring Movses Khorenatsi's account: "At the same report of the death of Trdat, through the scheming of Sanatruk, who was prince of the country from the line of Aršakunik', the barbarians killed Grigoris, the elder son of Vrt'anēs, who was bishop of the regions of Albania, trampled by horses on the Vatnean plain near to the Caspian Sea. The deacons of the same lifted him up and brought him to Pok'r Siwnik' and [they buried] him in the town of Amaras".¹⁰⁶ On the invention of the alphabet, he repeats all known classical sources, albeit extremely shortly: "For writing was given not only to Armenians but also to Georgia and Albania from the mindfulness of God by means of the blessed *vardapet* Mesrop".¹⁰⁷ Stepanos refers to the classical authors also in narrating about events of the ecclesiastical history such as the schism of the Armenian and Georgian Churches and the main anti-Nestorian and anti-Chalcedonian councils, but never goes into any details on Albania. Surprising, then, is the short paragraph in which he introduces the country of Albania and gives an explanation of its name: "And the country was named Aluank' [Albania] in honour of their *nahapet* because they addressed him as *alu* on account of the sweetness of his conduct",¹⁰⁸ which is almost *verbatim* taken from Movses Khorenatsi's *History* (book II, ch. 8).¹⁰⁹ The third part of Asolik's *History* covers the years 885–1004 and deals

Բագրատունեաց: (Manukean 2011: 640) – "... noble Agat'angelos, who is the narrator of the astonishing miracles and sufferings of St Grigor and the one who instigated our recognition of God; and after [him], the great Movsēs, equal to Eusebius, who is named the father of literature; and then *vardapet* Elišē, who considered the torments and the killing of Vardan and his companions and the holy priests; and after, the history of Łazar P'arpec'i, the orator; and P'awstos, who [was] also [known as] Biwzand; and the history of Heraclius, which was said to be by bishop Sebēos; and the history of Łewond the priest, who [recorded] the emergence of the Arabs and the travails of Armenians in their tyranny; last of all, in more recent days, the histories of Šapuh Bagratuni and lord Yovhannēs, catholicos of Armenia, those who were around in the Time of Ašot and Smbat, the first kings of the Bagratunik'" (Greenwood 2017: 98–100).

106 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* II, I.39: Ի նոյն համբաւոյ մահուն Տրդատայ գրիւքորիս գերեց որդին Վրթանայ, որ էր եպիսկոպոս կողմանցն Աղուանից, ի դաւելոյ Սանատրկոյ, որ էր իշխան աշխարհին յազգէն Արշակունեաց, սպանին բարբարոսքն ընթաղեալ ձիւսք ի Վասնեան դաշտին, մերձ ի ծովն Կասպից. զոր բարձեալ սարկաւազաց նորին եւ բերեալ ի փոքր Սիւնիս՝ [Թաղեցին] յԱմարասն աւանի: (Manukean 2011: 677); English translation by Greenwood (2017: 136). Cf. Movses Khorenatsi (1865: 189).

107 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* II, 1.112: զի ոչ միայն Հայոց, այլ եւ Վրաց եւ Աղուանից տուաւ գիր ի ինամոցն Աստուծոյ ի ձեռն երանելոյն Մեսրոպայ վարդապետին: (Manukean 2011: 684); English translation by Greenwood (2017: 143).

108 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* I, 24: և աշխարհն յանուն նահապետին նոցա անուանեցան Աղուանք. զի աղու ձայնէին զնա վասն քաղցրութեան բարուցն: Manukean (2011: 659); English translation by Greenwood (2017: 121).

109 Movses Khorenatsi, *History* II, 8: և աշխարհն յանուն քաղցրութեան բարուց նորա կոչեցան Աղուանք. Զի աղու ձայնէին զնա: (1865: 78) – "And the country was called Aluank', after the gentle-

exclusively with the Bagratuni family. It is important to note that Asolik does not show any traceable reference to the *History of the Country of the Albanians*.

4.1.4 Samuel Anetsi

Samuel Anetsi (1105–1185) is one of those exceptional historians of the Middle Ages who along with his accounts lists the dates according to different chronological systems, mentions the sources used, and tries to clarify the chronology of historical events, dynasties, rulers, and catholicoi. Although referring to the works of earlier historiographers, Anetsi often opposes them, preferring to retain the original figures as given by Eusebius, whom he appreciates most. He often presents the events in his own way, which increases the historical value of his writings. Anetsi first gives a brief chronological account of the universal history from Creation up to his own lifetime (his *History* was completed in 1163). In his short reports he also refers to “Albania”, i.e. Aran, as one of the two countries in the East which borders with the north of Sisakan and which according to him, too, is called *Ałowank’* after the word for ‘sweet’ of their language. He further mentions the Uti people, the people of Gardman and Tsodi, and the principality of *Gargarac’ik*.¹¹⁰ Quite shortly, Samuel recalls the narrative about St Grigoris, which he dates to 347: “A certain Sanatruk in Albania killed St Grigoris, the oldest son of Vrtanes by having him trampled by horses in the plain of Vatnean. His relics are buried in Amaras”.¹¹¹ It is interesting here to read that Sanatruk is indirectly considered an Albanian and, secondly, that there is no mention whatsoever that St Grigoris was the supreme ecclesiastical leader of the Albanians. Later on, however, Anetsi points out the influential power of a contemporary Catholicos of Albania (whom he does not mention by his name), in his account about the intrigues surrounding the Armenian Catholicos Petros I Getadardz (1019–1058). Petros was received with suspicion on his return from Sebastia to Ani and was

ness of his mode of life, for they called him *alu*” (Thomson 2006: 137). For the persistence of the popular etymology relating *aluank’* to *alu* ‘sweet, pleasant’ up to the 18th century cf. the petition by Udis sent to Tsar Peter in 1724 quoted in Chapter 5 of this Handbook (Schulze and Gippert), 1. with note 3.

110 Samuel Anetsi, *History*: եւ յարեւելից կողմանէ գերկուս նահապետութիւնս, զՍիսակեանն եւ որ ի տանէն Կարմեայ. եւ յարեւելից հիւսիսոյ զԱռան կարգէ կողմնակալ ի ծննդոց Սիսակայ. եւ աշխարհն յանուն քաղցր բարուց նոցա կոչի Աղուանք: եւ ի սորա ծննդոց սերին ազգն Ուտիացոց եւ Գարդմանացոց, եւ Ծօղիացոց, եւ Գարգարացոց իշխանութիւնն (Ter-Mikaelean 1893: 48).

111 Samuel Anetsi, *History*: Յիւէ. Յետ մահուանն Տրդատայ՝ Սանատրուկ որ ի կողմանս Աղուանից, սպանանէ գտուրք Գրիգորիս, գերէց որդին Վրթանայ ընթացողեալ ի ձիսն ի Վատնիանեան դաշտին: եւ եղաւ յԱմարաս նշխարք սրբոյն: (Ter-Mikaelean 1893: 65).

ordered by the king to spend further years in isolation (or in jail, as Anetsi writes) in Vaspurakan. In his place, King Yovhannes appointed Deoskoros, the abbot of Sanahin, as the new Catholicos, but the bishops did not recognise his authority. This led to great unrest within the Church, and the clergy anathemised the king and other followers of Deoskoros. Into this turmoil, as Samuel reprot, intervened the Catholicos of Albania, who had come to Ani to ask for peace, to free Catholicos Petros from prison and to send Deoskoros back to his monastery, which was successful.¹¹² Obviously, Samuel Anetsi did not use the *History of the Country of the Albanians* as a source.

4.1.5 Mkhitar Gosh

The main work of the priest, scholar and author Mkhitar Gosh (1130–1213) is his comprehensive law code, written in 1184. Only one of the relevant manuscripts, no. 1237 of the Mekhitarists' monastery of San Lazzaro in Venice,¹¹³ contains some pages on the history of the Albanians contained in the author's main colophon, which Dowsett has labelled Gosh's *Albanian Chronicle*. This very copy of the law code was written for, or by order of, the Armenian Prince of Khachen, Vakhtang (1182–1214), for whom, no doubt, the history of the Albanians had a special significance. After the usual introduction and a reference to the "History of Movses Daskhurantsi",¹¹⁴ the *Chronicle* begins with a list of the patriarchs of Albania which contains dates that are not found anywhere else and are possibly derived from Church records that have been lost.¹¹⁵ On St Grigoris, Mkhitar gives only very brief information, styling him the 7th Patriarch of Armenia after St Elisaeus: "And then the Albanians asked the Armenians for St. Grigoris, consecrated patriarch at the age of 15 and killed by the barbarians, as Catholicos. It was the 101st year of Rome".¹¹⁶ Briefly as well, he finally discusses events in Albania from about

112 Samuel Anetsi, *History* (year 1039): եւ ոչ լինէր խաղաղութիւն մինչև եկեալ Աղուանից կաթողիկոսն համոզեաց գնոսս ի խաղաղութիւն մեծաւ աղաչանօք հանեալ զտէր Պետրոս ի բանդէն եւ յուղարկեալ գիէոսկորոս ի վանս իւր (Ter-Mikaelean 1893: 107).

113 Manuscript V1237, described under no. 993 in the catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts repository of the Mekhitarist congregation in Venice (Chemchemean 1996a: 326–332), is probably even an autograph of Mkhitar Gosh. It is dated 1184, was written for Vakhtang, Prince of Khachen, and comprises a total of 325 folios. The main colophon of the scribe on folios 300a–318a contains the so-called "Albanian Chronicle".

114 Cf. 3.1 with n. 36 above as to Mkhitar's wording.

115 Cf. 6.1 (Appendix) with Table III below for a comparison of Mkhitar Gosh's list with those from the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and Kirakos Gandzaketsi's *History*.

116 Եւ ապա խնդրեցին Աղուանք ի Հայոց՝ կաթողիկոս զՍուրբն Գրիգորիս՝ ի հագետասան ամի ձեռնադրեալ ի հայրապետութիւն, և ի բարբարոսաց վախճան մահու ընկալաւ. Հրոտմ թվ. ձՄ. էր:

1130 up to 1162, after which his *Chronicle* breaks off abruptly. Mkhitar occupies a very special position among the Armenian chroniclers, not only because he names Movses Daskhurantsi as the author of the *History of the Country of the Albanians* but also because his own *Chronicle* probably served as a source for later revisions of the latter work (cf. 3.1 above).

4.1.6 Vardan Areveltsi

With his *Historical Compilation*, Vardan Areveltsi (1198–1271) represents a new approach to universal historiography in Armenian literature. He takes to an extreme what his predecessor Stepanos Asolik Taronetsi had already begun, namely to no longer narrate history but to summarise only the most important events in short paragraphs. Vardan's *History*, which begins with the Tower of Babel and continues until the death of Catholicos Constantine I Bardzrberdtsi (1267), is extremely concise. Vardan, too, uses a lot of sources from early Armenian historians, but does so very selectively, also often merging different accounts. Since he concentrates mainly on the most important events, Albanian history only comes to his attention when it intersects very concretely with that of Armenia. Obviously, Vardan did not use the *History of the Country of the Albanians* for this but only other sources.¹¹⁷ He writes briefly about St Grigoris, here presumably relying upon Movses Khorenatsi via Asolik: “After the death of Trdat, the second Sanatruk the Arsacid, whom he had established in P'aytarakan, took the crown and planned to rule over all Armenia. He had the young Grigoris killed by the barbarian nation in the plain of Vatnean; his body was taken and laid to rest in Amaras”.¹¹⁸ The creation of the Albanian script is also mentioned,¹¹⁹ but nothing con-

(Alishan 1901b: 339; cf. Manandyan and Acharyan 2014b: 605b); English translation by Dowsett (1958: 476–477).

117 Cf. Thomson (1989: 130–140), according to whom Areveltsi reworked the Syriac *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian and used it as one of his primary sources.

118 Vardan Areveltsi, *Historical Compilation*, 20: *Իսկ զկնի մահուանն Տրդատայ՝ երկրորդ Սանատրուկ արշակունին, զոր կացուցեալ էր ՚ի Փայտակարան, թագ եղեալ՝ խորհէր տիրել բոլոր Հայոց. որ և սպանանել ետ զմանուկն Գրիգորիս բարբարոս ազգին ՚ի Վատնեան դաշտին, զորոյ զմարմինն բերեալ յԱմարաս Հանգուցին:* (1862: 43); English translation by Thomson (1989: 164). As in Stepanos Taronetsi's account treated in 4.1.3 above, there is again no reference to Grigoris' function as a catholicos of Albania; the country is not even mentioned here explicitly.

119 Vardan Areveltsi, *Historical Compilation*, 25: *եւ գնացեալ յԱրուանս, ստեղծու եւ նոցա զիր ըստ նոցա լեզուին, ձեռօք Բենիամինի՝ որ անտի աշակերտեցաւ նմա:* (1862: 51). – “He went to the Ałuank' also, and fashioned for them a script for their language through Beniamin, who had been a pupil of his from there” (Thomson 1989: 168). – According to Thomson (1989: 133), Areveltsi's

cerning specifically important events in the history of Albania, let alone legends on figures such as Elisaeus or King Urnayr. Nevertheless, Vardan Areveltsi can be regarded as a source for the history of Albania after the Seljuk storm and during the Mongol period. In the “Geography”, another work attributed to him, he provides more detailed information about “where the Great Church of Amaras is located (and) where the relics of St Grigoris, the Catholicos of the Albanians, are”.¹²⁰

4.1.7 Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi

The *Chronography* of Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi (1230/35–1297/1300), which was completed in 1289, summarises the history of the Armenians and the neighbouring peoples from the Creation up to the end of the 13th century. The author draws from various sources, including the *History of the Country of the Albanians* which, as mentioned above, he also names twice in his work. In the chapter on the kings of Albania, he lists the rulers chronologically with their names, noting Urnayr as the second king, following a certain Aran and preceding “Vachagan, who [in the year] 365 built a church”.¹²¹ In the same list, Vardan uses the variant name form *Ēsvalēn*, which also occurs in the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, for Koryun’s King *Arsval(ēn)*, and in the subsequent list of Albanian Catholicoi, he names Elisaeus first, followed by Grigoris.¹²² In the barely narrative style of the first part of his *Chronography*, Ayrivanetsi mentions neither St Elisaeus nor St Grigoris or King Urnayr.

4.2 Kirakos Gandzaketsi

We have started the present survey with the 13th-century historiographer Kirakos Gandzaketsi (cf. 2. above), and his work should also be discussed at the end. Kirakos actually very often refers to the *History of the Country of the Albanians*

quite idiosyncratic narrative of the creation of the Armenian script is primarily based on Koryun and Khorenatsi but also on other sources.

¹²⁰ Vardan Areveltsi, *Geography*, 3: ուր մեծ եկեղեցին է Ամարաս, ուր կայ նշխարքն Գրիգորիսի Աղուանից Կաթողիկոսին: (Perperean 1969: 3).

¹²¹ Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, *Chronography*, Թագաւորք Աղուանից: Սուան. Ուռնայր. Վաչագան՝ որ յ կե եկեղեցի շինեաց: (Emin 1860b: 19).

¹²² Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, *Chronography*, Թագաւորք Աղուանից: Էսվաղեն: – Կաթողիկոսք Աղուանից: Սուրբն եղիշայ. Սուրբ Գրիգորիս: (Emin 1860b: 19).

by Movses Kalankatuatsi, which he lists among the prominent Armenian historiographical works. Kirakos's own *History*, which he started to write in 1241 and completed in 1265, can be considered a summary of events from the 3rd to the 12th century and a detailed description of his own days. Its first part is dedicated to the life of Gregory the Illuminator and the history of the Armenian Church from its beginning onwards. The second part focuses on the socio-cultural and geopolitical changes in the region that were triggered by the Turkic and Mongol invasions; it is primarily a history of the noble house of Khachen with the famous prince Hasan Jalal and of the foundation of the later Catholicosate of Gandzasar including the construction of the adjoining monastery. As such, it is also a history of the region from where Movses, the historiographer of the Albanians, presumably originated and from where, as already mentioned at the beginning, Kirakos himself came. This could possibly explain his noticeable affinity with Movses's *History of the Country of the Albanians*, for he devotes a great deal of attention to the history of the princes, bishops and catholicoi of Albania. His work is one of the most frequently copied histories of Armenia, perhaps not only because of its importance as a reliable historical source for the period of the Mongols but also because Kirakos, unlike most of his predecessors from the 10th century on, returned to a narrative style with a high preference for details.

To the history of Albania, Kirakos devotes a separate chapter (ch. 10) in his work, including a biographical list of the catholicoi of Caucasian Albania which he introduces as follows:

Now, for the second section [we begin with] a chapter on the illuminators of the Albanian regions, since they are our relatives and fellow-believers, and especially since many of their leaders were Armenian-speaking, their kings were obedient to the kings of the Armenians and under their control, their bishops were ordained by St Gregory and his successors, and their people remained together with us in orthodoxy. For these reasons it is fitting to recall the two peoples together.¹²³

Kirakos further reports on the church quarrels and disputes concerning the unity of the three Christian peoples of the Southern Caucasus against the “Nestorian heresy”, but also on the apostasy of the Georgian Church and the subsequent

123 Kirakos, *History* 10: Իսկ երկրորդ Տառուածիս դիցուք զլուսն զլուսաւորիչս կողմանցն Արուանից, որպէս զագգայնոց և զհաստակցաց մերոց, մանաւանդ զի և առաջնորդք նոցա հայալեզուք, հայերէնախոսք յլուովք էին. Թագաւորքն՝ հնազանդք Թագաւորացն հայոց, ընդ ձեռամբ նոցա լեալք, և եպիսկոպոսքն՝ ձեռադրեալք ի սրբոցն Գրիգորէ և յաթորակալ նորա, և ազգն ուղղափառաւթեամբ ընդ մեզ կացեալ ի կրօնս, վասն այնորիկ արժան է ի միասին լինել յիշատակ երկուց ազգացս: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 192); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 155). Cf. 6.1 (Appendix) with Table III below for a comparison of Kirakos's list with those from the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and Mkhitar Gosh's *Chronicle*.

schism.¹²⁴ After this, he continues with events from after the time covered by the *History of the Country of the Albanians*.

What is of interest now is which of the previously mentioned versions of the narratives about St Elisiaeus, St Grigoris and King Urnayr Kirakos adopted and possibly adapted.

Although he shortens and restricts the information about Elisiaeus to its essentials in comparison to the extensive narrative in the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, it is obvious that he followed the later, “Armenianised” version of the legend as appearing in book I, ch. 6 of the latter work. He writes:

They say that the initial cause of the illumination of the eastern areas was the blessed Elisiaeus, a pupil of the great apostle Thaddaeus, who, after the death of the holy apostle, went to Jerusalem to James, the brother of the Lord, received the ordination as a bishop from him, and then went to the land of Iran eventually reaching the country of the Albanians. He came to a place called Gis and built a church there, and he himself was martyred there, although it is not known by whom. His body was thrown into a well together with other corpses and it remained there until the time of the pious King Vachagan, the last [king].¹²⁵

Kirakos also takes over the legend of the finding of Elisiaeus’s bones by King Vachagan:

Then the pious Vachagan ruled, whom we recalled above. He heard that they had thrown blessed Elisiaeus into a well and he ordered that all the bones found be removed. They removed them and piled them into heaps. The pious king prayed to God that the bones of St Elisiaeus be revealed. A fierce wind arose and scattered across the face of the plain all the bones except for those of St Elisiaeus. Thanking God, the king gathered them up and distributed them [as relics] throughout his realm.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 2.4 and 5.1 for details.

¹²⁵ Kirakos, *History*, 10: Արդ՝ առաջին պատճառ լուսաւորութեան կողմանցն Արևելից ասեն զսուրբն եղիշէ, զաշակերտ մեծին Թադէոսի առաքելոյն, որ յետ մահուան սրբոյ առաքելոյն գնացեալ յերուսաղէմ առ Յակոբոս եղբայրն տեառն և ի նմանէ ձեռնադրեալ եպիսկոպոս՝ գայ ընդ աշխարհն Պարսից և հասանէ յաշխարհն Արուանից. Գայ նա ի տեղի մի անուանեալ Գիս, և անդ շինէ եկեղեցի, և ինքն կատարի անդէն նահատակութեամբ, անյայտ է, թէ յումմէ եղև: Եւ ընկեցեալ գնա ի ջրհոր մի ընդ ալլ բազում դիականց, անդ եկաց մինչև յառուրս բարեպաշտ արքային Վաչագանայ վերջնոյ: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 192–193); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 155).

¹²⁶ Kirakos, *History*, 10: Եւ ապա Վաչագան բարեպաշտ՝ գոր յիշատակեցաք ի վերոյ: Սա լուաւ, թէ զսուրբն եղիշէ ընկեցին ի գուբն, հրամայեաց հանել զամենայն ոսկերսն՝ որ ի գբի անդ, և հանեալ կուտեցին գնա շեղջս շեղջս: Յաղօթս եկաց բարեպաշտ արքայն առ աստուած, զի յայնսցէ գորկերս սրբոյն եղիշէի: Եւ ել հողմ ուժգնակի և ցանեալ ցրուեաց զամենայն ոսկերսն ընդ երեսս դաշտին, բաց յոսկերաց սրբոյն եղիշէի: Եւ բարոյեալ արքայի մեծաւ պատուով, գոհանալով զաստուծոյ՝ բաշխեաց ամենայն երկրին իւրոյ: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 193–194); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 156).

For the story about the conversion of King Urnayr, too, Kirakos chooses the later, historically less probable and again rather “Armenised” tradition as it is presented in book I, ch. 11 of the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. Kirakos briefly reports: “The latter came to the great king of the Armenians, Trdat, and to St Gregory and was baptised by him; and St Gregory gave to King Urnayr a man from among his deacons who had come with him from Rome and whom he had ordained as bishop”.¹²⁷

Lastly, also the account of St Grigoris and his martyrdom is based on the younger version as we find it in book II, ch. 9 of the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. Kirakos notes: “But Sanatruk, who had been set up as the overseer of the Albanian regions by Trdat, as soon as he learned of the king’s death, murdered the blessed Grigoris, son of Vrtanes and brother of Yusik, by tying him to the tail of a wild horse in the Vatnean plain”.¹²⁸

Kirakos allowed many of his predecessors’ accounts to flow into his own *History*, and among them definitely also some from the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. He presumably chose those versions of the legends of St Elisaeus, St Grigoris and the conversion of King Urnayr that were better known and more familiar to him through the latter text, through his own education by Vanakan Vardapet, or through local oral traditions; for since he grew up in the region of late medieval Albania-Artsakh, he was apparently somehow connected to the family of the Jalaleans ruling there and to the Monastery of Gandzasar.¹²⁹ Kirakos’s *History* – and through it Movses’s *History of the Country of the Albanians* – turned out to be highly influential on all subsequent historiographies, and thus also on the last great chronicle of the 13th century, the *History of the Province of Siwnik* by the Bishop and Metropolitan of Siwnik, Stepanos Orbelian, completed in 1298.

127 Kirakos, *History*, 10: Սա եկեալ առ մեծ արքայն Հայոց Տրդատ, և առ սուրբն Գրիգորիոս, մկրտի ի նմանէ: Եւ ձերնադրէ սուրբն Գրիգոր զայլ մի ի սպասաւորաց իւրոց եպիսկոպոս, որ եկեալ էր ընդ նմա ի հռոմոց, և տայ զնա Ուռնայրի արքայի: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 193); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1965: 156).

128 Kirakos, *History* 1: Բայց Սանատրուկ, որ կաղմանցն Աղուանից վերակացու կարգեալ էր ի Տրդատայ, զեղբայր Յուսկան՝ կապեալ զնա զազույ ամեհի ձիոյ ի դաշտին Վատնեան (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 16–17); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 13–14).

129 Though the monastery is already attested in the 10th century by Catholicos Anania Mokatsi, the main church was built only between 1216 and 1238 by the Armenian prince of Khachen, Hasan Jalal. Kirakos describes the construction of the church in ch. 31 of his *History* (cf. Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 268–269; Bedrosian 1986: 232).

4.3 Conclusions

Comparing the information which the later chroniclers provide as to St Elisaeus, King Urnayr and St Grigoris with that of the two versions appearing in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and older witnesses (see 3.3 above), we may safely state that Mkhitar Gosh, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi and Kirakos Gandzaketsi most widely adapt the later versions of the legends from the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. In contrast to this, Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Ukhtanes, Samuel Anetsi, Stepanos Taronetsi and Vardan Areveltsi rather follow the older versions, building either directly upon the 5th-century authors (Faustus of Byzantium, Movses Khorenatsi) or on their adaptation in the *History of the Country of the Albanians*. The resulting picture is illustrated in Fig. 4.

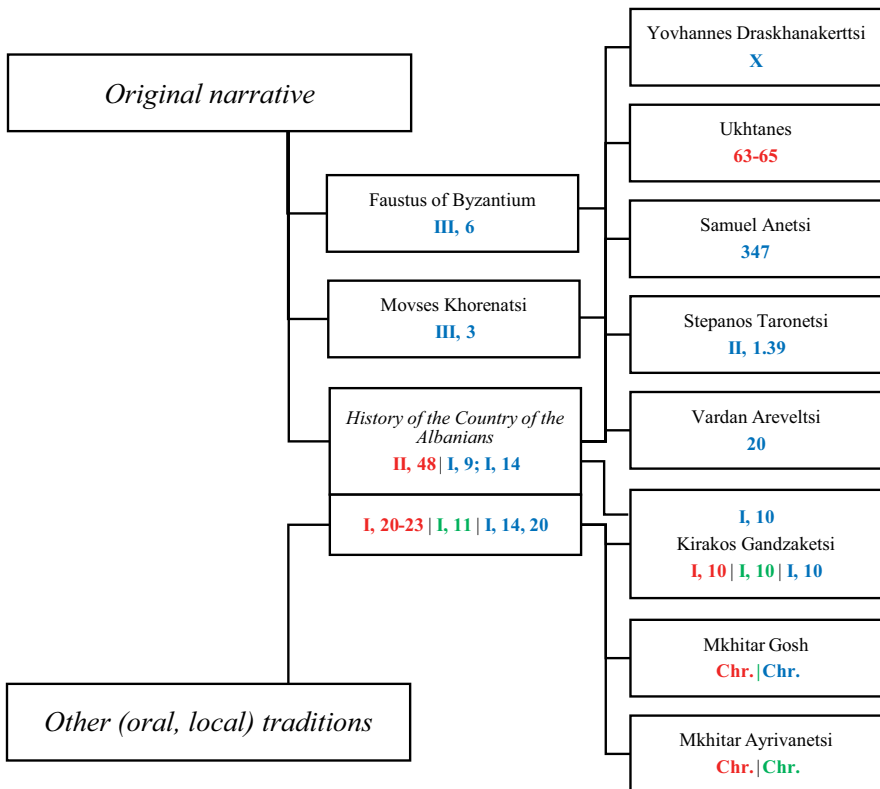


Fig. 4: Simplified representation of the interrelations between the Armenian historiographies concerning the narratives about St Elisaeus (indicated in red), King Urnayr (green) and St Grigoris (blue).

5 Concluding thoughts

The distinguished expert on Armenian historiography, Robert Thomson argued in 2014 that “there has certainly been a move away from earlier tendencies to regard Armenian histories as depositories of factual information, towards a more sophisticated attempt to understand them as compositions of often multi-layered sources, yet reflecting the concerns of their own time and their own authors or compilers”.¹³⁰

In the study of Armenian historiography and its sources, many questions are still open: the dating of most of the earlier works remains controversial; the concept of authorship remains vague in some cases. Different accounts of one and the same event contained in one and the same historiographical work raise additional doubts on dating and authorship; this is also true of the question of an intentional “distortion” of historical narratives and their adaptation to certain needs, at least with some authors. Different versions may also reflect to what extent historiographers offered different interpretations of the past: the historiographer renders history in accordance with his own knowledge and with the sources that he chose selectively or that were available to him. Moreover, sources and traditions are constantly revised and underlie changes that are either due to the influence of socio-political changes, of “ethnicising” tendencies or, simply, to the existence of other, perhaps only oral traditions. In some cases, written sources that were used by the historiographers may simply not have survived and thus remained unknown to us. Kirakos Gandzaketsi himself must have been aware of these circumstances as he admonished his readers: “One must read Christian and secular histories with diligence, not negligence.”¹³¹

¹³⁰ Thomson (2014: 306).

¹³¹ Kirakos, *History*, 1: *Բաբունաբար երկօք և ոչ վարկապարագի անցանել ընդ պատմութիւնս ժամանակաց՝ ներկնոց և արտաքնոց*: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 4); English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 1).

6 Appendix: Lists of church dignitaries and kings

6.1 Lists of bishops and catholicoi

The comparison of the chronological lists of the catholicoi and bishops of Albania as contained in *The History of the Country of the Albanians*, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi's *Chronography*, the *Chronicle* by Mkhitar Gosh and the *History* of Kirakos Gandzaketsi (Table III) reveals hardly any serious variation.¹³² The main difference is that the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, followed by Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, names St Grigoris directly after St Elisaeus but also, a second time, in the 8th position after Łazar as the other authors do, and there are some discrepancies in the years of office of each cleric. Similar divergences occur in the part covered only by the later authors, especially concerning the vacancy of the see after Stepannos. Differences concerning the numbers of years can mostly be explained by an alphanumeric notation, which notoriously leads to confusion in manuscript copying.¹³³

132 Note that the general information about the origin or the deeds of the bishops and catholicoi as we find it in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* was also largely adopted by Mkhitar Gosh and Kirakos Gandzaketsi; such data are only mentioned in the Table when they differ (cf. Dowsett 1958: 476–481 with footnotes).

133 This is especially true for the confusion of **ḅ** = 5 and **ḅ** = 7 or of **ḡ** = 3 and **ḡ** = 4.

Tab. III: Lists of bishops and catholicoi.

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i> ¹³⁴	<i>Mkhithar Ayrivanetsi, Chronography</i> ¹³⁵	<i>Mkhitar Gosh, Chronicle</i> ¹³⁶	<i>Kirakos Gandzaketsi, History</i> ¹³⁷
St Elišay (disciple of St Tadeós, consecrated in Jerusalem)	Elišay	Elišay [Elašay] (comes from Jerusalem)	St Elišē (disciple of St Tadeós)
<i>St Grigoris</i>	<i>St Grigoris</i>		
Šowp'hatišoy	Šowp'hatišay	Šowp'xatišoy	Šowp'hatišoy
Matt'ēos	Matt'ēos	Matt'ē	Matt'ē
Sahak	Sahak	Sahak	Sahak
Movsēs	Movsēs	<i>Karēn</i>	Movsēs
Pand	Pand	Pant	Pant
Łazar	Łazar	Łazar	Łazar
St Grigoris	Grigoris	St Grigoris	St Grigoris
Zak'aria	Zak'aria	Zak'area [Zak'aria]	Zak'aria

¹³⁴ Arakelyan (1983: 341–347); Emin (1860a: 274–278); English Translation by Dowsett (1961a: 228–231). In the case of discrepancies, the text of Arakelyan's edition is preferred.

¹³⁵ Emin (1860b: 19).

¹³⁶ Alishan (1901b: 338–342); English Translation by Dowsett (1958: 476–481). Spelling variants in the edition by Manandyan and Acharyan (2014b: 605–606) are indicated in brackets.

¹³⁷ Melik-Ohanjanean (1961: 194–201); English translation by Bedrosian (1986: 155–165).

Tab. III (continued)

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i>	<i>Mkhithar Ayrivanetsi, Chronography</i>	<i>Mkhitar Gosh, Chronicle</i>	<i>Kirakos Gandzaketsi, History</i>
Dawit'	Dawit'	St Dawit'	Dawit'
Yovhan	Yohan	St Yovhan	Yovhannēs
Eremia (meets Mashtots)	Eremiay	Eremeay [Eremiay]	Eremiay
Abas	Abas	Abas, 23 years	Abas
Viroy, 34 years	Viroy, 33 years	Viroy, 33 years	Viroy, 33 years
Zak'aria, 15 years (from Partaw)	Zak'aria, 15 years	St Zak'aria [Zak'aria], 17 years	Zak'aria, 15 years
Yovhan, 25 years	Yohan, 27 years	Yohan, 25 years	Yovhan, 25 years
Owxtanēs, 12 years	Owxtanēs, 12 years	Owxtanēs, 12 years	Owxtanēs, 12 years
Eliazar, 6 years (from Shaki)	Eliazar, 6 years	Eliazar, 6 years (688–689)	Eliazar, 6 years
Nersēs, 17 years (from Gardman)	Nersēs, 17 years	Nersēs, 15 years	Nersēs, 17 years
Simēon, 1.5 years	Simēon, 2 years	Simēovn, 1.5 years	Simēon, 1.5 years
Mik'ayel, 37 years (from Shaki)	Mik'ayel, 35 years	Mik'ayel [Mik'iēl], 35 years (741–742)	Mik'ayel, 35 years
Anastas, 4 years	Anastas, 3 years	Anastas, 4 years	Anania, 4 years
Yovsēp', 17 years (from Amaras)	Yovsēp', 15 years	Yovsēp' [Yovsēp'], 15 years	Yovsēp', 17 years
Dawit', 4 years (from Amaras)	Dawit', 4 years	Dawit', 4 years	Dawit', 4 years
Dawit', 9 years (from Mec Koweank')	Dawit', 9 years	Dawit', 9 years (776–777)	Dawit', 9 years
Matt'ēos, 1.5 years (from Kapatak)	Matt'ēos 2 years	Matt'ē, 1.5 years	Matt'ēos, 1.5 years

Movsēs, 2 years	Movsēs 2 years	Movsēs, 1.5 years	Movsēs, 1.5 years
Aharon, 2 years	Aharon, 2 years	Aharon, 2 years	Aharon, 2 years
Solomon, 0.5 years	Solomon, 1 year	Solomon, 0.5 years	Solomon, 0.5 years
Tēodoros, 4 years (from Gardman)	Tēodoros, 3 years	Tēodoros, 4 years (785–786)	Tēodoros, 4 years
Solomon, 11 years	Solomon, 2 years	Solomon, 11 years	Solomon, 11 years
Yovhannēs, 25 years	Yovhannēs, 25 years	Yovhannēs, 25 years	Yovhannēs, 25 years
Movsēs, 0.5 years	Movsēs, 1 year	Movsēs, 0.5 years	Movsēs, 0.5 years
Dawit', 28 years (from Kapatak)	Dawit', 28 years	Dawit', 28 years.	Dawit', 28 years
Yovsēp', 25 years (from Mec Koweank')	Yovsēp', 9 years	Yovsēp', 22 years (878–879)	Yovsēp', 25 years
Samowēl, 17 years (from Mec Koweank')	Samowēl, 13 years	Samowēl, 15 years	Samowēl, 17 years
Yovnan, 8.5 years	Yovnan, 2 years	Yovnan, 8 years	Yovnan, 8.5 years
Simēon, 21 years	Simēon, 21 years.	Simēon, 21 years	Simēon, 21 years
Dawit', 6 years (from P'arisos)	Dawit', 7 years	Dawit', 35 years (929–930)	Dawit', 5 years
Sahak, 18 years (from Mec Koweank')	Sahak, 18 years	Sahak, 25 years	Sahak, 18 years
Gagik, 14 years (from Gardman)	Gagik, 13 years	Gagik, 10 years	Gagik, 14 years
Dawit', 7 years (from Kapatak)			Dawit', 7 years
Dawit', 6 years	Dawit', 6 years	Dawit', 6 years	Dawit', 6 years
Petros, 18 years (from Gardman)	Petros, 18 years	Petros, 12 years	Petros, 16 years
Movsēs, 6 years (from P'arisos)	Movsēs, 6 years	Movsēs (from P'arisos)	Movses, 6 years (from P'arisos)

Tab. III (continued)

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i>	<i>Mkhithar Ayrivanetsi, Chronography</i>	<i>Mkhitar Gosh, Chronicle</i>	<i>Kirakos Gandzaketsi, History</i>
	Markos	Markos	Markos
	Yovsēp'	Yovsēp'	Yovsēp'
	Markos	Markos	Markos
	Step'annos	Step'annos	Step'annos
	Yovhannēs	Yovhannēs, 50 years	Yovhannēs, 50 years
	Step'annos, 1.5 years	Step'annos, 1.5 years	Step'annos, 1.5 years
	[8 years vacant]	[8 years vacant]	[25 years vacant]
	Grigor (consecrated 1139)	Grigor (consecrated 1139)	Gagik > Grigorēs (1139)
		Bežgēn	
		Step'annos, 40 years	
		Yovhannēs, 40 years	
		Nersēs (consecrated 1235)	

6.2 Lists of kings (and princes) of Albania

As can be seen from the comparison of the chronological lists of the kings of Albania given in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* and in Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi's *Chronography*, as well as the rather scarce information in the other historiographies, there are some important discrepancies, especially concerning the position of King Urnayr and the mentioning of Vache (II) and Vachagan (III) the Pious.¹³⁸ Secured datings are not available in these lists.

Tab. IV: List of the Kings of Albania.

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i> ¹³⁹	Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, <i>Chronography</i> ¹⁴⁰
(Ařan) ¹⁴¹	Ařan <i>Owřnayr</i>
Vač'agan ¹⁴² (I) "the Brave"	Vač'agan
Vač'ē [I] <i>Owřnayr</i> ¹⁴³	Vač'ē
Vač'agan ¹⁴² (II)	<i>Yawč'agan</i>
Merhawan ¹⁴⁴	Mirhawan

138 On the Life of Vachagan III the Pious as depicted in the *History of the Country of the Albanians* cf. 3.1 above.

139 The *History of the Country of the Albanians* comprises two lists of kings, one for the Arsacid dynasty ("Line of of Hayk") up to Vachagan III in book I, ch. 15 (Emin 1860a: 32 / Arakelyan 1983: 41 / Dowsett 1961a: 24; cf. n. 86 above as to the wording and spelling variants), which is briefly summarised in book III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 271 / Arakelyan 1983: 338) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225), and one for the Mihranid (*Mirhakan* or *Mirhean*) and later dynasties following in the latter chapter (Emin 1860a: 271–274 / Arakelyan 1983: 338–341) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225–227). The name form *Mirhakan* appears in books II, ch. 17 (Emin 1860a: 134 / Dowsett 1961a: 107) and III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 271) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225); the edition by Arakelyan (1983: 170 and 338) has both times *Mirhakan*. *Mirhean*, too, occurs in book III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 271 / Arakelyan 1983: 338) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225).

140 Emin (1860b: 19). At the end of his list, Ayrivanetsi adds: *Զայցալի գտաք՝ երեսուն թուով:* "That many we have found, thirty in number".

141 Not explicitly styled a king but rather an ancestor of the "Line of Hayk": *History of the Country of the Albanians*, I, 15 (Emin 1860a: 32 / Arakelyan 1983: 41 / Dowsett 1961a: 24).

142 The edition by Emin (1860a: 32) has the variant spelling *Vač'akan*.

143 Also mentioned by Kirakos Gandzaketsi, *History* 10 (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 193 / Bedrosian 1965: 156); cf. 4.2 above.

144 The edition by Emin (1860a: 32) has the variant spelling *Mrhawan*.

Tab. IV (continued)

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i>	<i>Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, Chronography</i>
Satoy	Satoy
Asay	Asay
Esowałēn ¹⁴⁵	Ĕsvalēn
Vač'ē [II]	
Vač'agan [III] "the Pious" ¹⁴⁶	
Mihr(an) ¹⁴⁷	Mihr
Armayēl	Armayēl
Vard [I]	Vard [I]
Vardan [I] "the Brave"	Vardan [I]
Vard [II]	Vard [II]
	<i>Varazman</i> ¹⁴⁸
Varaz-Grigor, "first Prince of Albania"	Varaz Grigor ¹⁴⁹
Ĵiwanšir, son of Varaz-Grigor, with three brothers: <i>Varaz-P'erož</i> , <i>Yezowt Xosrov</i> , <i>Varazman</i>	Ĵowanšēr ¹⁵⁰ "the Brave"
<i>Varaz-P'erož</i> , eldest son of Varaz-P'erož?	
Varaz-Trdat [I], ¹⁵¹ son of Ĵiwanšir?	Varaz Trdat [I]
Vardan [II], eldest son of Yezowt Xosrov?	Vardan [II]
Nerseh Džndak, eldest son of Varazman?	Nerseh

145 Also mentioned by Koryun, *Life of Mashtots* 17 with the name form *Arsval(e)* (Abeghyan 1941: 70 / Norehead 1985: 41) or *Arsowałēn* (Ananean 1964: 60); cf. 2.1.2 with n. 12 above. The latter form also appears in Movses Khorenatsi's *History* (III, 54; 1865: 248 / Thomson 2006: 317).

146 Also mentioned by Ukhtanes, *History*, 65 (1871: II, 123 / Arzoumanian 2008: 124).

147 First king of the *Mirhean* dynasty; the name form *Mihran* appears in book II, ch. 17 (Emin 1860a: 135–136 / Arakelyan 1983: 171–172 / Dowsett 1961a: 107–109), the shorter name form in book III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 271 / Arakelyan 1983: 339) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225).

148 Missing in the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, III, 23 (Emin 1860a: 271 / Arakelyan 1983: 339) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 225).

149 *Varaz* and *Grigor* appearing as two separate entries in Mkhitar's list (Emin 1860b: 19).

150 Name form also appearing in Vardan Areveltsi's *Historical Compilation*, 35 (1862: 67 / Thomson : 1989: 177).

151 Also appearing in Vardan Areveltsi's *Historical Compilation*, 36: "Varaz-Trdat, prince of Albania" (1862: 68 / Thomson 1989: 177).

Tab. IV (continued)

<i>History of the Country of the Albanians</i>	<i>Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, Chronography</i>
Gagik, son of Nerseh Džndak ¹⁵²	Gagik
Step'annos [I], son of Gagik	Step'anos [I]
Varaz Trdat [II]	Varaz Trdat [II]
Step'annos [II], son of Varaz Trdat	Step'anos [II]
Atrnerseh, son of Sahl ¹⁵³	Atrnerseh
Grigor [I], son of Atrnerseh, with brother Apow-sēt' (Abuseh)	Grigor [I]
Sahak named Sewaday [I], son of Grigor [I], brother of Apowli (Abu-Ali)	Sewaday
Grigor [II], son of Sewaday (I), brother of Dawit'	Grigor [II]
Sewaday [II] named Ishkhan, son of Grigor [II], with brother Atrnerseh	
Yovhannēs named Senek'erim, son of Sewaday [II], with brothers Grigor, Atrnerseh, P'ilippē ¹⁵⁴	Yovhannēs

Other kings and princes of Albania that appear in the Armenian historiographies:

- Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi in his *History* mentions a Prince Esayi of Albania (ch. 26), as well as Hamam, Prince and later King of Albania or, as labelled by Yovhannes, “great prince of the East” (ch. 33), and his son Atrnerseh, King of Albania, who “rules in the northeastern regions of the Caucasus” (ch. 44);¹⁵⁵ Hamam is likely to be identical with Grigor [I] in the lists;¹⁵⁶
- Stepanos Taronetsi in his *Universal History* mentions “prince” Sanatruk of the Arsacid (*Arshakuni*) dynasty (book II, ch. 1);¹⁵⁷ additionally, a prince of

¹⁵² *History of the Country of the Albanians*, III, 23 (Emin 1860a: 272 / Arakelyan 1983: 340) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 226).

¹⁵³ *History of the Country of the Albanians*, III, 23 (Emin 1860a: 273 / Arakelyan 1983: 340) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 226–227).

¹⁵⁴ *History of the Country of the Albanians*, III, 23 (Arakelyan 1983: 341) / 22 (Dowsett 1961a: 227); the edition by Emin (1860a: 271) has an abridged text version here. On details concerning Yovhannes-Senekerim cf. Chapter 14 of this Handbook (La Porta).

¹⁵⁵ Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, *History*, 24; 33; 44 (1912: 127; 170; 217 / Maksoudian 1987: 123; 144; 166).

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Maksoudian (1987: 279). Grigor-Hamam, known as a ruler of Aran, restored the kingship of Albania in about 893.

¹⁵⁷ Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* II, 1 (Manukean 2011: 677 / Greenwood 2017: 136–137). This refers to the King Sanatruk who had St Grigoris killed (cf. 4.1.3. above).

- Albania named *Varazdat patrik ēk'sarxos*,¹⁵⁸ probably identical with Varaz-Trdat [I] in the list; Prince Esayi of Albania, at the time of the Abbasid general Bugha (both in II, 2);¹⁵⁹ and also King Hamam of Albania (III, 3);¹⁶⁰
- Vardan Areveltsi in his *Historical Compilation* also mentions the Albanian Prince Esayi in dealing with the time of Bugha (ch. 43);¹⁶¹ he further brings up a certain Vahan, son of Juansher (ch. 47)¹⁶² and a King of Albania named Kiwrikē (ch. 56).¹⁶³

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158 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* II, 2 (Manukean 2011: 703 / Greenwood 2017: 167).

159 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* II, 2 (Manukean 2011: 708 / Greenwood 2017: 174).

160 Stepanos Taronetsi, *Universal History* III, 3 (Manukean 2011: 743 / Greenwood 2017: 215).

161 Vardan Areveltsi, *Historical Compilation*, 43 (1862: 81 / Thomson 1989: 184).

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Picture credits

- Figure 1: Sprengling (1953: Plate 20a), detail, modified Jost Gippert.
- Figure 2: Sprengling (1953: Plate 22a), detail, modified Jost Gippert.
- Figure 3: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Or. quart. 805, fol. 212r – Public domain mark 1, https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN790628635&PHYSID=PHYS_0431&DMDID=DMDLOG_0040&view=picture-download.



II The Heritage of Caucasian Albanian

Jost Gippert

3 The Textual Heritage of Caucasian Albanian

Abstract: The Chapter outlines the textual heritage of Caucasian Albanian, which mostly consists of the biblical texts concealed in the lower layer of the two Georgian palimpsest codices Sin. georg. NF 13 and NF 55 of St Catherine’s Monastery on Mt Sinai. On the basis of new insights gained by advanced imaging techniques, it describes the contents of the different parts of the undertexts and their structure and attempts at a codicological reconstruction of the underlying manuscripts. In addition, it provides an up-to-date survey of the few inscriptions in the Albanian language that have been preserved.

1 Introduction

In the historical account of the life of his teacher, Mesrop Mashtots, the 5th-century Armenian author Koryun reports, as one of Mesrop’s many achievements, the invention of a script for the language of the *Alowan* people:¹

Then there came and visited them an elderly man, an *Alowan* by offspring, by the name of Benjamin. And he (Mesrop) inquired and investigated the barbarian words of the *Alowan* language, created then, with his usual God-given vigour, letters (for it), which he, with the mercy of Christ, successfully arranged, examined and fixed.

According to Koryun, Mesrop thus paved the way for the emergence of a Christian literature in the Albanian language:²

After this then, bishop Jeremiah began soon to undertake the translation of the divine scriptures, whereby immediately, within a second, the savage, vagrant, and brutal country of the *Alowans* became skilled in the prophets and well acquainted with the apostles, and heirs to the Gospels, and in no way ignorant of all the divine traditions.

1 Koryun, *Life of Mashtots*, ch. 16 (Abeghyan 1941: 68): Յայնմ ժամանակի եկեալ դիպէր նմա այլ մի երէց արուան ազգաւ, քննիւամէն անուն. եւ նորա հարցեալ եւ քննեալ զբարբարոս զբանս արուաներէն լեզուին, առնէր ապա նշանագիրս ըստ վերնապարզեւ կորովի սովորութեան իւրում եւ յաջողութեամբ Քրիստոսի շնորհացն կարգեալ եւ հաստատեալ կռէր: – English translation after Norehad (1985: 40).

2 Koryun, *Life of Mashtots*, ch. 17 (Abeghyan 1941: 70–72): Ապա այնուհետեւ երանելոյն երեմիայի եպիսկոպոսի ի ձեռն առեալ՝ վարդապետի զաստուածային գրոց թարգմանութիւնս ի գործ արկանէր, որով անրէն յական թաւթափել վայրենամիտ եւ դատարկատուն եւ անասնաբարոյ աշխարհն Արուանից

1.1 The alphabet list

For about 1500 years, Koryun’s information remained unproven as no traces of the Albanian script and the translated texts had been discovered. The aporia ended only in 1937 when the Georgian scholar Ilia Abuladze discovered a 13th-century Armenian “collective codex of educational character” in the Matenadaran in Yerevan (ms. 7117)³ which contains, among the accounts of several other scripts (Armenian, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Latin, Georgian, and Coptic), a list of “Albanian” letters (*alowanik’ girn*). The list comprises 52 characters arranged in alphabetical order in 11 lines, with the letter names added in Armenian transcription below them (see Figures 1–2 where the Albanian list, embedded between the accounts of the Georgian and Coptic scripts, is highlighted, and Chapter 4 of the present Handbook for details).⁴

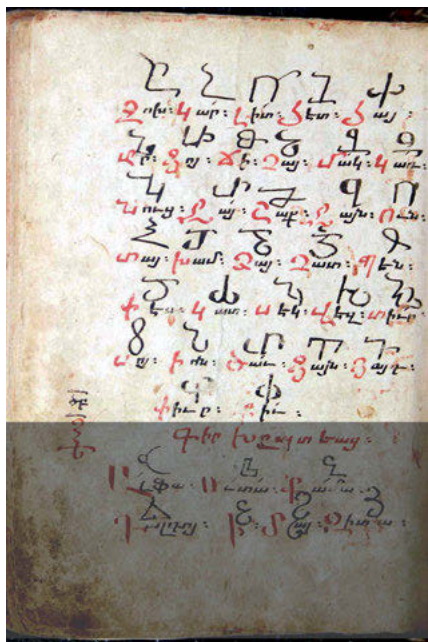
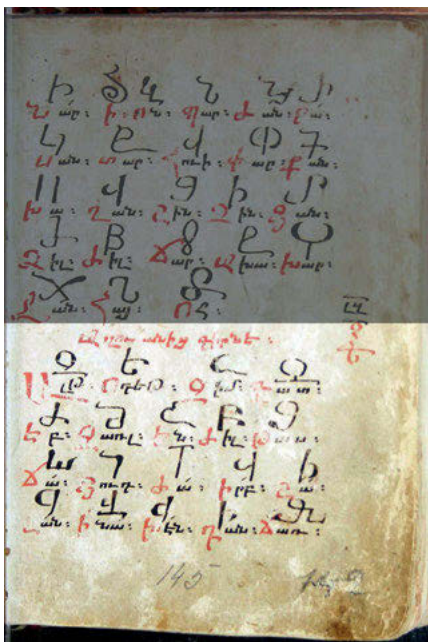


Fig. 1: Ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran 7117, fol. 145r. Fig. 2: Ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran 7117, fol. 145v.

մարդարեւագէտք եւ առաքելածանաւթք եւ աւետարանաժառանգք լինէին, եւ ամենայն աւանդելոցն Աստուծոյ ոչ իւրիք անտեղեակք: – English translation after Norehad (1985: 41).

3 Abuladze (1938: 70): “... в одном из сборников учебного характера”.

4 A first attempt at editing the alphabet list was provided by Akaki Shanidze (1938). According to the same author (1957: 37), the manuscript emerged from the school of Thomas of Metsoph

1.2 The detection of inscriptions

A few years later (between 1946 and 1953), excavations in Sudağilan near the construction site of the hydroelectric power station at Mingachevir (Mingəçevir; Mingeçaur) in North-West Azerbaijan⁵ revealed a few artefacts with short inscriptions that were assumed to be written in the Albanian script,⁶ among them a rectangular block of appr. 70 × 70 cm which obviously represented a pedestal (or capital) used to carry a cross (see Figures 3–7); however, differences in the letter

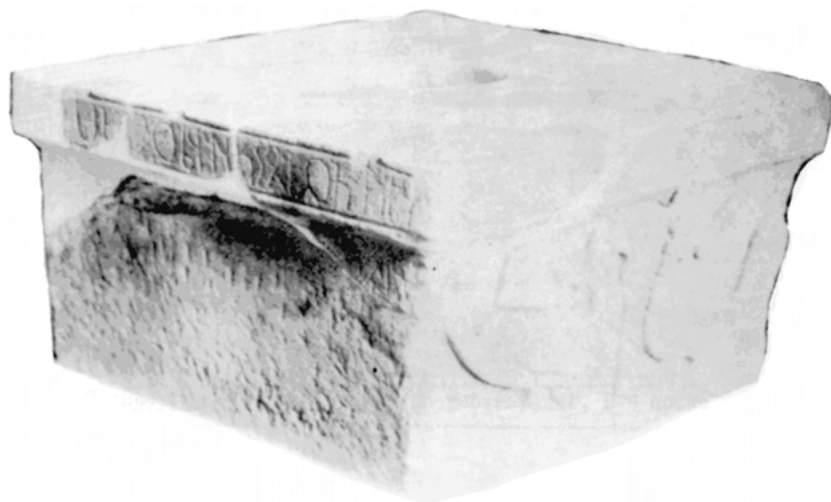


Fig. 3: The pedestal of Mingachevir, total view.

(T'ovma Mecop'ec'i) who died by 1446 CE. A late 16th-century copy of the Yerevan manuscript was described by H. Kurdian (1956: 81–83 with pl. III), who had achieved it in 1953; other Armenian manuscripts that seem to contain a similar list such as ms. 3124 of the Matenadaran are not pertinent (cf. Shanidze 1938: 47). The two lines from a note in an Armenian manuscript of 1535 published by N. Karamianz (1886: 315–319) bear no similarity to the Albanian alphabet, the given script representing a peculiar Armenian cursive instead (cf. Gippert et al. 2008: I, II-1, n. 1); the manuscript in question is today kept as Ms. or quart. 805 at the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, the note is found at the bottom of p. 214 (see https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN790627981&PHYSID=PHYS_0214).

5 Situated at 40°47'01" N, 47°02'12" E on the left bank of the Kura river.

6 The discovery of the inscriptions was reported by Qaziyev (1948), Golubkina (1949), and others; cf. 4. below for details. General accounts of the archeological sites and the finds in question were published by R. Vahidov (1952 and 1961).

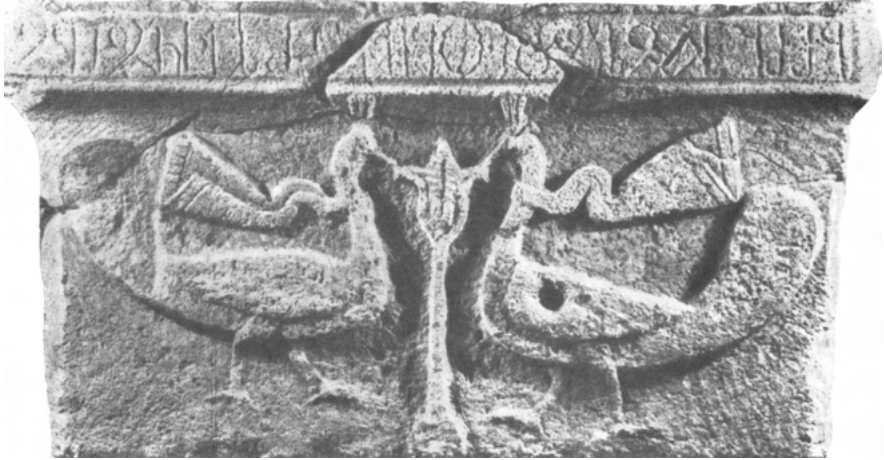


Fig. 4: Same, front face with inscription.



Fig. 5: Same, second face.



Fig. 6: Same, third face.



Fig. 7: Same, fourth face.

shapes between the alphabet list and the inscriptions prevented scholars from providing reliable readings⁷ (see 4.1 below for more details).

1.3 The discovery of manuscripts

It took about 40 years until more extensive text materials in the same script were discovered. Among the great number of unknown manuscripts that came to light by consequence of a fire in St Catherine's monastery on Mt Sinai in 1975, the Georgian scholar Zaza Aleksidze discovered in 1996 two palimpsested parchment codices (Sin. georg. NF 13 and 55) whose lower layer was determinable, at least



Fig. 8: Ms. Sin. georg. NF 13, fol. 4v: Georgian with Albanian undertext.

⁷ For attempts cf. e.g. Abrahamyan (1964: 39–50); Klimov (1967: 77–78); Gukasyan (1969: 60, no. 24 and 70–71); Murav'ev (1981: 265–270) / Mouraviev (1998–2000: 35–41); Schulze (1982: 285–291). The first interpretation that was based upon a comparison with the script as appearing in the palimpsests of Mt Sinai (see 1.3 below) was published in Gippert (2004: 107–120); all previous attempts must be regarded as obsolete.



Fig. 9: Same, ultraviolet photograph.

for parts, to be Albanian.⁸ Even though the undertexts were heavily erased, with usually only a few lines remaining discernible to the naked eye (cf. Fig. 8), Aleksidze was able to identify biblical passages mostly from the Pauline Epistles on them; the basis for the decipherment was, besides the alphabet list of the Mate-nadaran manuscript, the language of the Udi people in Azerbaijan, who have traditionally been assumed to be descendants of the Caucasian “Albanians”.⁹ The palimpsests thus turned out to be the first (and only) manuscript remains in the Albanian language available to us.

1.4 The first edition

With the aim to reveal the complete content of the Albanian palimpsests and to prepare a printed edition, a first international project was launched in 1999,¹⁰ in

⁸ Cf. Aleksidze and Mahé (1997 and 2001), and Aleksidze (1998, 1998–2000, 2003a, and 2003b).

⁹ Cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook as to the interrelation of the Albanian and Udi languages.

¹⁰ “Digitization of the Albanian palimpsest manuscripts from Mt. Sinai”, part of the project “Kaukasische Sprachen und Kulturen: Grundlagen ihrer elektronischen Dokumentation” (“ARMAZI



Fig. 10: Same, multispectral image, digitally processed.

the course of which a large set of ultraviolet images of the palimpsest folios was taken.¹¹ In many cases, these photos enhanced the readability of the Albanian undertexts effectively (cf. Fig. 9), and the identification of the contents and the characters made considerable progress even though plenty of questions still remained open. At the same time, however, the technology of digital photographing advanced and first attempts to use a method called “multispectral imaging” for the decipherment of palimpsests had yielded some success. This technology was for the first time applied to the Albanian palimpsests in 2004 in a follow-up project;¹² the resulting images (cf. Fig. 10) served as the basis for the first scholarly edition of the Albanian undertexts, which was published in two volumes in

project”, kindly supported by the Volkswagen Foundation); cf. <https://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/armaz3.htm>.

¹¹ The photographs were produced in summer 2002 under the direction of Z. Aleksidze.

¹² The project under the title “Neue Wege zur wissenschaftlichen Bearbeitung von Palimpsesthandschriften kaukasischer Provenienz” ran, with kind support by the Volkswagen Foundation, from 2003–2007; participants were Z. Aleksidze, J.-P. Mahé, W. Schulze, M. Tandashvili and the present author. For the principles of multispectral imaging cf. Gippert (2007a).



Fig. 11: Ms. Sin. georg. NF 55, fol. 40v+35r.

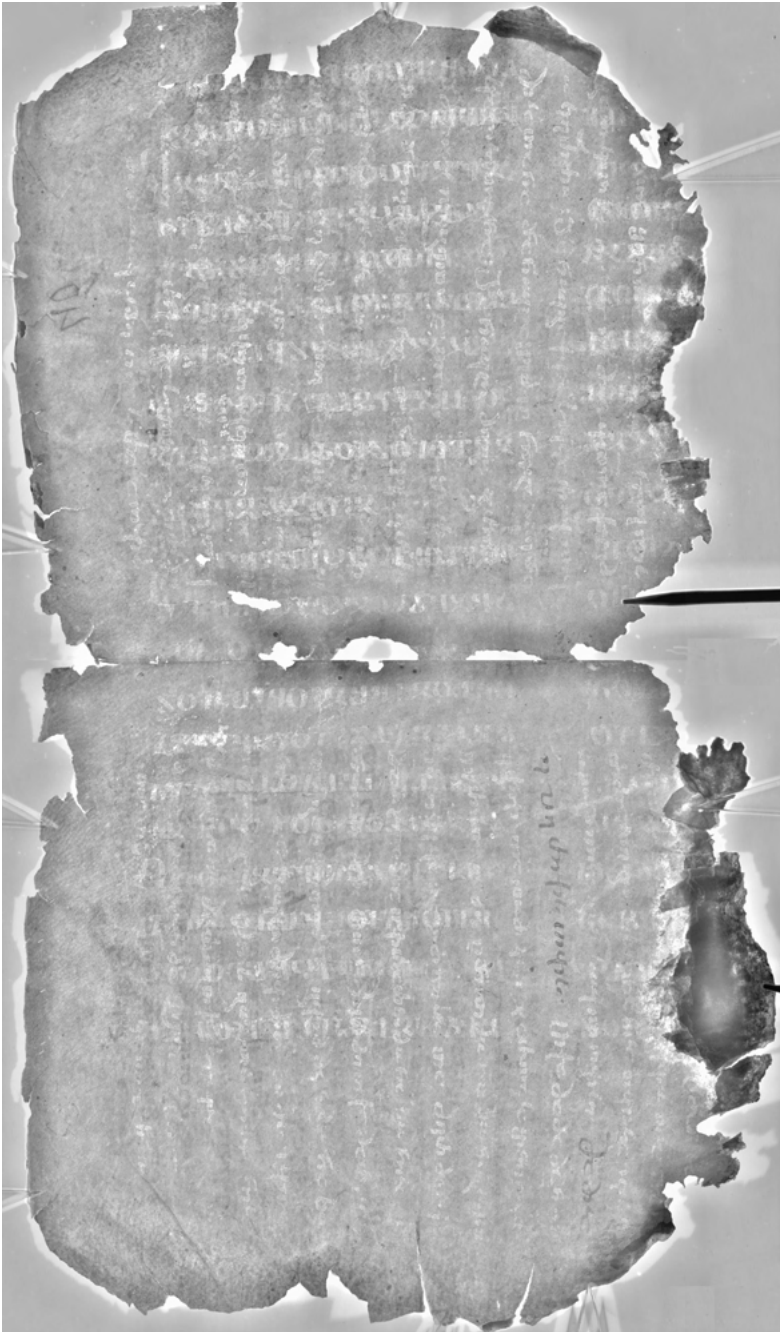


Fig. 12: Same, transmissive light image.

2008,¹³ comprising a total of 242 manuscript pages of Sin. georg. NF 13 and 55. The contents were determined to be all biblical, with 116 pages (58 folios) containing parts of the Gospel of John; the remaining 126 pages (63 folios) revealed themselves as deriving from a lectionary, with pericopes mostly from the Pauline Epistles but also from the other Gospels, the Acts of Apostles and the Catholic Epistles, plus one lection from the Old Testament (Isaiah 35.3–8). Only one double folio remained unidentified (Sin. georg. NF 55, f. 1+5), and for one more double folio, the contents could only be guessed at (Sin. georg. NF 55, f. 35+40, assumed to contain John 20.30–21.15). Especially with the Gospel of John, the average readability rate had remained rather low (max. 30 % per page), while the lectionary texts were restorable with much higher confidence (up to 99 %). Together with the fact that there are clear differences in the layout between the Gospel of John and the other texts, this led to the assumption that the Albanian palimpsests represent the remains of two different original codices.

1.5 Enhanced technology

New facilities for improving the readability of the palimpsests emerged a few years after the edition had been published, in the course of the Sinai Palimpsests Project (2012–2017),¹⁴ which attempted at providing high-standard multispectral images of all palimpsests stored in St Catherine’s monastery. It was especially the new technology of “transmissive light imaging” developed during this project that brought about remarkable progress in establishing the Albanian undertexts, by increasing the readability of the Gospel of John to about 75 %. This included the hitherto unidentified double folio, which was now determined to contain John 20.30–21.16, as well as Sin. georg. NF 55, f. 40+35, now ascertained to comprise John 18.16–31 (cf. Figures 11 and 12). The large amount of new and corrected readings has made it necessary to provide a second edition, which will be published in the near future; the following summary of the textual heritage of the Albanians represents the present state of the decipherment as does the short description of the language in Chapter 4 of this Handbook.

¹³ Gippert et al. (2008); a third volume (Gippert 2010) was devoted to the Armenian undertexts of the Sinai palimpsests.

¹⁴ Cf. <http://sinaipalimpsests.org/about-project>; the project was a collaboration of St. Catherine’s Monastery of the Sinai and the Early Manuscripts Electronic Library, funded by Arcadia Foundation and directed by Claudia Rapp and Michael Phelps.

2 The Gospel of John

2.1 The codicological setting

In the edition of 2008, the distribution of the 56 folios that were determined to belong to the Gospel of John was illustrated as given in Table I, which clearly shows that there were eleven sets of contiguous Gospel text scattered without any intrinsic order about the two palimpsest codices, Sin. georg. NF 13 (marked ‘A’ in the Table and hereafter) and 55 (marked ‘B’). In most cases, two folios each were found to represent one folio of the original codex, thus constituting conjugates (or bifolios) of the palimpsest (e.g., A40 + A47); for only two folios (A7 and A107), the “partner” was missing. Beyond the sequences of attested and non-attested passages, no underlying codex structure was discernible.

The Sinai Palimpsest Project provided not only enhanced images permitting to ascertain the contents of the lower layer but also several fragments that had not yet been accessible to the edition project in 2004; some of these were attributable to the Gospel of John.¹⁵ Together with a more meticulous codicological investigation, which revealed that double folios of the original codex were not distributed at random in the palimpsests but according to a symmetrical (or “mirroring”) principle,¹⁶ the structure of the Albanian Gospel codex has now been established with certainty: it must have consisted of six quires of eight folios (four bifolios) each (i.e. quaternions), with the (lost) first folio being either empty or filled with paratextual material (a title page, a miniature, or a lecture index). After the end of the Gospel (John 21.15–25), the last folio contains an extra column of which only a few characters have remained; this is likely to have been a scribe’s colophon (cf. 2.3 below). Table II illustrates the structure of the Gospel codex as established today; note the symmetrical distribution of, e.g., A6 and A7 or A40+47 and A41+A46 in quire I and of B18+21 and B17+22 in quire II. In addition, the structure clearly reveals that the codex followed Gregory’s rule, with hair sides of the parchment facing hair sides and flesh sides facing flesh sides (here indicated in green);¹⁷ every quire began with a hair side. With 35 folios of the original codex represented *in toto* or fragmentarily in the palimpsests, more than two thirds of St John’s Gospel have been preserved.

¹⁵ In the Sinai Palimpsest Project, the additional fragments were assigned to Sin. georg. NF 55, with folio numbers 60–78; this assignment has no bearing on the reconstruction of the original codex since Sin. georg. NF 13 and 55 had before been determined to represent one *codex rescriptus* on the basis of the Georgian overtexts.

¹⁶ This approach was first applied in Gippert (2012a).

¹⁷ Cf. Gregory (1900: 8–10).

Tab. II: Reconstruction of the original codex of the Gospel of John (2021).

I										
(vacat)	1.1–25	1.25–45	1.45–2.15	2.15–3.9	3.9–26	3.27–4.11	4.11–31			
	A40r	A40v	A6r	A7r	A7v	A41r	A41v			
	A47v	A47r	A1v	A1r		A46v	A46r			
II										
4.31–48	4.48–5.17	5.17–35	5.35–6.9	6.9–27	6.27–48	6.49–66	6.66–7.17			
B18r	B69v	B69r	A101r	A101v	A99r	B70v	B70r	B17r		B17v
B21v	B21r	A97r	A96v	A96r	A98v	B60r+75r	B60v+75v	B22v		B22r
III										
7.17–37	7.37–8.14	8.14–31	8.32–50	8.51–9.9	9.9–27	9.27–10.6	10.7–27			
B68v	B68r	A19r	A50r	A51r	A51v	A18r	A18v	B66v		B66r
B71r	B71v	A20v	A55v	A54r	A54r	A21v	A21r	B72r		B72v
IV										
10.27–11.7	11.7–30	11.30–47	11.48–12.6	12.6–26	12.26–44	12.44–13.11	13.11–28			
	A65r	A65v	B12r	B11r	B54r	A66r	A66v			
	A60v	A60r	B9v	B10v	B55v	A59v	A59r			
V										
13.28–14.7	14.7–24	14.24–15.13	15.13–16.5	16.5–22	16.22–17.6	17.6–25	17.25–18.16			
			A30r	A31r						
			A25v	A24v						
VI										
18.16–31	18.32–19.7	19.7–22	19.23–38	19.38–20.14	20.15–29	20.30–21.15	21.15–25+col.			
B40r	B40v	A61r	A61v	B13v+77r	B14r+78r	B1r	B39r	B39v		B39r
B35v	B35r	A64v	A64r	B8v	B7v	B5v	B36v	B36r		B36r

2.2 The Albanian Gospel text

As was already pointed out in the first edition, the Albanian version of the Gospel agrees in a considerable manner with the Armenian *textus receptus* and, to a lesser extent, the Georgian version as represented in the so-called Adishi Gospels of 895;¹⁸ in a few instances, it shows affinities to a Semitic stratum as in the case of the name of the prophet Isaiah which appears as *ešaya* (John 1.23 and 12.38: A47rb, 17 and B55ra, 14) with a *š* matching Syriac *ešāyā* and opposing itself to Greek Ἰσαΐας, Armenian *ēsaya*, and Georgian *esaia* / *esaya*; another such case is the name of the lake Siloam which appears with initial *š*-, too (gen. *šilohaown* and dat. *šilohaḡ*, John 9.7 and 11, A51vb, 10 and A18ra, 9–10), corresponding to Syriac *šilūhā* and contrasting with Greek Σιλωάμ, Armenian *siḡovam*, and Georgian *siloam*.¹⁹ These observations have now been corroborated, and the assumption of the Albanian Gospel text witnessing to an ancient Syriac-based “Caucasian” Bible version that was shared by its Armenian and Georgian neighbours before it was remodelled upon the Greek text has gained even more ground. We can now adduce further examples of biblical names with a *š*- such as that of Samaria (dative *šamariyaḡ*, John 4.4: A41va, 8–9) and the Samaritans (singular *šamraown*, John 4.7 and 4.9: A46ra, 19–20 and A41vb, 5; plural *šamraowḡ*- in John 4.5 and 4.9: A41va, 11 and A41vb, 10), matching Syriac *šamrāye* and *šamrīn* as against Greek Σαμαρεία, Armenian *samaria*, and Georgian *samaria* etc.; similarly, the name of the prophet Moses appears as *mowše* in John 5.46 and 6.32 (A101va, 5 and A98va, 16–17) in agreement with Syriac *mūše* and contrasting with Greek Μωϋσῆς, Armenian *movsēs*, and Georgian *mose*. Another “Syriacism” can be seen in the name of Lazarus, which is *laazar* in John 11.14 and 12.1 (A65rb, 7 and B9ra, 16), as a closer match of Syriac *lā‘azar* than Greek Λαζαρός, Armenian *lazaros*, and Georgian *lazare*; once we even read *lafazar*- (John 12.17: B11va, 2–3), with the Syriac letter ܘ (ܘ) rendered by the Albanian pharyngeal, ʙ = ʕ.

2.2.1 The “AAA” trias

These examples notwithstanding, the assumption of a peculiar affinity of the Albanian Gospel text with the Armenian version and that of the Adishi Gospels (hereafter: Ad.) has gained further ground as well. To give but a few examples: In John 5.18 (A100ra, 4), the Albanian text has the plural form *šanbaṭowḡ* ‘sabbaths’

¹⁸ Gippert et al. (2008: I, 1-32–33).

¹⁹ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, 1-34–37); cf. also Gippert (2012b: 238–240). Former readings of the name in Albanian with word-final *-m* must be corrected.

matching Armenian *zšabat's* and *šapatta* in Ad., in contrast to the singular forms τὸ σάββατον in Greek and *šabatsa* in the other Georgian witnesses. In John 5.28, Jesus asks “Why do you marvel at this?” in Albanian (*etal ha-nan-ameç*; A100va, 12–13)²⁰ just as in Armenian (*ənd ayn zi² zarmanayk'*) and in Ad. (*ese raysa gikwrs?*) while the Greek text and the Georgian Protovulgate have a prohibitive “Do not marvel” (μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο / *nu gikwrn ese*). In the Albanian text of John 6.27 (A107rb, 16), the imperative *biya-nan* ‘do!’ (pl.) is preceded by *owkalan* ‘go!’ (pl.), in perfect agreement with Armenian *ert'ayk' gorc'ec'ek* and Georgian *čarvedit ikmodet* in Ad., while the Greek text and the other Georgian versions have only the second imperative (ἐργάζεσθε, *ikmodet*). In John 19.14 (A22vb, 21), Pilate says to the Jews *aha üwx bšefi všax* ‘Look, your king for you’, exactly matching *aha t'agawor jer zjez* in the Armenian text and *aha meupē tkueni tkuenda* in Ad.; the Greek and the other Georgian versions lack the (redundant) final pronoun (Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν / *aha meupē tkueni*). In the Armenian version of John 20.27, Jesus addresses Thomas in saying *ber zmatowns k'o ew ark aysr ew tes zjers im* ‘bring your fingers and cast (them) here and look at my hands!’, closely followed by Ad. (*moqven titni šenni da šemaxe aka da ixilen qelni čemni*) and the Albanian (*heqa-n(ow)n e kašix vē baha-heqa-n(ow)n etiš beğa-n(ow)n kowlmowx bezi*);²¹ the second imperative is missing in the other Georgian versions as well as the Greek text, which in addition has the singular τὸν δάκτυλον instead of a plural.

In some cases, the trias of Albanian, Armenian and Ad. (hereafter styled “AAA”) is joined by peculiar witnesses of the Greek and Syriac tradition, thus suggesting the existence of a special text version as the common ancestor. This is true, e.g., of John 6.23 (A107ra, 17–20), which in most Greek and Georgian witnesses as well as the Syriac Peshitta ends with the Lord (or Jesus) having given thanks (or a blessing: εὐχαριστήσαντος τοῦ κυρίου / *romel aqurtxa upalman da hmadlobda / kad barek yešū'*); this phrase is missing in the Greek codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis (D)²² and the two older Syriac versions preserved in the Curetonian Gospels and the Sinaiticus Palimpsest, as well as AAA. In John 8.40 (A55vb, 15–16), Jesus says “which I have heard from my father” in AAA (*ihē-h~ke-za dexoc bezi ~ zor loway hawrē immē ~ ray mesma mamisagan čemisa*), here joined by the so-called Korideti Gospels (Θ, f. 217ra) with ἦν ἠκουσα παρὰ τοῦ πατρός μου, while the other witnesses have “from God” (τοῦ θεοῦ / *gmrtisagan / men 'alāhā*).²³ A “Syriac” trait that is worth investigat-

²⁰ The former reading as thematised in Gippert (2012b: 241) must be corrected accordingly.

²¹ The Albanian text (A16vb, 7–10) is not certain in all details here but the sequence of words is beyond doubt.

²² As well as two later (minuscule) manuscripts, 69 (Leicester) and 788 (Athens).

²³ Cf. Gippert (2012b: 242) and further Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 5.2.1.

ing is the rendering of an agent by the phrase “from / by the hand of” as occurring, e.g., in John 1.17 (*e oṭanowx kowin mowšēi dağē-anaḳe madil'owx own tʃegen(ow)n kowyoc y~i k~i* ‘because the laws are given by the hand of Moses, graces and truth from the hand of Jesus Christ’: A47ra, 13–15); here, both *kowin* (erg. sg.) and *kowyoc* (abl. sg.) correspond to Syriac *b-yad* ‘by’ (lit. ‘in the hand’), matched by Armenian *i jeṙn* and, in the first instance, by *qelita* in Ad., whereas the Greek text and the other Georgian witnesses (including the second instance in Ad.) have a mere pre- or postposition (διὰ / *mier*). These correspondences are anything but straightforward, however; so we find, e.g., *oowk(a) kowyoc* ‘by him’ three times in John 1.3, 1.4 and 1.7 (A40ra, 6 and 9; A47va, 20), where the Syriac text of the Peshitta has two times *b-ide-hw* but once simply *be-h* ‘in him’ (1.4; in the Curetonian Gospels also in 1.3), and the Armenian text uses three times the simple pronoun *novaw* (instrumental) ‘by him’. On the other hand, the trias of AAA stands out again in John 19.17 with *ã~y kowya* ‘into their hand’ (A17va, 10) ~ *i jeṙs noc’a / qelta matta*, whereas the Syriac text (of the Peshitta) here agrees with the Greek and the other Georgian versions in having simple *l-hün* ‘to them’ ~ αὐτοῖς / *mat*.

2.2.2 Special matches between Armenian and Albanian

In several cases, the Albanian Gospel of John suggests a peculiar relationship with the Armenian version. We must not count here the large amount of loanwords from (Middle) Iranian languages that both languages share (often also with Georgian), for these can always be independent borrowings; to the many examples gathered earlier (e.g., Albanian *vardapeṭ* ~ Armenian *vardapet* ‘teacher’, *marğaven* ~ *margarē* ‘prophet’, *vašamaḳ* ~ *varšamak* ‘cerecloth, napkin’, etc.),²⁴ we may now add *žan* ‘hour’ (John 11.9: A65ra, 8) ~ Armenian *žam* (also Georgian *žam-i*), *asp̄arez* ‘stadion’ (John 11.18: A60vb, 220) ~ Armenian *asparēs* (also Georgian *asp̄arez-i*), possibly also *biṭowan* ‘id.’ (John 6.19: A107vb, 17–18) ~ Armenian *vtawan* (also Georgian *uṭevan-i*), and *asp̄inza* ‘lodge’ (John 18.28: B35ra,21–B40vb, 1) ~ Armenian *asp̄njakan* ‘inn’ and Georgian *m-asp̄inž-el-i* ‘host’.²⁵ A bit more telling is the use of reduplication in producing “intensified” adjectives such as *bân'i-bân'i* (John 5.20: A97va, 18–19) and *beg-beg* (John 21.11: B5ra, 17) both meaning ‘very big’ and both mirroring Armenian *mecamec* ‘id.’. As a new Armenian loanword we

²⁴ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, 1-30); Gippert (2011c: 3–8).

²⁵ Cf. also the Georgian place name *Asp̄inza* (Andronikashvili 1966: 287–288 and Gippert 1993: 119–124). The word also occurs in Acts 1.13 (A104ra, 20); in both cases, the reading of the character *z* (corresponding to Georgian *z*) is uncertain, it might also be a *ž* in accordance with Armenian *j* (cf. Gippert forthc.: I).

may note *dol* ‘vessel, bucket’ which obviously renders Armenian *doył* ‘id.’ in John 4.11 (A46rb, 20), in its turn probably a Semitism (Syriac *dawlā* ‘id.’, vs. Greek ἀντήμα and Georgian *sarçqul-i* / *savsebel-i*); another Syriacism may be concealed in *daizowzn’a* ‘denarius’ (John 6.7: A101vb, 11–12) if this is a hybrid compound consisting of *dai-* ‘green’ (> ‘silver’?) and Syr. *zūzā* ‘drachm’.²⁶ An exclusive accordance of the Armenian and the Albanian texts is met with in John 19.15 where the Jews shout two times “take him (up away) from us” (A17va, 1–2: Albanian *heqan(ow)n žaxoc* ~ Armenian *barj i mēnj*) with an explicit ablative, while the other versions only have “take (him) up” (Greek ἄρον, Georgian *ağage*). Another exclusive accordance of the Albanian and the Armenian texts is found in John 19.29 (B8vb, 17–18) where only these two versions mention a “bundle of hyssop”, using even the same Iranian loanword (*mistiḱaloš zoḱaown* ~ *mštkaw zovpayi*), while all others only speak of “hyssop” alone (Greek ὑσσώπω, Georgian *usupsa*, Syr. *zōpā*) or of a mere “flower” (Georgian *q̄uavili*, Ad.). Only in the Armenian and the Albanian texts, Jesus asks in John 21.22 “Why do you care?” (*vak ya-ne q̄irmir*, B36vb, 20, ~ *k’ez zi p’oyt’ ē*, lit. ‘What eagerness is (it) to you’), while the other versions have a mere “What” or “How much (is it) to you?” (Greek τί πρὸς σέ, Georgian *šenda ray* / Syr. *lākmā’ lek*). A telling coincidence is also met with in John 19.26 and 20.15 (B13rb, 5 and B7rb, 21–A16ra, 1) where Jesus talks to his mother and Mary Magdalene, respectively: to the plain address “woman!” (Armenian *kin*, Albanian *xifowyo*, ~ Greek γύναι, Georgian *dedaḱaco*, Syriac *’attā*), only Armenian and Albanian here add the 2nd person pronoun “you” (*dow* / *vown*). In Armenian, this may be due to the fact that the language does not have a peculiar vocative form (in contrast to Greek or Georgian) so that *kin* alone was underspecified; in Albanian, however, the vocative is clearly distinguished by the ending *-yo* so that the addition of the pronoun is redundant and only explicable as a calque of the Armenian wording.

The most intriguing feature that joins the Albanian text with the Armenian version is the list of languages in which the inscription on the Cross was written (John 19.20). According to the Greek tradition, these were Hebrew (Ἑβραϊστί), Latin (~ Roman, Ῥωμαϊστί), and Greek (Ἑλληνιστί), with the order of the second and third one varying among the witnesses. The Georgian versions agree with this in naming *ebraelebr* ‘Hebrew’, *hromaelebr* ‘Roman’,²⁷ and *berzl* ‘Greek’; the same is true, with a different order, for the Syriac Peshitta which has *’ebrā’īt*, *yawnā’īt*, and *rawmā’īt*, with *yawnā’īt* referring to Greek (‘Ionian’). In contrast to this, the Armenian text has *ebrajec’erēn*, *dałmatarēn*, and *yownarēn*, with the last

²⁶ For further details cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 5.2.2.

²⁷ Ad. has the remarkable variant *prominebr*; cf. Blake (1923: 83–88) and Peeters (1926: 76–77) for other attestations of Georgian *promin-* ‘Roman’.

word matching Syriac *yawnā'ūt*; the peculiar term is the second one, which obviously refers to Dalmatia instead of Rome. This is now matched by the Albanian version, which can be established to read *ebraowneš, dalmaṭaowneš, yovnaowneš* (A17vb, 12–13),²⁸ including the specific reference to Dalmatia, which has been convincingly motivated for Armenian as an indication of the Christianisation of Armenia during the reign of the Roman emperor Diocletian, of Dalmatian origin, between 284 and 305 and the acknowledgement of his suzerainty over Armenia by the Sassanid kings in 298 CE.²⁹ The mentioning of Dalmatia instead of Rome in the Gospel of John may thus yield a *terminus a quo* for its first translation into Armenian; for the Albanian text, we may safely assume that it depends on the Armenian tradition established then.

As a matter of fact, the dependance of the Albanian version on the Armenian one manifests itself not only in peculiar words and expressions as discussed above, but overall in the wording which follows the Armenian text wherever possible. This includes the sentence-internal word order, but also the use of the definite article.³⁰ The text passage of John 19.13–22 printed synoptically in Table III is meant to illustrate this by way of example.³¹

28 The reading proposed in Gippert et al. (2008: I, V-97) must be given up.

29 Cf. Künzle (1984: II, 177), arguing against Macler (1919: 638–642).

30 Cf. Chapter 4 in this Handbook, 3.3.2 and 4.1.

31 The representation of the Albanian text in the Table follows the principles established in the *editio minor* part of the first edition (Gippert et al. 2008: I, III-1–46), with round parentheses marking resolved abbreviations, curly brackets indicating uncertain readings and angle brackets, characters missing in lacunae.

Tab. III: John 19.13–20 in synoptical arrangement.

Jo.	Caucasian Albanian	English	Armenian	Georgian (Ad.)	Georgian (vulg.)	Greek	Russian	Udi	Syriac
19,13 (193)	Pont'e p̄liat̄(ost)a ihē-an'ke	Then when Pilate heard	Իսկ պիլատոս իրիւն լուսաւ	ბოლო პილატის ვითარცა ვახა	ბოლო პილატის და ეძიებენ	Ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας	Пилат, услышав это слово,	Plata, me alta ibaki,	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
12	e il'owx . ře-he-bokē-n-o-ven	these words, he brought	զրահն գալտտիկ. ած	სიტყუთა ეხე, გმობავუნან	სიტყუთა ეხე, გმობავუნან	τῶν λόγων ταύτων ἤγαγεν	вывел вои	čnečeri	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
13	y'sax' acari-na-va e	Jesus outside; he sat down	զյ աւրտար, ն. նասաւ	იესუ გარე და დავად	იესუ გარე და დავად	ἔξω τῶν Ἱεροσὺν, κατ' ἐκάσθου	Иисуса тоъ ва' арреци	Isusax toъ va' arreci	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
A22vb, 14	b'axe-xownt'e xowntex ci-	on the judgement seat at the place that is named	ի վերայ ընտին ի տեղերն որ կոչէր ինքն	სჯელის მას ზედა, აფთხის მას, რამელსა ერქმობას	სჯელის მას ზედა, აფთხის მას, რამელსა ერქმობას	ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον	на судилище, на месте, наываемом	duvan botal ganu, ře ganu matuxte exčun	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
15	ka-hanaytowike {žemoy}	the stone-	քարաստապ	ქვეყნელ,	ქვეყნელ,	λίθοστρωτον,	Лифостратон,	iflostroton,	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
16	-at(š)al' ebraowne(š-al)	ground and in Hebrew,	ն. եղևակերկն	რომელ არს ებრაულენ	ბოლო ებრაულენ –	Ἐβραϊστὶ δέ	а по-еврейску	žuhufun muzin gena	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
19,14	kařpata' bow-ne-he {řla-	Karpatha. It was the preparation	կապադովն. էր որդրաբն	კაპპათა, და იყო პარასკევი	კაპპათა, და იყო პარასკევი	Γαββαθα. Ἦν δέ παρασκευή	Гаввафа. Тогда была пятница	ganwafa. řevaxta buney paraski	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
18	{řas(š)ei axšibay(own h)ē-	day of the passover, it was	գաստիք ն. էր	ღაჭიგასა მის; და იყო	ღაჭიგასა; ებო იყო	τοῦ πάσχα, ὡρα ἦν	перед Паскою, и час	axcimim beš bu, va sahadun	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
19	ne-řla uwxřaro(wn žam-aj)ke'	about the sixth hour.	ի რկ. ժամ վեցերորդ	ვითარ ქვს ეამ ოფენ.	ვითარ შექუქმდ.	ὡς ἔκρη.	шесть.	uřo'	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
20	pē-n-oen (ē) vatarow(šos ')	He said to the Jews,	ն. առ գրիხարն	და პეტრო და პურკათა მათ;	და პეტრო და პურკათა მათ;	καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις,	И сказал [Пилат] Иудеям:	va' pine řilatēn žuhufgo:	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
21	aħa tawx b'řefi řař ')	'Look, your king for you!'	ահա թարաար ձեր զեպի.	აჰა, მუცემ თქვენ! თქვენ!	აჰა, მუცემ თქვენ!	Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν.	се, Царь ваш!	miglia, pařařağ efi!	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ
19,15 (194)	ř(n hay)-p(ē-n-š' n) heřa-n' n	They cried, 'take him	ն. նրგա արտաղկին, բարձ	და იგინი დავაფიქენ; აძოვი,	და იგინი დავაფიქენ; აძოვი,	ἐκραύγασαν οὖν ἔκεινοι, Ἄρον	Но они закричали: возвыши,	amma řořton harařiqumbi ařa,	ܩܕ ܥܬܟ ܐܢܝ ܩܠܝܠܝܬܐ

13	hegay-n-oya-hē ičñow	He himself had taken	Եւ իւրձաւս էր իւրքիս	և ձագցնեալ և ընթաց ձա՛ն տցն օր չըշտն,	և զյոր ձա՛ն տցո չըշտն տցն,	και βασιτάρων αυτῶ τὸν σταυρὸν	И, ИЕСЯ вышел	va', ič	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
Aztra, 14	e ihālown dowrowd že- bāla-	the beam of the cross, he was going out	գիւղայի ճառն բարձրեալսն Եւ Ելանէր	և աջորդ և աջորդ	և զգնոր և գնոր	էջիղն	крестъ Свѣд. ОН вышел	xaciŋ tašeri, šono žerine	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
15	-va-hē e xownel č-i-ka-	onto the place that was named	ի սոխն որ անուաներ	աջորդ ձա՛ն, բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն	աջորդ ձա՛ն բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն	էլ զն լեղնոն	на место, называемое	te ganu, matuxte exčun	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
16	-hanay(šow)kē-hē biin ' eb'raowneš	'of the head', which in Hebrew	Գաւրաման.	տեղն	տեղն	Կրանու Տօնոյ,	Лобное,	kodoxia,	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
17	č-i-ka- hanayč'w(š)e-	was named	Եւ Իրչր կրտսերիսն	բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն	բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն բա՛ն ձա՛ն չըլն	ո՛ղն էր Էբրա՛ն	no-epeřku	žuhunun muzin	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
19,18	-hē golgota . ihālas-	Golgotha, where	Գողգոթա, որ	գողգոթա, եղ	գողգոթա, եղ	Գողգոթն, որ	Голгофа; там	golgota; metār	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
19	-hamay(ke-oo)w- žexay-hē ' .	they had put him on the cross.	Եւ ի խաչն իւր հանին զիւս:	չըշտն-սցնն օր, չըշտն-սցնն օր,	չըշտն-սցնն օր, չըշտն-սցնն օր,	ստն էստարսան,	располо на сѣтѣх	čarčarāžumbi šotux	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
(198)	20	Oowkoš heğala-al e'neğ	Together with him another	և իւր նմա	և իւր նմա	και μετ' αυτου αλλου	u c Hum	va' šotuxoal	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
21	pšāā' r . eto(šw- e)štow	two here-and- there,	Երկուս եւս ապա, աստ	տե՛ն երկուս, տե՛ն	տե՛ն երկուս, տե՛ն	ծոյ ծոյքս, ո ո	ծոյք ծոյքս, ո ո	va' žeriotu so žečō,	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
A17vb, 1	būwga-al 'y'sax ' .	and in the middle Jesus.	ի սիջի դ' ս:	սա՛նջալ օրս,	սա՛նջալ օրս,	մէսն ծոյք Իրսոն.	α πορθου Ιηουσα.	žati gena Isusax.	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
19,19	2	Cam-pē-ne sa daxtak pī-lātosen	And Pilate wrote a tablet	Գրեցս եւ տախտակ պիղատոս	և գրեց տախտակ պիղատոս	էրգրեց ձե՛ն տիտոն զ Պիլատոս	Πιλατον γε καμηριου u καμηριου	Pilaten gena camperi cam	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
3	žexay-n-oen e	and he put it	Եւ իւր	և իւր	և իւր	και εθηκεν	u πορθου	va' ianexi	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى
4	ihā(š) hala ' . b(ow)nje-(hē)	on the cross. And it was	ի վրայ խաչիս-Եւ էր	ի վրայ խաչիս-Եւ և	ի վրայ խաչիս-Եւ և	էր իւր ստարոյ: իւր ձե՛	на кресте.	xaciŋ laxo.	مَدَّ يَدَيْهِ وَمَشَى

Tab. III (continued)

Jo.	Caucasian Albanian	English	Armenian	Georgian (Ad.)	Georgian (vulg.)	Greek	Russian	Udi	Syriac
5	cam-pe {y-s} nazoreow{no}	written: <i>Jesus of Nazareth,</i>	<i>գրված է յ նազարեթի</i>	წერდა იესო ნაზარეტელ, ნაზარეტელ,	წერდა იესო იესუ ნაზარეტელი,	γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζαρέτης	<i>Иисусомъ названъ Назаретъ,</i>	camney: Isus Nazorei,	ܡܫܝܚܐ ܢܘܙܪܐܝܝܐ
6	û{w}x va{ʔarowigoʔ}	<i>the King of the Jews.</i>	<i>թագաւոր Հրեից:</i>	მეფეებმ ჰურცათა.	მეფებმ ჰურცათა.	ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.	<i>Царь Иудейскій.</i>	pascaʒ ʒuhutuŋ.	ܩܨܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܗܘܢ
19,20	Iʔ (e) daxtaʔak zaʔ(w){n-bi}yʔa- n }	<i>The same tablet was read</i>	<i>Ձաքն տախտակը ընթերցան</i>	იგი ფიცარნი წარკითხეს	ესე ფიცარნი მრავალთა ადმოკითხეს	τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τίτλον	<i>Эту надпись читали</i>	me camnu kaqumexay	ܡܠܟܗ ܡܠܟܗܘܢ
8	avaiəˈn va{ʔarowigoʔ}	<i>by many of the Jews</i>	<i>բազումք ի Հրեից:</i>	ჰურცათა მრავალთა,	ჰურცათა,	πολλοὶ ἀνέγνωσαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων.	<i>многие из Иудее,</i>	göbiunigön ʒuhutigoxo,	ܩܘܿܠܠܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ
9	i{ə}-anake-hē e kalaka e	<i>because close to the city was</i>	<i>զի մասու էր ի քաղաք անդր</i>	რამეთუ მახლობელ იყო ქალაქის მას	რამეთუ მახლობელ იყო ადგილი იყო	ὅτι ἔγγυς ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς πόλεως	<i>потому что место, где был распят Иисус,</i>	ʒeiabaxʔinte ga, mate ʒa{ʔi}zabakiney Isus,	ܩܪܘܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ
10	xowni i{h}aias 3exay- hamaˈyˈke-	<i>the place where Jesus was put on the cross.</i>	<i>տեղին ուր խաչվածս</i>	ადგილი იყო, სადა ჰურცობ-დებოდა	ქალაქის, სადა-იყო ჰურცობა-დებოდა	ὅπου ἑσταυρωθῆ	<i>было недалеко от города,</i>	axaiteney ʒəhairaxo,	ܩܪܘܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ
11	-hē yˈsax ˈbow- ne-(hē e ʔam-	<i>It was written</i>	<i>է գրվ. էր գրված</i>	იქნა და წერდა იყო	იქნა და იყო წერდა	ὁ Ἰησοῦς: καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον	<i>и написана была</i>	vaˈ cameciney բնո	ܩܪܘܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ
12	-pe ebraowmēs . dalmā{ʔ}aˈ	<i>in Hebrew, ‘Dalmatian’,</i>	<i>Երբայցկերև դալմատի.</i>	ქრსთულენ, ფრომენენ	ქრსთულენ, კრძამულენ	Ἐβραϊκῶν, Ῥωμαϊκῶν	<i>но-еврейску, но-аревеску,</i>	ʒuhutuŋ, berdze- nun	ܩܪܘܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ
13	owmēs . yownaowmēs ˈ	<i>Greek</i>	<i>և քრძამულեն ქერქენ.</i>	და ბერძენ, და ბერძენ.	და ბერძენ, და ბერძენ.	Ἑλληνικῶν	<i>но-римску.</i>	vaˈ rimma muzur- gon.	ܩܪܘܘܢ ܩܪܘܘܢ

2.3 Layout and paratexts

The Gospel of John is written in two columns throughout, with 21 lines per column and an average of 17–18 characters per line. The characters have a height of 4 mm; initials of paragraphs are enlarged (up to 9 mm) and slightly outdented. At the line break, words are usually divided (without any hyphenation mark) at syllable boundaries; characters that would exceed the line are often placed, in minor size, above or (at the end of pages) below the line. The only punctuation mark used regularly is a dot placed at the top of the line after the last character of sentences or larger units. Abbreviations (elisions) are marked with a tilde-shaped line above. The beginning of Ammonian sections is indicated to the left of the initial character of the section with the respective number represented alphanumerically by the corresponding characters written in minor size (appr. 1 mm, often extremely difficult to make out), originally probably in red ink (e.g., *çdē* for 197, John 19.16b: A17va, 12) and partly with horizontal lines above and below (e.g., *çžž* for 137, John 15.16b: A25va, 19). In addition, sections and minor paragraphs are often separated from each other by a lengthy horizontal stroke (slightly tilde-shaped) to the left of the column (a similar divider appears, e.g., in the Armenian Gospels of Moscow of 887 CE, now ms. 6200 of the Matenadaran, Yerevan). The division into sections and paragraphs (and, depending on it, the use of enlarged initials) corresponds by and large to that applied in the Armenian Gospels of Moscow and Ejmiatsin (of 989 CE, now ms. 2374 of the Matenadaran, Yerevan), with but a few exceptions (e.g., sections 213 and 214 being indicated at the beginning of John 20.19 and within 20.20, A16rb, 7 and A23vb, 17, not in 20.20 and at the beginning of 20.22 as in the latter). On a few folios, remnants of a Eusebian apparatus are discernible, arranged in up to four columns (headed by *y* = John, *m* = Matthew, *m(r)* = Mark, and *l* = Luke) in tiny characters (appr. 1 mm) below the columns, possibly also in red ink (best visible on fol. A25v, John 136–141 ~ 15.14–21).³²

In several cases, the beginning of a text passage is accompanied by a marginal gloss in minor characters (appr. 2 mm) left of it indicating the use of the passage as a pericope, i.e. a lection read during liturgy. This is true, e.g., of the gloss *powriâ~y gâen* ‘for the dead’ pertaining to John 5.19 (A100ra, 8). In some cases, the pericopes indicated by these glosses have a counterpart in the Armenian and / or Georgian lectionaries of the Jerusalem rite (hereafter LA / LG, cf. Chapter 6 of this Handbook [Renoux]) as in the case of a lection beginning with John 12.24, which is glossed *istepanosi* ‘of Stephen’ (B11vb, 10), thus matching the pericopes

³² Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, I-32).

of John 12.24–26 and 12.24–41 attested in LA and LG for 27 December, the commemoration day of the Protomartyr; similarly, John 20.24 is glossed by *tomas* ‘Thomas’ (A16va, 8), thus supposing a lection of John 20.24–31 as prescribed in LA for 23 August or John 20.24–25 as noted in LG for 1 November, both days being devoted to the eponymous Apostle.³³ The more verbose gloss accompanying John 21.20 on fol. B39r (ll. 6–8) probably reads *yakobi hebiyayoya own yohannēsi žowlowǵaloya* ‘of James the Apostle and John the Evangelist’, matching both LA and LG which prescribe John 21.20–25 on 29 December, the commemoration day of John and James the Great. A lection beginning with John 8.31, indicated by the gloss *abrahami* ‘of Abraham’ in the palimpsest (A20rb, 17), is attested in the Latal manuscript of LG as a lection of the Friday of the 5th week after Easter, covering John 8.31–59.³⁴

Other marginal glosses are rather explanatory. This holds, e.g., for *ḡasek* added, in a frame of dotted lines, in the right margin of fol. B9v (l. 16) at the beginning of John 11.55, obviously meant to explain the word *axsibay* ‘Easter’ it faces, one of the few Georgian borrowings in Albanian;³⁵ exactly the same gloss (*ḡasek*) is found at exactly the same position in the Armenian Gospels of Ejmiatsin (fol. 204vb) rendering *zatikn* ‘id.’, and Ad. glosses the Georgian equivalent, *zatiḡi*, at the same position by *vnebatay*, i.e. ‘of the Passion(s)’.³⁶ A similar gloss is found in the right margin of fol. A66r (l. 11), with *ḡasekown* rendering the genitive form *axsibayown* of John 13.1; this, too, is matched by a corresponding gloss (*ḡasek*) in the Ejmiatsin Gospels (fol. 208r). Two marginal glosses on fol. A98r were obviously added as corrections for the text of John 6.42 at positions marked by obelisk-like signs, namely, *y*~s in line 17 indicating the name of Jesus to be inserted between *te o-ne* ‘is not this’ and *o ḡar yoseḡi* ‘the son of Joseph’, and *nex* ‘mother’ in line 19 as an addition to the phrase *ža aa-hanayoyake-ža o dex* ‘of whom we know the father’; in both cases, the omissions are a common feature of the Albanian and the Armenian versions,³⁷ thus again witnessing to their close relationship.

33 There is no pericope beginning with John 5.19 in the Armenian or the Georgian lectionaries; however, John 5.17–24 is contained as a lection for the Deceased to be read on Mondays in the (later) Constantinopolitan lectionary.

34 Cf. Tarchnišvili (1959a: 164–165 / 1959b: 131, no. 856m).

35 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 5.2.5.

36 Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, 1–35–36).

37 The gloss *nex* for ‘mother’ was not yet identified in the edition. The equivalent of ‘mother’ is also missing in the Syriac text of the Curetonian Gospels and the Sinaiticus Palimpsest but present in the Peshitta; among the Georgian versions, it is the Protovulgate that lacks the equivalent while Ad. does have *deday da mamay* ‘mother and father’. The name of Jesus is present in all Georgian and Syriac versions. Cf. Gippert (2012b: 241–242) as to the wording of the Greek Codex Sinaiticus.

A peculiar paratext is contained after the end of the Gospel, John 21.25, in the second column of the last folio of the original codex consisting of fol. B39vb+36rb. Although only a few letters of lines 9–21 of the column have remained, we may safely assume that this was the colophon of the scribe of the codex who, beginning with *zow* ‘I’ (line 9), refers to the Lord (ζ̃*e*, ergative or dative), and later supplicates for his parents and his relatives (<*be*>*zi dex* <*own nex own qar*>*n’aã~<x>*, lines 16–18); the last line obviously addresses the Mother of God (*Marya*<*m*>, line 21). Unfortunately, neither the scribe’s name nor any detail as to the date and place of his endeavour have been preserved.

3 The “Lectionary”

3.1 Layout and paratexts

Except for the fact of being arranged in two columns as well, the layout of the “Lectionary” part of the Albanian palimpsests differs remarkably from that of the Gospel of John. The characters of its main text are slightly larger (appr. 5 mm) than those of the latter; the same is true for the initials (appr. 11 mm). The most frequently used punctuation mark is a colon indicating the end of sentences or longer phrases; a long arrow-shaped horizontal stroke is sometimes used as a line-filler at the end of sections or paragraphs (e.g. after I Thessalonians 2.9: A38ra, l. 19). Abbreviations and numerical values are indicated in a similar way as in the Gospel of John. A peculiar diacritic found in the Lectionary part is a dot placed above characters that denote vowels in word-initial or syllable-initial positions as on the first *o* of *ič’ořom* ‘the same’ and the first *e* and the second *a* of *efa-anaķe-edġon* ‘that they have’ in Romans 12.4 (A32vb, 1–2).³⁸ All in all, the text of the Lectionary part is written less diligently than that of the Gospel of John, with many haplo- and dittographies; e.g., the text of Romans 12.4 just cited begins erroneously in the upper margin, from which it was erased before the preparation of the palimpsest, while other such errors remained uncorrected (e.g. dittographic *mowç’owç’owr-* for **mowç’owr-* ‘pure’ in *mowç’owç’owr-baal-anķe-oen* ‘that he might purify’ on fol. A29va, ll. 10–12).

Usually, each column has 22 lines, with an average of 15–16 characters per line; on eight folios, there is one more line per column (B25 and *sqq.*, cf. below). In contrast to the Gospel, enlarged initials are not only found at the beginning of

³⁸ Cf. the comparable use of a diaeresis-like symbol in the Armenian Gospels of Ejmiatsin (Künzle 1984: 100*/101*).

lines, more or less outdented, but often also within lines, thus yielding the impression of a more continuous text. This, however, is frequently interrupted by titles that precede, in much smaller characters (appr. 2.5 mm) but as well with enlarged initials (appr. 9 mm), the beginning of individual pericopes; an example is the title of the lection of I Corinthians 15.51–58 which covers lines 12–13 of fol. B34rb and reads (with large initials rendered by capital letters) *Ɔorintaowğoy Serbaown D'ipnowxoc P̄awlosi hebiyayoya owpesown*, i.e. 'Lecture from the First Epistle (lit. Writing) to (lit. of) the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle'. It was these titles that paved the way for the decipherment of the Albanian language and script as contained in the palimpsests.

Another important type of paratext that is characteristic for the Lectionary part is glosses that accompany the titles, usually to the left of them in the margins or in the space between the columns. Written in even smaller letters (appr. 1.8 mm), they indicate the occasion on which the respective lection was meant to be read as in the case of I Corinthians 15.51–58, which is styled *owpes(ow)n mowç'(ow)rã'y*, i.e. a 'Lecture (scil. for the commemoration) of Saints' (B34rb, 11–12). In some cases, the glosses contain the indication of a "Psalm-refrain" or antiphon (*salmos korbaale*) or an "Alleluia psalm" (*alēlowya salmos*) as they were usually sung before and between lectures; this is true, e.g., of the lection of Ephesians 2.4–8, which is introduced by the title *Epesaowğoy D'ipnowxoc P̄awlosi hebiyayoya owpesown* 'Lecture from the Epistle to (lit. of) the Ephesians of Paul the Apostle' (B23va, 10–11), together with a gloss referring to Psalm 66.2 [67.2]:³⁹ *owpes(ow)n besesownowğoy salmos korbaale l̄z b'e ix-qa-žan-hē*, i.e. 'Lecture for (lit. of) the Supplications; Psalm-refrain 66: "God, may we be pitied!"'.

In two cases, the indication of the liturgical purpose has been integrated with the title of a lection. One of them is the lection of Luke 7.1–10, which is introduced on lines 17–20 of fol. A8rb as *E xown' üwxRoy hüwkel-balnaxoštay Lowkasi Mowç'owr Źowdağesownaxoc owpesown*, i.e. 'At this place, from the commemoration of Kings: Lecture from the Holy Gospel of Luke'; in addition to the information present here, there is still a gloss accompanying the title which can be made out as *žowdağes(ow)n üwxr(o)y own goeã'y alēlowya salm(o)s y ž'ẽ mil'anownen vē hüwķ-hē-qa-n* 'Gospel (lecture for the commemoration) of Kings and Rulers. Alleluia-psalm 20: "Lord, by your strength may rejoice"' (Psalm 20.2 [21.2]). Considering the fact that immediately preceding the title, we read the name of Jerusalem as the last word of the pericope of Mark 15.39–41, the strange wording "at this place" may be taken to refer just to the Holy City. The second case concerns the lection of I Timothy 3.14–16, which is introduced as follows (A28rb+27vb, 11–16):

³⁹ As in the neighbouring traditions of Eastern Christianity, psalms are numbered in accordance with the Septuagint, not the Hebrew Bible as in the West (here referred to in brackets).

Miūwḡen(ow)n mowç'(ow)r Ihâlown own eklesiowğoy Salmos Kōrbaale : yē ž̃e bowqana-biyay-zow cegowown kod'in vē : Ṭimoteosi Serbaown d'ipnowḡoc Pawlosi Hebiyayoya owpesown 'Of the feast of the Holy Cross and the Churches. Psalm-refrain 25: "Lord, I love the splendour of Your house" (Ps. 25.8 [26.8]). Lection from the First Letter to (lit. of) Timothy of Paul the Apostle.' Here, too, we find an additional gloss, which reads *owpes(ow)n miūwḡenownax eklesiowğoy* 'Lection (read) on the feast of the Churches'.

A peculiar arrangement is found on fol. A12r with the lection of Matthew 10.16–22 of which both the title and the gloss are placed in the margins; the former reads *Mateosi Mowç'owr žowdağesownax(o)c* 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew' and the latter, *žowdağesown mowç'(ow)rā~y alēlowya salm(o)s yčā bamgen-ne bartay-hanayoenke čomeown(ow)χ* 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Saints. Alleluia-psalm 31: "Blessed is (he) who has given up (his) transgressions"' (Ps. 31.1 [32.1]). All these titles and glosses are extremely important for the reconstruction of the liturgy of the Caucasian Albanians (see Chapter 6 of this Handbook [Renoux]); they are therefore listed *in toto* in Table IV.⁴⁰

In two cases, a pericope is preceded or followed by a sequence of several Psalm verses, written in minor letters (appr. 2.5 mm) but within the given lines. This is true, first of all, of lines 12–22 of the bifolio A73vb+70rb where a sequence of five Psalm verses follows after the end of the Old Testament lection (Isaiah 35.3–8), each introduced by an indication of its use; the sequence begins with Psalm 25.8 [26.8], assigned here, too, as a 'Psalm-refrain, 25' for the 'Feast of the Churches' (*Mowḡenownax eklesiowğoy : Salm(o)s kō<rbaale :> yē*). The verses following it are Ps. 35.10 [36.9] (*Kačioya Salmos yčē* 'Psalm of the blind one, 35'), Ps. 6.3 [6.2] (*Salmos marmin-rara-hēoya : z̄* 'Psalm of the one having become weak-bodied [i.e. the paralytic], 6'), and Ps. 22.1 [23.1] (*Salmos asefown yb* 'Psalm of the shepherd, 22'). The last verse in the sequence is probably Ps. 118.132 if the number and the text are established correctly (*Salmos besesownowğoy : çčž̃ : Beğā-n(ow)n zas ž̃e hüwķ-ihā-nown-al zas* : 'Psalm of the Supplications, 118: "Look upon me, Lord, and have pity for me"'). The second sequence of Psalm verses is found preceding the lection of I Corinthians 12.26–14.2 on the first lines of fol. B26r of which, unfortunately, only a few characters have survived; here we can tentatively restore and identify the following verses: Ps. 103.3 [104.3] (*<Aci-faxē-n-o>en xenaloš* 'He roofed on the water'), Ps. 115.6 [116.15] (*Oṭān-<biṭē-ne ž̃~ē būwa ow>ḡ*

⁴⁰ The entries in the Table are ordered after the Biblical lections, not their appearance in the palimpsests. Square brackets indicate presumable verse numbers of lost beginnings or ends of lections in the first column and numbers of Hebrew (~ western) Psalm verses in the fourth column. Titles and glosses are rendered in a simplified transcription, with abbreviations resolved (in parentheses) wherever possible.

Tab. IV: Lections with titles and glosses.

Lection	Title	Gloss	Psalms	Position
Mt. 2.16–18	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr žowdagesownax(ol)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>žowdages(ow)n ġarmoy alēlowya s(almo)s cčb afre-pa-nan ġarmo</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Children. Alleluia-psalm 112: "Praise, children!"	112.1 [113.1]	A34rb, 9
Mt. 5.13–16	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A14ra)
Mt. 5.17–20	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr žowdagesownax(ol)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>žowdages(ow)n marġavenow(ol)y bowcalowġoy : alēlowya salmos xġ ya bowġana-he xoranowx wē ž'e</i> : – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Prophets (and) Altars. Alleluia-psalm 83: "How amiable are your tents, Lord!"	83.2 [84.2]	A10va, 18–19
Mt. 5.17–24	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr žowdagesownax(ol)c</i> – 'Lecture from the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	–	–	A14fb, 3–4
Mt. 10.16–22	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr žowdagesownax(ol)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>žowdagesown mowč'(ow)rā'y alēlowya salm(ol)s yčā bamgen-ne bartay-hanayoenke čameown(ow)ix</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Saints. Alleluia-psalm 31: "Blessed is (he) who has given up (his) transgressions"	31.1 [32.1]	A12r, 0–4
Mt. 10.24–32 [10.24–36]	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr žowdagesownax(ol)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>žowdages(ow)n mowč'(ow)rā'y</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Saints'	–	A11vb, 19
Mt. 10.41–42 [10.37–42]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A13r)
Mt. 14.2–12 [1–12]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A103v)
Mt. 16.16–20 [16.13–20]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A103r)

Mt. 17.1–5 [17.1–9]	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>šowdages(ow)n en'eg-lam-batk'own</i> : <i>alēlowya salmos</i> : <i>ia</i> : <i>aša-lax(o)c yordanan(ow)n hermonax(o)c bowax(o)c maletx(o)c</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the feast) of Transfiguration. Alleluia-psalm 41: "From the land of Jordan and the mountain Hermon, the small one (i.e. Mizar)"	41.7 [42.6]	A13va, 11
Mt. 19.27–30	(lost)	(lost)	–	(B4ra, 18)
Mt. 20.1–16	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>šowdages(ow)n pawlosi</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Paul'	–	B4v, 10
Mt. 22.23–33	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c ow-pes(ow)n</i> : – 'Lection from the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>šowdages(ow)n aharani yešoi</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Aaron (and) Joshua'	–	A42vb, 2–3
Mt. 23.34–38 [23.34–24.1]	< <i>Ma>teosi Mowč'owr šow<agesownaχ(o)c</i> > – 'From the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>šowdages(ow)n marǵavenowǵy zakariyay</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of the Prophets (and) Zechariah'	–	B3va, 5–6
Mt. 24.29–35	<i>Mateosi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c ow-pes-own</i> – 'Lection from the Holy Gospel of Matthew'	<i>šowdages(ow)n iħālown</i> : <i>alēlowya salmos d'e š'ǵ üwx hē-ne age-çale-ǵa-n-pē asālen</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of the Cross. Alleluia-psalm 95 (1): "The Lord has become king, may the earth rejoice!"	96.1 [97.1]	A15ra, 6–7
Mk. 15.39–41	<i>Markosi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c ow-pesown</i> – 'Lection from the Holy Gospel of Mark'	<i>šowdages(ow)n čibǵ(o)y</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Women'	–	A15va, 11–12
Lk. 1.57–80	<i>Lowkasi mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Luke'	<i>šowdages(ow)n bixēown(ow)n yohanēsi</i> : <i>alē(ow)ya salm(o)s č'ǵy hatenke š'ǵ te-en'e-hē</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of the Nativity of John (the Baptist). Alleluia-psalm 123: "If the Lord had not been"	123.1 [124.1]	A35vb+A36rb, 12–13
Lk. 2.1–7	<i>Lowkasi Mowč'owr šowdagesownaχ(o)c OwpeSown</i> : – 'Lection from the Holy Gospel of Luke'	<i>šowdages(ow)n maryami</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Mary'	–	A36vb, 14–15

Tab. IV (continued)

Lection	Title	Gloss	Psalm	Position
Lk. 4.14–22	<i>Lowkasi Mowč'owr žowdağesownaxoç owpesown</i> – 'Lection from the Holy Gospel of Luke'	<i>žowdağesown isai marğaven(ow)n</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of the prophet Isaiah'	–	A34va+A37ra, 13–14
Lk. 4.25–36 [4.25–37]	<i>Lowkasi Mowč'owr žowdağesownaxoç</i> – 'From the Holy Gospel of Luke'	<i>žowdağes(ow)n marğaven(o)wğoy alēlowya salm(o)s qalec'an</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of prophets. Alleluia-psalm: "You ..."	unde-terminated	A44va, 19–20
Lk. 7.1–10	<i>E xown' uwxRoy hūwkel-balnaxoštay Lowkasi Mowč'owr žowdağesownaxoç owpesown</i> : – 'At that place, from the commemoration of Kings. Lection from the Holy Gospel of Luke'	<i>žowdağes(ow)n uwxr(o)ly own goeā'y alēlowya salm(o)s ý ž'e mil'anownen wē hūw-k-hē-qa-n</i> – 'Gospel (lection for the commemoration) of Kings and Rulers. Alleluia-psalm 20: "By your strength may rejoice"	20.2 [21.2]	A8rb, 17–20
Acts 1.13–14 [1.1–14]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A104r)
Acts 12.1–10 [12.1–24]	<i>Ašrox hebiyayō-y Owpesown</i> – 'Lection from the Acts of the Apostles'	<i>owpes(ow)n petrosi own yaKa(bi he)biyayoya gare ze(beday)</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Peter and James the Apostle, the son of Zebedee'	–	A57rb, 5–6
Acts 13.17–42 [13.16–42]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(B27r)
Jac. 1.1–11	<i>Yakobi katolikewğoy D'iḡnowx(o)c byex-osřay owpes(ow)n</i> : – 'Lection from the Catholic Letter of James, from the beginning (<i>lit.</i> 'head')	<i>owpes(ow)n yakobi hebiyayoya</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of James the Apostle'	–	A3ra, 16–17

II Pet. 1.12–19	<i>Ṗetrosi katolikowǵoy Powran(ow)n D'ipnow- xoc owpesown</i> : – ‘Lecture from the Second Catholic Letter of Peter’	<i>owpes(ow)n Ṗetrosi own čibǵoy</i> – ‘Lecture (for the commemora- tion) of Peter and the Women’	–	A4ra, 3–5
I John 1.1–9	< <i>Yohanani katal'ike-owǵoy serbaown d'ipnowxoc owp-e>s-own</i> > – ‘Lecture from the First Catholic Letter of John’	(lost)	–	A104rb, 13–14
Rom. 8.9–27	< <i>Hromao-wǵoy D'ip-nowǵox Ṗawlosi <hebiyayoya Owpe>sown</i> : – ‘Lecture from the Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) the Romans of Paul the Apostle’	(lost)	–	B25ra, 1–2
Rom. 8.28–39	<i>Hromao-wǵoy D'ipnowxoc Ṗawlosi he-biyayoy<a owpesown</i> > – ‘Lecture from the Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) the Romans of Paul the Apostle’	<i>owpes(ow)n mowč'(ow)rǻ'y</i> – ‘Lecture (for the commemora- tion) of Peter and the women’	–	B34vb, 7–8
Rom. 12.1–17	<i>Hromao-wǵoy D'ipnowxoc Ṗawlosi hebiyay- oya Owpesown</i> : – ‘Lecture from the Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) the Romans of Paul the Apostle’	<i>owpes(ow)n mowč'(ow)rǻ'y</i> – ‘Lecture (for the commemora- tion) of Saints’	–	A39vb, 17–19
I Cor. 15.51–58	<i>Korintaowǵoy Serbaown D'ipnowxoc</i> : <i>Ṗawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> – ‘Lecture from the First Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) the Corin- thians of Paul the Apostle’	<i>owpes(ow)n mowč'(ow)rǻ'y</i> – ‘Lecture (for the commemora- tion) of Saints’	–	B34rb, 10–12
I Cor. 12.26–14.2	< <i>Korintaowǵoy serba>own d'ip-nowxoc Ṗawlosi hebiyayoy<a ow<pesown</i> :> – 'Lecture from the First Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle’	(lost)	–	B26ra+ B31va, 13–15

Tab. IV (continued)

Lection	Title	Gloss	Psaln	Position
II Cor. 4.7–18	<i>Ɔorintaowŋoy Powran(ow)n D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiy(al)yoya owpesown</i> – 'Lection from the Second Letter to (lit. of) the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle'	<owp>es(ow)n <now>ç(ow)r <ð̄>y – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Saints'	–	A69va, 17–18
II Cor. 5.1–10	<i>Ɔorintaowŋo<y> P<owra>ŋ(ow)n D'ipnowxoc Paw<losi hebiy(al)yoya owp>esown</i> – 'Lection from the Second Letter to (lit. of) the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)n m<ow>ç(ow)rð̄'y</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Saints'	–	A68vb, 12–13
II Cor. 9.4–15 [9.1–15]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(A56r)
II Cor. 11.23–31	<i>Ɔorintaowŋoy Powran(ow)n D'ipnowx(ol)c Pawlosi hebiy(al)yoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Second Letter to (lit. of) the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)n hebiyayð̄'y</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Apostles'	–	A77va, 6–8
Gal. 1.11–20	< <i>Galata>owŋoy D'ipnow<xoc Pawlosi hebiya>yoya owpesown</i> – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Galatians of Paul the Apostle'	(lost)	–	B15va, 18–19
Gal. 4.4–6 [3.24–4.7]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(B65v)
Eph. 2.4–8	<i>Epesowŋoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Ephesians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)n besesownwŋoy salmos korbaale l̄ b̄'e ix-qa-žan-hē</i> – 'Lection for (lit. of) the Supplications. Psalm-refrain 66: "God, may we be pitiful!"	66.2 [67.2]	B23va, 10–11

Eph. 4.11–16 [4.7–16]	(lost)	(lost)	–	(B67r)
Eph. 5.25–30 [5.25–32]	<i>Epesawǰoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya</i> <i>owpesown</i> : – 'Lecture from the Letter to (lit. of) the Ephesians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpesown mtiwǰenax eklesiwǰoy</i> – 'Lecture (read) on the feast of the Churches'	–	A27ra, 16–18
I Thess. 2.5–12	<i>Tesalalikeawǰoy (!) Serbaown d'ipnowx(o)c</i> <i>Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpes(ow)jn</i> : – 'Lecture from the First Letter to (lit. of) the Thessa- lonians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpesown hebiy(o)ǰǎ'y</i> – 'Lecture (for the commemoration) of Apostles'	–	A33rb, 8–10
I Thess. 4.12–17	<i>Tesalonok-sawǰoy (!) serbaown d'ipnowxoc</i> <i>Pawlosi -heb>iyayoya owpesown</i> – 'Lecture from the First Letter to (lit. of) the Thessa- lonians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)jn helegiyax hǎǎ'y</i> – 'Lecture (for the commemora- tion) of (those) having been in hope' (?)	–	A75vb, 20–22
II Thess. 2.13– 3.3	<i>Tesalonikaawǰoy Powran(ow)jn d'ipnowx(o)c</i> : <i>Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lecture from the Second Letter to (lit. of) the Thessa- lonians of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)jn hebiyǰǎ'y own margavenowǰ(o)j</i> – 'Lecture (for the commemoration) of Apostles and Prophets'	–	A38rb, 14–16
Heb. 2.14–18	(lost)	(lost)	–	(B65r)
Heb. 3.1–6	< <i>Ebraawǰoy D'ipnowx>oc</i> : <i>Paw<losi</i> <i>hebiyayoya owpe>Sawn</i> : – 'Lecture from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	(lost)	–	B16va, 16–17
Heb. 9.1–7	< <i>Ebraawǰoy d'ip<nowxoc</i> <i>Pawlosi</i> <i>hebi>yayoya <owpes(ow)jn</i> :> – 'Lecture from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(ow)jn aharon kahaown own tǰapan(ow)jn</i> – 'Lecture (for the commemoration) of Aaron the Priest and the Ark'	–	B16rb, 15–17

Tab. IV (continued)

Lection	Title	Gloss	Psalm	Position
Heb. 11.17–27 [11.17–31]	<i>Ebraowgoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(own) derigoy ban'ia'y yešoi</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of the Patriarchs (lit. great fathers) (and) Joshua'	–	A5rb, 5–7
Heb. 11.32–40	<i>Ebraowgoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(own) hebiyayā'y own margavenowgoy</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Apostles and Prophets'	–	B42ra, 19–21
Heb. 12.1–5 [12.1–11]	<i>Ebraowgoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(own) mowc(ow)rā'y own pfađārowgoy</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Saints and the Forty'	–	A67va, 1–2
Heb. 12.18–19 [12.18–28]	<i>Ebraowgoy D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (lit. of) the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(own) besesownowgoy</i> – 'Lection for (lit. of) the Supplications'	–	A78vb+ A75fb, 13–15
Heb. 13.10–16	<i>Ebraowgoy D'ipnowx(o)c : Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpesown</i> :	<i>owpes(own) besesownowgoy</i> – 'Lection for (lit. of) the Supplications'	–	A56vb, 9–11
I Tim. 2.1–7	<i>Timotiosi serbaown D'ipnowxoc Pawlosi hebiyayoya owpes(own)</i> : – 'Lection from the First Letter to (lit. of) Timothy of Paul the Apostle'	<i>owpes(own) iuxroy</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Kings'	–	A26ra, 20–22
I Tim. 3.14–16	<i>Müwæten(own) mowc(ow)r : İhālowm own ekleslowgoy Salmos İorbaale : ye š'e bowğana-biyay-zow cegowown kađin vē : Timoteosi Serbaown d'ipnowxoc Pawlosi Hebiyayoya owpesown</i> ('Lection) of the feast of the Holy Cross and the Churches. Psalm-refrain 25: "Lord, I love the splen-	<i>owpes(own) müwætenowx ekleslowgoy</i> 'Lection (read) on the feast of the Churches'	25.8 [26.8]	A28rb+ A27vb, 11–16

<p>dour of Your house". Lection from the First Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) Timothy of Paul the Apostle'</p>	<p>II Tim. 4.1–8 <i>Ṭimot<easi> Ṗowran(ow)n D'ipnowxoc Ṗa<wlosi> hebijayoya owpes(ow)n></i> – 'Lection from the Second Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) Timothy of Paul the Apostle'</p>	<p><i>owpes(ow)n Ṗawlosi own iskapos(o)wǵ(o)y</i> – 'Lection (for the commemoration) of Paul and the Bishops'</p>	<p>–</p>	<p>B24vb, 5–6</p>
	<p>Tit. 2.11–15 <i>Ṭitosi D'ipnowx(o)c Ṗawlosi Hebijayoya owpesown</i> : – 'Lection from the Letter to (<i>lit.</i> of) Titus of Paul the Apostle'</p>	<p><i>owpes(ow)n akowk-hēown(ow)n</i> – 'Lection (for the feast) of Epiphany'</p>	<p>–</p>	<p>A29rb, 7–8</p>
	<p>Isaiah 35.3–8 <i>Owpe(s(ow)n isai margavenaxoc</i> : – 'Lection from the Prophet Isaiah'</p>	<p><i>owpes(ow)n kačioya own marmir-ra(ra)-hēoya</i> : – 'Lection (for the commemoration of the healing of) the Blind (man) and the Paralytic (<i>lit.</i> having become weak-bodied)'</p>	<p>–</p>	<p>A70vb, 18–19</p>

moṣṣ'(ow)*r*-<*â*~*y* *ičē*> 'Revered is before the Lord the death of His saints'), and Ps. 18.5 [19.4] (*Lowś*<*ow aśalaṣ ta-bâhē-ne il'ow*> [*â*~*ly* : 'Their word goes out into all the world').

Other paratextual elements are rare in the Lectionary part of the palimpsests. We do find Ammonian and Euthalian section numbers such as $\overline{dā}$, $\overline{d̄b}$ and $\overline{d̄g}$ = 91, 92 and 93 for Matthew 10.25b, 26b and 27 (A12va, 6, 12, 17) or $\overline{c̄b}$ = 12 for Romans 8.18 (B25va, 7); the numbers are not always reliable as in the case of $\overline{xē}$ = 87 which appears two times on f. A12ra+A11va, for both Matthew 10.17 and 10.18 (recte: * \overline{xz} = 88).⁴¹ In two cases, a Euthalian section number which is dividable by 50 is introduced in the margin by the word *koḍ'owr*, lit. 'houses', matching the Armenian term *townk'* and, furtheron, the Semitic tradition which denotes text sections as 'houses' (Syr. *baytā* etc.); this is \overline{f} = 50 for I Thessalonians 2.9b (A38ra, 17)⁴² and $\overline{z̄f}$ = 250 for Ephesians 5.29b (B67va, 3). A correction of the text may be intended with the gloss *č̄in'a* appearing in the left margin of fol. A11va (l. 16) facing Matthew 10.18. If this is the genitive of *č̄in* 'tribe, kind', it might indicate this word to be inserted between *bezi* 'my' and *gāen* 'because of' yielding **bezi č̄in'a gāen* 'because of my kind' or, alternatively, after *powlaygana ā̄y* 'to witness for them' yielding **powlaygana ā̄y č̄in'a* 'to witness for their kind'; however, these amendments find no counterpart in other text versions. Unclear is the gloss readable as *xt*: (or *xa*?) in the left margin facing Mark 15.39 (A8ra, 14); it might conceal a number 89 (or 81) but this matches neither the Ammonian section (225) nor other numbers known for this verse (e.g., 47 in the Armenian Bible).⁴³

The most important paratext in the lectionary part is a single text line written in characters of minor size (appr. 3 mm) that is visible in the upper margin of fol. B25r, originally extending over both columns of which the left one has mostly been burnt off. In the edition, its remnants were tentatively read as <*****>{*}<*>*ra(l)i zo(w) [ai]-bah[~]k(e) [k]a(na)[y] p̄ṣiya-al e[fe] ž]a* and rendered as '... .. which I fulfil all the time, that for us',⁴⁴ without any relation discernible

⁴¹ Other attested section numbers for the Gospel of Matthew are 32: 5.14 (A14ra, 8); 35: 5.19 (A13rb, 13 and A9vb, 21); 99, 100: 10.41, 42 (A13ra, 1, 10); 145: 14.6 (A103vb, 14); 167: 16.17 (A34ra, 2); 198: 16.20 (A34rb, 4; recte: 168); 199: 19.30 (B4va, 7); 240: 23.34 (B3va, 7); 258: 24.29b (A15ra, 8); for the Gospel of Luke: 17: 4.14 (A37ra, 15); 19: 4.22 (A44va, 14); 22: 4.25 (A44va, 21); 24: 4.32 (A43va, 15); 67: 7.10 (A45ra, 20; recte: 66); for the Pauline Epistles: 4: I Tim. 2.1 (A29vb, 1); 17: Heb. 12.1 (A67va, 1).

⁴² Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, I-34).

⁴³ The facing verse contains the strange misspelling *bāhn'i* for *bān'i* 'great' (influenced by the variation in the spelling of the two verbs *bā(h)esown* 1. 'think' 2. 'go?') in *xo-ḡāaray-bān'ioow* dat. 'centurion', lit. 'great one of the five (times) twenty' but this seems not to have a relation to the gloss.

⁴⁴ Gippert et al. (2008: II, VII-43).

to the text on the page which begins with a lection of Romans 8.9–27. On the basis of the new images available now, the line, which was probably written in red ink, can be restored as <üwġa-biyesown hüw>{ķ}{[el]-bali[ġ]o[y]} {ba}[i]-ba-h̄ke kanay p̄šiya-al e[r]m̄a,⁴⁵ with the last word representing the name of Jerusalem in abbreviated form (dat. *erowsalema). In the way indicated, the line can be taken to be a close match of the headings of the Armenian and Georgian lectionaries of the Jerusalem rite if it meant ‘Collection of the commemorations that are fulfilled all the time in Jerusalem’ (cf. Chapter 6 of the present Handbook [Renoux] for more details). If this is correct, fol. B25, with the lection from Romans 8 it contains, must have been the first folio of the “Lectionary” codex preserved in the palimpsests.

3.2 The codicological structure

The assumption that fol. B25 represented the first folio of the lectionary part is supported by one more observation. Below the middle of the heading but still above the text columns, fol. B25r exhibits the single letter **Ⲛ** = ē encircled by dots, probably written in the same hand and ink as the heading. Its position (in the middle of the upper margin) and its design suggest that we have a quire number here, with ē representing ‘7’. This of course would not fit off-hand with the suggestion of fol. B25 being the first folio of the lectionary part; however, if we consider that the codex containing the Gospel of John must have comprised exactly six quires, we arrive at another assumption: the lectionary part might have been added secondarily to the Gospel part, beginning with the 7th quire of the composite codex thus produced. Even though the resulting composition of an entire Gospel of John with a collection of lections from other Biblical texts following it remains strange, this would easily explain why the contents of both parts are intermingled without any guiding principle in the Sinai palimpsests. It may be noteworthy in this context that in contrast to the codex containing the Gospel of John, the alleged first quire of the lectionary begins with a flesh side; one more indication that the composite codex was piled up secondarily from two originally independent manuscripts. For the quire number, this implies that it was added after the two manuscripts were put together.⁴⁶ This assumption is further corroborated by a second quire number appearing in the lectionary part, namely, in the

⁴⁵ A few characters appear on a scrap of B25 that was photographed together with B27.

⁴⁶ In this context it may be noted that the usual abbreviation for Jerusalem is not *er̄m̄*- as in the heading but *e[r]m̄*- as in B15ra, l. 14 (Galatians 1.17); this might indicate that the heading was also added secondarily, by a later hand.

upper margin of fol. A77r where we find the single letter **P** = *z* representing the number '8', thus obviously indicating the eighth quire of the composite codex.

If we further consider that there are eight folios with 23 lines per column in the lectionary part which contain contiguous text beginning with fol. B25r and exhibiting a "mirroring" distribution in a similar way as the quires of the Gospel of John, we are now able to clarify the internal structure of the underlying codex in a much better way than before. In the edition of 2008, the content of the Lectionary part was described as consisting of six contiguous sets of lections from the Gospels and four contiguous sets of lections from Acts, Epistles, and the Old Testament; the arrangement of the sets was not determined. In both groups, two sets each can now be merged due to new readings (the remnants of the right column of fol. A103rb contain not Matthew 14.15–16 but Matthew 16.13–16, a lection immediately continued on fol. A34ra, and the two newly found fragments B67 and B65 represent the folios missing between A27rb and A29ra), and on the basis of codicological observations. The resulting structure is straightforward indeed: the Lectionary part can now be shown to have consisted of five quires (i.e. quires VII–XI of the composite codex), arranged in quaternions (with but one exception: the fourth quire must have been a quinion); it first comprised the 29 lections from the Pauline Epistles, then the 6 lections from Acts and Catholic Letters, then the Old Testament lection, and at its end, the 22 lections from the synoptical Gospels. The first Gospel lection must have been Matthew 10.16–22, which begins on fol. A12ra with the title appearing in the upper margin (cf. above), possibly an indication that this title, too, was added secondarily; it must have followed the lection from Isaiah and the sequence of Psalms concluding fol. A70rb. The only inconsistency is found in the fifth (or last) quire (quire *XI), where some text must be missing between Luke 4.36 on fol. A44rb and Matthew 5.13 on fol. A14ra. Here we have to assume either one (or several) extra folios to have been inserted outside of the quaternion structure of the quire or, alternatively, that the bifolium consisting of A14+A9 and A15+A8 (containing Matthew 5.13–16, 5.17–24, 24.29–35, Mark 15.39–41, plus the title and the *incipit* of Luke 7.1) was secondarily substituted for another bifolium. An indication of this might be the fact that the title of Luke 7.1 on fol. A8rb is the only one among the Gospel lections that contains the indication of the occasion (commemoration of Kings, cf. 3.1 above); in addition, the last line is not filled, thus leaving some space before the continuation of the lection on fol. A42ra. The complete structure as established now is illustrated in Table V, with the problematical bifolio marked by light blue colour.

In spite of the heading now determined, it is clear from this reconstruction that the Lectionary part of the Albanian palimpsests was anything but a typical representative of its genre: the sequence of lections does not follow the liturgical

year, and in contrast to the other witnesses of the Jerusalem rite, it does not group lections from the “Apostolos” with Gospel lections read on the same date. What we do find is sequences of lections that pertain to the same “general” type of commemoration; e.g., the first five lections (from the Pauline Epistles) all concern the commemoration of Saints, the following ones are associated with either the Apostles or Prophets. This strongly reminds us of the groups of “common” commemorations that we find in the Georgian Lectionary (LG);⁴⁷ here we have, e.g., a group for the Martyrs with Epistle lections beginning with Romans 8.10–17 and ending with Hebrews 12.1–11,⁴⁸ thus corresponding in a remarkable way to the first quire of the Albanian lectionary. The correspondence appears even stronger if we consider that after the (defective) lection of Hebrews 12.1–11 in the palimpsest (fol. A67vb) we have the first list of psalm verses (on fol. B26ra), just as in LG where seven “alleluia-psalms” follow after Hebrews 12.11.⁴⁹ And interestingly enough, the first Gospel lection following the psalms in LG, Matthew 10.16–22, is also the first of the Gospel lections in the palimpsested codex according to the reconstruction now proposed. Nevertheless, the codex that was re-used in the palimpsests cannot represent a lectionary in its proper sense but must have been a selection from lectionary materials re-arranged after a different purpose; this question is dealt with in extenso by Charles Renoux in Chapter 6 of this Handbook.

3.3 The text of the Albanian lectionary

In addition to the divergences in the layout, the Lectionary part differs from the Gospel of John by some peculiar traits. E.g., the word for ‘teacher’ is here spelt *vartapet-* throughout, not *vardapet-* as in the Gospel; a similar variation is found in Armenian manuscripts, too. As in the Gospel of John, there are several peculiarities in the Albanian text that correspond to the Armenian Bible; this is true, e.g., of abstract nouns appearing in the plural such as *gorowx* ‘sins’ matching Armenian *z-mels* in Hebrews 12.1 (fol. A67va, 9) vs. sing. Greek ἀμαρτίαν, Georgian *codvay*, and Syriac *ḥtītā*, or *biyayownowx* ‘creatures’ matching Armenian *ararack’n* in Romans 8.19–21 (B25va+32ra, 12–13, 17 and 22–23) vs. sing. Greek κτίσις, Georgian *dabadeba-* / *dabadebul-i*, and Syriac *brītā*. In II Corinthians 4.17 (A68vb, 2), the Albanian text agrees with the Armenian in speaking of a “temporary increase of the slight distress” (*e pñiyown owxa-ariyen e owsī qaç-aķesownown ~ aržamayn yaça-xowt’iwn t’et’ew nelowt’eans*), while the other versions only denote a “temporary

⁴⁷ Cf. Galadza (2018: 342–347) as to the “general commemorations” in the Jerusalem liturgy.

⁴⁸ Cf. Tarchnišvili (1960a: 80–71 / 1960b: 64–65, nos. 1475–1484).

⁴⁹ Ps. 88.8, 33.9, 114.1, 115.12, 149.5, 100.6, 86.1, cf. Tarchnišvili (1960a / 1960b: no. 1484).

Tab. V: Reconstruction of the ‘Lectionary’ codex.

VII									
Rom. 8.9–25	Rom. 8.25–27; II Cor. 4.7–18; II Cor. 5.1–2	II Cor. 5.2–10; Rom. 12.1–9	Rom. 12.9–17; I Cor. 15.51–58; Rom. 8.28–30	Rom. 8.30–39; Heb. 11.32–35	Heb. 11.35–40; I Thess. 2.5–12; II Thess. 2.13	II Thess. 2.13–3.3; Heb. 12.1–5 [11]	Ps. 18.5 etc.; I Cor. 12.26–13.6		
B25r	A68r	A32r	B34r	B33r	A33r	A67r	B26r	B26v	
B32v	A69v	A39r	B41v	B42v	A38v		B31v	B31r	
VIII									
I Cor. 13.6–14.2; II Cor. 11.23–27	II Cor. 11.27–31; Gal. 1.11–19; II Tim. 4.1–3	II Tim. 4.3–8; Ps. 25.8; I Tim. 3.14–16; Eph. 5.25–29	Eph. 5.29–30 [32]; Eph. 4.[7] 11–12 [14]	Eph. 4.14–15 [16]; Gal. [3.24] 4.4–6 [7]; [Heb. 2.14]	Heb. 2.14–18; Tit. 2.11–15; I Tim. 2.1–5	I Tim. 2.5–7; Heb. 3.1–6; Eph. 2.4–8; Heb. 9.1–2	Heb. 9.2–7; I Thess. 4.12–17; Heb. 12.18–19		
A77r	B24r	A28r	B67v	B65v	A29r	B23r	A78r	A78v	
A76v	B15v	A27v			A26v	B16v	A75v	A75r	
(IX)									
[Heb. 12.19–28]; [II Cor. 9.1–4]	II Cor. 9.4–15; Heb. 13.10–11	Heb. 13.11–16; Heb. 11.17–27	[Heb. 11.27–31]; [Act. 1.1–10]	Act. 1. [10] 13–14; I Jo. 1.1–9	I Jo. 1.9; II Pet. 1.12–19; Jac. 1.1–5	Jac. 1.5–11; Act. 12.1–10	[Act. 12.10–24] [Act. 13.16–17]		
	A56r	A5r			A4r	A57r			
	A49v	A49r		A104r	A3v	A48v			
(X)									
Act. 13.17–34	Act. 13.34–42; Is. 35.3–8; Ps. 25.8 etc.	Mt. 10.16–22; Mt. 10.24–32	Mt. 19.27–30; Mt. 20.1–7	Mt. 20.7–16; Mt. 23.34–38	[Mt. 23.38–24.1]; [Mt. 10.37–41]	Mt. 10.41–42; Mt. 5.17–20; Mt. 17.1–5	[Mt. 17.6–9]		
B27r	A73r	A12r	B4r	B3r		A13r			
B30v	A70v	A11v	B2v	B6v		A10v			

(XI)

Mt. 14,[1]–[12]; Mt. 16,[13]–16	Mt. 16.16–20; Mt. 2.16–18; Lk. 4.14–19	Lk. 4.19–22; Lk. 4.25–36	Mt. 5.13–16; Mt. 5.17–24	Mt. 5.24; Mt. 24.29–35; Mk. 15.39–41; Lk. 7.1	Lk. 7.1–10; Mt. 22.23–25	Mt. 22.25–33; Lk. 2.1–7; Lk. 1.57–58	Lk. 1.58–80
	A34r	A43r	A14r	A15r	A42r	A35v	A105r + B62r
A103v	A34v	A43v	A14v	A15v	A42v	A35v	A105v + B62v
	A37r	A44r	A9r	A8r	A45v	A36r	A106r
	A37v	A44v	A9v	A8v	A45r	A36v	

distress” (Syriac *ʿulṣāneh d-zabnā*), a “temporary light distress” (Georgian *saçutroy ese mcire çiri*) or a “temporary lightness of the distress” (Greek τὸ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως).⁵⁰ In Matthew 16.19, only the Armenian and the Albanian texts (A37va, 20) add “once” (*miangam ~ som čar*) to “whatever you will bind on earth”, and in Hebrews 13.14, they agree with the Syriac in rendering the Greek participle μένουσαν ‘remaining’ by a modal relative clause “that is to remain” (*or mnaloc’ ē / bowresown-h~ke*).⁵¹ A clear agreement of the Albanian and Armenian texts with the Adishi Gospels can be seen in Mark 15.41 where the AAA trias speaks about “many other women” following Jesus (*en’eg avel čibowx-al ~ ew ayl bazowm kanayk’ ~ da sxuebica mravalni dedani*; A15vb+A8rb, 13–14), the other versions having only “many others” (καὶ ἄλλαι πολλαί / *da sxuani mravalni*).⁵²

A remarkable coincidence can also be seen in I Corinthians 15.51 where the Albanian text agrees with the Armenian and the older Georgian redaction of the Pauline Epistles⁵³ in commuting the distribution of positive and negative clauses in the mystery thematised by Paul, thus contrasting with the younger Georgian redaction and the Greek and Syriac versions. While the latter texts read “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”, the former invert this into “We shall all sleep, but we shall not all be renewed” (B41vb, 14–16). In a similar way, the three versions go together in Hebrews 12.19 in using a relative clause “where the trumpet was sounding” (A75rb, 21–22), thus contrasting with the nominalised expression “in the sound of the trumpet” of the other texts; here as in many other cases, we may further note the co-occurrence of an Albanian imperfect with its Armenian counterpart. Another remarkable coincidence is met with in II Thessalonians 3.1 where it is only the Albanian, Armenian and Syriac texts that append a phrase “in all places” to “(that the word) may be glorified” (A67rb, 6). An important case is provided by I Corinthians 12.28 where the Albanian text adds *e targowman(ow)n mowzroy*, i.e. ‘this translation of tongues’, to the list of functions and gifts God has appointed (B26rb+B31vb, 13–14). This addition is only matched by the Armenian text which has *t’argmanowt’iwns lezowac*; all other versions end the verse with the preceding item of the list, which is “diversities” or “kinds of tongues” throughout. The peculiarity of the Albanian text is the demonstrative pronoun *e* ‘this’, here combined with the singular abstract noun *targowmanown* ‘translation’, which is only explicable if it reflects the final -s of Arm. *t’argman-*

50 Several witnesses add προσκαιρον και after παραυτικα, which simply underlines the notion of ‘temporary’.

51 The Georgian text has the adverbial form *saçoplad* ‘for residing, remaining’.

52 In contrast to the Peshitta, which matches the Greek text, the Syriac Sinaiticus Palimpsest adds *māšammašān* ‘ministers, assistants’; this peculiarity requires further investigation.

53 Redaction AB in the edition by Dzotsenidze and Danelia (1974).

owt'iwns understood as the proximal definite article, not as the accusative plural ending ('translations of tongues', thus anticipating the content of the second verse to follow) as in all preceding objects of God's "appointment" (*zōrowt'iwns* 'powers' ~ Albanian pl. *mil'anownowχ*, *šnorhs* 'gifts of mercy' ~ *madil'owχ*, *azgs lezow-ac* 'kinds of tongues' ~ *qarmowχ mowzroy* etc.).⁵⁴

Calques of Armenian formations can be seen in the reduplicative *qar-qar* 'diverse', lit. 'sort (by) sort', which renders *pēs-pēs* 'id.' in James 1.2 (A4vb, 3), also matched by Georgian *pirad-pirad-i* but opposing itself to Greek *ποικίλος* and Syriac *mšahlpē*, and in the denotation of the sun as *bfeğown powl*, lit. 'eye of the sun', corresponding to Armenian *areg-akn* in Matthew 17.2 and 24.29 (A10ra, 21–22 and A15ra, 10) vs. plain ἥλιος, *mze-*, and *šamšā* in Greek, Georgian, and Syriac. In some cases, the Albanian text agrees with variants of the Armenian tradition; this is true, e.g., of II Corinthians 9.5 (A56ra, 10) where it reads *būwabiṭ-al of-biyay-baal-al-anke-ā~n* 'and that beforehand they should also make prepared', which corresponds to the Armenian variant reading *patrastesc'en* 'they should prepare', not to the form *patmesc'en* 'they should inform' of the *textus receptus* which also stands against Greek *προκαταρτίσωσιν*, Georgian *gangakrzalnen*, and Syriac *w-an'atdūn*. A peculiar critical value can be assigned to the placement of the sentence "and he stood up to read" (*hay-zari-na-va owpesa*, A34vb, 9–10) in Luke 4.16–17; here we see a clear correspondence of the Albanian text with the Armenian, the Georgian, and specific Greek and Syriac witnesses (cf. the synoptical arrangement in Table VI).⁵⁵

As in the Gospel of John, we find Semitisms here and there, partly matched by the Armenian text. This is true, e.g., for constructions with *kowyoc* 'by the hand of' indicating agents or instruments which are as frequent as in the Gospel of John; cf., e.g., Matthew 2.17 with *e kowyoc eremiya margavenown* 'by the hand of Jeremiah the Prophet' matching Syriac *b-yad 'eramyā nbīyā* and Armenian *i jeṛn eremiayi margarēi* vs. Greek *διὰ Ἰερεμίου τοῦ προφήτου* and Georgian *ieremia činačarmetṭuelisay*. The correspondances are not always straightforward, however; cf., e.g., II Corinthians 9.11 (A56va, 7–8) with *žaka kowyoc* 'by us' ~ Syr. *b-īda-n* vs. Arm. plain instrumental *mewk'*, Greek *δι' ἡμῶν* and Georgian *čuen mier*, II Cor. 9.12 (A49ra, 15) with *avelā~k kowyoc* 'by many' vs. Arm. *bazmōk'*, Greek *διὰ*

⁵⁴ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, 1-36); the other peculiarities mentioned ib. must now be given up: in Matthew 14.6, the name of Herodias is *herodia-*, not *herodiow-*, and in II Corinthians 9.13, *žow-dagesown* 'Gospel' is not combined with *al'e* 'old'.

⁵⁵ The Table contrasts the Greek text of the Codex Vaticanus (B, p. 1315) with that of the Korideti Gospels of Tbilisi (Θ, f. 133v) and the Syriac text of the Sinaiticus Palimpsest (S, f. 72v) with that of the Peshitta (P). The peculiar text form of the Korideti Gospels is also attested in some minuscule manuscripts (f¹).

Tab. VI: Luke 4:16–18 in synoptical arrangement, with the major difference highlighted.

Lk.	A34vb	Caucasian Albanian	English	Armenian	Georgian (Ad.)	Georgian (vulg.)	Greek (Θ, f. 133v)	Syriac (S, f. 72v)	English	Greek (B, p. 131E)	Syriac (P)
4:16	2	Afī-na-va nazarēṽax	He came to Nazareth,	Եւ եկին ի նազարէթ	ღო ძოვდალ ნაზარეთას,	ღო ძოვდალ ნაზარეთას,	καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαράτ,	ܕܢܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܢܘܘܪܝܢ	And he came to Nazareth,	καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Ναζαράτ,	ܕܢܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܢܘܘܪܝܢ
	3	bāni-hamayke-	where he grew	ուր սնեայն էր.	სადგვა აღზრდალ იყო,	სადგვა აღზრდალ იყო	ὅπου ἦν ἀνα-τετραμμένος,	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	where he had been brought up:	οὗ ἦν τετραμμένος,	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	4	-va-hē : baha-bāhē-n'a-	up. He went inside,	Եւ եմիտ	ღო შვედალ,	ღო შვედალ,	καὶ εἰσῆλθεν	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	and,	καὶ εἰσῆλθεν	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	5	-va zahown-anke-v'a-	as he was used to,	լստ սովորութեան իբրևս	ვითარცა ჩვეულ იყო იფო,	ვითარცა ჩვეულ იყო იფო,	κατὰ τὸ εἰσῶδες αὐτοῦ	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	according to his custom, he went	κατὰ τὸ εἰσῶδες αὐτοῦ	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	6	-hē šambatown g'iy'a'	on the day of sabbath	յառարն շաբաթուց	დღესას შაბათის დღეს,	დღესას შაბათის დღეს,	ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	on the sabbath day	ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
4:17	7	e z'dax : dāgē-n-oo'w'-	into the syna- gogue. To him was given	ի ժողովարան Եւ ետուն նրա վաս	შესაკრებელს შობის, და მისცეს მას	შესაკრებელს შობის, და მისცეს მას	εἰς τὴν συνα- γωγὴν, καὶ ἐπέδθη αὐτοῦ	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	into the syna- gogue and stood up to read. And to him was given	εἰς τὴν συν- αγωγὴν, καὶ ἀνέστη ἀναγνώσασθαι καὶ ἐπέδθη αὐτοῦ	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	8	xow d'ip isai mar'gavennown:	the book of the prophet Isaiah.	գիրս գեսայսայ մարգարէի.	წიგნი ესაიას წინამწებუტ-მეუღესაო,	წიგნი ესაიას წინამწებუტ-მეუღესაო,	βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἰσαΐου,	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	the book of the prophet Isaiah.	βιβλίον τοῦ προφήτου Ἰσαΐου,	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	9	hayz'a \iri-	He stood up	Եւ արիսաւ.	ადგვა	ადგვა	καὶ ἀνέστη	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ	And	καὶ	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ
	10	-na-va ow-pesa :	to read (it).	ընթերնարսլ.	კითხვად	კითხვად	ἀναγνώσασθαι	ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ			ܘܘܪܝܢ ܕܘܘܪܝܢ

11	axay-pë-anke- oen	When he had opened	in <i>hqr̥in. lrag</i>	და კაფიო	και ἀναπτύξας	amha	when he had opened	ἀνοίξας	ⲁⲛⲟⲓⲗⲁⲥ
12	e d'ip ' bax̥e-n- oow	the book, he found	<i>hqr̥in. hqr̥in</i>	წიგნი იგი გითხვედა და პოვა	τὸ βιβλίον εὗρεν	amhar. r̥abab	the book, he found	τὸ βιβλίον εὗρεν	ⲁⲛⲁⲃⲁⲣ. Ⲡⲁⲃⲁⲃ
13	e xown' cam- pë-hamaʹy' k̥e-	the place where it was written,	<i>q̥in̥ in̥ ab̥il̥h q̥ur̥m̥ in̥ hqr̥in̥ qr̥'</i>	აფცილო, რამიქლას წერდა იგი;	τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν γε- γραμμένον,	amhar. r̥abab	the place where it was written,	τὸν τόπον οὗ ἦν γεγραμμένον,	ⲁⲛⲁⲃⲁⲣ. Ⲡⲁⲃⲁⲃ
4.18	-hē hel ʒ' ē zal haŋla...	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me'...	<i>h̥am̥h in̥ 'n̥ i' q̥ur̥m̥ in̥</i>	სული უფლისა ჩემ ზედა...	Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐστ' ἐμῆ...	amhar. r̥abab ...h̥am̥h	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,	Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐστ' ἐμῆ,	Ⲡⲁⲃⲁⲃ Ⲡⲁⲃⲁⲃ ⲁⲛⲟⲓⲗⲁⲥ

πολλῶν, Georgian *mravaltats*, and Syriac *sagiyātā*, or Galatians 1.15–16 (B24va, 5–6) with *madil'owgok kowyc* 'by the (lit. hand of) graces' ~ Arm. *i jeṛn šnorhac'* vs. Greek διὰ τῆς χάριτος or Georgian plain instrumental *madlita*, but also *zaka kowyc* 'by me' (B24va, 7) vs. Arm. plain instrumental *inew*, Greek ἐν ἐμοί, and Georgian *čem mier*.⁵⁶

An interesting picture is provided by name forms again. We do find clear instances of a Semitic tradition as, e.g., in the name of the Sadducees, which appears as *zadokawox* (erg. *zadokawgon*) with an initial voiced *z* matching Syriac *zadūqāyē* and thus opposing itself to Armenian *sadowkec'ik'*, Georgian *saduqev-el-ni*, and Greek σαδδουκαῖοι (Matthew 22.23: A42vb, 5), or in the names of the prophet Eliseus (Elisha) which is written *eliša* (Luke 4.27: A44vb, 15) as in Syriac *'elišā'* vs. Greek Ἐλισαίου, Armenian *eliseiw*, and Georgian *elises*; the patriarch Jesse which appears as *yešē* (gen.; Acts 13.22: B27rb, 5–6) as in Syriac *Yišay* vs. Arm. *Yesse*, Gk. Ἰεσσαί, and Georg. *Iese*; and, probably, that of Joshua which we find twice written *yešoi* (genitive) in glosses (A42vb, 2–3 and A5r, 7, pertaining to Matthew 22.23–33 and Hebrews 11.17–27) matching Syriac *Yešu* vs. Arm. *Yesow*, Gk. Ἰησοῦς, and Georg. *Iso*. To these cases, we can further add the name of the Judge Samson whose initial letter is now discernible as a *š* (Hebrews 11.32: B33vb, 2), thus supposing a name form **šamšon-* matching Syriac *šemšūn* vs. Greek Σαμψών, Armenian *samp'sovn-*, and Georgian *sampson-*. On the other hand, the name of the mother of John the Baptist occurs as *elisabet-* (Luke 1.57: A36rb, 14) in agreement with Greek Ἐλισάβητ, Armenian *elisabet'* and Georgian *elisabet/d-* but opposing itself to Syriac *'elišba'*, just as *simon* (John 13.6: A59ra, 17 etc.) matches Arm. *Simovn*, Gk. Σίμων and Georg. *Simon* vs. Syr. *Šām'ūn*; and the name of Jerusalem is *erowsalem*.⁵⁷ with an *s* as in Greek Ἱεροσόλυμα, not an *š* as in Syriac *'urīšlem*. In contrast to the Gospel of John, the name of the prophet Isaiah appears not as *ešaya* but as *isai* (genitive) in the Lectionary part of the palimpsest, both within a pericope (Luke 4.17: A34vb, 8) and in paratexts (the gloss pertaining to the lection of Luke 4.14–22: A37ra, 14, and the title of the lection of Isaiah 35.3–8: A70vb, 19). In a similar way, the name of Moses occurs not as *mowšē* as in the Gospel of John but as *mowsēs* throughout (Matthew 17.3–4: A13vb, 3–4 and 12; Acts 13.39: A73rb, 3; Hebrews 3.2: B23rb, 6; Hebrews 3.5: B16vb, 19).

⁵⁶ The Syriac text of the Peshitta has plain *b-* 'in' in both these cases (*b-ṭaybūte-h*, *b-iy*). No corresponding Syriac expression is found for *kahanaowgoy-bān'ioowk kowyc* 'by (the hand of) the highpriest' in Hebrews 13.11 (A49rb, 20–21) ~ Arm. *i jeṛn k'ahanayapetin*, vs. Gk. διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως and Georgian *mgdeltmozgurisa mier*.

⁵⁷ Spelt out only once, in Mark 15.41 (A8rb, 16–17) at the very end of the pericope (see above); in all other places, the name is abbreviated as in the Armenian and Georgian Gospels (cf. n. 45 above).

All this suggests that the translations of the Gospel of John and of the Lectionary were undertaken under different circumstances, by different persons, with a different model, at a different place and/or a different time: the Lectionary underlying the palimpsested codex may indeed have been translated in a more “Hellenic” environment in Jerusalem while the Gospel of John may have emerged in a rather “Syro-Armenian” milieu in the Caucasus. However, even within the Lectionary part we find divergences that have a bearing on this question; this is true of the name of John which occurs both in a “Semitic” form, as *yohanan*, and in the “Greek” form *yohan(n)ēs* which, remarkably enough, is also the form used in the Gospel of John (1.6: A47va, 16; 4.1: A46vb,21 – A41va, 1; 5.36: A101ra, 5; probably also in 1.19: A47ra, 19–20; 5.33: A97rb, 15–16; and the gloss pertaining to 21.19: B39rb, 7). The co-occurrence cannot be motivated as reflecting the different persons meant: both *yohanan* and *yohan(n)ēs* can refer both to John the Baptist (*yohanan*: Acts 13.24–25, B30vb, 14, 19; *yohan(n)ēs*: Luke 1.61 and 63, A105ra, 11–12 and A106va, 21, and A35vb, 12 in the gloss indicating the lection for his Nativity, Luke 1.57 *sqq.*, as well as all attestations in the Gospel of John) and to John the Evangelist (brother of James, son of Zebedee; *yohanan*: Matthew 17.1, A10ra, 15; Acts 12.2, A57rb, 12; *yohan(n)ēs*: Acts 1.13, A104ra, 22). This seems to suggest that the circumstances of the translation may have been different even for individual lections.⁵⁸

4 The Albanian inscriptions

The work on the palimpsests also paved the way for a consistent decipherment and analysis of the few inscriptions in the Albanian language and script, which were therefore included in the first edition of the palimpsests in 2008. Of the total of ten artefacts dealt with there,⁵⁹ the first seven were excavated at Sudağilan near Mingachevir in Azerbaijan (cf. 1.2 above) and are now preserved in the National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, Baku where they were examined in greater detail by the present author during a visit in 2011; for some of the remaining inscriptions, new insights have meanwhile been gained via scholarly communica-

⁵⁸ A more thorough investigation of the remnants of the Albanian Bible translation is one of the tasks of the research project “The Development of Literacy in the Caucasian Territories” (“DeLiCaTe”) that has started in Hamburg in April, 2022.

⁵⁹ Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-85–94). The remnants of a few further inscribed fragments from Mingachevir with max. five characters each as reproduced in Qaziyev (1948: 399, Fig. 4) and Vahidov (1958: 114–115 with Figures 9–10) have remained undeciphered so far.

tion. In the following pages, all ten inscriptions are revisited in order to illustrate the present state of knowledge.⁶⁰

4.1 The cross pedestal

The longest inscription in Caucasian Albanian known so far is that on the four faces of the rectangular block from Sudağilan that has been determined to represent the pedestal (or a capital) for a cross (cf. 1.2 above and Figures 13a–d). Older pictures show that the beginning of the inscription (first and second faces) was still more complete when the monument was unearthed, but even then, most of the text of the third and fourth faces was missing (cf. Figures 4–7).⁶¹

Meanwhile, important parts from the first faces have been lost, too, as illustrated in Figures 14a–d. The essentials of the inscription have nevertheless been established with confidence: it commemorates the erection of a cross, obviously on the monument itself,⁶² by a Christian bishop in the 27th year of a king named Khosrow. Considering the fact that the autonomy of the Albanian church developed in the 6th century,⁶³ the king in question may well have been Khosrow I Anushirvan, the ruler of the Sasanian empire from 531 to 579; the event would in this case have taken place in 557.⁶⁴ The second Sasanian king of the same name, Khosrow II Parviz (r. 590–628), might also be taken into account; in this case, the year in question would be 616 CE.⁶⁵ In contrast to the name of the king,

60 The following pages are a revised version of Gippert (2016b), which was printed without images, without the application of the correct fonts and without any proofs submitted to the author.

61 Cf. Qaziyev (1948: 399–401) and Vahidov and Fomenko (1951: 97–98) for the first publications of the find. The images provided in these publications show the monument in the state of its detection; they prove that the remnants of the third and the beginning of the fourth line were discovered later and applied to the monument only after its restoration (cf. Figures 13c–d).

62 Cf. Vahidov (1958: 110 with Fig. 2) for a drawing showing the reconstruction of the monument with the cross; the hole for the insertion of the cross is preserved in the middle of the upper plane of the block.

63 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 4.2 as to the circumstances.

64 Cf. Gippert (2004: 117–118) as to details concerning this identification.

65 The fact that datings referring to Khosrow II are also found in the Armenian inscription of Bagaran and abound in Armenian literary sources and colophons (cf. Greenwood 2004: 42–43 with notes) may be taken to speak in favour of the latter identification. – Remnants of an Armenian inscription on plaster fragments found in a later layer of the Sudağilan complex (“VIII–IX Էրսլըր Էյդ օլան ճըրճընչյ մը՛Յըճ – the fourth temple, which belongs to the VIII–IX centuries”; Vahidov 1961: 142) have no relation to the Albanian inscription; the attempt of a reconstruction by A. Abrahamyan (1956a: 66–72), who assumes the “35th year of (the Byzantine emperor) Heraclius” (*ի ժամանակի երեսներորդի Հինգերորդի ամին երակդի*) has no basis as the

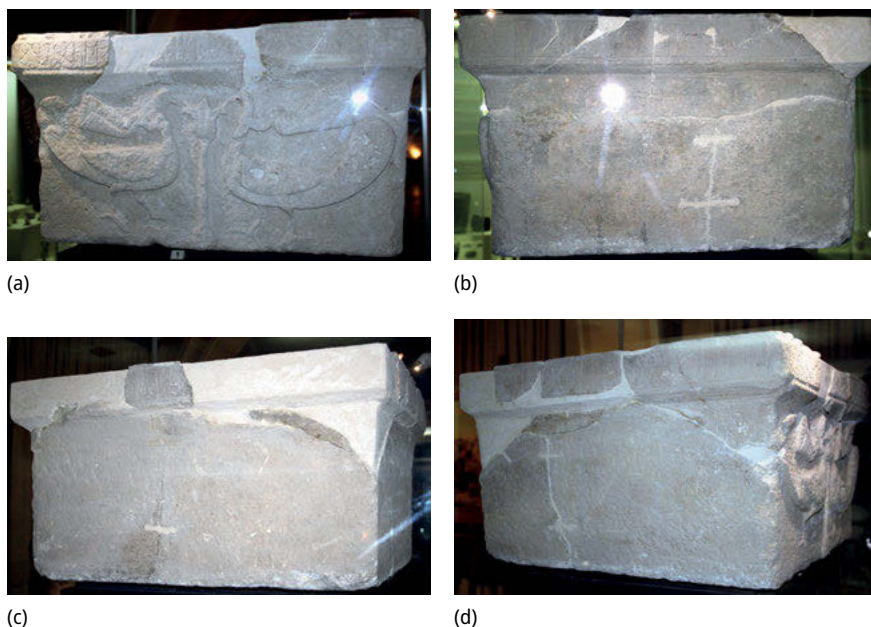


Fig. 13a-d: The four faces of the Mingachevir pedestal (2011).

still readable as *xosroow-* in the older photographs of face 2 (cf. Fig. 5)⁶⁶ of which only *xosro* has remained today (cf. Fig. 14b), the name of the bishop, which may have covered the beginning of face 4 (cf. Figures 7 and 14d), is anything but certain. The proposal to restore it as *[ab]âs*, thus matching the name of the Albanian patriarch Abas who, according to Armenian sources, transferred the ecclesiastical throne from Derbent to Partaw under Khosrow I,⁶⁷ must now be given up as the last character cannot be maintained to be an *s*. Instead we seem to read *-ây* at the given position, which would best be taken to represent the usual pronominal (“referentialised”) genitive plural ending (more precisely *-â~y*, with an abbreviation mark);⁶⁸ the word the ending belonged to must be left open, however. Another slight difference as to the reading published in the edition concerns the right-hand part of face 1 where instead of *ara-hêne*, past tense form of an

name of the emperor has not been preserved. The question of the dating of these fragments thus remains open (cf. Vahidov 1961: 148).

⁶⁶ Cf. Trever (1959, pl. 34); Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-85, Fig. 6). The reading *xosro(υ)* was first proposed by G. A. Klimov (1967: 78).

⁶⁷ Cf. Gippert (2004: 118–119).

⁶⁸ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-29–30) and Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.2.



Fig. 14a-d: The inscription on the four faces of the Mingachevir pedestal (2011).

otherwise unattested verb **ara-ihesown* with the meaning ‘to be erected’, it now seems more likely that we have to read *ala hēne*, with *ala* representing the postposition *hala* ‘(up)on’.⁶⁹ Third, it seems clear now that the final word of the inscription, comprising the four letters added on the surface of face 4, reads *biyayn*, not *biyayne*, thus lacking the final *-e* as part of the third person clitic marker which usually appears as *-ne*;⁷⁰ the meaning remains the same though (‘he made it’). Whether the four extant letters of the third face, *serb*, represent the ordinal number *serb[aown]* ‘first’ or *serb[esown]* ‘build’ or another form of the same verb, must remain open; the same is true for the identification of *čō-* on the fourth face with the name of Derbent, *Čor/Čol*. The resulting reading is displayed, together with a close transliteration, a simplified transcription and an English translation, in Table VII.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Whether or not there once was a letter $\text{ⴗ} = \langle h \rangle$ in the given fissure remains unclear.

⁷⁰ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.5.2.

⁷¹ In the transcripts of the inscriptions, characters that were still discernible in older photographs are marked with a light grey background in the original script and with round parentheses in the Latin transliteration; characters that are barely readable in any photograph, by a dark grey background in the original script and with square brackets in the Latin transliteration. Characters that are supplemented *in toto* are printed white on a black background in the original script and in angle brackets in the Latin transliteration.

Tab. VII: The Mingeçaur pedestal inscription.

1	ՋԿԳԶԻԵԵԵԵԵՅԻԹԻՓԻՊԻՊԻՉԻԿԻԿԻՅԻ	<i>çiyasžē(=be)[š](i)[ys]io[lo]<h>alahēneei</i>
2	ԿՍԳ ԴԵ ՕՒԻՇԻՅՅՐ ԿՕՒԼԼՕ ՕՒԻՍ	<i>hâl yē owsena xosroow<i></i>
3	ԿԿԼԵ ԶՕՒԻՍ... <i>serb<aown></i>
4	ՍԴ ՅՕԵԿԿԿ ԿԿՏԶԳՕՒԿԿԿ ԵԿ ԴՁԴԿ	... <i>ās čöfin iskaṗosen bi</i> <i>yayn</i>
1	<i>çiyas žē beši ys̄i olo hala hēne e i hâl</i>	In the name of our Lord Jesus! On the pillar was (erected) this ç ross
2	<i>ȳ ē owsena xosroowi</i>	in the 27(th) year of Khosrow
3 <i>serb</i> first/built
4	.. <i>āy</i> čöfin iskaṗosen bi yay-n	of the ... the bishop of Derbent ma de (it).

Another remarkable feature of the Mingachevir pedestal is the image on its front side, which exhibits two peacock-like birds facing each other with a plant stalk between them (cf. Fig. 15). Based upon a comparison with peacocks on a silver bowl detected in 1947 at Bartym in present-day Bashkortostan (cf. Fig. 16),⁷² K. Trever considered a Sasanian background for this symbol,⁷³ which would well agree with the Sasanian king being mentioned in the inscription. However, the Christian embedding of the pedestal suggests another origin. It has been noted for long that the symbol of two affronted peacocks with a plant or a flower basket between them appears as a decorative element in ancient Gospel manuscripts, more precisely, on their introductory pages comprising the Eusebian canon tables together with the letter to Carpianus as a “prologue”; this is true, e.g., for the oldest Armenian Gospel codexes (cf. Fig. 17 showing fol. 1r of the Ejmiatsin Gospels of 989).⁷⁴ In other Gospel manuscripts of Caucasian provenance, similar symbols (with peacocks or other birds) appear also on top of the “portals” to the individual Gospels as in the case of the Georgian Gospel codex of Vani (ms. A-1335 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre for Manuscripts, Tbilisi, 12th–13th cc., cf. Fig. 18) or on miniatures displaying the evangelists as in the Gospel codex of Jruchi (ms. H-1667 of the same Centre, 12th c., cf. Fig. 19).⁷⁵ In one of the oldest Greek Gospel

72 Image reproduced from Bader (1949: 86, Fig. 19a).

73 Trever (1959: 318 with n. 2) referring to Bader (1949) but also to I. A. Orbeli and L. A. Matsulevich who proposed a Transcaucasian origin.

74 Cf. Nordenfalk (1938: 99) as to the Ejmiatsin Gospels, Kouymjian (1993: 128) as to the Queen Mlk'ē Gospels of 862 and the Lazarian Gospels, Moscow, of 887, and Kouymjian (2011: 91–122). For the Ejmiatsin Gospels cf. the facsimile edition by Macler (1920); for the two-peacocks symbol in other traditions cf., e.g., Gnisci 2020 (Ethiopian) and Trinks 2020 (Latin).

75 Figures 7 and 8 are reproduced from Chkhikvadze (2010 / 2018: 51 and 43).



Fig. 15: Mingachevir Pedestal, front side (2011).



Fig. 16: The silver bowl of Bartym.

manuscripts, Cod. 847 of the Austrian National Library, Vienna, of about the 6th century from Ravenna, the peacock symbol occurs even more prominently on its initial page preceding the Eusebian prologue, in a decorative ornament with a cross inside (cf. Fig. 20a–b),⁷⁶ and the earliest complete Bible manuscript in Latin, the Codex Amiatinus (ms. Amiatino 1 of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence), contains a miniature of Ezra sitting in front of a book case whose triangular pediment shows two peacocks facing each other with a cross on a

⁷⁶ Drawing reproduced from Nordenfalk (1938: 157–158 and 190); the colour photograph is accessible at https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_7688876&order=1&view=SINGLE.



Fig. 17: Eusebian Prologue of Ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran 2374, fol. 1r (Ejmiatsin Gospels of 989 CE).

pedestal in between.⁷⁷ All this suggests that the image we see on the Mingachevir pedestal was meant to symbolise the Christianisation of the Albanians via the introduction of the Gospels as the principal texts of Christian faith.

⁷⁷ Cf. Ramirez (2009) and the digital colour image at https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcwdl.wdl_20150/?sp=8.



Fig. 18: Portal of the Gospel of Mark, Vani Gospels.



Fig. 19: Evangelists' Miniature, Jruchi Gospels.

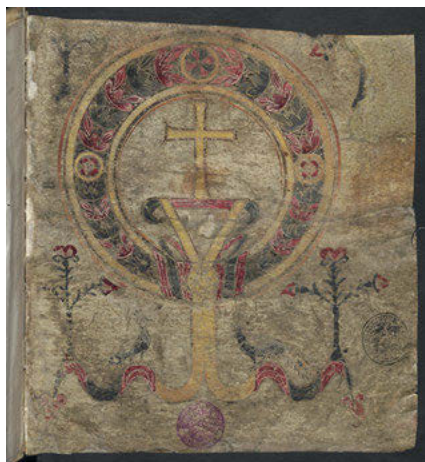
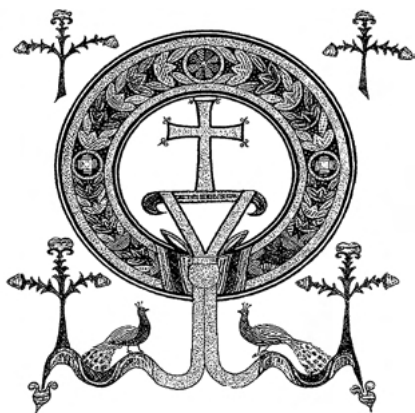


Fig. 20a-b: Title page of Ms. Vienna, Austrian National Library, Cod. 847 (ca. 6th c.).

4.2 Yog's candleholder

The second longest Albanian inscription is engraved in several lines on the four sides of a clay candleholder, as well from Sudağlan, measuring appr. 8 cm in height (cf. Figures 21a–d).⁷⁸ It names a certain Yog who obviously was its engraver:

⁷⁸ The artefact was first published by R. M. Vahidov (1951: 83–84 with Fig. 2).



Fig. 21a–d: Yog’s candleholder with inscription.

z(o)w yog gokarxē naišow b(ixašowǵ)ē ešowx beleǵa-hake e hūwken ašowx-biyay ‘I, Yog, the sinful servant of God, have made this appear with the heart as it is decent.’ In contrast to the published edition,⁷⁹ a minor correction concerns the arrangement of the lines across the four faces (cf. Figs. 10a–d), caused by the fact that the individual *e* character on the front face has now been identified as pertaining to the verb form *beleǵa*, a hitherto unattested present tense form with *l*-infix of the verb *beǵesown* ‘be necessary, have to’, or of the homonymous verb *beǵesown* ‘look’ which would yield a slightly different meaning (‘what the heart looks at’).⁸⁰ In addition, the *e* assumed in the third line within the verbal form *-karxē* (quasi **-karexē*) has turned out to be a mere scratch. The corrected reading is illustrated in Table VIII.

79 Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-88).

80 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.5.3 as to this type of present stem formation.

Tab. VIII: Yog's candleholder inscription.

	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
1	ՏԻԻՕ-				<i>zw yo</i>			
2	ՏՏՕ-				<i>g go</i>			
3	ԺԶԼ	ՎԸՎԶ	ՎԽՕԻ	ԵԸԵԼ	<i>kar</i>	<i>xē na</i>	<i>ifow</i>	<i>bē eṭ</i>
4				ՕԻԻԽԵԵԵԵ				<i>owx bele</i>
5a				ՏԶՅԶՏԵԵ				<i>gahake</i>
5b	ՄՍԻՏԵԵ	ՎԶՏՕԻԻԽԵԵ	ԴԶԴ		<i>hūwke</i>	<i>n ak[ow]xbi</i>	<i>yay</i>	

4.3 Potsherd inscription

For the defective four-line inscription on a potsherd of appr. 10.5 × 10 cm (Figures 22a–b),⁸¹ the inspection has brought about only little new insight. It now seems



Fig. 22a–b: Potsherd inscription (twofold view).

⁸¹ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-88–9); the find was first published by T. I. Golubkina (1949: 234–236). Readings were proposed by Vahidov (1958: 111–112), Abrahamyan (1964: 60–62), Gukasyan (1969: 61 no. 31 and 72), and Murav'ev (1981: 273–274 / 1998–2000: 45–47).

Tab. IX: Four-line potsherd inscription.

1	ՏՕԻ Գ Զ	<i>zow m[a]... ...</i>
2	ԲՄԻՏԶ	<i>büwğa... ...</i>
3	ՊՏԵՏՕԻ	<i>hke-zow</i>
4	ԲԵՄԻ	<i>[b]ē he[l]... ...</i>

more likely that the first character is not a *ġ* (of *ġowm* ‘palace’) but the *z* of the personal pronoun *zow* ‘I’, which is then followed by an *m* as the initial letter of a personal name, given the similarity with the fourth letter of line 3. Of the name itself, the remnants of an *a* as its second letter seem discernible at the right-hand edge. For the first character of the fourth line, it has become slightly more probable that it is a *b*, thus yielding the (abbreviated) form of the genitive of the word for ‘God’, *bē*, to be read as *b(ixaḡowġ)ē*. There are no traces of a sixth letter in the same line. Cf. Table IX for the revised reading of the inscription, which might mean something like ‘I, M(a)..., who was pledged ..., with the hope of God ...’.

4.4 Candleholder foot

The reading of the inscription on two faces of a lengthy, slightly pyramidal clay artefact of appr. 16 × 4.5 cm that is likely to have been the foot of a candleholder⁸² (Figures 23a–b) has been slightly improved, at least in its first part, which presumably mentions the addressee of the text. Instead of *niqe* or the like, we now seem to read *kiye* as the person’s name. It is true that *kiye* is not attested as a personal name elsewhere and only occurs as an word meaning ‘rich(ness), wealth(y)’;⁸³ in the present context, however, it might also be a vocative form of the underlying noun, *ki* ‘wealth’ (in the sense of ‘treasure, darling’).⁸⁴ This is suggested by the word following it if this is the vocative form *bowqanayo* ‘beloved one!’ as proposed now, instead of the syntactically unmotivated attributive form, *bowqana*. For the second part of the inscription, there are no new insights available; it seems clear though that the text means something like ‘Darling, beloved, I made the candle(holder) for you’. Cf. Table X for the updated reading.

⁸² In Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-89) erroneously described as two separate feet of the same size.

⁸³ In James 1.10 (A48va, 15) and Hebrews 11.26 (fol. A2rb, 14); cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-23).

⁸⁴ The noun *ki* itself is not attested but contained in the privative formation *ki-nowt* ‘poor’, lit. ‘wealthless’ (cf. Gippert et al. 2008: I, IV-23). – Alternatively we might read *hiye*, which is not advantageous as this form is unknown elsewhere.

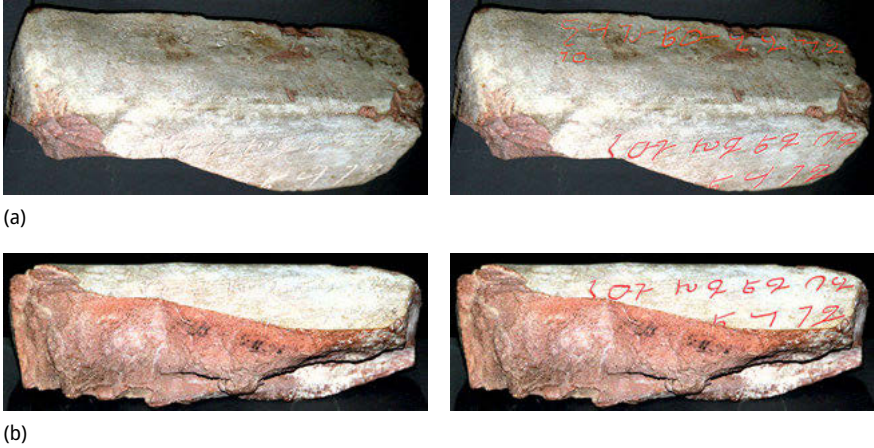


Fig. 23a–b: Candleholder foot with inscription on two faces.

Tab. X: Inscription on the two faces of a candleholder foot.

1	ΣΥΠΙ- 60-Γ22'42	[k]iye bowqan[a]
2	70-	yo
3	50-Γ Γ-2 6272	zow va bala...
4	6'412	biya<y>

4.5 Candleholder with defective alphabet

For the inscription on a quadrupedal, slightly conical candleholder (Figures 24a–d), which consists of appr. 16 characters of the Albanian script in alphabetic sequence,⁸⁵ no new insights have been gained. There is a slight chance that the two characters *y* and *z* that are missing between *ç* (no. 10, last character in the horizontal row) and *i* (no. 13, first character clearly visible on the foot below *d*) may once have been present at the bottom of the foot before the sequence *ifl*. The distribution of the characters is illustrated in Table XI.

⁸⁵ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-90).



Fig. 24a–d: Candleholder with alphabet inscription.

Tab. XI: Alphabet inscription on candleholder.

I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
ԶԵ	ՏՉ	ԵՏԸ	ԲՅԼ	<i>a b</i>	<i>g d</i>	<i>e z ē</i>	<i>ž t č</i>
	ԼԼԻԲ		ԿԿԸ		ԼՅԺԿԻ		ՉՔԻ

4.6 One-line candleholder inscription

For the one-line inscription running up vertically on one side of a candleholder of a height of appr. 18 cm (Fig. 25),⁸⁶ the inspection has brought about an improved reading. The sentence *zow kin-pe* proposed now can be understood as ‘I made it by hand’, with *kin* representing a later form of the instrumental case of *kowl* ‘hand’ which still appears as *kowin* in the palimpsests (in John 1.17, cf. 2.2.1

86 Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-91).



Fig. 25: Candleholder with vertically applied single-line inscription.

Tab. XII: Single-line inscription on candleholder.

ՏՕԻ ԺԿԿ ՍԵ	<i>zow kin pe</i>
------------	-------------------

above, and *kowin nowt-biyay* ‘not made by hand’ rendering Greek ἀχειροποίητον, Armenian *ařanc’ jeragorci*, Georgian *qelit-ukmneli* in II Corinthians 5.1, A69rb, 20) but as *kin* in Vartashen Udi (twice in Luke 7.8 where the Albanian text has other forms of *kowl* ‘hand’), even though a compound verb *kin-pesown* for ‘manufacture’ is attested in neither Albanian nor Udi. The proposed reading is illustrated in Table XII.

4.7 Single-name potsherd inscription

For the potsherd inscription consisting of a single name (Fig. 26), the reading *manas* (standing for the beginning of a name like *manase*) proposed by G. A. Klimov as early as 1967⁸⁷ seems now preferable to the alternative reading *manan* (standing for a name like *manana* ‘Manna’),⁸⁸ cf. the rendering in Table XIII.



Fig. 26: Potsherd with single-name inscription.

⁸⁷ Klimov (1967: 78): “чтение хорошо известного из истории Агвании собственного имени Манаса « Манасэ »” (“the reading of the personal name Manase, well-known from the history of Albania”).

⁸⁸ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-91).

Tab. XIII: Single-name inscription on potsherd.

 𐌆𐌆𐌆𐌆𐌆

manas...

4.8 The Derbent wall inscription

Since its first publication, the inscription discovered in the last decade of the 19th century in the northern wall of tower “B” of the Derbent fortress (Fig. 27a) has been supposed to be Albanian,⁸⁹ and there were even attempts to read it.⁹⁰ With a recent article in a Derbent newspaper,⁹¹ the view that the inscription might be Albanian has become obsolete. Instead, we may now gladly accept the proposal by A. R. Šixsaidov quoted in the article,⁹² according to which the inscription represents a fragment from Surah 2, verse 255 of the Qur’an,⁹³ written in a Kufic ductus of about the 11th–12th centuries. On the basis of photographs that have meanwhile become available, we can restore the text as outlined in Table XIV; it is important to note that the inscription must be turned by 180° as against its present position in the wall (cf. Figures 27b–c).

**Fig. 27a:** The Derbent wall inscription (drawing).

⁸⁹ Barkhutareants (1893: 119): *Հաւանական է որ լինին Արուսից լեզուի գրերից...* – “It is probable that it is (written) in letters of the Albanian language”.

⁹⁰ Murav’ev (1981: 281–283 / 1998–2000: 53–55); cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-92).

⁹¹ Musaev, Yusufov and Mirzoev (2011); my thanks are due to T. Maisak who made the article accessible to me on 22 June 2011.

⁹² Also quoted in Hajiev and Yusufov (2011: 57).

⁹³ Actually, the verse fragment in question occurs elsewhere in the Quran, too (e.g., Surah 4.42); however, 2.255 is the most probable on statistical grounds (Ludwik Kalus, personal communication of 21 November 2013).



Fig. 27b–c: The Derbent wall inscription as of today (current view / turned by 180°).

Tab. XIV: Surah 2.225 of the Qur’an as represented in the Derbent wall inscription.

allāhu lā ilāha illā huwa al-ḥayyu al-qayyūmu.
lā tāḥūduhu sinatuⁿ wa lā nau-
muⁿ lahu mā fī al-samāwāti
wa mā fī al-arḍi

الله لا إله إلا هو الحي القيوم
لا تأخذه سنة ولا نو
م له ما في السموات
وما في الأرض

‘Allah – there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence.

Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep.

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens

and whatever is on the earth.’

4.9 The Upper Labko tablet

It has for long been proposed that the inscription engraved on both sides of a flat stone tablet found in Upper Labko (Verkhniy Labkomakhi) in Dagestan⁹⁴ and published in 1971⁹⁵ is a fake, the sequence of letters it contains being a mere calque of the alphabet list of the Matenadaran manuscript (cf. 1.1 above), beginning with the second page of the list (cf. the images contrasted in Fig. 28a–f).⁹⁶ The proposal can be maintained, all the more since there are neither up-to-date photographs nor other new insights available that would contradict it.

94 42°20'27" N, 47°26'10" E.

95 Arslanbekov (1971: 70–72).

96 Cf. Murav'ev (1986), Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-92–3), and Gippert (2020a) for details.

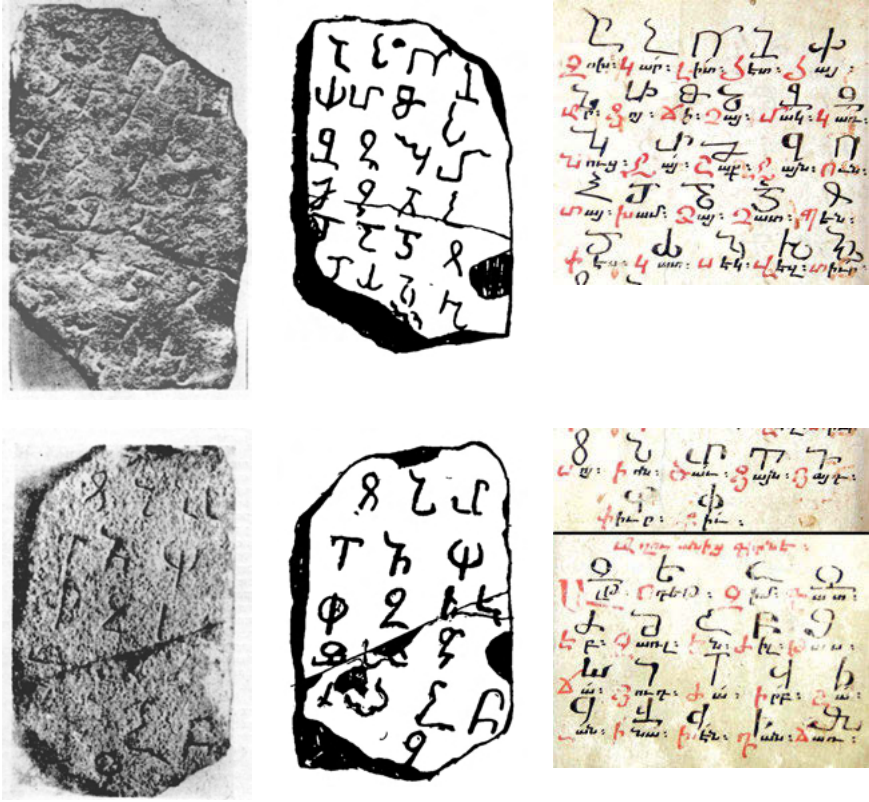


Fig. 28a–f: The Upper Labko tablet (contrasted with the alphabet list).

4.10 The Tkhaba-Yerdy roof tile

It has been disputed for long as well whether the five characters discernible on the fragment of a clay roof tile found in Tkhaba-Yerdy in Upper Ingushetia⁹⁷ in 1901 (cf. Figures 29a–b) can be considered as Albanian or, rather, Georgian (*asomtavruli* majuscules), but no trustworthy interpretation has been possible so far.⁹⁸ It is important to note, however, that the fragment bears the relief of two deer facing each other, with a (date?) tree in between, an image in some way reminding us of the peacock symbol on the Mingachevir pedestal (cf. 4.1 above).

⁹⁷ 42°48'33.9" N, 44°56'21.9" E. Cf. Trever (1959: pl. 29); Murav'ev (1981: 293).

⁹⁸ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-93–4) for details.



Fig. 29a–b: The Tkhaba-Yerdy plate (photograph / drawing).



Fig. 30a–b: The deer symbol on the roof of the church of Gethsemane, Jerusalem.

Indeed, the image of two deer is known in Christian contexts as well, taken to symbolise Psalm 41.2 [42.2] (“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God”) as on the roof of the church of Gethsemane in Jerusalem (cf. Figures 30a–b). The image of two deer was also used in illuminations of Gospel manuscripts, in a similar way as the symbols comprising peacocks or other birds;⁹⁹ the “portals” of the 12th-century Gospel codex no. 182 from the Kutaisi State Historical Museum (Figures 31a–d) may give an idea of this even though they contain other animals.¹⁰⁰ It thus becomes conceivable that the “unintelligible” characters on the Tkhaba-Yerdy plate might represent not a name¹⁰¹ but elements from the Eusebian canon tables; cf., e.g., Fig. 32 which shows an

⁹⁹ Cf. Nordenfalk (1938: 244–245).

¹⁰⁰ The portals pertain to the Gospels of Matthew (fol. 6r), Mark (81r), Luke (129r), and John (206r).

¹⁰¹ I. A. Orbeli (*apud* Marr 1947: 8) proposed to regard the five letters as rendering the personal name *gotarz* in Georgian *asomtavruli* script (abbreviated as *gotrz*); cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-94 with n. 208).



a)



b)



c)



d)

Fig. 31a-d: Gospel portals with animal symbols from ms. Kutaisi, State Historical Museum 182.

<p>ᄆᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆᄆ</p>					
<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>
<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>
<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>	<p>ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ ᄆᄆᄆ</p>

Fig. 32: Canon table from ms. Kutaisi, State Historical Museum 76, fol. 4r.

extract from the table comprising the second and third canon from the Kutaisi Gospel codex no. 76 (fol. 4r). However, the character sequence visible on the Tkhaba-Yerdy plate remains unidentifiable so far.¹⁰²

4.11 Conclusion

Summing up, we may state that the closer inspection of the artefacts containing Albanian inscriptions has brought about considerable new insights into their contents and background. However, many a riddle has still to be solved, and we cannot but hope that more material of this kind will come to light.

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¹⁰² Another inscription from Dagestan in Old Georgian characters that was regarded as Albanian (Marr 1947: 8–14) has meanwhile been determined to be in the Avar language; cf. Khapizov (2015: 65–70).

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- Figure 19: Chkhikvadze (2010/2018: 43).
- Figure 20a: Nordenfalk (1938: 157–158 and 190).
- Figure 20b: Photograph Austrian National Library (https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_7688876).
- Figures 21–26: Photographs Jost Gippert, 2011.
- Figure 27a: Barxowtareants (1893: 119).
- Figures 27b–c: Photograph Timur Maisak, 2011, modified Jost Gippert.
- Figures 28a–d: Arslanbekov (1971: 70–72).
- Figures 28e–f: Photographs Arshak Banouchyan, 2010, modified Jost Gippert.
- Figure 29a: Trever (1959: plate 29)
- Figure 29b: Murav'ev (1981: 293, Fig. 20).
- Figures 30a–b: Photographs Jost Gippert, 2014.
- Figures 31–32: Photographs Jost Gippert, 2007.

Jost Gippert and Wolfgang Schulze[†]

4 The Language of the Caucasian Albanians

Abstract: The Chapter provides a concise account of the Caucasian Albanian language as it appears in the Sinai palimpsests and the few known inscriptions. It begins with an analysis of the Albanian script and the phonological system it was invented for and continues with an overview of the morphological elements and the syntactical features of the language. Special attention is paid to the lexicon, with a focus on the different strata of loan words and the lexical elements that belong to the inherited East Caucasian stock.

1 Introduction

With the detection of the Albanian alphabet list in ms. 7117 of the Matenadaran, Yerevan, and the decipherment of the palimpsests of Mt Sinai (cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 1.1), the language of the Caucasian “Albanians” has become accessible for scholarly investigation. We may now safely posit that it was, if not a true ancestor, a close relative of Modern Udi, the relationship between the two being similar to the relationship between Classical Old Armenian (*Grabar*) and Modern East or West Armenian, with the exception of the lexicon which has undergone dramatical changes due to the influence of (Turkic) Azeri (including its Arabic and Persian layers) and Russian. The relatedness is warranted, among others, by deep accordances in the phonological, morphological and syntactical structures that go far beyond the similarities with other languages belonging together with Udi and Albanian to the Lezgif family of the North-East Caucasian stock. In the following treatise, comparative reference to Udi will be reduced to a minimum as this is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5 of this Handbook.¹






¹ The present Chapter is based upon common work undertaken by the two authors in the course of preparing the first edition of the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests (cf. Gippert et al. 2008: I, II-1-84) and afterwards. A more extensive sketch grammar of Albanian was prepared in cooperation for a collective volume concerning the languages of the Caucasus before W. Schulze’s untimely death on 13 April 2020.

2 Script and sound system

2.1 The alphabet list and the Albanian script














Under the heading *atowanic' girn* 'the script of the Albanians', the alphabet list contained in ms. 7117 of the Matenadaran comprises a total of 52 characters the sound value of which can only be guessed at on the basis of the letter names added to them in Armenian script (cf. Figures 1 and 2 of Chapter 3 of this Handbook). In spite of considerable differences in the actual letter shapes, which in the case of the alphabet list may be due to multiple copying by non-specialists in the course of centuries, nearly all of the items contained in it have been identified on the basis of the palimpsests; only two characters (nos. 32 and 34 of the list) have not yet been documented. The alphabet as established today is displayed in Table I;² the order of the first 21 characters has been ascertained by their alphanumerical use in the palimpsests.

Tab. I: The letters of the palimpsests contrasted with the alphabet list.














No.	Palimpsests	Alphabet list	Actual reading		Intended reading		Reconstr. name	Phonetic value	Transliteration	Num. value
				Alt':		Alt'				
1	Զ		Ալթ:	Alt':	Ալթ	Alt'	<i>Alt</i>	[a]	<i>a</i>	1
2	Ե		Ողեթ:	Odet':	*Բեթ	*Bet'	<i>*Bet</i>	[b]	<i>b</i>	2
3	Կ		Ջիմ:	Zim:	*Գիմ	*Gim	<i>*Gim</i>	[g]	<i>g</i>	3
4	Գ		Գատ:	Gat:	*Դատ	*Dat	<i>*Dat</i>	[d]	<i>d</i>	4
5	Դ		Էբ:	Ēb:	*Էբ	*Eb	<i>*Eb</i>	[e]	<i>e</i>	5

² For a previous account cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-4–17) and Gippert (2011a); meanwhile, character no. 28 has been identified (see below). In the Table, letters that have not yet been detected in the text documents are marked with an asterisk. For earlier attempts by A. Shandze (1938 and 1957), A. Abrahamyan (1964), V. Gukasyan (1969) and S. Murav'ev (1980 and 1981) cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-2–4).















Tab. I (continued)

No.	Palimpsests	Alphabet list	Actual reading	Intended reading	Reconstr. name	Phonetic value	Transliteration	Num. value
6	Տ		Ջարւլ: Zařl:	Ջարւլ Zařl	Zarł	[z]	z	6
7	Է		Էն: En:	*Էն *Ēn	*Ēn	[ej / e:]	ē	7
8	Բ		Ժիլ: Žil:	Ժիլ Žil	Žil	[ʒ]	ž	8
9	Չ		Թաս: T'as	Թաս T'as	Tas	[t]	t	9
10	Լ		Ճա: Čá	Ճա Čá	*Ča	[tɕ']	č	10
11	Դ		Գուժ: Yowd	Գուժ Yowd	Yowd	[j]	y	20
12	Կ		Ժա: Žá	Ժա Žá	*Ža	[ʒ]	ž	30
13	Կ		Իրբ: Írb	Իրբ Írb	*Irb	[i]	i	40
14	Ե		Շա: Ša	*Շա *Ša	*Ša? *Šra?	[ʃ]	ʃ	50
15	Դ		Լան: Lan	Լան Lan	Lan	[l]	l	60
16	Ն		Ինա: Ína	Ինա Ína	*In'a?	[n']	n'	70
17	Կ		Խեն: Xén	Խեն Xén	*Xĕn?	[x]	x	80
18	Դ		Դան: Dan	*Դան *Dán	*D'an	[d']	d'	90
19	Ջ		Ճար: Čar	*Ճար *Cař	*Čar	[ts']	č	100







Tab. I (continued)

No.	Palimpsests	Alphabet list	Actual reading		Intended reading		Reconstr. name	Pho- netic value	Trans- litera- tion	Num. value
20	ⲧ		ϩⲏⲃⲏ:	Zox	*ϩⲏⲃⲏ	*ϯox	*ϩox	[dʒ]	ϩ	200
21	Ϩ		ϩⲏⲣⲏ	Kār	ϩⲏⲣⲏ	Kār	*ϫar ?	[k]	ϫ	300
22	Ⲡ		ϫⲏⲃⲏ:	Lit	ϫⲏⲃⲏ	Lit	L'it	[lʲ]	l'	*400
23	ϩ		ϩⲫⲏⲃⲏ:	Hēt	ϩⲫⲏⲃⲏ	Hēt	Hēt	[h]	h	*500
24	Ⲡ		ϩⲏⲃⲏ:	Hay	ϩⲏⲃⲏ	Hay	*ϫay	[q, χ]	χ	*600
25	Ⲡ		Ⲡⲣⲏ:	Ar	*Ⲡⲣⲏ	*Ār	*Ār	[ɑ]	ā	*700
26	Ⲡ		ϩⲏⲃⲏ:	C'oy	*ϩⲏⲃⲏ	*C'óy	*Ćoy	[tɕ]	ć	*800
27	ϩ		ϫⲏⲃⲏ:	Či	ϫⲏⲃⲏ	Či	Či	[tʃ']	č	*900
28	Ⲡ		ϩⲏⲃⲏ:	Č'ay	*ϩⲏⲃⲏ	*Č'áy	*C'aj	[tsʲ] ?	(c')	*1000
29	Ⲡ		Ⲡⲓⲃⲏⲃⲏ:	Mák	Ⲡⲓⲃⲏⲃⲏ	Mák	*Maq?	[m]	m	*2000
30	ϩ		ϩⲏⲣⲏ:	Kār	ϩⲏⲣⲏ:	Kār	*Qar ?	[q]	q	*3000
31	Ⲡ		Ⲡⲏⲃⲏⲃⲏ:	Nowc'	Ⲡⲏⲃⲏⲃⲏ	Nowc'	Nowc	[n]	n	*4000
32	*Ⲡ		ϩⲏⲃⲏ:	ǰáy	ϩⲏⲃⲏ	ǰáy	ǰ'ay	[dzʲ] ?	(ǰ')	*5000

Tab. I (continued)

No.	Palimpsests	Alphabet list	Actual reading		Intended reading		Reconstr. name	Phonetic value	Transliteration	Num. value
33	Š		Šak'p	Šak'	Šak'p	Šak'	Šak	[ʃ]	š	*6000
34	*ǰ		ǰayn	ǰayn	ǰayn	ǰayn	ǰayn	[dʒ]	ǰ	*7000
35	O		Own	Own	Own	Own	*On	[o]	o	*8000
36	Z		Tay	Tay	*Sáj	*Táj	*T'aj	[tʰ]	t'	*9000
37	Ɔ		Xam	Xam	Xam	Xam	*Fam	[f]	f	*10000
38	Ɔ		Jay	Jay	Jay	Jay	Ɔaj	[dz]	Ɔ	*20000
39	Č		Čat	Čat	Čat	Čat	Čat	[tʃ]	č	*30000
40	Ɔ		Pen	Pen	Pen	Pen	Ɔen	[pʰ]	p'	*40000
41	Ɔ		P'ēs	P'ēs	*Xēs	*Xēs	*Ĝēs	[ɣ]	ǰ	*50000
42	Ɔ		Kat	Kat	*Erat	*Erat	*RaƆ	[r]	r	*60000
43	h		Sēk	Sēk	Sēk	Sēk	Sēk	[s]	s	*70000
44	Ɔ		Vēz	Vēz	Vēz	Vēz	Vēz	[v]	v	*80000
45	Ɔ		Tiwr	Tiwr	Tiwr	Tiwr	Tiwr	[tʰ]	t'	*90000
46	Ɔ		Soy	Soy	Soy	Soy	*Soy	[ɛ]	ś	*100000

Tab. I (continued)

No.	Palimpsests	Alphabet list	Actual reading		Intended reading		Reconstr. name	Phonetic value	Transliteration	Num. value
47	Մ(Ի)		Իոն:	Ion	Իոն:	Ion	*Üwn	[y]	ü	*200000
48	Վ		Վաւ:	Cáw	Վաւ:	Cáw	*Ç'aw	[tsʰ]	ç'	*300000
49	Գ		Յայն:	C'ayn	Յայն:	C'ayn	Cayn	[tsʰ]	c	*400000
50	Դ		Յայդ:	Yayd	Յայդ:	Yayd	Yayd	[w]	w	*500000
51	Պ		Փիւր:	P'iwr	Փիւր:	P'iwr	Püwr	[pʰ]	p	*600000
52	Կ		Կիւ:	K'iw	Կիւ:	K'iw	Küw	[kʰ]	k	*700000

The script as represented in the list is essentially phonological, i.e. it complies with the principle one sound – one letter. However, in accordance with the Greek, Armenian and Georgian (*asomtavruli*) scripts, the vowel /u/ is always represented by a digraph **Օ-Ի** <ow>. Another digraph consists of the sequence **Մ-Ի** <üw>; it must be noted here that the horizontal stroke attached to the right in **Մ** <ü> (character no. 47) in contrast to **Մ** <â> (character no. 25) is not assured by either the alphabet list or the attestations but was introduced in the first edition of the palimpsests to distinguish the two characters. Parallel to Old Armenian and Old Georgian, the letter **Ը** is likely to represent a “diphthongal” sequence *ey* (especially in loan words from Greek and Biblical names), obviously reflecting Greek **Η** (*ēta*) as do its Armenian and Georgian counterparts, **Է** and **Ի**; it is usually transliterated as <ē> though the Albanian language probably did not possess long vowels (cf. 2.2.1 below).

Among the letters representing consonants, the close resemblance of **Չ** <x> and **Ի** <x̄>, **Չ** <l> and **Գ** <l'>, and **Ե** and **Ե** <ſ> conditions that in the palimpsests it is sometimes difficult to discriminate them. The same holds true of **Զ** <t> and **Զ** <c'> which were not yet distinguished in the edition of 2008.

Beyond alphabetic characters, the Albanian script comprises a few punctuation marks (‘, ‘, ‘, and ↔), a dot-shaped diacritic denoting vowels in hiatus (e.g., **Თ** = *ā*), a superscript line marking abbreviations (e.g., **ᲗᲗ** = *ā*~*y* ‘their’) and superscript and subscript lines indicating the numerical use of characters (e.g., **ᲗᲗ** = *cye* = 125).

The following description of the Albanian language presents all data in a transliterated form. Accordingly, the digraph **ᲐᲗ** is rendered as *ow* and **ᲗᲗ** as *ūw*; **Თ** is transcribed as *ey* when required for grammatical analysis, in other cases as *ē*. Quite a number of lexical and morphological units appear abbreviated in the palimpsests (e.g. **ᲑᲗ** *b̄ḡ*, probably standing for *b(ixa)ḡow*ḡ ‘Lord’, or **ᲗᲗ** *-n̄n* ~ *-n(ow)n*, genitive ending or 2nd person sg. marker, etc.). Wherever the abbreviations do not admit of a secured reading (e.g. in the ergative pl. pronoun **ᲗᲗ** *ā*~*n* ‘they’), the abbreviated forms are maintained throughout this treatise.

2.2 The sound system

The phonetic value of the Albanian letters can only be described in rough terms. The main clue is given by the sound shape of loan words and by correspondences with Modern Udi.³ Hence, the exact phonetic values of the phonemes represented by the letters of this script may have slightly differed from what is described below.

2.2.1 Vowels

The system of the vowels of Albanian is shown, together with its graphical representation, in Fig. 1. The exact phonetic value of /*ü*/ is uncertain; it might have been pharyngealised (/*ü̠*/). As the sound is represented by a digraph with <*w*> as its second component, a labial articulation is warranted. This assumption is corroborated by correspondences such as <*hüwḡ*> /*hük̄*/ ‘heart, mind’ ~ Udi V *uk̄* / N *uk̄* ‘id.’, <*üwḡ*> /*üq*/ ‘six’ ~ Udi *u^oq* ‘id.’, <*vüwḡ*> /*vüḡ*/ ‘seven’ ~ Udi *vu^oḡ* ‘id.’, <*müwḡ*> /*müḡ*/ ‘eight’ ~ Udi *muḡ* ‘id.’, <*müwḡen*> /*müqen*/ ‘feast’ ~ Udi *mu^oq* ‘joyful, happy’, or <*hüwḡen*> /*hüqen*/ ‘bone’ ~ Udi *u^oqeⁿ* ‘id.’, but cf. also <*qüw(e)*> /*qü(e)*/ ‘fear, fright’ ~ Udi *q̄i^o/q̄a^o* ‘id.’, <*büwḡa*> /*büḡa*/ ‘between, amidst’ ~ Udi *bi^oḡ/ba^oḡ* ‘middle’, and <*büwi*> /*büi*/ ‘heavy’ ~ Udi *bi^o/ba^o* ‘id.’. The phonetics of /*ā*/ probably

³ Where in the following examples two variants are noted for Udi, the first one usually represents the Vartashen dialect (abbreviated V.) and the second one, that of Nij (N.); cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook, 2.2 sqq. as to the distinction of the two dialects.

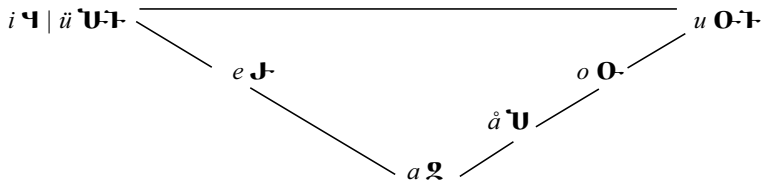


Fig. 1: The vowel phonemes of Caucasian Albanian and their graphical representation.

included both velar and labial features ([b]?), perhaps also pharyngealisation. This is suggested by correspondences such as *tâxan'in* ‘fig tree’ ~ Udi *to^hxaⁿ* ‘fig’, *tâ* ‘side, region’ ~ Udi *to^h-g-* ‘id.’ (plural, appearing in the postposition *to^hgo^l* ‘near, aside of’ ~ CA *tâowgol* superess.pl. ‘on the sides’); *qâ* ‘twenty’, attested in *sa-qâ-qo* ‘twenty-five’ ~ Udi *sa-^hqo-qo*, *xo-qâom* ‘hundredfold’, lit. ‘five-(times)-twenty-fold’, or *xo-qâaray-bânⁱ* ‘centurion’, lit. ‘of-five-(times)-twenty-(people)-chief’, and *bâgal(a)* ‘deep, depth, abyss’ ~ Udi *bo^hga^l* ‘deep’.

Contrary to Udi, Albanian probably did not yet possess a full set of pharyngealised vowels in phonemic function. This assumption is grounded in the fact that the letter **ⲃ** /ʁ/ clearly shows consonantal properties (cf. 2.2.2 below). This, however, does not exclude the possibility that vowels in the vicinity of the pharyngeal consonant might have been pharyngealised, e.g. in *p̣sa* ~ [p̣sa^h] ‘two’ ~ Udi *p̣a^h*.

Lengthening of vowels is not documented for Albanian (cf. 2.1 above as to the character **Ⲛ** = *ē* ~ *ey*). Tautosyllabic sequences consisting of a lower vowel and one of the glides (*ay*, *ey*, *oy*, *uy*, *aw*, rarely *ew*) may be interpreted as diphthongs. However, some of the sequences seem only to occur with a morpheme boundary within them, and the differentiation of monosyllabic and bisyllabic structures is not always clear (cf., e.g. *išebay* gen.pl. ‘brothers’ vs. *bai* ‘full’).

2.2.2 Consonants

The consonantal phonemes of Albanian are listed together with their graphical representations in Table II. In the Table, those elements that are not documented so far in the texts are marked with an asterisk. The assignment of a phonetic value to these units is tentative (based on the names given to the letters in the alphabet list and to systematical considerations).

As the Table shows, Albanian possessed the same three sets of sibilants and affricates as does Modern Udi (dental-alveolar, alveolar-palatal, and postalveolar);⁴ in addition, we have to assume a fourth set of palatalised dental-alveolars

⁴ Cf. Gippert (2018b); for a different approach cf. Lolua (2018).

Tab. II: The consonants of Caucasian Albanian with their graphical representation.

	Stops		Affricates		Fricatives		Nasals	Trills	Laterals	Glides
	voiced	voiceless	glottal-ised	voiced	voiceless	glottal-ised				
Labial	b Ե	p Մ	ɸ Գ	v Ե	f Դ	m Ե				(w Ե)
Dental-alveolar	d Գ	t Ժ	ʃ Լ	c Գ	s Ծ	n Կ	r Ծ			
Palatalised	d' Ի	t' Զ	*ʒ' Ե	c' Լ	ʃ' Գ	n' Ե				
Alveolar-palatal			*ʒ Գ	č Ծ	ʒ Բ					y Դ
Postalveolar			ʒ Ե	č Լ	ʒ Կ					
Velar	g Կ	k Դ	q Զ		g Ծ					
Uvular		x Ի	q Զ		x Գ					
Pharyngeal					ħ Ե					
Laryngeal					h Կ					

comprising both stops and affricates. The most frequent representative is /d/, which has developed into /ʒ/ in Udi as shown by Albanian *kod* ‘house’ ~ Udi *kož* ‘id.’, *xod* ‘shadow, shade’ ~ Udi *xoži/xoži* ‘id.’, and *d’ed’er* ‘lip’ ~ Udi *žežer* ‘id.’. A *d*-like stop is further evinced by the two loans *d’ip* ‘scripture, book’ (< Old Persian *dip̄-* etc.) and *bod’var* ‘censer’ (< Middle Iranian **bōdiβār*, lit. ‘perfume-bearer’).⁵ The glottalised stop /t̚/ is corroborated especially by *eṭ’a*, genitive of the demonstrative pronoun ‘this/that’ (< **e-t̚-ya*, > Udi *-ta*), and *-hanayt’ake-*, genitive of the neutral relative pronoun (< *-hanay-t̚-ya-ke-*). The palatalised lateral /lʲ/ is warranted, e.g., by *madil* ‘grace, mercy’ (< Old Georgian *madl-i* ‘id.’), *laq̄* ‘way, road’ ~ Udi *yaq̄* ‘id.’, and *bil’a-* ‘kill, die’ (present stem, ~ Udi *bi(y)a-* ‘id.’). Palatalised /nʲ/ may have been just an allophonic variant of /n/ in the vicinity of a palatal vowel, cf. *en’eg* ‘(an)other’ (if this corresponds to Udi *ene(x)* ‘moreover, additionally’) or *marmin’-* ‘body, flesh’ (< Arm. *marmin* ‘id.’); /nʲ/ also shows up in the derivational elements *-n’a* (< **-n-ya*) meaning ‘related/pertinent to’ as in *q̄ar-n’a* and *ç̄i-n’a* ‘relative’ (< *q̄ar* / *ç̄in* ‘kind, nation, stock’), *ṭfeg-n’a* ‘stroke, tittle’ (< *ṭfeg* ‘sign’), *gel-n’a* ‘guilty’ (< *gel* ‘debt(or)’) or *d’ip-n’a* ‘script-’, and *-n’i* forming adjectives as in *en’i* ‘new’ (~ Udi *ini* ‘id.’), *bān’i* ‘great’, *bāxn’i* ‘worthy’, *gān’i* ‘faded away’ and, perhaps, *aṣay-t̄in’i* / *-ṭown’i* ‘(having gone) astray’. The palatalised glottal affricate /çʲ/ is attested in the frequent word *mowç’owr* ‘pure, holy’, which corresponds to either Udi *muçur* ‘clear, bright (sky)’ or Udi *aç’ar* ‘clear, pure, transparent’, and the voiceless non-glottal affricate /ç/ has now been identified in *ac’esown* ‘be lost’ and *ac’es-biyesown* ‘destroy, lose’ ~ Udi *açesun* and *açes-besun* ‘id.’.

The pharyngeal /ʕ/ has clear consonantal properties. Examples are *fi* ‘ear’, pl. *fi-mowx* ~ Udi *imux*, *u’mu’x* ‘ear’ (pl.tant.), *ṣaxi* ‘far, distant’ ~ Udi *a’xi’l* ‘id.’ (superessive?), *vʕan* ‘you (pl.)’ ~ Udi *va’n* (besides *efan*)/*vā’n* ‘id.’ (but cf. *bṣefi* ‘your (pl.)’ ~ Udi *ef(i)* ‘id.’), *bṣeg* ‘sun’ ~ Udi *be’g* ‘id.’, and *ṣfa* ‘two’ ~ Udi *pā’/pā’* ‘id.’. Most likely, /ʕ/ had some kind of rhotic (co-)articulation as suggested by *xoṣaḳ* ‘heat’ ~ Arm. *xoršak*, Georg. *xoršak-i* ‘id.’ and *vaṣamaḳ* ‘cerecloth, napkin’ ~ Arm. *varšamak*, Georg. *varšamag-i* ‘id.’. Albanian *mowṣaḳ* ‘worker, labourer’ ~ Georg. *mušak-i*, Arm. *mšak* ‘id.’ and *iṣa* ‘near’ (Udi *i’śa*) suggest an underlying articulation [rʕ] or the like.⁶ The affinity of <ʕ> with /rš/ would further be stressed if CA *naiṣow* ‘servant’, *xiṣow* ‘woman, wife’, and *iṣowa* ‘widow’ are derived from *iṣow* ‘man’ (as ‘not-(free-)man’, ‘female-man’, and ‘man-less’).⁷

In addition to the similarity of the two letters representing them, the sound value of the characters ¶ and ¶, here transcribed *x* and *ç*, is difficult to determine, all the more since they seem to be interchangeable to a certain extent. The latter

5 Cf. Gippert (2007b: 102–104) as to this word.

6 Cf. Gippert (2009: 131–135) as to these words.

7 Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-32, IV-22, and IV-19 s.vv.).

usually occurs in the plural suffix *-owχ* which corresponds to Udi *-ux*, thus suggesting a fricative; this is corroborated by its variant *-owġ-* appearing in oblique case forms. In the ending of the dative II and the secondary case forms derived from it (cf. 3.1.3 below), we find both *-x-* and *-χ-*, again matching Udi *-x-*. On the other hand, word-initial *χ* usually corresponds to the uvular stop *q-* in Udi (cf., e.g., Albanian *χo* ‘five’ ~ Udi *qo*, *χüw-â~r* ‘some’ ~ Udi *qiʹ/qəʹ* ‘half’, *aχay-pesown* ‘open’ ~ Udi *qay-p(e)sun*), and also *χalay* ‘pregnant’ ~ Udi V *qela* vs. N *xela*), while initial *x* corresponds to a fricative (cf., e.g., *xaš* ‘light’ ~ Udi *xaš* (also ‘moon’, ‘month’), *xe* ‘water’ ~ Udi *xe*, or *xib* ‘three’ ~ Udi *xib*). *χ* may therefore be taken to denote an affricated uvular [qʰ].

2.2.3 Syllable structure and prosody

The syllable structure of Albanian is relatively restricted. Clusters of two or more consonants are usually excluded in both initial and final position, loans such as *kroba-* ‘cherub’ or *varz* ‘reward’⁸ being exceptions. Loans including word-final clusters usually undergo anaptyxis or metathesis; cf., e.g., *harik* ‘tribute, tax, necessity’ vs. Arm. *hark*, Georg. *xarġ-i* ‘id.’, *madil* ‘grace, mercy’ vs. Georg. *madl-i* ‘id.’, or *ašarġeġ* ‘pupil’ vs. Arm. *ašakert* ‘id.’. In this context, the phonological status of the pharyngeal consonant *ʕ* might be questioned when it follows an initial consonant as in *bŧeġ* ‘sun’, *pŧa* ‘two’, *vŧan* ‘you (pl.)’, or *ġŧaban* ‘desert’ (cf. Udi *ġaʹvaʹn/qavun* ‘meadow, pasture’). Here, the letter <ŧ> may already have had the function to mark a pharyngealised articulation of the following vowel.⁹

Nothing is known about the prosodic features of Albanian. Nevertheless, the strong presence of enclitic (in parts also proclitic) elements suggests that the language was characterised by some kind of stress accent.

2.2.4 Conditioned and unconditioned alternations

Phonological alternation mainly occurs with the plural suffix *-owχ* whose *-χ* becomes a voiced fricative when followed by a case morpheme; cf., e.g., *angelos-owχ* > gen. *angelos-owġ-oy* ‘angels’, *ašarġeġ-owχ* > erg. *ašarġeġ-owġ-on* ‘disciples’, *ilʹ-owχ* > gen. *ilʹ-owġ-oy* ‘words’, or *marġaven-owχ* > gen. *marġaven-owġ-oy* ‘pro-

⁸ Cf. 5.2.2 and 5.2.1 below.

⁹ Note that in the first Udi primer, *Samġi dəs*, the pharyngealisation of vowels is also indicated by an individual letter (*ħ*) printed before the vowel as in *pħa* ‘two’ ~ *pħaʹ*; cf. Alb. *pŧa* (Jeirani and Jeirani 1934: 41).

phets'. In these cases, the vowel of the plural suffix is frequently syncopated as in *čib-owx* > gen. *čib-ĝ-oy* 'wives, women' (pl.tant.); this is also true of the plural suffix *-owr* which usually appears with monosyllabic nouns as in *mog-owr* > erg. *mog-r-on* 'mages' (cf. 3.1.2).

Ablaut processes are attested in the formation of aspecto-temporal verb stems (cf. 3.5.3). An *i/a*-ablaut is clearly visible in the verbs *ihesown* 'be(come)' with present stem *aha-*, *biqesown* 'seize' with present stem *baqa-*, and *biyesown* (< **bi'e-*) 'do, make' with present stem *ba(a)-* (< **ba'a-*). Another type of ablaut occurs with the thematic vowel of aspecto-temporal stems: with so-called "weak" verbs, both the present and the past stem are marked with a thematic vowel *-a-* as in *heqesown* 'take' with present and past stem *heqa-*, whereas with "strong" verbs the thematic vowel of the past stem is equal to that of the infinitive (*-e-*) as in *beqesown* 'look' with past stem *beqe-* vs. pres. stem *beqa-* (cf. 3.5.1).

3 Morphology

Albanian clearly distinguishes the following word classes: nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, adverbs, verbs, conjunctions, and particles. The language has no system of noun classification as it is typical for other East Caucasian languages, the only remnants being petrified prefixes in verbs, adjectives, and a few nouns.¹⁰ In contrast, it possesses a sexus-based gender system that shows up in the paradigm of articles and demonstratives (masculine vs. feminine vs. neuter). The verbal tense-aspect-mood system is only modestly elaborated. Albanian by and large lacks morphological devices of subordination (e.g., converbs), which are replaced by a complex system of conjunction-based subordination strategies.

A prevalent feature of Albanian is the dominant role of cliticisation processes. Large clitic chains are typical for subordinative syntagms but may likewise occur in matrix clauses. Some clitics usually take a fixed (and primary) position in the clitic chain. These clitics normally have a stronger lexical semantics than the subsequent ones, which show a higher degree of grammaticalisation. Strongly lexical clitics are termed "heavy" clitics here, whereas the other clitics (following them when present) are termed "light". Heavy clitics include *-qa-* (hortative optative, cf. 3.5.4), *-en'e-* (conditional, 3.5.4), *-anke-* (subjunctive, 3.5.4), *-anaqe-* (explicative, 3.8), and the forms of relative pronouns in clitic position (3.3.6). All other clitics such as the agreement clitics (3.5.2) or the focal clitic *-al* (3.9) are light clitics.¹¹

¹⁰ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 26–27) for examples.

¹¹ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-60–64) as to the appearances of "clitic chaining" in Albanian.

3.1 Nouns

3.1.1 Stem formation and composition

Nouns can be underived, derived, or compounded. Underived nouns include terms like *ġar* ‘child, son’, *de* ‘father’, *ne* ‘mother’, *ša* ‘daughter’, *bŕeġ* ‘sun’, *bowze* *‘moon’ > ‘month’, *bowl* ‘head’, or *kowl* ‘hand’. A frequent word formation element is *-al* forming *nomina agentis*, most likely related to the *-al(a)*-participle (cf. 3.5.6), which often occurs in plural forms (*-al-iḡ*); cf. *bix-al-iḡ* ‘parents’ (*bixesown* ‘give birth, create’), *voe-k-al-iġ-* ‘weepers’ (*voe* ‘woe’ + *-(ow)ka-* pres. stem of *(ow)pesown* ‘say’), *ŕi-baq̄-al* ‘ear’ (*ŕi-bi/aq̄-esown* ‘listen’, lit. ‘take ear’). Another frequent element is *-xown*’ (originally a noun denoting ‘place’) deriving *nomina loci* as in *bŕaxe-xown* ‘court’ < ‘place of judge(ment)’ (*bŕax*), *dai-xown* ‘marsh meadow, rushes’ (lit. ‘green place’), *iġa-xown* ‘desiccated, parched (ground)’ (cf. *iġ* ‘thirst’). The suffix *-own* derives abstract nouns denoting states from primary or secondary adjectives, adverbs, and verbal participles, as well as *masdars* (verbal nouns) from the infinitive stem of verbs (cf. 3.5.7); cf. *aana-own* ‘knowledge’ and *n-aana-own* ‘ignorance’ (*-aa-* ‘knowing’, *n-* negator), *himiġana-own* ‘need’ (*himiġana* ‘lacking’), *bowġa(na)-own* ‘love’ (*bowġana* ‘beloved, wanted’), *ġaršow-own-* ‘childhood’ (*ġar* ‘child’ + *išow* ‘man’), or *biyes-own* ‘doing, making’ (infinitive stem *biy-es-*) and *ihs-own* ‘being, becoming’ (infinitive stem *ih-es-*).

Compounding strategies concern (a) noun+noun compounds (usually *determinans-determinatum*, with genitival first member) such as, e.g., *ayzin-d’ip* ‘land taxation’ (lit. ‘of-land-writing’), *bŕeġown-powl* ‘sun’ (lit. ‘of-sun-eye’), *kaeni-xal’owm* ‘morning star’, *bŕaxe-ž(ow)ġ* ‘judge’ (lit. ‘of-judgement-lord’), and *kođ’in-ž(ow)ġ* ‘patron’ (lit. ‘of-house-lord’); (b) compounds consisting of noun+adjective or adverb, cf. *ġaṭari-bân’i* ‘governor of the feast’ (lit. ‘of-temple-big (one)’) and *kahanaowġoy-bân’i* ‘high priest’ (lit. ‘of-priests-big (one)’); (c) deverbal compounds based on incorporation such as *d’ipn’a-baal* ‘scribe’ (lit. ‘(one) making scripture(s)’) and *il’owḡ-heċal* ‘messenger’ (lit. ‘(one) bringing words’).

3.1.2 Number

Albanian nouns distinguish only singulars and plurals; duals are not attested. The formation of the nominal plural is based on a set of allomorphs the most frequent of which is *-owḡ*. This form of the suffix only occurs in the absolute case. In the oblique cases, the velar becomes voiced and the vowel can be dropped after voiced consonants (cf. 2.2.4 above). Examples for nouns using *-owḡ* are *bŕe-owḡ* ‘sheep’, *biyayown-owḡ* ‘creatures’, *daxṭak-owḡ* ‘tablets’, *hetanos-owḡ* ‘Gentiles’,

and *mar-akesown-owx* ‘sufferings’. With certain nouns (often formations in *-al*, cf. 3.5.6), the suffix is *-ix/-ig-* instead, cf. *aḱal-ix* ‘witnesses’ (lit. ‘seeing (ones)’), *ḱow-lowḱal-ix* ‘evangelists’ (lit. ‘news-givers’), *axay-boḱal-ix* ‘leaders’, *bal’-baḱal-ix* ‘servants’, *bixal-ig-* ‘parents’, *d’ipn’a-baal-ix* (alongside *d’ipn’a-baal-owx*) ‘scribes’, *ix-bišal-ix* ‘zealous (people)’, and *ḱen’-ix* ‘linen clothes’. Alternative plural morphemes are *-b(owr)*, *-(ow)r(owx)*, and *-m(owx)*. These plural markers are based on the inherited plural morphemes *-ur-* and *-m-*. Plain *-owr* is mostly attached to monosyllabic nominal stems as in *aš-owr* ‘works’, *bâx-owr* ‘snakes’, *lowf-owr* ‘doves’, *mowz-owr* ‘tongues, languages’, *xown’-owr* ‘places’, *ḱaḱ-owr* ‘bonds, chains’, *hüwḱ-owr* ‘hearts’, or *ḱod’-owr* ‘houses’ (> ‘verses’); the same is true of *-m-owx* as in *ḱar-m-owx* ‘sons, children’, *ḱar-m-owx* ‘tribes’, *ḱow-m-owx* ‘mouth’ (pl.tant.), *l’aḱ-m-owx* ‘ways’, *oḱ-m-owx* ‘door’ (pl.tant.), *bowl-m-owx* ‘heads’, *powl-m-owx* ‘eyes’, *kowl-m-owx* ‘hands’, or *towr-m-owx* ‘feet, legs’. With monosyllabic stems ending in vowels, the suffix *-owx* is usually added to *-(ow)r-*, cf. *ḱi-r-owx* (> *ḱi-r-ḱ-*) ‘days’, *go-r-owx* (> *go-r-ḱ-*) ‘sins’, *bow-r-ḱ-* ‘mountains’, *de-r-ḱ-* ‘fathers’; however, the combination also occurs with other stems as in *naifow-r-owx* ‘servants’. The simple *-r-* and *-m-* plurals can occasionally be found in oblique cases, too, as in *aš-r-on* (erg.pl.) ‘with works’, *mowz-r-on* (erg.pl.) ‘with tongues’, *xown’-r-ol* (superess.I pl.) ‘on/at places’, *ḱaḱ-r-on* (erg.pl.) ‘with bonds’, *ḱar-m-oy* (gen.pl.) ‘of the sons’, *ḱar-m-ol* (superess.I pl.) ‘about the children’, *kowl-m-on* (erg.pl.) ‘with the hands’, *towr-m-oy* (gen.pl.) ‘of the feet’, and *ḱol-m-on* (erg.pl.) ‘with skins’. The *-bowr*-plural normally occurs with a pronominal inflection as in *iše-bowr* ‘(co-)brethren’ with genitive *iše-b-ay* and dative *iše-b-a-s*; irregular formations are the *pluralia tantum* *owsbo* ‘husbands’ (dat.I pl.) with ergative *owsbo-n* and *čibowx* ‘women, wives’ suppletting *xifow* ‘woman, wife’.

3.1.3 Case

All in all, nineteen cases have been documented for Albanian (including a vocative). There is a clear distinction between grammatical cases (absolute, ergative, genitive, and three datives) and locative cases, most of which are built upon one of the datives. These datives can be regarded as representing intermediate functions, covering both grammatical and local relations.

To a certain extent, the paradigm of nominal case forms differs from that of pronominal elements. The main difference consists in the marking of the primary dative. In principle, all nouns exhibit a “nominal” paradigm except for those that show stem augmentation (cf. 3.1.4). While the case marking of locatives is relatively straightforward, the ergative, genitive and dative cases are liable to allomorphic variation. The exact conditions that decide upon the use of the individual

Tab. III: Primary case endings of Caucasian Albanian.

	Nominal		Pronominal	
	SG	PL	SG	PL
Absolutive	-∅	-∅	-∅	-(a)r
Vocative	-e	-o	-	-(a)re
Ergative(-Instrumental)	-e; -en; -in	-on	-en	-an
Genitive I	-i, -y	-oy	-ya	-ay
Genitive II	-in, -own	-	-	-
Ablative I	-oc	-oc	-	-
Anteablative I	-oštay	-	-oštay	-

allomorphs are not always transparent. All in all, four sub-patterns can be distinguished.

(a) Primary (underived) case forms (Table III). Among the allomorphs of the **ergative**, the ending *-e* is restricted to the following forms: *de* ‘father’ (< **de-e*), *ne* ‘mother’ (< **ne-e*), *vičiy-e* ‘brother’, *ž̃-e* ‘lord’ (probably *ž̃(owǵ)e*, abs. *ž̃-ǵ̃ ~ ž̃(ow)ǵ̃*), *b̃-e* ‘God’ (probably *b̃(ixaǵowǵ)e*, abs. *b̃-ǵ̃ ~ b̃(ixaǵow)ǵ̃*, lit. ‘creating Lord’), and *iše* ‘man, someone’ (abs. *išow*), probably also *biy-e* ‘head’ (abs. *bowl*) and *piy-e* ‘eye’ (abs. *powl*). This suggests a semantic grouping (kinship terms and related concepts?). The distribution of the *-en-* and the *-in-*ergative is not predictable. At any rate, the *-en-*ergative seems to have been the default. The *-in-*ergative shows up, e.g., with *hel* ‘spirit’ > *hel-in*, *iǵ* ‘thirst’ > *iǵ-in*, *bows* ‘hunger’ > *bows-in*, *xaš* ‘light’ > *xaš-in*, *helas* ‘oath’ > *helas-in*, and *mowš* ‘wind, storm’ > *mowš-in*. – As in Udi, the **genitive** knows two basic types (*-i/-y* vs. *-own*), the distribution of which is not fully clear. The ending *-y* occurs after vowels and mainly with nouns having an ergative in *-e*, which suggests a common sub-paradigm; cf., e.g., *b̃-ē* (i.e. *b̃-e-y*) ‘of God’ (erg. *b̃-e*), *ž̃-ē* (i.e. *ž̃-e-y*) ‘of the Lord’ (erg. *ž̃-e*), *vičiy(e)ē* (i.e. *vičiy(e)-y*) ‘of the brother’ (erg. *vičiy(e)*), *išow-y* ‘of the man’ (abs. *išow*, erg. *iše*); but note gen. *ičē* (i.e. *ič-e-y*) ‘of oneself, own’ (abs. *ič*) vs. erg. *ič-en* and *ǵar-e* ‘of the son’ vs. erg. *ǵar-en* (cf. below). The ending *-i* usually appears with proper names (mostly with stems ending in consonants), cf. *Abel-i*, *Abraham-i*, *Aharon-i*, *Barak-i*, *Elisabet-i*, *Herodēs-i*, *K̃-s-i* ‘of Christ’ (probably *K̃(ristos)i*), *Lowkas-i*, and so on, but also *ž̃-d-i* (alongside *ž̃-d-own*) ‘of the people’. A genitive in *-ya* is typical for pronominal elements such as, e.g., *o-ya* ‘his’, *aǵ-ya* ‘her’ etc., but also shows up in some kinship terms (*ša-ya* of *ša* ‘daughter’, *de-ya* of *de* ‘father’, and *ne-ya* of *ne* ‘mother’); note also *daizde-ya* ‘golden, of gold’. The ending *-ya* is also concealed in the derivational element *-n’a* < **n-ya* (see 3.2 below). An *-in-*genitive occurs with a restricted set of nouns and usually merges with the *-in-*ergative. Examples are *bi-in* ‘of the head’ (abs. *bowl*), *pi-in* ‘of the eye’ (abs. *powl*), *ḳod-in* ‘of the house’, *žow-lowǵal-in* ‘of

the evangelist', *eklesi-n* 'of the church', *ayz-in* 'of the world'. Far more frequent is the genitive in *-own* which is often used as the basis of adjectival formations as in *marġaven-own* 'of a prophet, prophetic', *ćowd-own* (for **ćowdow-own*) 'of heaven, heavenly', or *ġiy-own* 'of the day, daily' (abs. *ġi*). A few monosyllabic words have a genitive in *-e*; cf., e.g., *ġar-e* 'of the son' (*ġar*), *l'am-e* 'of sheep', *ća-e* 'of the sea' (*ća*), or *oe* 'of the grass' (**o*). – Attested **vocatives** are, among others, *ź~e* 'Lord!', *y~s-e* 'Jesus!', *owp~e* 'death!', *boťohowm-e* 'hell!', *de-yo* 'father!' (abs. *de*), *xifow-yo* 'woman!' (abs. *xifow*), *išebowr-o* 'brethren!', *apiyes-baalix-e* 'despisers!', *bowqana-hěã~r-e* 'beloved ones!', and *ařay-ťin-iã~r-e* 'erring ones!'. – The **ablative I** appears, e.g., in *kowy-oc* 'from/by the hand' (abs. *kowl*), *powriem-oc* 'from the dead' (abs.sg. *powri*, with unusual plural suffix *-em-*), *řown-řown-oc* 'from each side', and the adverbs *ćohoc* and *bahoc* 'from outside' and 'from inside'; the **anteablative I** is only concealed in the adverbial formations *hamořtay* 'whence', *emořtay* 'hence', *eťořtay* 'thence', *halořtay* 'from above' and *owqořtay* 'from below'. – The *o*-vowel of the plural morphemes (except for *-oc*) has probably resulted from an assimilation to the vowel *ow* of the plural morpheme *-owġ-*.

All other case forms are based upon either the primary dative (dative I, always ending in a vowel) or one of the two secondary datives (dative II with a suffix *-x/-ř*, dative III with a suffix *-s*) or the superessive I (with a suffix *-l*), which are extensions of it.¹² Obviously, the underlying pattern has resulted from the typical East Caucasian way of linking case and series morphemes in locative function, with the series encoding the regions of a landmark and the case forms relating to the motion/state type of the trajectory. This paradigm must have undergone severe changes, which no longer allow for describing the case forms in terms of full-fledged case-series sequences.

(b) **Dative I** and its derivatives (Table IV). Within the allomorphic set of vocalic endings, the most typical instantiation is *-a* as in *aķowķ-ihesown-a* 'to the manifestation', *harzesown-a* 'to the resurrection', *ařarķeť-*a** 'to the disciple', *avazan-a* 'in the pool', *bűwġ-a* 'amidst, in the middle', *cexar-a* 'to all', *ćiy-a* 'to the name', *ćowdow-a* 'in heaven', or *damasķos-a* 'to Damascus'. The *e*-dative is rare. It occurs with *ťã-e* 'side', *biy-e* 'head' (abs. *bowl*), *piy-e* 'eye' (abs. *powl*), *će-* (< **će-e*) 'fire', *rowġ-e* 'seed', *ź~e* 'lord' (abs. *ź~ġ*), *b~e* 'God' (abs. *b~ġ*), *hűwķ-e* 'heart', *de-* (< **de-e*) 'father', *ne-* (< **ne-e*) 'mother', *xown~e* 'place', *vićiy-e* 'brother', *ayz-e* 'world', *hom-e* 'back', and *ġe* 'today' (< *ġi* 'day', as opposed to *ġiy-a* 'on the day'). The *i*-dative is documented in *gal'i-* 'guard', *cam-i-* 'writing, text', *xař-i-* 'light', *hel-i-* 'spirit', *ķal'i-*

¹² In Gippert et al. (2008), the dative in *-s* is assigned dative II and the dative in *-x*, dative III. The present assignment is meant to facilitate comparison with Udi where only the latter has survived.

Tab. IV: Dative I and its derivatives.

	Abbreviation	Nominal		Pronominal	
		SG	PL	SG	PL
Dative I	DAT.I	-i, -e, -a, -ow	-o	-a, -ow	-a
Adessive I	ADESS.I	-V _{DAT.I} -k(a)	-o-k(a)	-V _{DAT.I} -k(a)	-a-k(a)
Adessive II	ADESS.II	-V _{DAT.I} -čʰ	-o-čʰ	-V _{DAT.I} -čʰ	-a-čʰ
Equative	EQU.	-V _{DAT.I} -ǰa	-o-ǰa	-V _{DAT.I} -ǰa	-a-ǰa
Subessive	SUBESS.	-V _{DAT.I} -ǰ	-o-ǰ	-V _{DAT.I} -ǰ	-a-ǰ
> Dative II	DAT. II	-V _{DAT.I} -x	-o-x	-V _{DAT.I} -x	-a-x
> Dative III	DAT. III	-V _{DAT.I} -s	-o-s	-V _{DAT.I} -s	-a-s
> Superessive I	SUPERESS.I	-V _{DAT.I} -l	-o-l	-V _{DAT.I} -l	-a-l

Tab. V: Dative II and its derivatives.

	Abbreviation	Nominal		Pronominal	
		SG	PL	SG	PL
Dative II	DAT.II	-V _{DAT.I} -x	-o-x	-ow-x	-a-x
Ablative II	ABL.II	-V _{DAT.I} -x-oc	-o-x-oc	-ow-x-oc	-a-x-oc
Anteablative II	ANTEABL.II	-V _{DAT.I} -x-ošay	-o-x-ošay	-ow-x-ošay	-a-x-ošay
Superessive III	SUPERESS.III	-V _{DAT.I} -x-ol	-o-x-ol	-ow-x-ol	-a-x-ol
Comitative	COM.	-V _{DAT.I} -x-oš	-o-x-oš	-ow-x-oš	-a-x-oš
Directive	DIR.	-V _{DAT.I} -x-ow	-o-x-ow	-ow-x-ow	-a-x-ow

‘voice’, *žam-i* ‘hour’, *mowš-i* ‘wind’, and *eḱles-i* (< *eḱlesi-i*, alongside *eḱlesiy-a*) ‘church’. A dative in *-ow-* is attested in *gol-ow-* ‘herd of sheep’ (abs. *gol*).

(c) **Dative II** and its derivatives (Table V). In its ending, the two consonants *x* and *χ* vary without a clear distribution (cf. 2.1 above as to the difficulty of distinguishing the two characters representing *x* and *χ*). It seems that *χ* usually appears in word-final position and always in combination with the ablative ending *-oc* (> *-χ-oc*) whereas *x* is usually written with the directive and comitative endings following it (> *-x-ow*, *-x-oš*). For the sake of simplicity, the spelling variants with *-χ* instead of *-x* are ignored in the present grammatical treatise, the suffix being generally transliterated as *-x-* in order to clearly distinguish it from the plural ending *-χ*.

(d) **Dative III** and its derivatives. Except for the anteablative III ending in *-s-taxoc*, the dative with the suffix *-s* seems not to have yielded secondary cases.

(e) **Superessive I** and its derivatives (Table VI). The formations based upon the superessive I that are documented so far are the superessive II (with the comitative ending *-oš*), a superablative in *-oc*, and a superanteablative in *-ošay*.

Tab. VI: Superessive I and its derivatives.

	Abbreviation	Nominal		Pronominal	
		SG	PL	SG	PL
Superessive I	SUPERESS.I	-V _{DAT.I} -l	-o-l	-V _{DAT.I} -l	-a-l
Superessive II	SUPERESS.II	-V _{DAT.I} -l-oš	-o-l-oš	-V _{DAT.I} -l-oš	-a-l-oš
Superablative	SUPERABL.	-V _{DAT.I} -l-oc	-o-l-oc	-V _{DAT.I} -l-oc	-a-l-oc
Superanteablative	SUPERANTEABL.	-V _{DAT.I} -l-ostay	-o-l-ostay	-V _{DAT.I} -l-ostay	-a-l-ostay

The primary dative (dative I) functions as a locative (inessive or allative) or encodes indirect objects. In addition, it usually serves to mark the subject of experiencer constructions (with *verba sentiendi*). The dative II encodes both an (often directional, but also inessive) locative and the “direct object” if it is not in the absolutive (see 4.2.2). The dative III usually encodes the addressee of speech act verbs. For the derived case forms, the semantics can usually be inferred from the corresponding labels.¹³

3.1.4 Oblique stem marking

Contrary to modern Vartashen Udi but quite in accordance with the variety of Nij,¹⁴ an oblique stem marker (-n-) may appear inserted in some nouns. In Albanian, this “stem augment” is confined to a small set of original nouns and to *nomina agentis* marked by the suffix *-al* (cf. 3.5.6). With the latter, the stem augment is present in the ergative case; cf. *baal* ‘doer’ > erg. *baal-n-en*, **axal* ‘nurse’ > erg. *axal-n-en*, *ča-biṭal-n-* ‘curtain’ (lit. ‘face-sowing’), or *bal’-baṭal-n-* ‘servant’. With primary nouns, the stem augment is usually present in the datives and the corresponding locative cases; cf. *aśal* ‘earth’ > erg. *aśal-en*, gen. *aśal-own* vs. dat. I *aśal-n-a*; *balala* ‘candle’ > gen. *balal-in* vs. dat. III *balal-n-ax*; *ḫowr* ‘rock’ > superess. I *ḫowr-n-ow-l*. At least four nouns differ from this pattern by showing the stem augment *-n-* in the genitive, too. Here it merges with the initial consonant of the genitive suffix *-ya* resulting in a suffix *-n’a*; cf. *d’ip* ‘book’ > gen. *d’ip-n’a* < **d’ip-n-ya*. This suffix has been reanalysed as marking relational properties (‘belonging to, related to’, cf. 2.2.2 and 3.2).

¹³ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-26–29) for a set of examples.

¹⁴ Cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook, 2.2 as to the dialects of Udi.

3.2 Adjectives

The number of basic, non-derived adjectives and adverbs is rather small, as in other Lezgc languages, too. Examples include *al'e* 'old', *mal* 'small, few', *büwi* 'heavy', *kaçi* 'blind', *faxi* 'far', *bai* 'full', *aci* 'below', *qaç* 'narrow', *aqat'i* 'naked', *iša* 'near', *en'eğ* 'other', *himi* 'other, next, remaining, left over', *ser* 'true, real', *ē* ~ *ey* 'good', *ğowy* 'living, alive', and *bowxi* 'strong'.

Derivational processes are usually based on case marking, the ergative and the genitives (both in *-own* and *-ya* including *-n'a* with stem augmented nouns) being most frequently involved; cf. *mal-ḫfiy-own* 'temporal, transient' (*mal* 'few', *ḫfi* 'time'), *margaven-own* 'prophetical' (*margaven* 'prophet'), *daizde-ya* 'golden' (*daizde* 'gold'), *kod'-in* 'belonging to the house' (*kod'* 'house'), etc.; formations based on the ergative(-instrumental) are, e.g., *hel-in* 'spiritual' (*hel* 'spirit') and *ḫfeg-en* 'true' (*ḫfeg* 'sign') etc., possibly also *kiye* 'rich' (< **ki* 'wealth, strength'). In addition, adjectives may be identical with or derived from participles. Other derivational processes are not fully transparent; this is true, e.g., for the segment *-n'i* that occurs with the following adjectives: *bân'i* 'great, big', *bâxn'i* 'worthy', *gan'i* 'faded away, dwindled' (only in *gan'i-ihesown* 'wither, fade away'), *en'i* 'new', and *aḫay-ḫin'i* / *-ḫown'i* 'erring, going astray'.

There are no agreement patterns of adjectives within noun phrases or in predicative position. Both attributive and predicative adjectives are unmarked with respect to case, number, or gender except when referentialised, i.e. nominalised. In principle, all adjectives (as well as most participles, certain pronouns and case forms) can undergo referentialisation; cf., e.g., *bân'i-o* 'the (male) big one', *karxes-baal-o* 'the saving (one)', *pē-o* 'the spoken (one)', *bezi-etxostay* 'from mine', *yohannēsi-txoc* 'from those of John', or *saŋesownax-ã~a* 'to those in temptation'.¹⁵ Table VII lists the primary case forms of the referentialising elements,

Tab. VII: Basic case forms of referentialising elements.

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL
Absolutive	-o	-ã~r	-ağ	-ağ-owr	-o	-ebowr
Ergative	-o-en	-ã~n	-ağ-en	-ağ-r-o-n	-(e)t-en	-ed-ğ-o-n / -et-x-on
Genitive	-o-ya	-ã~y	-ağ-ya	*-ağ-r-o-y	*-(e)t-ya > -(e)t'a	-ed-ğ-o-y / -et-x-oy
Dative I	-o-ow	-ã~a	-ağ-ow	-ağ-r-o	-(e)d/t/t-ow	-ed-ğ-o / -et-x-o

¹⁵ For further examples cf. Gippert (2018a: 28–29).

which are clearly related to the system of the demonstrative pronouns and articles (see 3.3.2).

3.3 Pronouns

3.3.1 Personal and possessive pronouns

Albanian has no 3rd person pronouns, the demonstrative pronouns being used instead (see 3.3.2). The language does not know an inclusive/exclusive distinction for the first person plural. The case marking of the personal pronouns is purely of the “nominative-accusative” type, contrasting a base form that encodes both the subject of an intransitive verb (hereafter: “S”) and the agent of a transitive verb (“A”), with a dative II-marked form used to encode the direct object of a transitive verb (“O”); there is no distinction of absolutive and ergative forms. Instead of proper genitive forms, Albanian uses possessive formations that are characterised, except for the 2nd person singular, by a petrified class marker *b-* in initial position and, in the plural forms, by a noteworthy alternation of the root consonant (see Table VIII).

Tab. VIII: The personal and possessive pronouns of Caucasian Albanian.

	1Sg	2Sg	1Pl	2Pl
Absolutive/Ergative	<i>zow</i>	<i>vown</i>	<i>žan</i>	<i>všan</i>
Genitive/Possessive	<i>b-ez-i</i>	<i>vë</i> (~ <i>ve-y</i>)	<i>b-eš-i</i>	<i>b-šef-i</i>
Dative I	<i>za</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>ža</i>	<i>vša</i>
Dative II	<i>zax</i>	<i>vax</i>	<i>žax</i>	<i>všax</i>
Dative III	<i>zas</i>	<i>vas</i>	<i>žas</i>	<i>všas</i>

3.3.2 Demonstrative pronouns and articles

The palimpsests show that Albanian possessed only one demonstrative pronoun with a full inflection, which was used in both deictic and anaphoric function. This pronoun, which is also the basis for the referentialised forms of adjectives and participles (cf. 3.2) and, at least partly, the preposed definite article (cf. 4.1), exhibits a threefold sexus-based gender system in both singular and plural, including a masculine (“M”), a feminine (“F”) and a neuter (“N”).¹⁶ Table IX illus-

¹⁶ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 28–29) for a discussion of the neuter allomorphs.

Tab. IX: Demonstrative pronouns, referentialising suffixes and definite articles.

		Demonstrative / anaphoric			Referentialiser			Article		
		M	F	N	M	F	N	M	F	N
Sg.	Abs.	<i>o(o)</i>	<i>aġ</i>	<i>e(e)</i>	<i>-o</i>	<i>-aġ</i>	<i>-o</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>
	Obl.	<i>o-</i>	<i>aġ-</i>	<i>ed/t/ḫ- ~ o-</i>	<i>-o-</i>	<i>-aġ-</i>	<i>-ed/t/ḫ- ~ -o-</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>
Pl.	Abs.	<i>ā~r</i>	<i>aġowr</i>	<i>ebowr</i>	<i>-ā~r</i>	<i>-aġowr</i>	<i>-ebowr</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>
	Obl.	<i>ā~-</i>	<i>aġr-</i>	<i>edġ- / etx-</i>	<i>-ā~-</i>	<i>-aġr-</i>	<i>-edġ-</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>

trates the basic forms of the demonstrative pronoun contrasted with the referentialising suffixes and the forms of the article.

The exact pronunciation of the masculine plural forms is difficult to assess as they appear always abbreviated in the palimpsests. A probable reading for *ā~r* is *ā-ar* (vs. ergative *ā~n* = *ā-an* or *ā-ar-an* etc.).¹⁷ The genitive of the demonstratives is used instead of possessive pronouns; the forms are M *o-ya*, F *aġ-ya*, N *eḫ'a* (< **eḫ-ya*) in the singular and M *ā~-y*, F **aġro-y*, N *edġo-y* in the plural (the feminine form is unattested).

The pronoun seems not to be specified for distal or proximal deixis which can, however, be indicated by the adverbs *eme* ‘here’ (corresponding to Arm. *ast* ‘id.’, e.g. in Matthew 17.4: A13vb, 8),¹⁸ probably the basis of the proximal pronoun *me-* in Udi, and *eḫe / eḫiṣ* ‘there’ (corresponding to Arm. *and(r)* ‘id.’, e.g., in Luke 2.6: A35vb, 1), which reappears in Udi *ḫe-* ‘that’.¹⁹

3.3.3 Reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

The reflexive pronoun is *ič*. The following forms are attested: abs. *ič*, erg. *ičen*, gen.sg. *ičē* (= *iče-y*, vs. gen.pl. *iča-y*), dat.I *ičow*, dat.II *ičowx*, abl.II *ičowxoc*. When they are used attributively, their nominal head is usually marked by the definite article. The concept of reflexivity may further be reinforced by the noun *bowl* ‘head’ in the appropriate case; cf., e.g., *bowqana-ba-hanayoenke xiḫow ičē ičē bowl bowqana-ba-oen* ‘(He) who loves his own wife loves himself (lit. his own head)’ (Ephesians 5.28: A27rb19–22).

¹⁷ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 31).

¹⁸ From here on, the two palimpsest codices Sin. georg. NF 13 and 55 are denoted by “A” and “B”, resp.

¹⁹ The words *eḫe* ‘there’ and *eḫol* ‘over there’ listed in Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-15) can no longer be upheld.

The pronoun *ič* bears a similar emphatic semantics as English *-self* does. With clause internal reflexive objects, the reduplicated construction **ičen-ičow* (erg. + dat.I) is used; in the palimpsests, the resulting form appears as *ičīnčow* in the Gospel of John and *ičownčow* in the lectionary materials. A derivation of the reflexive pronoun is present in the term *išowičē*, lit. ‘someone of/for himself’ (*išow* + *ičē*), which usually translates Arm. *iwrak’anč’iwr* ‘each’ (a variant is *išow-ičē-išow*, lit. ‘man-own-man’, in Hebrews 11.21: A5va, 7).

The reciprocal pronoun *sowsn-* is obviously shortened from **sunsun* (lit. ‘one-one’, with the oblique stem of *sa* ‘one’, *sown-*). The following forms are documented: gen. *sowsnay*, dat.I *sowsna*, dat.II *sowsnax*, dat.III *sowsnas*, com. *sowsnaxoš*. An example is *acē-ne pāmown sowsnaxoš e ašarkeṭowx* ‘the disciples went away again with each other’ (John 20.10: B7ra, 20–21).

3.3.4 Interrogative pronouns

Most of the interrogatives are marked by an element *ha-* (at least twice used independently in the sense of ‘why, what’, in John 5.28: A100va, 12 and 18.23: B40va, 2).²⁰ The two referential interrogative pronouns are *ha-š(ow)* ‘who’ (erg. *ha-še*; probably < *ha-* + *išow* / *iše* ‘man’) and *ya* ‘what’ (no other case forms known). A locative interrogative stem is *-ma-*, to which case endings can be added; cf. *ha-may* ‘where’ (genitive in *-y?*), *ha-ma-ṭown* ‘how much’ (*-ṭown* ‘up to’), and *ha-m-ošṭay* ‘whence, from where’ (anteablative I). *ha-moč* ‘when’ seems to be derived from a noun, viz. **moč* ‘time’ (cf. *e-moč-en* ‘then’ and Udi *ṭem-mač-ağ/me-mač-ağ* ‘until then, so far’ etc.). The attributive interrogative *ha-nay* ‘which’ is rarely attested as such. Usually it occurs as a relative pronoun, combined with the subordinator *-ke* (probably a borrowing from Middle Iranian, cf. 5.2.1 below) and functioning as a clitic (cf. 3.3.6). In subordinate interrogative clauses, the other interrogative pronouns appear with *-ke*, too, but they do not function as clitics here; cf., e.g., *n-aa-za hamay-ke-oowx-zexay* ‘I do not know where (they) put him’ (John 20.2: B14rb, 10–11).

3.3.5 Indefinite and negative pronouns

As indefinite pronouns the two nouns *išow* ‘man’ > ‘someone, anyone’ and *hił* ‘thing’ > ‘something, anything’ are used. Negative pronouns are not attested in

20 For the latter attestation see Gippert (forthc.: I).

the corpus; instead, the indefinite pronouns are used in combination with a negator (cf. 3.5.5).

3.3.6 Relative pronouns

Relative pronouns are extremely frequent in the palimpsests. The forms are mostly derived from the attributive interrogative pronoun *hanay-* ‘which’, more rarely from *haš(ow)-* ‘who’ and *ya-* ‘what’. When used as a relative pronoun, *hanay-* is always referentialised with the help of the corresponding deictic elements (> *hanay-o-* etc., cf. 3.3.2), followed by the subordinator *-ke*. The choice of the referential elements depends on gender and number. In all cases the relative pronoun has strong clitic properties. It usually takes the position after the verb that pertains to the relative clause but precedes personal markers or auxiliaries such as *hē* ‘was, were’. The basic paradigm can be established as in Table X (note that the absolutive singular form of the masculine and neuter appears always abbreviated as *h~ke* but can tentatively be restored as *h(anay-o)-ke*).

Indefinite (free) relative pronouns add the subordinator *-ke* to the corresponding interrogative pronouns, thus yielding *haš(ow)-ke* ‘whosoever’ and *ya-ke* ‘whatsoever’. The form *hake* appearing in the inscription on Yog’s candleholder (cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 4.2) may be, if not a different abbreviation for *h(anay-o)-ke*, a combination of the basic interrogative element *ha-* with the subordinator (*ha-ke*) in the sense of ‘how, as’. In some cases, the subordinator *-ke* can

Tab. X: The basic case forms of the relative pronoun (singular and plural).

Singular	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Absolutive	<i>h(anay-o)-ke</i>	<i>hanay-aġ-ke</i>	<i>h(anay-o)-ke</i>
Ergative	<i>hanay-o-en-ke</i>	<i>hanay-aġ-en-ke</i>	<i>hanay-t-en-ke</i>
Genitive	<i>hanay-o-ya-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-ya-ke</i>	<i>hanay-t'a-ke</i>
Dative I	<i>hanay-o-ow-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-ow-ke</i>	<i>hanay-t-ow-ke</i>
Dative II	<i>hanay-o-owx-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-owx-ke</i>	<i>hanay-d-owx-ke</i>
Dative III	<i>hanay-o-ows-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-ows-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-d-ows-ke</i>
Plural			
Absolutive	<i>hanay-ã~r-ke</i>	<i>hanay-aġ-owr-ke</i>	<i>hanay-e-bowr-ke</i>
Ergative	<i>hanay-ã~n-ke</i>	<i>hanay-aġ-r-on-ke</i>	<i>hanay-d-ġ-on-ke</i>
Genitive	<i>hanay-ã~y-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-r-oy-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-d-ġ-oy-ke</i>
Dative I	<i>hanay-ã~a-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-r-o-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-d-ġ-o-ke</i>
Dative II	<i>hanay-ã~x-ke</i>	<i>hanay-aġ-r-ox-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-d-ġ-ox-ke</i>
Dative III	<i>*hanay-ã~s-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-aġ-r-os-ke</i>	<i>*hanay-d-ġ-os-ke</i>

be separated from the pronoun by the verbal stem as in *ya-baa-ke-n(ow)n* ‘what you are doing’ (Jo. 6.30: A99ra, 10) or *hamay-ığa-ke-zow* vs. *ığa-hamay-ke-zow* ‘where I go’ (both John 8.22, A20vb, 14 and 19–20); the ratio behind this alternation is unclear.

3.4 Numerals

3.4.1 Cardinal numbers

The Albanian counting system is decimal with respect to the first two decades, and vigesimal from ‘twenty’ onwards; cf. *pa-çe* / pl. *pa-ç-ar* ‘twelve’ (‘two-ten’), *pfa-qâ* ‘forty’ (‘two-twenty’), or *sa-qâ-viç* ‘thirty’ (‘one-twenty-ten’). ‘Hundred’ can be denoted both vigesimally (*xo-qâ*, lit. ‘five-twenty’) and lexically (*baç*). The highest number attested in spelt-out form is 153, which is *vüwğ-qâ-xib-eç-ar*, lit. ‘seven (times) twenty (plus) three (plus) ten-s’ (John 21.11: B5ra, 17–18).²¹ The basic cardinal numbers are displayed in Table XI.

Tab. XI: Basic cardinal numbers.

1	<i>sa</i>	10	<i>viç</i>
2	<i>pfa</i>	12	<i>pa-çe</i> / <i>pa-ç-ar</i>
3	<i>xib</i>	13	<i>xib-eç-ar</i>
4	<i>bip</i>		
5	<i>xo</i>	20	<i>qâ</i>
6	<i>üwç</i>	30	<i>sa-qâ-viç</i>
7	<i>vüwğ</i>	40	<i>pfa-qâ</i>
8	<i>müwğ</i>		
9	<i>vowy</i>	100	<i>xo-qâ; baç</i>

The numerals from ‘three’ onwards can be marked by the plural morpheme *-ar* (*xib-ar* ‘the three (ones)’), which is possibly the same as the pronominal plural marker *-ar* (absolutive; cf. 3.3.2). The resulting forms are inflected according to the singular case pattern (note that the ergative ends in *-an* instead of *-en*): abs. *-ar*, erg. *-ar-an*, gen. *-ar-ay*, dat.I *-ar-a*, etc. The plural form of *pfa* ‘two’ is *powran* (e.g., in *powran išowy* ‘of two men’, John 8.17: A20va, 13–14).

²¹ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 42).

3.4.2 Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers are attested only fragmentarily. Nevertheless, the forms *xib-ar-own* ‘third’, *üwχ-ar-own* ‘sixth’, *vüwġ-ar-own* ‘seventh’ and *müwġ-ar-own* ‘eighth’ as well as *powran-own* ‘second’ suggest that ordinals were derived from the plural of the corresponding cardinal, followed by the derivational element *-own*. The same suffix is also present in *serba-own* ‘first’, which lacks a secured explanation; an alternative term for ‘first’ is *büwa*, which is identical with *büwa* (adverb / postposition) ‘before, in front of’.²²

3.4.3 Multiplicative numbers

Multiplicatives are formed by adding the morpheme *-om* to the cardinals (note **sa-om* > *som* ‘once’), optionally followed by the noun *çar* ‘time(s)”; cf. *som (çar)* ‘once’, *xib-om (çar)* ‘three times’, *χo-om (çar)* ‘five times’, etc. The form *pšaom* ‘twice’ is probably present in Act. 12.6 (A48ra, 16); it also seems to be concealed in the adverb *pšamown* ‘again’ (< **pša-om-own*).

3.4.4 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are *cex* ‘all’ (plural *cex-ar*), *kanay*, *lowśow* ‘all, whole’, *mal* ‘few’, *avel* ‘many’, *žin* (with unclear declension) and *χüwã~r* (pl.) ‘some’.

3.5 Verbs

The Albanian verb is characterised by a rather complex morphology. Its categories include person and number, tense, aspect, mood, direction, location (expressed by preverbs), as well as the dimension of subordination. The following sentence comprises two verbal complexes that exhibit typical features such as the incorporation of clitics and verbal compounding: *nowt-anaqe-išow-ahal vax apiyes-baa-hašqe* ‘lest there be someone who (might) despise you’ (Tit. 2.15: A26ra, 18–19).²³

²² Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-41) for a discussion.

²³ The clitic *-anaqe-* is written *-ananake-* by dittography in A26ra, 18.

3.5.1 Stem formation

Albanian possesses a restricted set of simple verbs such as *ac'-esown* 'perish, be lost' (masdar, hereafter used as the citation form), *aḱ-esown* 'see', *aḫ-esown* 'arrive, come, be present, reach', *bâ(h)-esown* 1. 'think', 2. 'go', *baḫ-esown* 'find', *beḡ-esown* 1. 'be necessary, have to', 2. 'look, observe, see', *bes-esown* 'seek, ask', *bit-esown* 'fall', *biṭ-esown* 'sow', *bix-esown* 'create, give birth', *biy-esown* 'do, make', *boḱ-esown* 'lead', *bowḡ-esown* 'love, want', *ef-esown* 'keep, have, hold', *heḡ-esown* 'come', *heḡ-esown* 'take, receive', *iḡ-esown* 'beat, hit', *iḡ-esown* 'go', or *ih-esown* 'be(come)'. The great number of verbs beginning with *b-* suggests that at least some of them might conceal petrified class markers.

Three types of complex verbs can be distinguished:

(a) complex verbs including an auxiliary stem that no longer exists as a lexical verb in its own right. The following root-final consonants may represent former auxiliaries: *ṭ*, *t*, *d*, *q*, *x*, *k*, *g*, and *z*. Examples are *bsai-d-esown* 'release, relinquish', *da-ḡ-esown* 'give' (present stem *low-ḡ-a-* 'give'), *bat-k-esown* 'turn around, return, change', *bas-ḱ-esown* 'sleep', *biḱ-ḱ-esown* 'become clear', *boc-ḱ-esown* 'wash', *bar-t-esown* 'let, leave', *bos-ṭ-esown* 'shut, wrap', *ze-ṭ-esown* 'bind', *bač-x-esown* 'hide', *bic-x-esown* 'show, report', *boḱo-ḱ-esown* 'burn', *čal-x-esown* 'realise, know', *kar-x-esown* 'be saved', *ze-x-esown* 'put, fix, fasten', and *har-z-esown* 'rise';

(b) complex verbs including an existing light verb. Table XII shows the light verbs that are documented in the texts.

(c) compounds incorporating nouns and other elements such as *il'ow-ḱor-biy-esown* 'answer' (lit. 'word-back-do'), *ḡow-baqal-biy-esown* 'ask' (lit. 'news-taking-do'), *ḱi-boḱ-esown* 'be able' (lit. 'wealth-bring'), *hel-ḡax-esown* 'sigh, groan' (lit. 'spirit-emit'), or *ačam-owk-esown* 'eat unleavened bread'.

Tab. XII: Light verbs.

Intransitive	<i>iḡ-esown</i>	'go/come'
Intransitive, anticausative	<i>ih-esown</i>	'become'
(In)transitive	<i>p-esown</i>	'say'
Transitive(-causative)	<i>biy-esown</i>	'do, make'
Transitive-causative	<i>daḡ-esown</i>	'give'

3.5.2 Agreement

Albanian possesses a paradigm of personal agreement clitics which normally agree with the subject (S and A) but occasionally also with objects. Agreement

Tab. XIII: Verbal agreement.

			Subject (S/A)			Object (O/IO)
			nFOC	FOC		
			S		A	
1SG			-z(ow)			-za(x/s)
2SG			-(n)own			-va(x/s)
3SG	Pres. Stem	m	-∅	-va	-o-en	-oow(x/s)
		f		-aġ	-aġ-en	-aġow(x/s)
		n		-ya	-t-en	-tow(x/s)
	Past Stem	m	-n(e)	-va	-o-en	-oow(x/s)
		f		-aġ	-aġ-en	-aġow(x/s)
		n		-ya	-t-en	*-tow(x/s)
1PL			-žan			-ža(x/s)
2PL			-nan			-vša(x/s)
3PL	Pres. Stem	m	-∅	-ā~r	-ā~n	-ā~a(x/s)
		f		-aġ-owr	-aġ-r-on	-aġ-r-o(x/s)
		n		-e-bowr (?)	-ed-ġ-on	*-ed-ġ-o(x/s)
	Past Stem	m	-n(e)	-ā~r	-ā~n	-ā~a(x/s)
		f		-aġ-owr	-aġ-r-on	*-aġ-r-o(x/s)
		n		-e-bowr (?)	*-ed-ġ-on (?)	*-ed-ġ-o(x/s)

clitics are strongly bound to verbal stems,²⁴ as long as they do not have a copular function (cf. 4.2.4 below).

The paradigm of agreement clitics for the 3rd persons is divided into two sub-paradigms that are related to stem formation and focus. The unfocused 3rd person does not distinguish the singular from the plural; however, it occurs in two forms, namely, as -∅ with tense/mood forms derived from the present stem, and as -n(e) with tense/mood forms derived from the past stem as well as static presents (e.g., in *bow-ne* ‘(there) is’). The unfocused 3rd person subject clitics may be reinforced with the help of pronominal clitics that copy a deictic pronoun onto the verb (“explicative” or focussing clitics). In this case, subjects in the absolutive (S) are distinguished from ergative subjects (A). In addition, a gender opposition applies

²⁴ Cf. Harris / Duff (2018) for a discussion.

with both the singular and the plural clitics. The distribution of $-\emptyset$ vs. $-n(e)$ is also present when such emphasising clitics follow the verbal stem (e.g. $-oen$ vs. $-noen$): $-oen$ alone occurs with those tense/mood forms that normally exclude the clitic $-ne$ (e.g., present *bareta-oen* ‘he leaves’) while $-noen$ appears in the other cases (e.g., past *bartay-n-oen* ‘he left’). Therefore it is reasonable to assume that the frequent complex clitic $-na-va$ is a combination of the primary clitic $-ne$ with the explicative clitic $-va$ ($*-ne-va > -na-va$). Distributional criteria further allow us to assume that $-va$ replaces the weak agreement clitic $*-o$ (i.e. the absolutive of the masculine/neuter anaphoric pronoun) with intransitive verbs (as opposed to the ergative form $-oen$ with transitive verbs), even though it is difficult to decide whether $-va$ is a morpheme distinct from $-o$ or whether it has developed from $-o$ via phonetic processes ($*-o > *-awa > -va?$).

The 2nd person singular shows a similar distribution, at least in the Gospel of John, with $-own$ occurring with present tense forms and $-n-own$ in other cases (e.g., *ba-own* ‘you do’ vs. *biyay-n-own* ‘you did’), thus suggesting that the $-n-$ was not restricted to 3rd persons originally; however, there is no such variation with the 2nd person plural clitic, $-nan$. Table XIII lists the clitics for all persons.

All agreement clitics belong to the class of light clitics (cf. 3. above). They follow heavy clitics in case these are present. A typical chain of clitics (introduced by the heavy optative clitic $-qa-$) is given in *karxes-qa-n-oen-žax-biyay* ‘He will save us’ (Isaiah 35.4: A73va, 8–9).

3.5.3 Tense and aspect

Albanian is characterised by a tense system that is based on an earlier aspectual system. Most verbs show a thematic vowel ($-a/-e$) following the root-final consonant. Four stem types are derived depending on the type of the thematic vowel, namely, the present, past, infinitive, and imperative stems. In the infinitive stem, the thematic vowel ($-e$) has merged with an original case marker $*-s$ (dative III) yielding $-es-$. With so-called “weak” verbs, both the present stem and the past stem are marked with the thematic vowel $-a-$, whereas with “strong” verbs the thematic vowel of the past stem is equal to that of the infinitive ($-e-$). The imperative stem is based on that of the infinitive but marked by the thematic vowel $-a-$. The basic pattern is given in Table XIV.

Older patterns of aspectual stem formation are preserved with certain verbs. To which degree they were still productive at the times of the documented language cannot be told for sure. Two types must be distinguished here:

(a) $-a/-i-$ root ablaut (cf. 2.2.4). This ablaut pattern is clearly present with the verbs *ihesown* ‘be(come)’ (present stem *aha-*), *biqesown* ‘seize’ (present stem

Tab. XIV: Tense stem formation (stem final thematic vowels).

		Present	Past	Infinitive	Imperative
Strong verbs	Thematic vowel	-a-	-e-	-e-	-a-
	Example	<i>beġ-a-</i>	<i>beġ-e-</i>	<i>beġ-es-</i>	<i>beġ-a-</i>
Weak verbs	Thematic vowel	-a-	-a-	-e-	-a-
	Example	<i>heq̄-a-</i>	<i>heq̄-a-</i>	<i>heq̄-es-</i>	<i>heq̄-a-</i>

Tab. XV: Suppletive stem formation.

	Infinitive Stem	Present Stem	Past Stem	Imperative Stem
‘go’	<i>i-ġ-es-</i>	<i>i-ġa-</i>	<i>ace-</i>	<i>ow-kal-</i>
‘come’	<i>he-ġ-es-</i>	<i>he-ġa-</i>	<i>ar-</i>	<i>he-kal-</i>
‘say’	<i>p-es-</i>	<i>(ow)ka-</i>	<i>pe-</i>	<i>(ow)pa-</i>
‘die/kill’	<i>(owp̄-)</i>	<i>bil’a-</i>	<i>powr-</i>	<i>owpar-</i>
‘give’	<i>da-ġ-es-</i>	<i>low-ġa-</i>	<i>da-ġe-</i>	<i>da-ġa-</i>

baġa-), and *biyesown* (< **bi’e-*) ‘do, make’ (present stem *ba(a)-* < **ba’a-*). Note that *biqesown* once also shows a masdar variant *baqesown* (Hebrews 9.6: A78rb, 12), which illustrates that the ablaut may have occurred in the infinitive stem, too. Ablauting verbs can be both weak (*biyesown* > present stem *ba(a)-* < **ba’a-*, past stem *biya-* < **bi’a-*) and strong (*ihesown* > present *aha-*, past stem **ihe-* > *he-*);

(b) infixation of *-r/l(e)-* (with *-l-* changing to *-l’-* after a palatal vowel) in present (and, sometimes, infinitive) stems such as *bi-l’e-ç-a-* (vs. *bic-esown* with variant *bi-l’-ç-esown* ‘dissolve, get rotten’), *a-re-c-a-* (past *ac-ar-i*, **a(r)c-esown* ‘sit’), *i-l’e-g-a-* (*ig-esown* ‘beat’), *ze-l-ṭ-a-* (*zeṭ-esown* ‘bind’), *ze-le-x-a-* (*zex-esown* ‘put, fix’), *a-le-p-a-* (*aṗ-esown* ‘reach’), *ā-le-p-a-* (past stem *āpe-* ‘kindle’), and *bā-l-a-* (probably < **bā-l-h-a-*; *bā(h)-esown* ‘go / think’). With a few verbs, the infix seems to be confined to the vowel *-e-* preceding the stem-final consonant, as in the present stems *bat-e-ka-* (*batk-esown* ‘turn’), *bic-e-xa-* (*bicx-esown* ‘report’), *boc-e-ka-* (*boçk-esown* ‘wash’), *bač-e-xa-* (*bačxesown* ‘hide’), or *čal-e-xa-* (*čalx-esown* ‘realise, know’).

The stem formation of some verbs is characterised by full or partial suppletion as shown in Table XV; note that for ‘dying / killing’ there exists no infinitive stem proper, the noun *owp̄* ‘death’ being used instead.

Two basic tense categories are documented in the palimpsests: present and past. The present tense is marked by the thematic vowel *-a-*. From the present tense stem a (periphrastic) imperfect is formed by the addition of the clitic variant of the past of the auxiliary *ihesown* ‘be(come)’, *-hē* (= *-he-y*). The past tense is

Tab. XVI: Elements of tense formation.

	Root	Infix	Thematic Vowel	Suffix	Auxiliary
Present					-Ø
Imperfect	[-a-]	[-r/l(e)-]	-a-	-	+ =hē
Past					-Ø
Pluperfect	[-i-]	-	-a-/e-/Ø	-y-/i-	+ =hē

marked by a morpheme *-y ~ -i* added to the past stem. The variant *-i* is restricted to the suppletive past stem of *hegesown* ‘come’, *ar-i*, used both as an independent and as a light verb; cf. *ac-ar-i* ‘sitting, having sat down’ (pres. stem *a-re-ca-*), *powri* < *pow-ar-i* (?) ‘dead, having come to death’ (pres. stem *bil’a-*), possibly also *bowri* < *bow-ar-i* ‘standing, having come into upright position’ < ‘having come to be’ (if the pres. stem *bowra-* is secondary). A secondary past tense form (corresponding to a pluperfect) is again formed with the help of the clitic past of *ihesown* ‘be(come)’, *-hē*, here combined with past forms. The forms *efa-ã~n-ahal* ‘do/will they have’, *il’ow-ka-ã~n-ahal* ‘do/will they speak’, and *targowmanown-ba-ã~n-ahal* ‘do/will they translate’ (I Corinthians 12.30: B26va, 2–6) suggest that the present could also be extended by modal forms of the same light verb (here the subjunctive *ahal* ‘will be’; however, the existing data are too scarce to prove the existence of a distinct category. Table XVI summarises the basic pattern of tense formation.

The following examples illustrate the present, the imperfect, the past and the pluperfect: *žan-al bicexa-žan-vša* ‘We also declare (it) to you’ (I John 1.5: A104va, 18–19); *băgal-baa-z-ya-hē* ‘I used to ransack it’ (Galatians 1.13: B15vb, 14–15); *il’ow-kor-biyay-n-oen-ã~a* ‘He replied to them’ (John 9.27: A21rb, 21); *xibom nša-žiz-acē-hē-zow* ‘three times I had suffered shipwreck’ (II Corinthians 11.25: A77vb, 1–3).

3.5.4 Mood and modality

The modal paradigm of Albanian includes a (hortative) optative, a (future) subjunctive, a conditional, an imperative, and a prohibitive. Special constructional patterns are used to encode necessity and (in)ability.

The optative, which sometimes functions as a mere future, is based on the heavy clitic *-qa-*. It usually combines with past tense forms and is always followed by the “past” agreement clitics. The basic pattern can be seen in *heqay-qa-n-oen* ‘he shall take’ (Matthew 10.41: A13ra, 4–5 and 8–9) and *ta-pē-qa-žan* ‘let us offer’ (Hebrews 13.15: A2va, 17).

The subjunctive (more regularly used to denote a future tense) is based upon the *-al*-participle (see 3.5.6), regularly (but not always) combined with the clitic element *-anķe-*. The clitic most often corresponds to a conjunction '(so) that', thus constituting (final) subordinate clauses. The basic pattern is visible in *baal-anķe-zow* '(so) that I should do' (John 6.38: A98vb, 18) and *aķal-anķe-ža* '(so) that we may see' (John 6.30: A99ra, 9).

The conditional is derived from the present tense by adding the clitic *-en'e-*. A past variant is construed like the imperfect by adding the past form of the auxiliary *iħesown* 'be(come)', *-hē*. As the construction is based on the present stem, no agreement clitic appears with 3rd persons (cf. 3.5.2). The basic pattern is illustrated by *efa-en'e-žan* 'if we hold' (Hebrews 3.6: B23va, 9) or *aa-en'e-vša-hē* 'if you had known' (John 8.19: A19rb, 4).

The imperative is derived from the infinitive stem by a change of its thematic vowel to *-a-*. Hence the stem differs from the present stem only in case of vowel alternation, infixation, or stem suppletion (cf., e.g., *beğ-esown* 'see, look', present stem *beğa-*, imperative stem *beğa-*, but (*ow*)*p-esown* 'say', present stem (*ow*)*ķa-*, imperative stem *owpa-*). With many standard verbs, the imperative stem is thus difficult to distinguish from the present stem. With root ablauting verbs, the imperative takes the vocalisation of the infinitive stem, e.g. *iħ-esown* 'be(come)' > imperative *iħa-* vs. present stem *aha-*, *biğ-esown* 'take' > imperative *biğa-* vs. present stem *bağa-*, and *biy-esown* 'do, make' > imperative *biya-* vs. present stem *ba(a)-*. This rule also applies when the stems are used as light verbs in verbal composition.

The two motion verbs *iğ-esown* 'go' and *heğ-esown* 'come' have suppletive imperative stems, viz. *owkal-* 'go!' and *hekal-* 'come!'. Most likely, we have to deal here with two petrified preverbs (*ow-* vs. *he-*) that are added to an imperative stem *kal-* 'move!'. A few verbs show an imperative stem in *-ar-* (*boz-ar-* 'endure!', *hay-z-ar-* 'arise!', *owp-ar-* 'kill!');²⁵ these usually go along with a past stem in *-(a)r-*,²⁶ which may rely on *ar-i*, the irregular past of the light verb *heğ-esown* 'come' (cf. 3.5.3) used as a light verb.

The imperative stem is usually followed by subject clitics as in *bai-efa-nown* 'keep fulfilled!', *beğa-nan* 'look!', *ořana-bowra-nan* 'pray!' (lit. 'stand in prayer!'), *břaida-n(ow)n-za* 'leave me alone!', *zahown-iħa-nan* 'learn!', *bowxi-iħa-nan* 'become strong!', *biya-nown* 'do, make!' or *bowřana-biya-nan* 'love!'.

²⁵ II Timothy 4.5 (A28ra, 13); Acts 12.7 (A57vb, 4); Matthew 5.21 (A9ra, 20).

²⁶ *boz-ari-* John 4.38 (B18rb, 12) and Hebrews 12.3 (A67vb, 6); *hay-z-ari-* John 13.4 (A66va, 7) etc.; the frequent *powri-* 'died' (Romans 8.34: B33rb, 4 etc.) may represent an underlying **pow-ari-*, cf. *owp* 'death'. The form *batar-nown* 'leave!' in Matthew 5.24 (A9rb, 21–22) is likely to be misspelt for **barta-nown*, given that the past of *bartesown* 'leave' is *bartay* throughout.

A periphrastic necessitative is based on a constructional pattern that uses the word *beġa* ‘necessary’, originally probably the present stem of *beġ-esown* ‘be necessary, have to’. The obliged person is marked by one of the datives, whereas the lexical verb appears in the infinitive (in *-es-a*, cf. 3.5.7). An example is *beġa o owsbos bowqana-biy-es-a iĉay ĉibowx* ‘the husbands must love their wives’ (Ephesians 5.28: A27rb, 15–17). Another way of expressing necessity is the use of the form in *-esown*, probably the genitive of the infinitive (*-es-own*, cf. 3.5.7), as a quasi-predicate (cf. Engl. *I am to do s.th.*); cf., e.g., *haše-žax baćow-biyesown e bowqanaaxoc k’si* ‘who (is) to separate (lit. make fragmented) us from the love of Christ’ (Romans 8.35: B33rb, 10–11).

Ability is expressed by the verb *ķi-boķesown* ‘prevail, conquer, be victorious’, which is likely to have developed from ‘bring wealth’. It is generally followed by the verb in the infinitive.²⁷ An example is *ķi-boķa-oen řafesownaxã~a-al heć-ihe-sa* ‘He can also help those (who are) in temptation’ (Hebrews 2.18: A29rb, 5–6).

3.5.5 Negation

In Albanian, negation is expressed by the elements *te-*, *now-*, *nowt-*, and *ma-*. The element *te-* is the inherited Lezgetic negator, whereas *ma-* and *now-* are most likely loan elements (cf. 5.2.1 below), and *nowt-* may have resulted from a combination of *now-* and *te-*. Different from the other negators, *te* can be used independently, with its function coming close to that of a negative copula; it is also used as a sentential negator (‘no’). As a negative copula as well as with finite verbs, *te* functions as a clitic host followed by agreement clitics as in *vić-ġaar daizowzn’a sówm te-n-ã~a řow* ‘bread for (lit. of) two hundred dinars is not enough for them’ (John 6.7: A101vb, 11–12). With verbs, the use of *te-* seems to be restricted to past tenses and stative expressions; cf., e.g., *te-ne-biyay* ‘He did not do (it)’ (John 8.40: A55vb, 17), *te-ne-soma-ari-hē* ‘He had not yet come’ (John 6.17: A107vb, 14) or *te-zow-zaown-hē* ‘I was not taught (it)’ (Galatians 1.12: B24rb, 6).

The negator *now-* is the preferred element with tense/mood forms that are not based on the past. In this respect it stands in complementary distribution with *te-*. *now-* often assimilates to, or merges with, a subsequent vowel (> *na-*, *ni-*, *n-*). Contrary to *te-* it is normally not followed by agreement clitics but by the verbal stem,²⁸ cf. examples like *n-aa-za* ‘I do not know’ (John 9.12: A18ra, 13), *now-ba-aġen-hüwķel* ‘she does not remember’ (lit. ‘does not do on heart’; John 16.21: A24rb, 16–17) or *now-břax-baa-z* ‘I do not judge’ (lit. ‘do judgement’; John 8.15: A19ra, 4–5).

²⁷ Cf. Ganenkov (2015: 121–122).

²⁸ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-61).

Both *now-* and *nowt-* are used in derivation. This is especially true of *nowt*, which can be used as a suffix in the sense of an *alpha privativum* (cf. *ğar-nowt* ‘child-less’ and *ki-nowt* ‘poor’, lit. ‘wealth-less’).²⁹ It further appears in negating subordinate verbs, conditionals, and forms based on the participle in *-al*. Like *te-*, it usually takes the first place in the verbal chain and hence serves as a primary host for clitics such as *-anake-* and *-anke-*; cf. examples like *nowt-anake-nan-heqay* ‘for you have not received’ (Romans 8.15: B25rb, 13–14), *nowt-anke-ten-efal* ‘that it may not have’ (Ephesians 5.27: A28vb, 9–10) or *nowt-hamaṭownke-va-hē* ‘as long as he was not’ (Luke 7.6: A42rb, 6–7).

Albanian possesses two types of prohibitives (here named strong and weak). Both forms are based on the proclitic negation particle *ma-*. The strong prohibitive is built upon the imperative; cf. *biya-nown* ‘do!’ > *ma-biya-nown* ‘do not!’. Here, *ma-* is always followed by the verbal stem. The weak prohibitive is the negated equivalent of the optative. In its formation, the hortative particle *-qa-* follows immediately after the negation particle *ma-*, the verbal base being shifted to the end of the clitic chain. The basic pattern is *biyay-qa-nown* ‘you should do!’ > *ma-qa-nown-biyay* ‘you should not do!’. Note that the cluster *ma-qa-* cannot be separated by other clitics and that in contrast to the strong prohibitive, the forms are not restricted to 2nd person subjects. Examples are *ma-qa-n-bitē* ‘(it) will not fall’ (Matthew 10.29: A12vb, 13–14), *ma-qa-n-eṭiš-hē* ‘there shall not be’ (Isaiah 35.8: A73vb, 8) or *ma-qa-zow-če-biyay* ‘I shall not cast out’ (John 6.37: A98vb, 15). A peculiar use of *ma* is found in phrases introduced by *meçiḡay* ‘really, perhaps; lest’; cf. *meçiḡay iḇē bowl bil’a-ma-ke-oen-ahal* ‘will he perhaps *not* kill himself (lit. his own head)?’ (rhetorical question, John 8.22: A20vb, 17–18) or *meçiḡay heḡa-ma-ke vṣal hala pēo marḡavenowḡoy* ‘lest the (word) spoken by the prophets might come over you’ (Ephesians 5.28: A27rb19–22). The element *ma* is also contained in *qūw-ma-ne* ‘consolation’, lit. ‘(may) fear not be (there)’, which appears in *qūw-ma-ne-pesown* ‘console’ and *qūw-ma-ne-heqesown* ‘be consoled’, lit. ‘speak’ and ‘take consolation’ (cf. 5.2.5 below).

3.5.6 Participles and converbs

The two basic participles of Albanian are identical with the pure forms of the present and the past. The present participle is zero-marked (present stem with

²⁹ Possibly, the obscure adjective *ašnowt* appearing as a variant reading in the letter from bishop Giwt to St Vache in Movses Kalankatuatsi’s *History of the country of the Albanians* as an epithet of Arm. *ašown* ‘autumn’ (book I, chapter 11; Emin 1860a: 19, l. 14 / 1912: 32, l. 13; Arakelyan 1983: 24, l. 15 note) represents Albanian *aš-nowt* ‘workless’, chosen by the author because of the alliterative similarity to its head-noun; Dowsett (1961a: 14, l. 23) translates “parched” as the

thematic vowel *-a*), whereas the past participle is marked by the suffix *-y ~ -i* added to the past stem. The simple present stem is but rarely used as a participle, however. In attributive function, it is rather replaced by a secondary formation containing the element *-al* (i.e. thematic vowel *-a-* + *-l*). The *-al*-participle, here styled a present-future participle, is also used for the derivation of *nomina agentis* and forms the basis for the *anḱe*-subjunctive (cf. 3.5.4 above). In addition, there are two marginal participle formations documented in the texts, namely, a present participle in *-ala*, an extension of the *-al*-participle (most probably a dative variant), and a participle in *-ana* (as well built upon the present stem).

All participles are labile with respect to diathesis in that they do not exhibit any clear affinity to either active or passive voice. Most of the formations can be referentialised with the usual elements (cf. Table VII in 3.2). Examples are *bow-ḡana-o* ‘the beloved one, friend’, *pē-o* (< *pe-y-o*) ‘what was spoken’, *hebiyay-oya* ‘of the sent one, apostle’, *bēḡa-eṭxoc* ‘from what is necessary’, *go-karxē-ā̃y* ‘of those who have sinned, sinners’, *aana-edḡoy* ‘of the known (things)’, or *ser-ḡexay-edḡoy* ‘of the established (things)’.

The Albanian texts do not show any systematic converbial structures, conjunction-based subordination being used instead. In a few cases, a plain verbal form (without person reference) is used like a converb preceding a fully inflected form as in *hoći biyay bisay-n-oen* ‘having made clay, he anointed’ (John 9.11: A18ra, 7–8), *angelos ž̃ē ari bowri-ne hala* ‘an angel of the Lord, having come, stood above’ (Act. 12.7: A48ra, 20–22) or *ḡowmowx biḡa ḡe-bāha-nown* ‘hold(ing your) tongue (lit. mouth) go out!’ (Luke 4.35: A43vb, 11–12); note that the conjunction *own* ‘and’ is usually not used between two verbal forms (but cf. 4.2.6). Certain case forms of *masdars* may function in terms of converbs, too (cf. 3.5.7).

3.5.7 Infinitives and action nouns

There are two formations of *nomina actionis* in Albanian. The primary formation is based upon the infinitive stem in *-es*. Historically, the formation in *-es* must have had a goal function which, however, has been lost by and large in Albanian. Instead, it has developed more nominal functions, which can be inferred from the fact that it can be inflected as a noun; cf. genitive *biy-es-own* ‘of making’ (> *masdar* ‘the making’, see below), dative I *biy-es-a* ‘(in order) to make’, dative II *biy-es-ax* ‘in making’, and ergative *biy-es-en* ‘by making’; absolutive forms (**biy-es* ‘the making’) are only attested in derivational causatives (see 3.5.8). The ergative

equivalent of Arm. *eraštowt* which is one of the other variant readings at the given position (reading preferred in Arakelyan 1983: 24, l. 15).

form in *-es-en* often functions like a manner converb; cf. *eša-ig-es-en* ‘by persecution’, lit. ‘by going behind’, *gal'-ih-es-en* ‘by being alert’ > ‘with containment’, *hüwķ-ih-es-en* ‘by being heart(ful)’ > ‘by mercifulness’, *ifown-ih-es-en* ‘with being angry, menacing’ > ‘with strictness’, and *qáč-aķ-es-en* ‘by being troubled’ (lit. ‘seeing strait’). The primary dative of the formation in *-es* (> *-es-a*) has developed into an infinitive expressing purpose. Examples are *axa-ep-es-a* ‘to exhort’, *hala-kač-p-es-a* ‘to circumcise’ (lit. ‘cut above’), *harz-es-a* ‘to rise’; *heğ-es-a* ‘to come’, *iğ-es-a* ‘to go’, *horo-iğ-es-a* ‘to go around, behave’, *aķowķ-ih-es-a* ‘to be visible’, *aqat'i-ih-es-a* ‘to be bared’, *büwi-ih-es-a* ‘to be burdened’, *ćaćaows-ih-es-a* ‘to be confronted’, *gowy-ih-es-a* ‘to live’, *heq-es-a* ‘to receive’.

The secondary action noun, here named *masdar*, is built with a suffix *-esown* which probably derives from the genitive of the infinitive (*-es-own*). It has even stronger nominal properties than the primary formation and can be inflected just as any other polysyllabic noun; cf. absolute *biy-esown* ‘making’, ergative *biy-esown-en* ‘by the making’, genitive *biy-esown-own* ‘of the making’, dative I *biy-esown-a* ‘for the making’, etc.

3.5.8 Diathesis

Albanian does not have inflectional means of foregrounding or backgrounding subjects or objects in terms of diathesis. Diathesis-like processes are basically derivational, involving the use of special light verbs. One of them is the light verb *iğ-esown* ‘go’ which has valence-reducing properties. An example is *žiz-iğ-esown* ‘be shaken, tossed’. Nevertheless, paucity of data does not permit of describing this derivational pattern as a systematic way of forming passives. Causatives are generally based on the light verb *biy-esown* ‘do, make’, which is often opposed to its intransitive (anti-causative) counterpart *ih-esown* ‘become’; cf. *za(h)own-biy-esown* ‘teach’ vs. *za(h)own-ih-esown* ‘learn, be taught’, *bai-biy-esown* ‘fill’ vs. *bai-ih-esown* ‘be filled, full’, *bân'i-biy-esown* ‘enlarge’ vs. *bân'i-ih-esown* ‘be(come) large, grow’, etc. When combined with the plain infinitive stem in *-es* (cf. 3.5.7), *biy-esown* derives true causatives; cf. *ac'-es-biy-esown* ‘cause to perish’ > ‘destroy’ (vs. *ac'-esown* ‘perish, be lost’), *batk-es-biy-esown* ‘turn s.th. around/away’ (vs. *batk-esown* ‘turn, be turned’), *bowr-es-biy-esown* ‘make s. o. stand’ (vs. *bowr-esown* ‘stand’), *harz-es-biy-esown* ‘raise’ (vs. *harz-esown* ‘rise’) or *karx-es-biy-esown* ‘save’ (vs. *karx-esown* ‘be saved, live’). The basis of *apiy-es-biy-esown* ‘despise, disdain’ is not attested as such.

3.5.9 Preverbs

Albanian verbs can be combined with preverbs that encode directional and locational specifications. Two types can be distinguished here in correspondence with

Tab. XVII: Directional preverbs.

Plain verb		* <i>ta-</i> ‘thither’		* <i>he-</i> ‘hither’	
<i>boķesown</i>	‘lead’	<i>ta-boķesown</i>	‘row’ < ‘lead away’	<i>he-boķesown</i>	‘bring’ < *‘lead hither’
<i>iķesown</i>	‘go’			<i>he-ķesown</i>	‘come (hither)’
<i>bāhesown</i>	‘go’	<i>ta-bāhesown</i>	‘go thither, pass away’		
* <i>pesown</i>	‘put, beat’	<i>ta-pesown</i>	‘put off’ > ‘offer, approach, close’		
				<i>he-ķesown</i>	‘take’ < *‘get hither’?
<i>biķesown</i>	‘take, receive’			<i>he-beķesown</i>	‘gain’ < *‘take hither’?
<i>daķesown</i>	‘give’	<i>ta-daķesown</i>	‘give away’		
<i>biyesown</i>	‘do, make’			<i>he-biyesown</i>	‘send’ < *‘make hither’?
<i>batkesown</i>	‘turn’	<i>ta-batkesown</i>	‘exchange’		
<i>biķesown</i>	‘sow’	<i>ta-biķesown</i>	‘preach’ < *‘sow out’		

Tab. XVIII: Locational preverbs.

<i>aci-bāhesown</i>	‘go down, descend’	<i>hala-bowresown</i>	‘stand above, reign’
<i>aci-biķesown</i>	‘be swallowed, drowned’	<i>hala-kač-pesown</i>	‘circumcise’
* <i>aci-faxesown</i>	‘be covered, hidden’	<i>hala-pesown</i>	‘put on, dress’
<i>aci-heķesown</i>	‘take down’	* <i>hala-zesown</i>	‘stir up’ (only in <i>hala-zari</i>)?
<i>aci-pesown</i>	‘stoop, bend down’	<i>hay-bāhesown</i>	‘go up, ascend’
<i>aci-sak-pesown</i>	‘cast down’	<i>hay-boķesown</i>	‘lead up’
<i>baha-bāhesown</i>	‘go inside, enter’	<i>hay-heķesown</i>	‘take up, raise’
<i>če-axay-boķesown</i>	‘put away, discard’	<i>hay-pesown</i>	‘speak up, aloud’
<i>če-bāhesown</i>	‘go out, pass away’	<i>hay-zesown / ha-r-zesown</i>	‘get up, rise’
<i>če-beķesown</i>	‘look out, hope’	<i>hay-zexesown</i>	‘fix upon, crucify’
<i>če-boķesown</i>	‘thrust out’	<i>horo-iķesown</i>	‘walk around, follow’
<i>če-heķesown</i>	‘look out, see’	<i>ķor-iħesown</i>	‘return, go back’
<i>če-sak-pesown</i>	‘lay aside’	<i>-ķor-biyesown</i>	‘return, give back’
<i>eš-boķesown</i>	‘search after, examine’	<i>owq-ow-pesown</i>	‘talk low, murmur’
<i>eša-iķesown</i>	‘persecute’	<i>owq-a-biyesown</i>	‘put under, subdue’
<i>eša-iķesown</i>	‘go behind, follow’	<i>owħa-he-ķesown</i>	‘be added’
		<i>owħa-he-boķesown</i>	‘enrich, increase’

the case/series distinction of locative case forms (cf. 3.1.3 above). The first type consists of the ‘directional’ preverbs *ta-* ‘thither’ (itive) and *he-* ‘hither’ (ventive), both referring to motion with respect to the basic deictic opposition of ‘here’ and ‘there’. Examples are given in Table XVII; note that the preverb of *he-ķesown* ‘come’ is dropped in the suppletive past stem *ar-* (instead of **he-ar-*). The pair (*ow*)*p-esown* vs. *-ep-esown* ‘speak, say’ (only in combinations such as *hekal-epesown* ‘call’, lit. ‘say

“come”!, or *axa-epesown* ‘exhort’) suggests that there might have been another set of directional preverbs, namely **u-* vs. **e-*; **u-* may also be present in *owp-* ‘death’ (cf. the past *powr-i* ‘died, dead’) and *owk-esown* ‘eat’ (past *ka-y*).

Preverbs related to the concept of “series” refer to locational circumstances. They include *aci-* ‘down’, *baha-* ‘in(to)’, *če-* ‘out, away from, toward’, *eś(a)-* ‘behind, after’, *horo-* ‘around’, *hay-* ‘up’, *hala-* ‘on(to)’, *kor-* ‘back’, *owq(a)-* ‘under’, and *owxa-* ‘on top’. Table XVIII lists some examples. One more preverb (of uncertain meaning but cf. *go* ‘sin, fault, spot’) may be present in the three verbs *go-bicxesown* ‘command’ (vs. *bicxesown* ‘show’), *go-boķesown* ‘hurt’ (vs. *boķesown* ‘bring, carry’), and *go-karxesown* ‘sin’ (vs. *karxesown* ‘be saved, live’).

3.6 Adverbs

As far as our data go, no genuine class of adverbs can be established for Albanian. Local and temporal adverbs are, e.g., *eme-* ‘here’, *eṭiš* and *eṭe* ‘there’, and *emočen* ‘then’ (< *e-moč-en* erg. ‘that-time?’), all built upon the demonstrative *e-*, as well as *eśin* ‘then’ (< *eś-in* ‘finally, eventually’ < erg. ‘end?’); as an adverb of manner we may note *yanķe* ‘thus’ (< **ya-anķe* ‘what-as’). A sort of deadjectival adverbs is formed with the (comitative?) suffix *-eś* as in *ebraown-eś*, *dalmaṭaown-eś* and *yovnaown-eś* ‘in Hebrew, Latin and Greek’ (John 19.20: A17vb, 12–13, cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 2.2.2); in *ser-zexay-eś* ‘more fixed, certain’ (II Peter 1.19: A3ra, 6) the same suffix seems to carry the function of a comparative (corresponding to Arm. *hastata-goyñ*, Gk. βεβαϊότερον, and Georg. *u-mṭḱic-ēs-i*).

3.7 Postpositions

Quite in accordance with the general typology of East Caucasian languages, Albanian can specify locative functions by using postpositions. Table XIX lists the postpositions that are documented in the texts.

Tab. XIX: Postpositions.

Postposition	Meaning	Origin	Governed case
<i>būwa</i>	‘in front of’	<i>*bū</i> ‘front’ (dat.I)?	Dative
<i>būwga</i>	‘in the middle, among’	<i>*būg</i> ‘middle’ (dat.I)?	Genitive
<i>čacaows</i>	‘against, towards, facing’	<i>ča</i> ‘face’ (abs. + dat.III ‘face to face?’)	Dative
<i>eśa</i>	‘behind’	<i>*eś</i> ‘end’ (dat.I) ?	Genitive
<i>gāen</i>	‘for (the sake of), because of’	<i>go</i> ‘guilt’ (erg.) ?	Genitive
<i>hala</i>	‘on, upon’	<i>ha-</i> ‘up’ + <i>*la</i> ‘above’	Superessive I

Tab. XIX (continued)

Postposition	Meaning	Origin	Governed case
<i>heġala</i>	'together (with)'	<i>heġesown</i> 'come' (participle in <i>-ala</i>)	Comitative
<i>lamen</i>	'like'	* <i>lam</i> 'picture' (erg.)?	Genitive
<i>owġa</i>	'under'	* <i>owġ</i> 'ground' (dat.I)?	Subessive
<i>-town(-ġe)</i>	'until'	Non-derived?	Superessive I

3.8 Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are *own* and (rarely) *üwġa* 'and', *bowen'e* 'or' (< *bowen'e* 'if it is', 'be it'), *sa* 'but' (= *sa* 'one, alone?'), *i* 'now', and *eġ(a ġâe)n* 'because, therefore, for' < **eġ-ya ġâ-en* ('because of that'; always abbreviated as *eġ~n* but cf. pleonastic *eġ~n ġâen* in II Corinthians 9.14: A56vb, 4).

Subordinating conjunctions generally comprise the subordinator *-ġe*, which is also present in the relative pronouns (cf. 3.3.6). Most subordinating conjunctions are based upon the corresponding interrogative pronouns. Examples include *hamatownġe* 'until' (< *ha-ma-town-ġe* 'up to where/when that'), *hamoġġe* 'when' (< *ha-moġġe* 'this time that'), *hatenġe* 'if' (< *ha-ten-ġe* 'by what that?'), and *haġinġe* 'as, how, like' (< *ha-ġin-ġe* 'what sort that'); the origin of *-anaġe-* 'that (complementiser); because, for (causal)' and *-anġe-* 'when, as; so that, in order to (temporal, consecutive, purposive)' is unclear. With the exception of *hatenġe* 'if', the subordinating conjunctions are generally placed in the position of a heavy clitic after the lexical verb or a phrase-initial element. The two subordinators *-anġe-* and *-anaġe-* are extremely frequent.

3.9 Particles and Interjections

The Albanian texts do not exhibit a broader set of particles. Nevertheless, the following items can be mentioned: *soma* 'yet' (dative of *som* 'once?'), *himi* 'moreover, still, otherwise' (also used as an indefinite pronoun '(an)other'), and *meġiġay* 'really, perhaps, lest' (mostly used to introduce rhetorical questions, cf. 3.5.5 above); clitic particles are *-ġa* (phrase-final quotative, < (*ow*)*ġa* 'saying'), *-al* ('also, too', additive focus clitic), and *-oġom* ('as well', 'very', additive focus clitic appearing with pronouns and adverbs such as *iġ-oġom* 'the very same', *eġiġ-oġom* and *eme-oġom* 'at the same place', and *owhow-oġom* 'likewise', with unclear basis *owhow* 'just'). Except for *aha* 'behold', no explicit interjections are documented for Albanian; however, *hi-pesown* 'cry out' is likely to be based on an unattested inter-

jection **hi* ('say *hi*', cf. also *hihi* 'lamentation' with *hihi-pesown* 'lament' and *voe* 'woe' with *voe-pesown* 'weep, mourn').

4 Syntax

The syntax of the Albanian biblical texts is heavily influenced by the models used by the translators. This holds especially true for word order phenomena, probably also for the use of articles. In addition, we cannot exclude the possibility that the means of syntactical subordination are, at least in parts, as well motivated by the translators' efforts to stick to their originals as closely as possible.

4.1 Noun phrase and postpositional phrase

Noun phrases usually exhibit the order *determinans–determinatum*, i.e. article–noun, adjective–noun, genitive–noun, pronoun–noun, numeral–noun, noun–postposition, etc. Except for the number and gender distinction of the article (see 3.3.2), no noun phrase-internal agreement patterns are documented for the language. Note, however, that numerals can combine with nouns in both the plural and the singular. The basic patterns are illustrated by the following examples: *e ba xown'-ex* (article–adjective–noun) 'in that dark place' (II Peter 1.19: A4va, 11–12); *e owpen(ow)n kowl-aqesown* (article–genitive–noun) 'the power of death' (Hebrews 2.14: A29ra, 3–4); *ič giya* (pronoun–noun) 'on the same day' (Matthew 22.23: A42vb, 4); *pša čbalo[w]χ* (numeral–noun) 'two sparrows' (Matthew 10.29: A12vb, 10–11); *xib bowze* (numeral–noun) 'three months' (Hebrews 11.23: A2ra, 21); *müw-qen(ow)n eša* (noun–postposition) 'after Easter' (Acts 12.4: A57va, 4). Nevertheless, attributes may also follow their *determinatum*, which most likely represents a calque of Armenian syntax; cf., e.g., *himiqanaown e mowç'owrã~y* (noun–article–genitive) 'the need of the saints' (II Corinthians 9.12: A56va, 12–13) or *e bfaχ-al bezi* 'my judgement, too' and *hüwkeqaown bezi* 'my intention' vs. *bezi biyexoc* 'from myself' (lit. 'from my head'; all John 5.30: A97ra, 21–A100vb, 5).

In general, indefiniteness is not marked on nouns or within noun phrases; cf., e.g., *hē-ne bân'i bows lowsow ašalal hala* 'There was a great famine in (lit. on) all the land' (Luke 4.25: A43rb, 6–7). The example also illustrates that definite noun phrases are not necessarily marked specifically, although the language possesses definite articles (see 3.3.2). Obviously, the use of the definite article, which always introduces the noun phrase, adds a specific notion, perhaps in terms of emphasis, and it probably depends on the use of articles in Armenian. The following examples illustrate its use: *bowqa-ža çe-bâhesa e marmin'axoc* 'we want to go

out of the body' (II Corinthians 5.8: A39va, 2–4); *o dex bezi-al a(a)-anaḳe-vša-hē* 'for you would also know my father' (lit. 'the father of mine'; John 8.19: A19rb, 3–4). Another way of indicating definiteness is possibly involved in the use of the dative II to indicate direct objects (cf. 4.2.2 below).

4.2 Sentence structure

4.2.1 Word order and information structure

Due to the nature of the existing texts, nothing precise can be said about word order preferences. To which extent the word order in the palimpsests deviates from that of the possible models (Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Syriac) remains an unstudied matter up to now. The same holds true for strategies of structuring information such as clefts; but cf., e.g., *zow-zow powlaygan-aha-h̃ḳe-zow zaloc* 'it is me who bears (lit. who I bear) witness to myself' (John 8.18: A20va, 15–16). Albanian possesses at least one clitic that clearly has focal functions, namely, the additive clitic *-al* 'also, too'. A typical passage is *de bowqana-baa-anaḳe ġarax cex hil'-al bicexa-oen oows iĉen baa-h̃ḳe-oen* 'for the father loves the son (and) also shows him everything (lit. every thing, too) that he himself does' (John 5.20: A97va, 16–18).

4.2.2 Case assignment and verbal agreement

The underlying system of case assignment is basically ergative, with agents of transitive verbs (A) being encoded differently from subjects of intransitive verbs (S). This is valid for 3rd persons; cf., e.g., *eṭ'a eša acē-ne ỹs eṭow-xown çax gali-laowğoy* 'after this Jesus went across the lake of the Galilees' (John 6.1: A101va, 11–12) with S (*ỹs*) in the absolutive, and *il'ow-ḳor-biyay-ne ỹn pē-n-ā̃s* 'Jesus replied and said to them' (John 6.29: A99ra, 4–5) with A (*ỹn*) in the ergative. In contrast to this, 1st and 2nd person pronouns do not distinguish absolutive and ergative forms; cf., e.g., *zow ari-zow çiyen deya bezi* 'I have come in (lit. by) the name of my father' (John 5.43: A101rb, 12–13) with *zow* 'T' = S, and *aha zow baa-z-všax bšeowx-anḳe owlowğox büwğa* 'Look, I send (lit. make) you like sheep among the wolves' (Matthew 10.16: A12ra, 1–3) with *zow* 'T' = A. At the same time, the latter sentence shows that personal pronouns in the function of the direct object (O) appear in the dative II (*všax* 'you'), not in the absolutive (*všan*). The same may apply to 3rd person objects as in *ta-qa-n-dağē viĉiye viĉiy-ex owpa* 'A brother will deliver (his) brother to death' (Matthew 10.21: A12rb, 7–9) with O

(*vičiyex* ‘brother’) being marked in the dative, thus contrasting with the ergative *vičiyē* representing A. In all these cases, the verbal predicate agrees primarily with S or A (with *-ne* for 3rd persons and *-zow* for the 1st person), not O.

The exact conditions under which the dative II can be used for 3rd-person direct objects are not fully transparent; it seems that it was restricted to animate or even human objects. This is possibly a calque of Old Armenian, given that the Albanian dative II matches the original directional semantics of the Armenian *nota accusativi* (*z-*), which is somehow also related to definiteness. Nevertheless the distribution is not balanced: within the lectionary texts, roughly 75 % of all Armenian terms marked with the *nota accusativi* are rendered by the Albanian dative, whereas 25 % show the absolutive. Personal pronouns and anaphorics in object function are always marked by the dative II, except for the neuter clitic *-ya* ‘it’; cf., e.g., *he-biyay-hanayoenke-zax de* ‘the father who sent me’ (John 8.16: A19ra, 10–11) and *he-biyay-qa-z-ya vřaxow* ‘I will send it to you’ (John 16.7: A31ra, 12–13). The dative II can appear with both definite and indefinite human objects as in *haypē-baa-hamočke-nan ġarax iš(o)wy* ‘When you lift up the son of man’ (John 8.28: A19vb, 2–3) and *efa-hanayoenke margavenax margavenown çiyen* ‘He who receives a prophet in (lit. by) the name of a prophet’ (Matthew 10.41: A13ra, 1–3). In contrast to this, the absolutive usually appears with inanimate objects, but also with humans; cf., e.g., *dağē-qa-z-va kıltoŋ* ‘I shall give you the keys (abs.) of the kingdom of heaven’ (Matthew 16.19: A37va, 18–19), *bartay-n-oen ičē xiřow vičiyē ičē* ‘He left his wife (abs.) to his brother’ (Matthew 22.25: A35ra, 1–2), or *ič e řowrownl hala biyay-qa-zow eklesi bezi* ‘On this very rock I shall build my church (abs.)’ (Matthew 16.18: A34ra, 13–14) vs. *k’sen bowqana-biyay-haçinke eklesix ičē* ‘(just) as Christ loved his church (dat.II)’ (Ephesians 5.25: A27ra, 20–22). As far as data go, dative II-marked non-human objects only occur in case they are definite. Most likely, we have to deal with the beginnings of a grammaticalisation process which has been stabilised later on in Udi.

A peculiar setting is found in experiencer constructions (with *verba sentiendi*). Here, the object (“stimulus”) is either in the absolutive or in the dative II, whereas the experiencer is marked by the dative I; cf., e.g., *ma-qa-n-oow-aķē owp* ‘he (dat.I) will not see death (abs.)’ (John 8.52: A51ra, 11–12), *iha-hamočke-ã’a-hē ee* ‘when they (dat.I) heard this (abs.)’ (Luke 4.28: A44vb, 21–22), *aķē-n-oow sa kaçi išow bixēaxoc* ‘he (Jesus, dat.I) saw one man (abs.) blind from birth on’ (John 9.1: A51va, 6–7) vs. *hařenke zax aa-en’e-vřa-hē dex bezi-al a(a)-anaķe-vřa-hē* ‘for if you (dat.I) knew me (dat.II), you (dat.I) would also know my father (dat.II)’ (John 8.19: A19rb, 2–4). In the verb, the experiencer is indicated by a set of clitics that correspond to the dative of the personal pronouns as shown in Table XX. Obviously, the pattern is bipersonal with 3rd-person experiencers and stimuli; cf., e.g., *aķē-n-oow* in John 9.1 (see above, with *-n-* agreeing with the object in the absolutive,

Tab. XX: Verbal experiencer clitics.

	Stimulus		Experiencer	Stimulus		Experiencer	
	3 rd person			3 rd person			
	nFOC	FOC		nFOC	FOC		
1.SG	-z(ow)-		-za	1.PL	*-žan-	-ža	
2.SG	-own-		-va	2.PL	*-nan-	-vfa	
3.SGm	-n-	-	-o-ow	3.PLm	-n-	-	-ã~a
3.SGf	-n-	-	-ağ-ow	3.PLf	-n-	-	-ağ-r-o

the blind man, and *-oow* with the experiencer in the dative, Jesus) vs. *išow... te-za-aķē* ‘I did not see anyone’ (Galatians 1.19: B24vb, 2–3) or *hüwķel-qa-v’a-hē e il’ow* ‘you should remember the word’ (John 15.20: A30rb, 12–13). Bipersonal combinations with non-3rd-person stimuli are rare. Probably *ahownza* ‘I know you’ in Luke 4.34 (A44ra, 7–8) represents **a(a)-own-za* (with “hypercorrect” *h* in the hiatus), with *-own-* representing the 2nd person singular as the stimulus and *-za*, the 1st person experiencer in the dative I; similarly, *nowt-aa-z-vfa* (‘you (pl.) do not know me’) in John 8.19 (A19rb, 1–2) contains *-z-* (< *-zow-*) for a 1st person sg. stimulus and *-vfa* for the 2nd person pl. experiencer.³⁰ At least one example (*aķē-n-ã~n* ‘they saw’; John 21.9: B1va, 10–11) illustrates that experiencer verbs could also be aligned to the transitive pattern, with the experiencer in the ergative (*ã~n* ‘they’ instead of *ã~a* ‘id.’ dat.I).³¹

4.2.3 Comparative constructions

In Albanian, the standard of comparison is marked by the ablative as in *nowt-anake naiřow beg ž~exoc ičē* ‘that the servant is not greater than (lit. great from) his master’ (John 15.20: A25vb, 13–14); the ablative may be accompanied by *ixoy* ‘more’ as in *bân’i-n-oen-bâē qfa k’si ķiyexoc ixoy boc’e-ķod’in egiřtosowğoy* ‘he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater than (lit. great more from) the rich(es) of the treasury of the Egyptians’ (Hebrews 11.26: A2rb, 13–15).

³⁰ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 37) for a discussion.

³¹ Cf. Gippert (2018a: 41–42).

4.2.4 Non-verbal predicates

Albanian has three strategies for expressing copular concepts: a) the use of the defective verb *bow* ‘be, exist’, which appears in the present stem only; b) the use of the verb *ihesown* ‘be(come)’ (strong verb with ablaut, cf. 3.5.3); c) the use of agreement clitics that replace (or incorporate) the copula function. The verb *bow* usually has a local connotation (‘there is’) as in *bow-žax(o)š-hē vüwğ išebowr* ‘there were seven brothers with us’ (Matthew 22.25: A45rb, 19–20). The past of *ihesown* ‘be(come)’ (**ihē* > *hē*) generally supplies the missing past stem of *bow*, cf. *hē-ne bân’i bows lowšow ašalal hala* ‘there was a great famine in (lit. on) all the land’ (Luke 4.25: A43rb, 6–7). Identifying and qualifying copula constructions are usually formed with the mere agreement clitics as in *zow-zow e šowm ġoww-own(ow)n* ‘I am the bread of life’ (John 6.35: A99rb, 5–6); these, however, can also be omitted as in *hē e yal oya biki xaš-anke* ‘his raiment was white like light’ (Matthew 17.2: A13vb, 1–2).

Although Albanian can express possession verbally with the help of *efesown* ‘keep, hold, receive’, it occasionally employs constructional patterns that are based on a nominal strategy. Here it is the copula *bow* which relates the *posses-sum* to a *possessor*; the latter stands in either the adessive I (-*ak(a)*) or the genitive. An example is *cex hil’ bow-h~ke deya bezio-ne* ‘everything that the father has (lit. is of the father) is mine’ (John 16.15: A24vb,21–A31va, 1).

4.2.5 Interrogative sentences

Polar questions are generally unmarked; cf., e.g., *vown bezi towrmowx bocek-own* ‘are you washing my feet?’ (John 13.6: A59ra, 19–20) and *ari-nown ac’es-biyesa žax* ‘have you come to destroy us?’ (Luke 4.34: A43vb: 6–7). A negative reply is formed with the negator *te* ‘no!’, no secured data are available for ‘yes’ in positive replies (the word was most probably *al’e* as appearing in John 11.27: A65vb, 8). Rhetorical questions may be introduced by *meçiğay* followed by a verb in the subjunctive as in *meçiğay cexaran mowzron il’owka-ã~n-ahal* ‘will perhaps all speak in languages?’ (I Corinthians 12.30: B26va, 2–4; cf. also John 8.22 and Ephesians 5.28 in 3.5.5 above).

Content questions use the corresponding interrogative pronouns. They do not differ syntactically from affirmative clauses; cf., e.g., *ya řegowr ba-own?* ‘what signs do you do?’ (John 6.30: A99ra, 8–9), *i ya zow pãmown owpesown* ‘now, what again am I to say?’ (Hebrews 11.32: B42ra, 21–22), or *vown hašow-n(ow)n* ‘who are you?’ (John 8.25: A19va, 11).

4.2.6 Coordinated predicates

As far as data go, Albanian lacks the systematic use of a clausal coordinating conjunction, asyndetic coordination being preferred as in *aḱē-n-oow hāya-hē-na-va* ‘He saw it (and) he believed’ (John 20.8: B7ra, 16–17). Nevertheless, the conjunction *own* occasionally appears in this function as in *sa besē-ḱa-n-oen hāyaḱownen own ma-na-va-p̄ḱa-hūwḱ-hē* ‘But he may beg in faith, and he should not be in doubt!’ (James 1.6: A57ra, 1–3), even though its primary domain is the coordination of noun phrases (cf. 3.8).

4.2.7 Relative clauses

Due to the nature of the underlying texts, the Albanian palimpsests are marked by an extremely rich set of relative clauses. Relativisation is carried out mainly with the forms of the relative clitic *hanay-* *-ḱe* (cf. 3.3.6). These relative clitics are case-marked according to the role the pronoun plays in the relative clause; cf., e.g., *o bowḱana-biyay-hanayoenḱe-ḱax* ‘he who loves us’ (Romans 8.37: B33va, 1–2) or *cex ifown-aha-h~ḱe vičiyel ičē amčenen* ‘everyone who is angry about his brother without a cause’ (Matthew 5.22: A14vb, 4–6). If the role of the relative pronoun is not subjective or agentive, the actual subject of the relative clause is usually cross-referenced with the help of agreement clitics following later on in the clitic chain as in *o ihē-hanayoowlocke-ḱa : ešin piye aḱal-aal-hanayoyake-ḱan : o begē-hanay-oowsḱe-ḱan* ‘that about which we have heard, then (that) of which we are eye-witnesses (lit. seeing with the eye), (and) that which we have looked upon’ (I John 1.1: A104rb, 16–20). When a 3rd person, but not the relative pronoun, serves as the subject of the relative clause, subject agreement is usually missing as in *sa b~e hay-heḱay-hanayoowxḱe te-n-oow-aḱē biçesown* ‘but (he) whom God raised (again), (he) did not see corruption’ (Acts 13.37: A70va, 16–18). A co-referential non-3rd-person subject agreement clitic is always placed after the relative pronoun as in *e ašowr baa-h~ḱe-zow* ‘the works that I do’ (John 5.36: A101ra, 7).

4.2.8 Complement clauses

Clausal complements are introduced with the clitic *-anaḱe-* as in *aḱē-n-oow bow-ḱa-anaḱe vačarowḱos* ‘He saw that (it) pleased (lit. pleases) the Jews’ (Acts 12.3: A48vb, 14–15). Reported speech can be marked by the clitic particle *-ḱa* as in *ihē-vḱa pē-anaḱe būwaa~s ma-owḱar-nan-ḱa* ‘You have heard that it was told to the first ones: “You shall not kill!”’ (Matthew 5.21: A9ra, 19–20).

4.2.9 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are generally introduced by subordinating conjunctions (cf. 3.8) such as *-anaqe-* ‘because’ as in *ee cam-ka-z vřaxow p(ow)l-efa-anaqe-zow iřadowř heęesa vaxow* ‘This I write unto you (pl.) because I expect (lit. hold eye) to come to you (sg.) shortly’ (I Timothy 3.14: A27vb, 16–19).

5 Lexicon

Our knowledge of the Albanian lexicon has increased remarkably with the new readings of the palimpsests that have become possible by applying the technology of transmissive light imaging (see Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 1.5). E.g., the newly deciphered passage of John 21.8–12³² has brought about the first attestations of words like *et* ‘net’, *řow* ‘fish’, *kown-* ‘coal’, *beg-beg* ‘very big’, *baręesown* ‘tear apart’, *řap-pesown* ‘dine’, and *kowl-ihesown* ‘dare’ (lit. ‘become hand(y)'). In general, we can distinguish elements that pertain, as inherited words, to the common East-Caucasian (Lezgif) stratum and are usually shared with Udi, and elements that have been borrowed from neighbouring languages.

5.1 Inherited words

The share of Albanian lexical units that have clear matches in Udi is roughly 40%.³³ Of these, at least one third has secure correspondences in at least one of the Lezgif subgroups.³⁴ The matches with Udi include, among others, personal and possessive pronouns (e.g., Albanian *zow* ‘I’ ~ Udi *zu* ‘id.’, *beři* ‘our’ ~ *beři* ‘id.’, *vę* ‘your’ (sg.) ~ *vi* ‘id.’); other pronouns such as, e.g., *ha / ya* ‘what’ ~ *e* ‘id.’, *hamay* ‘where’ ~ *ma* ‘id.’, *ha-řow* ‘who’ (< **ha-iřow* ‘what a man?’) ~ *řu* ‘id.’, *ič* ‘self’ ~ *ič* ‘id.’, *sowsna-* ‘one another’ ~ *sunsuna-* ‘id.’, probably also *řüwã-r* (pl.) ‘some’ ~ *qi* ‘half’ (cf. Arm. *kęsk* ‘some’, plural of *kęs* ‘half’); numerals such as, e.g., *sa* ‘one’ ~ *sa* ‘id.’, *řřa* ‘two’ ~ *pa* ‘id.’, *xib* ‘three’ ~ *xib* ‘id.’, *řoęe* ‘fifteen’ ~ *qoęe* ‘id.’, *řřa-řã* ‘forty’ ~ *pa-řo* ‘id.’, but also *powran-own* ‘second’ ~ *puran* ‘again’; adjectives such as, e.g., *aqat* ‘i’ ‘naked’ ~ *aqaçi* ‘id.’, *ařay* ‘open’ ~ *qay* ‘id.’, *bai* ‘full’ ~ *bui* ‘id.’, *bãgal-* ‘deep’ ~ *bořãl-* ‘id.’, *boči* ‘dense’ ~ *boçu* ‘id.’, *büwi* ‘heavy’ ~ *bi* ‘id.’,

³² Cf. Gippert (2018a: 41–43).

³³ Cf. the list in Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-75–76).

³⁴ Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-66–74).

dai ‘green’ (in *dai-xown* ‘marsh meadow’, possibly also *dai-zde* ‘gold’ and *dai-zowzn’a* ‘denarius’) ~ *däy(i)* ‘fresh, green, wet’, *en’eg* ‘other’ ~ *ene(x)* ‘more’, *en’i* ‘new’ ~ *ini* ‘id.’, *қаңи* ‘blind’ ~ *қаңи* ‘id.’, *mal* ‘little’ ~ *mal* ‘id.’, *mii* ‘cold’ ~ *mi* ‘id.’, *nowğowr* ‘awake’ ~ *moğor* / *muğur* ‘id.’, *owski* ‘soon, fast’ ~ *usin* / *usum* / *usun* ‘id.’, **pas* ‘scattered’ in *pas-iğesown* ‘be scattered’ ~ *pas* ‘destroyed’ with *pas-besun* ‘destroy, spread’, *қаң* ‘narrow’ (in *hüwke-қаң* ‘sorrow’, lit. ‘narrow in the heart’, and *қаң-ağesown* ‘be troubled’, lit. ‘see narrow(ness)’) ~ *қаң* ‘id.’, *qari* ‘dry’ ~ *qari* ‘id.’, *šel* ‘good’ ~ *šel* ‘id.’, *ser* ‘true’ ~ *seri* ‘id.’, *ḡalay* ‘pregnant’ ~ *qela* / *xela* ‘id.’, and *zamara* ‘wicked, fool’ ~ *zamaru* / *zamaroy* ‘numb’, probably also *açpē* ‘false’ (originally the past of a verb **aç-pesown* ‘lie’) ~ *apçi* ‘lie’ and *mowç’owr* ‘pure, holy’ ~ *muçur* ‘clear, bright’.

Among nouns, we find kinship terms and other words denoting persons such as, e.g., *de* ‘father’ ~ Udi *-de* (only in *sey-de* ‘father-in-law’), *ne* ‘mother’ ~ *-ne* (only in *sey-ne* ‘mother-in-law’), *ğar* ‘son, child’ ~ *ğar* ‘id.’, *işow* ‘man’ ~ *işu* ‘id.’, *viçi* ‘brother’ ~ *viçi* ‘id.’, but also *žġ* ‘Lord’ and *bġ* ‘God’ if they are to be read as *ž(ow)ğ* and *b(ixa-žow)ğ*, lit. ‘creating Lord’, corresponding to Udi *žowx/ğ* in *bixažug* / *buxažug* ‘id.’ and *koñžux* / *qonžug* ~ Albanian *kođin-žġ* ‘house lord’. Albanian *xifow* ‘woman, wife’ ~ is probably concealed in Udi *xuni* ‘female’, *xun-çi* ‘sister’ (< **xun-içi*) and *xinar* / *xuyär* ‘girl, daughter’ (< **xun-ğar*); its suppletive plural *čibowx* appears in Udi as *čibux* / *čubux* / *čuhux* ‘woman’ (pl. tant.). Other common nouns are terms denoting body parts such as, e.g., *ća* ‘face’ ~ *čo* ‘id.’, *d’ed’er* ‘lip’ ~ *žežer* ‘id.’, *hüwķ* ‘heart’ ~ *uķ* / *üķ* ‘id.’, *hüwqen* ‘bone’ ~ *u’qe’n* ‘id.’, *fi* ‘ear’ ~ *imux* / *u’mu’x* ‘id.’ (pl. tant.), *mowz* ‘tongue, language’ ~ *muz* ‘id.’, *pi* ‘blood’ ~ *pi* ‘id.’, *tol* ‘skin’ ~ *tol* ‘id.’, *towr* ‘foot’ ~ *tur* ‘id.’, and *žowmowx* ‘mouth’ (pl.tant.) ~ *žomox* ‘id.’; this set includes *bowl* ‘head’, *powl* ‘eye’ and *kowl* ‘hand’ with their peculiar case forms *biin*, *piin* (genitive), *biye-*, *piye-* (ergative, dative), and *kowin* (ergative) and *kowya/-koywo-* (dative) ~ Udi *bul*, *bin* / *biin*, *b(iy)e-*, *pul*, *pin* / *piin*, *p(iy)e-*, and *kul*, *kin* / *kiin*,³⁵ *k(iy)e-* / *kula-*. Further terms relating to humans are, e.g., *aš* ‘work’ ~ *aš* ‘id.’, *bows* ‘hunger’ with *bowsa-iħesown* ‘be hungry’ ~ *busa* ‘hungry’, *çi* ‘name’ ~ *çi* ‘id.’, *hel* ‘spirit, soul’ ~ *elmux* (pl.tant.) ‘id.’, *helas* ‘oath’ ~ *elas* ‘id.’, *ķal* ‘voice’ ~ *ķal* in *ķal-psun* ‘call’, *ķod* ‘house’ ~ *ķož* ‘id.’, *lašķay* ‘marriage’ ~ *lašķo(y)* ‘id.’, *müwħen* ‘feast’ ~ *mu’q* ‘joyful’, *nep* ‘sleep’ ~ *nep* ‘id.’, *qar* ‘tribe, kind’ ~ **qar* in *iš-qar* ‘man’, lit. ‘mankind’, *oť* ‘shame’ (in *oť-iħesown*³⁶ ‘feel ashamed’) ~ *oť* ‘id.’, *qüw* ‘fear’ ~ *qi* / *qā* ‘id.’, *šov* ‘trumpet’ ~ *čov* ‘sound’, *tog* ‘price’ ~ *tog* / *toy* ‘id.’, *üwğ* ‘roof’ ~ *u’ğ* ‘id.’, possibly also *xowl* ‘shoe’ ~ *qo’lo’x* ‘pants’ (pl. tant.). Common terms for food are, e.g., *açam* ‘unleavened bread’ ~ *açam* N. ‘fresh lavash’, *el* ‘salt’ (only in *elen-biyesown* ‘salten’),

35 The ergative form *kin* is already attested in a candleholder inscription; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 4.6.

36 There is no primary verb *oťesown* as assumed in Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-34).

lit. 'make with salt') ~ *el* 'id.', *fī* 'wine' ~ *fī* 'id.', *mowhenown* 'of barley' ~ *mu* 'barley', and *sowm* 'bread' ~ *šum* 'id.'. Concerning nature and the environment we find, e.g., *ašal* 'earth, ground' ~ *očal* 'id.', *ayz* 'world' ~ *ayz* 'village',³⁷ *bšeg* 'sun' ~ *be'g* 'id.', **bowrowx* 'mountain' ~ *burux* 'id.' (pl.tant.), *çiçik* 'flower' ~ *çiçik* 'id.', *čobal* 'sparrow' ~ *čoval* 'id.', *ex* 'harvest' ~ *ex* 'id.', *tāxan'in* 'fig tree' ~ *to'xa'n* 'fig', *kšaban* 'desert' ~ *qa'va'n* / *qavun* 'meadow', *l'aq* 'way' ~ *yaq* 'id.', *mowš* 'wind' ~ *muš* 'id.', **o* 'grass' ~ *o(y)* 'id.', *owl* 'wolf' ~ *ul* 'id.', *owsen* 'year' ~ *usen* 'id.', *šan* 'den' ~ *šan* 'ground, bottom', *šow* 'night' ~ *šu* / *šü* 'id.', *xaš* 'light' ~ *xaš* 'id.', and *xod'i* 'shadow' ~ *xoži* / *xoži* 'id.'; this includes words with irregular stem formations such as *gi* 'day' vs. *ge* 'today' ~ *gi* / *ge* 'id.', **ka* 'morning' with erg. *kaen* 'early' > *kaeni-xal'owm* 'morning star' ~ *kay* / *käy* 'dawn', *xe* 'water' with gen. *xene*, erg. *xenen* and dat. *xena-* ~ *xe*, *xene*, *xenen*, *xena-* 'id.', and *že* 'stone' with gen. *zēne*, erg. *zēnen*, dat. *zēna-* ~ *že*, *zēne*, *zēnen*, *zēna-* 'id.', as well as case formations such as *baenaq*, subessive of *ba* 'darkness', ~ *be'i'nq* 'darkness', or *tāowgol*, superess. pl. of *tā* 'side, region' ~ *to'go'l*, postposition 'aside, near by', from *to'g* 'region' (pl. tant.). Common abstract nouns are rather rare; cf., however, *cam* 'writing' with *cam-pesown* 'write' ~ *cam*, *cam-pesun* 'id.' and *za(h)own* 'teaching' in *za(h)own-biyesown* and *za(h)own-ihesown* 'teach / be taught' ~ *zom* in *zom-besun* and *zom-baksun* 'id.'.

Among preverbs, adverbs, postpositions and other particles we may note, e.g., *aci* 'down, under' ~ *ci* 'id.', *baha-* 'in' and *bahoc* (abl.) 'from inside' ~ *bay-* and *boš* 'inside', *büwga* 'between, among' ~ *bi'g* / *bə'g* 'middle', *če-* 'out' ~ *če-* 'id.', *eša* 'after' ~ *oša* 'id.', *iša* 'near' ~ *i'sa* / *ə'sa* 'id.', *šaxi* 'far' ~ *a'xi'l* (superess.) 'id.', *hala* 'above' ~ *ala* 'id.',³⁸ *horo-* 'around' ~ *furu-* 'id.', *owqa* 'under' ~ *oqa* 'id.', as well as *pon'e* 'then' ~ *poj* 'id.', the negator *te* ~ *te*, and the frequent focus particle *-al* 'also, too' ~ *-al* 'id.'.

Common verbs are, e.g., *ašesown* 'see' ~ *ašsun* 'id.', *baresown* 'shed' ~ *barsun* 'id.', *bartesown* 'leave' ~ *bartesun* 'id.', *bakesown* 'sleep' ~ *bakšsun* 'lie down', *bešesown* 'look' ~ *be'gšun* 'id.', *bšeqesown* 'count, select' ~ *bo'qa'l-besun* 'id.', *besesown* 'search, ask for' ~ *bessun* 'id.', *bišesown* 'seize' ~ *bišsun* 'id.', *bitesown* 'fall' and *bišesown* 'sow' ~ *bišun/bišsun* 'id.', *bixesown* 'give birth' ~ *bixsun* 'id.', *biyesown* 'do, make' ~ *besun* 'id.' (also as a light verb), *bokošesown* 'burn' ~ *bošsun* 'id.', *bowšesown* 'love, want' ~ *bušsun* 'id.', *čalxesown* 'know, realise' ~ *čalxesun* 'id.', *čow-pesown* 'spit' ~ *ču-psun* 'id.', *dašesown* 'give' ~ *ta-desun* / *ta-šun* 'id.' (also *-desun*, *-tesun* etc. as a light verb forming causatives), *efesown* 'hold, have' ~ *efsun* 'id.', *hešesown* 'take' ~ *ašsun* 'id.', *karxesown* 'live' ~ *karxsun* 'id.', *sak-pesown* 'throw' ~ *sakšun* 'id.', *üwšesown* 'drink' ~ *ušsun* 'id.', possibly also *batkesown*

37 For the semantic shift cf. Old Georgian *sopel-i* 'world' > Modern Georgian *sopel-i* 'village'.

38 Probably the later form without initial *h-* is already attested in the inscription on the pedestal of Sudağlan (see Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 4.1).

‘turn’ ~ *batksun* ‘sink, drown’ (if not ~ *baksun* ‘become, be’), *baxesown* ‘find’ ~ *ba’ğa^c-psun* ‘id.’, *oresown* ‘spring up (water)’ ~ *orein* / *orayin* ‘source, spring’, *parpesown* ‘release’ ~ *far-pesown* ‘play (instrument), lift up and throw down’, and *ʔap^c-biyesown* ‘shut, close’ ~ *çap^c-besun* ‘hide’ or *ʔap^c-besun* ‘hit’. This includes irregular formations such as *bow* ‘be, exist’ (present only) ~ *bu* ‘id.’, **heçesown* ‘bring’ (in *il’owx-heçal* ‘messenger’, lit. ‘bringing words’) with past *heçari* ~ *eçsun/esçun* with past *eçeri* ‘id.’, *hegesown* ‘come’ with imperative *hekal* and past *ari* ~ *esun* with imperative *eke* / *eki* and past *ari* / *hari*, **a(r)cesown* ‘sit’ with present *areca* and past *acari* ~ *arcesun* with imperative *arca* and past *arci* ‘id.’, *harzesown* ‘rise’ with past *hayzari* ~ *ayzesun* with past *ayzeri* ‘id.’, *iğesown* ‘go’ with past *acē* ~ *taysun* ‘walk’ with past *ta-ci*, (*ow*)*pesown* ‘say, tell’ with present stem (*ow*)*ka* and past *pē* ~ *pesun* with subjunctive stem *u^cka* and past *pi*, *owkesown* ‘eat’ with past *kay* ~ *uksun* with past *kāy*, and *owp* ‘death’ with present stem *bil’a* and past *powri* ~ *bi(y)esun* / *bisun* with *puri* ‘dead’. In some cases, Albanian and Udi verbs are differentiated by the presence of a petrified class marker *b-* as in *apēsown* ‘arrive, reach’ vs. *bapsun* ‘id.’ and *bāpes-besun* ‘deliver’ or *boçkesown*³⁹ ‘wash’ vs. *oçkesun* ‘id.’, possibly also in *aa-* ‘know’ (present stem) ~ *aba/ava-* ‘id.’.

To the many correspondences that were already established in the first edition of the palimpsests, we may now add, among others, *ac^cesown* ‘perish, get lost’ and *ac^ces-biyesown* ‘lose, destroy’⁴⁰ ~ *açesun* / *açtun* and *açes-besun* ‘id.’, *elem* ‘donkey’ (John 12.15: B11rb, 13) ~ *elem* ‘id.’, *hoçi* ‘lump’ (John 9.6: A51vb, 6 e.a.) ~ *oçi* ‘dirt’, *kap-pesown* ‘hurry’ (II Peter 1.15: A4rb, 1) ~ *kapsun* ‘id.’, *kaši* ‘finger’ (if read correctly in John 20.25: A23ra, 18) ~ *kaša* / *kašā* ‘id.’, *koçoc* ‘cock’ (John 18.27: B35ra, 20) ~ *koçoc* ‘hen’,⁴¹ *kowr* ‘hole’ (John 4.11: A46rb, 21) ~ *kur* ‘id.’, *müw^cxay* ‘bridegroom’ (John 3.29: A41ra, 10 e.a.) ~ *mu^cqu^c* ‘id.’, *oqoy* ‘vinegar’ (John 19.29: B8vb, 14–16) ~ *oqo(i)* ‘id.’, *owše* ‘evening’ ~ *üşe* ‘id.’ (John 20.19: A16rb, 6), *qowt^c-pesown* ‘swallow’ ~ *quç^c-pesun* ‘id.’ (I Corinthians 15.54: B34va, 10), possibly also *bostesown* ‘wrap’ (Luke 2.7: A35vb, 6 e.a.) ~ *bossun/bostun* ‘throw, hurl’, *owd* ‘leaf’ (Matthew 24.32: A8vb, 19) ~ *uda* ‘mulberry leaf’, and *bowla* ‘pot (for manna)’ ~ *bula* ‘corn measure’ (Hebrews 9.4: A75va, 18).

5.2 Loanwords

Beyond this, the Albanian lexicon is characterised by a remarkable number of words which have counterparts in non-related languages such as Armenian,

³⁹ In the edition of 2008, this verb was still read with initial *f-*, not *b-*.

⁴⁰ Both verbs were read with *ʔ* instead of *c* before.

⁴¹ The reading **kowkowç^c* in proposed in the edition for ‘bird’ in Isaiah 35.7 (A70ra, 21) can no longer be maintained.

Georgian, Greek, Syriac, or (Middle) Iranian and which are likely to have been borrowed from one of these languages, either in the course of Christianisation and text translation or in every day usage. The exact source and the route of borrowing is not always easy to determine though, esp. when the same etymon is present in more than one of the languages concerned.⁴²

5.2.1 Iranianisms

Iranianisms shared with neighbouring languages are, among others, *afre-pesown* ‘praise’ (> Udi *afu/ere-psun* ‘bless, pray’) ~ Arm. *awrhnel* < Mİran. *āfrī-* ‘id.’, *abazak* ‘robber’ ~ Arm. *awazak*, Georg. *avazak-i* < Mİran. **ā-wāzak* (?) ‘id.’,⁴³ *ašarkeṭ* ‘disciple’ ~ Arm. *ašakert* < Mİran. **ašākert* ‘id.’, *avazan* ‘pond’ ~ Arm. *awazan*, Georg. *avazan-i*, Syr. *āwzānā* < Mİran. **āwāzan-* (?) ‘id.’,⁴⁴ *bod’var* ‘censer’ ~ Arm. *bowrivar*, Georg. *bervar/i-* < Mİran. **bōdiwar* ‘id.’,⁴⁵ *çatar* ‘temple’ ~ Arm. *taçar*, Georg. *taşar-i* ‘id.’ < OPers. *taçara-* ‘palace’, **dagin* (superess. *dagnowl*) ‘assarius’ ~ Arm. *dang*, Georg. *dang-i*, Syr. *dānqā* ‘id.’ < MPers. *dāng* ‘grain’, *daxtaḳ* ‘tablet’ ~ Arm. *taxtak* < MPers. *taxtag* ‘id.’, *dev* ‘demon’ ~ Arm. *dew*, Georg. *dev-i* < Mİran. *dēw* ‘id.’, *d’ip* ‘book, scripture’ < OPers. *dipī* (> Arm. *dpir* ‘writer’), *garazman* ‘grave, sepulchre’ (> Udi *gārāmzā*) ~ Arm. *gerezman* < OIran. **zəmarkana-* ‘id.’,⁴⁶ *hambaw* ‘rumour’ ~ Arm. *hambaw*, Georg. (*h*)*ambav-i* ‘id.’ < Mİran. **ham-bāw* (?),⁴⁷ *harik* ‘tribute’ ~ Arm. *hark*, Georg. *xarḳ-i* < Mİran. **hark* (MPers. *harg*) ‘id.’, *mog* ‘mage’ (pl. *mogowr*) ~ Arm. *mog*, Georg. *mogu-* < MPers. *mog* ‘id.’, *nša* ‘ship, boat’ ~ Arm. *naw*, Georg. *nav-i* < Mİran. *nāw* ‘id.’, *paçar* ‘reason’ ~ Arm. *patçar* ‘id.’ < Mİran. **pat-çār*, *powsak* ‘crown’ ~ Arm. *psak* ‘id.’ < Mİran. **pusak* (Sogd. *pusak*, MPers. Parth. *pusag*), **šad* ‘open, free’ (in *šad-biyesown* ‘loosen’, *šad-ihesown* ‘be loosened’, *kowl-šad* ‘generous’, lit. ‘with a free hand’) ~ Arm. *šat* ‘much, rich’ in *marda-šat* ‘populous’ etc. < Mİran. *šād* ‘happy’, *taḷavar* ‘tabernacle’ ~ Arm. *taḷawar*, Georg. *taḷavar-i* < Parth. *talawār* ‘id.’, *vašamak* ‘cerecloth, napkin’ ~ Arm. *varšamak*, Georg. *varšamag-i* < Mİran. **wāšamak* ‘id.’ (cf. Sogd. *w’smy*, NPers. *bāšāma*), *vard/taṭeṭ* ‘teacher’ ~ Arm. *vardapet* ‘id.’ < Mİran. **wardapet*,⁴⁸ *xartaḳ* ‘piece, bit’ in *xartaḳ-biyesown* ‘break, crack’ ~ Arm. *xortakel* < Mİran. **xwartak* ‘tiny’ (vs. MPers. *xwurdag*, NPers. *xurda*),

42 Cf. Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-79–84) and Gippert (2011c: 3–6) for a first survey.

43 Cf. Andronikashvili (1966: 217): **āvāzak*.

44 Cf. Andronikashvili (1966: 218): **ā-vāz-āna*.

45 Cf. Gippert (2007b: 105–106).

46 Cf. Gippert (2011c: 8, n. 26).

47 Cf. Andronikashvili (1966: 222): **hambav*.

48 Cf. Benveniste (1929: 10).

xofaḵ ‘heat’ ~ Arm. *xoršak*, Georg. *xoršak-i* ‘id.’ < Miran. **xwar-šak* (cf. MPers. Parth. *xwar-(x)šēd* ‘sun(light)’) or, less likely, **hōšāk* (cf. MPers. *hōšāg* ‘hot, parching wind’), and *xoran* ‘tent’ ~ Arm. *xoran* ‘id.’ < Miran. **xwa-δān* (cf. Arm. *vran* ‘id.’ < Parth. *wi-δān* ‘id.’).⁴⁹ To these terms we may now add *mistīḵ* ‘bundle (of hyssop)’ ~ Arm. *mštik* ‘id.’ (John 19.29: B8vb, 17) < Miran. **mus/štīk* ‘fist(ful)’⁵⁰ (cf. MPers. *mus/št* ‘fist’),⁵¹ *žam* ‘hour, time’ (John 11.9: A65ra, 8 e.a.)⁵² ~ Arm. *žam*, Georg. *žam-i* ‘id.’ < Miran. **žam* (cf. Parth. *žamān* vs. MPers. NPers. *zamān*)⁵³ and *asparez* ‘stadion’ (John 11.18: A60vb, 20) ~ Arm. *asparēs*, Georg. *asparez-i* ‘id.’ < Miran. **asparēs*, lit. ‘turning point of horse (races)’,⁵⁴ possibly also *biṭowan* ‘stadion’ (if read correctly in John 6.19: A107vb, 17–18) ~ Arm. *vtawan*, Georg. *uṭevan-i* ‘id.’ < Parth. *wi-tāwan* ‘bowshot’⁵⁵ and *ṭapan gidagowgōy* ‘ark of the covenant’ (Hebrews 9.4: A75va, 14–15) ~ Arm. *arkl ktakaranac*, Georg. *ḱidoban-i šžulisay* ‘id.’ if this contains *ṭapan* ~ Arm. *tapan* ‘coffin, large chest’ < Miran. **tapan* (Sogd. *tp’n, tpn*; cf. MPers. *ta-pang*)⁵⁶ ~ Arm. *tapanak* ‘small chest’, and NPers. *tabangōy* ‘box, chest’) and *gidagowgōy*,⁵⁷ gen.pl. of *gidag-* ‘testament’ ~ Arm. *ktak-* and Syr. *geṭṭā* ‘testament, writ of divorce’ < Akkad. *giṭtu*⁵⁸ via Miran. **gitak* ‘id.’.

Iranianisms that are peculiar to Albanian are, e.g., *asam* ‘peace’ < Miran. **āsām* ‘id.’ (MPers. *āsān*), *banġen* ‘blessed’ < Miran. **bāngēn* ‘splendid’,⁵⁹ *bazmacown* ‘dinner party’ vs. Arm. *bazmakan* ‘id.’ < Miran. *bazm* ‘meal’, perhaps also *bazman* ‘dish, plate’ (Matthew 14.11: A103ra, 15) if this is derived from the same Miran. term, *dowrowd* ‘beam (of the Cross)’ (> Udi *durut* ‘log’) < Parth. *dārūβδ-* in *dārūβδ-ag* ‘crucified’, and *margaven* ‘prophet’ < Miran. **marya-wēn-* ‘augur’, lit. ‘bird-seeing’, vs. Arm. *margarē* < **marya-δē-* ‘id.’,⁶⁰ possibly also *asef* ‘shepherd’ if this corresponds to Avestan *aḥše* ‘who owns sheep’⁶¹ and *mowfaḵ* ‘worker’ ~ Arm. *mšak*,

49 For the latter terms cf. Gippert (2009).

50 Cf. Acharyan (1977: 336b s. v. **mštik*).

51 Cf. MacKenzie (1971: 57 s.v. ²*must* and *mušt*).

52 Alb. *žam* is also concealed in *ič žamil* ‘already’, lit. ‘at the same time’ corresponding to Gk. ἤδη, Arm. *ayn inč*, Georg. *munkues oden* and Syr. *men kaddū* in John 19.33 (B8ra, 19); the former reading *ikēamil* must be corrected.

53 Cf. Panaino (2017: 179–180 n. 31) as to Armenian *žam* and its relation to Iranian.

54 Cf. Gippert (1993: 16–23).

55 Cf. Gippert (1993: 273–279).

56 Attested in the Pahlavi translation of Vidēvdād 7.48 (Jamasp 1907: 273, 10).

57 The form *gidagowgōy* can also be restored a second time at the end of Hebrews 9.4 (A75va, 21).

58 Cf. Brockelmann (1928: 113b).

59 Cf. Gippert (2007b: 100–102).

60 Cf. Gippert (2005: 155–165).

61 Cf. Gippert (2016a).

Georg. *mušak-i* < MIran. **mūšāk* (cf. NPers. *mušāq* ‘servant’).⁶² To these terms we may now add *qowr* ‘foal, colt’ (John 12.15: B10vb, 14) ~ MPers. *kurrag* ‘id.’ (Udi *kuruk* ‘id.’). A remarkable doublet is represented by *varz* ‘reward, salary’ ~ Arm. *varj* ‘id.’ and *bo(w)rzown* ‘labour’, *bo(r)zar(i)* ‘tired, having endured’ if both rely upon MIran. **warz* ‘labour, gain’ (MPers. *warz* ‘work, agriculture’, NPers. *warz* ‘gain’, *warzīdan* ‘win, gain’, *barz* ‘agriculture’, *barzīdan* ‘sow’). Unclear remains the relationship of *qaravar* ‘camp’ with Parth. *kārwan* ‘army on the march’⁶³ (cf. also Georg. *qarav-i* ‘tent’ and *qaraul-i* ‘donkey’) and of *tabig* ‘similar, equal’ (if read correctly in John 5.18: A100ra, 6) with Parth. *tabang* ‘image, prototype’, NPers. *tabank*, *tubnak* ‘crucible, mould’, and Syr. *tāpniḳ* ‘prototype’.⁶⁴ The Iranian privative prefix *a-* (corresponding to Greek *ἀ-*) may be hidden in *amowz-hiçe* ‘animal’⁶⁵ if this can be analysed as *a-mowz-hiçe* ‘being without tongue, language’ (*mowz*) in agreement with Armenian *an-a-sown* / *an-ban*, Gk. *ἄ-λογος* and Georgian *ṗir-u-tḳu*, all denoting animals as being ‘without reason / word’ or ‘with a non-speaking mouth’;⁶⁶ Iranian loans are probably also the negators *now-* (< MIran. *na*) and *ma-* (< MIran. *mā*) as well as the subordinator *-qe* (< MIran. *kē* ‘which’, replaced in Udi by *-te* < Arm. *(e)t’e*).⁶⁷

5.2.2 Semitisms

As in the neighbouring languages, there are several Hebrew and Aramaic words that have entered Albanian in the context of Bible translation. Leaving personal names aside,⁶⁸ this is true, e.g., of *aba* ‘Abba, father’ ~ Gk. *ἄββα*, Arm. *abba*, Georg. *abba*, Syr. *abbā*, *rabbi* and *rabbowni* ‘my / our master’ ~ Gk. *ῥαββί* / *ῥαββουσι*, Arm. *ṙabbi* / *ṙ/rabbowni*, Georg. *(h)rab(b)i* / *(h)rab(b)o(w)ni*, Syr. *rabbān* / *rabbūlī*, *belzebowl* ‘Beelzebub’ ~ Gk. *Βεελζεβούλ*, Arm. *beelzebowl*, Georg. *berzebul-i*, Syr. *b’el-zabūb*, *saṭanay* ‘Satan’ ~ Arm. *satanay*, Georg. *saṭana-y*, Gk. *Σατανᾶς*, Syr. *sāṭā-nā*, *manana* ‘manna’ ~ Arm. *mananay*, Georg. *manana-* vs. Gk. *μάννα* and Syr. *mannā*, and *ṗasek* ‘Passover’ ~ Gk. *φασέκ* (alongside *πάσχα*), Arm. *ṗasek*, Georg. *ṗasek-i*, Syr. *ṗasek* (alongside *ṗaskā*). A transmission via Middle Iranian is probable for *šam/nbaṭ* ‘Sabbath’ ~ Parth. *šambat* vs. Arm. *šabat*, Georg. *šab/pat*, Syr. *šabtā*, and Gk. *σάββατον*.

62 Cf. Gippert (2009: 132–133).

63 Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst (2004: 203 s. v. *q’rw’n*, *k’rw’n*).

64 Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst (2004: 323 s. v. *tbng*) after W. B. Henning.

65 The reading *amowm-hiço* in the edition (Gippert et al. 2008: I, IV-5) must be corrected.

66 Cf. Gippert (2022: 137).

67 Cf. Gippert (2011b: 209).

68 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 2.2 and 3.3 for a discussion.

A possible candidate of an Aramaism is the name of the coin corresponding to the *dēnarius*, which appears as *daizowzn'a* in John 6.7 (A101vb, 11–12),⁶⁹ possibly also in Matthew 20.10 (B6va, 16–17) and 13 (B3rb 9–10) where only *da-* has survived, and in John 12.5 (B9rb, 17) where the word is lost entirely. The element *-zowz-*, here probably composed with *dai* ‘fresh, green, yellow’, matches Syriac *zūzā* which denotes ‘half a shekel’ or a ‘drachm’ in Exodus 30.13,⁷⁰ and the Aramaeogram ZWZN’ which stands for the drachm coin in Middle Persian;⁷¹ the Syriac word was also borrowed into Armenian (*zowzay*)⁷² and Georgian (*zuzā-y*), but there are no attestations of these terms in Bible translation⁷³ so that they cannot be taken to have served as a model for Albanian *-zowz-*.⁷⁴ Another Aramaeism that Albanian shares with Armenian and Georgian is *ḫilinz* ‘bronze, copper, brass’ ~ Arm. *ḫlinj*, Georg. (*s*)*ḫilenz-i* < Aram. *ḫilizzā*, Syr. *ḫelzā*, vs. Pers. *brinj* etc. A Syriac basis (*krūbā*) is probable for the name of the Cherubs, which appears as *kroba* in Albanian matching Arm. *k'rovbē* vs. Georg. *kerobin-i* < Gk. Χερουβίμ. To these cases we may now add *zōpā-* (gen. *zōpāown*; John 19.29: B8vb, 18) ‘hys-sop’ ~ Arm. *zovpay* < Syr. *zōpā* vs. Georg. *usup-i* < Greek ὕσσωπος ‘id.’, and *dol* ‘vessel, bucket’ (John 4.11: A46rb, 20) ~ Armenian *doyl* ‘id.’ < Syriac *dawlā* ‘id.’⁷⁵ vs. Greek ἄντλημα and Georgian *sarçqul-i* / *savsebel-i*. A transmission via Armenian is probable for *kahana* ‘priest’ ~ Arm. *k'ahanay* < Syr. *kāhnā* ‘id.’. Unclear is the actual source of *kalak* ‘city’ ~ Arm. *k'alak'*, Georg. *kalak-i* vs. Syr. *karḫā* ‘id.’⁷⁶ as well as *targowman-own* ‘translation’ ~ Arm. *t'argman-owt'iwn*, Georg. *targman-eba-* ‘id.’, which presuppose an agent noun **targumān* ‘interpreter’ as present in Mīran. *targumān*⁷⁷ and Syr. *targmānā*, lastly deriving from Akkad. *tar(u)gumānu* ‘id.’⁷⁸

69 Cf. Gippert (2012b: 243 with n. 12), correcting the former reading *mezaizowz* (Gippert et al. 2008: I, I-30).

70 The Aramaic word is likely to go back to Akkad. *zūzu*, cf. Brockelmann (1928: 191); in the NT passages quoted above, all Syriac witnesses use *dīnārā* < *dēnārius* instead.

71 Cf. MacKenzie (1971: 27).

72 Cf. Acharyan (1973: 107b) s. v.

73 The translation ‘didrakma’, i.e. ‘didrachm’ given in the lexicon by Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani (Abulaže 1965: 292b s. v. *zuzā*) may be taken to refer to Exodus 30.13 (see above) which actually speaks of ‘half of a didrachm’, thus suggesting that the word might have appeared in this verse in an unknown OT witness.

74 Cf. Akopyan (2021a: 106–115) for a thorough discussion of “the Sasasian *zūzā*”, which still relies upon the former reading (*me*)*zai-zowz-*; however, the reading with *dai-* has now been confirmed and is also matched by the occurrences of *da-* in Matthew 20.10 and 13.

75 If this is not an Iranianism as proposed by Hübschmann (1895: 144 s. v. *doil*).

76 Cf. Bielmeier (1985: 38–41).

77 Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst (2004: 325 s. v. *trkw̄m'n*, *trqwm'n*, *trqwm'n*).

78 Cf. Brockelmann (1928: 834a).

5.2.3 Grecisms

Greek words in Albanian are usually shared with the neighbouring languages, too. This is true, e.g., of *katolikeown* ‘Catholic’ ~ Arm. *kat’olikē*, Georg. *katolike* < Gk. καθολική or *iskapōs* ‘bishop’ ~ Arm. *episkopos*, Georg. *episkopos-i*, Syr. *episqūpā* < Gk. ἐπίσκοπος. A transmission via Armenian is probable for *salmos* ‘psalm’ ~ Arm. *salmos* < Gk. ψαλμός vs. Georg. *psalmun-i* < Gk. acc. ψαλμόν, and *hetanos* ‘heathen, Gentile’ ~ Arm. *het’anos* ‘id.’ < Gk. ἔθνος vs. Georg. *çarmart-i*. In contrast to this, a transmission via Georgian can be claimed for *angelos* ‘angel’ ~ Georg. *angeloz-i* ‘id.’ < Gk. ἄγγελος vs. Arm. *hrestak* (< Miran. **frēštak*) and *eklesi* ‘church’ ~ Georg. *ek(k)lesia* ‘id.’ < Gk. ἐκκλησία vs. Arm. *ekelec’i*, probably also for *kēsar* ‘emperor’ ~ Georg. *keisar-i* ‘id.’ < Gk. καῖσαρ (< Lat. *Caesar*) vs. Arm. *kayser*; and *kilt* ‘key’ ~ Georg. *klite* ‘id.’ < Gk. κλείς, gen. κλειδός. To the latter words we may now add *paraske* ‘Friday, preparation day’ (John 19.31: B13va, 4–5) ~ Georg. *paraskev-i* < Gk. παρασκευή ‘id.’ (vs. Arm. *owrbat’*), which has survived into Modern Udi as *paraski* with the variants *paraski* and *paraski*, and *laḳana* ‘basin’ ~ Georg. *laḳana*-, *la(n)ḳna*-, Syr. *laqnā* < Gk. λακάνη ‘id.’ (> NPers. *lagan* > Udi *lāgän*). An older Greek loanword in Albanian is possibly *-zde* ‘metal, iron’ (only contained in *dai-zde* ‘gold’ and *ḡai-zde* ‘sword’) < Gk. σίδηρος ‘iron’, cf. Udi *zido* ‘id.’.

5.2.4 Armenianisms

The share of Armenian loanwords in Albanian is rather small if we leave aside words of different origins that were transmitted via the neighbouring language. The most striking Armenian term is certainly *marmin* ‘body, flesh’ < Arm. *marmin* ‘id.’ which translates Gk. σῶμα, σάρξ, σκῆνωμα, etc. Another frequent element is the word for ‘people, crowd, synagogue’ which always appears abbreviated as *ẓ̌d*; this is likely to represent its Arm. counterpart, *žolovowrd*. Other candidates for borrowings from Armenian are *avel* ‘much, many’ ~ Arm. *aṛ-awel* ‘plus’, *kor*-(preverb) ‘back(wards)’ (> Udi *kori* ‘id.’) < Arm. *kor* ‘bent, crooked’, *ḳala* ‘lame’ (> Udi *ḳala*) < Arm. *kał* ‘id.’ ~ Arm. *kał* ‘id.’, possibly also *haç-* ‘right (hand)’ in *haç-ḳown* ‘right side’⁷⁹ (> Ud. *aça* with *aça-čo* ‘right side’, lit. ‘right face’) and *haçex-biyesown* ‘make succeed’, lit. ‘make (al)right’) ~ Arm. *aḷ* ‘right (hand)’ > *yajotel* ‘make succeed’. A calque of an Armenian concept is visible in *powl-efesown* ‘wait, expect, hope’, lit. ‘hold (the) eye’, which clearly matches Arm. *akn ownel* ‘id.’. A Proto-Lezgian loan from Armenian may be represented in Alb. *lowf* ‘dove’ ~

⁷⁹ The analysis provided in Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-24) s.v. *haçex* must be corrected: *ḳown* is an independent word meaning ‘side, direction’.

Aghul / Tabassaran *luf*, Lezgian *lif*, Kryts *laf*, and Rutul *lirx*^w ‘id.’ if they derive from a preform of Arm. *alawni*⁸⁰ and not MPers. *āluf* / *āluh* ‘eagle’⁸¹ which, of course, deviates semantically.

5.2.5 Georgianisms

Most of the few terms that are borrowings from Old Georgian belong to basic concepts of Christianity such as *axsibay* ‘Easter’, also spelt *axçibay*, < Georg. *ağvsebay* ‘id.’, lit. ‘fulfilment’; this term has survived into Modern Udi (in the forms *axsibay* and *axçima*). Other such terms are *madil* ‘grace, mercy’ < Georg. *madl-i* ‘id.’, *sabowrzel* ‘seat, see’⁸² < Georg. *savrzel-i* ‘id.’, and *saxē* ‘vision’ < Georg. *saxē* ‘id.’. A candidate is also *xexer* ‘saw’ ~ Georg. *xerx-i* ‘id.’ if the two words are not merely onomatopoeic. A calque of Georgian may be seen in the two verbs *xaş-dağesown* ‘baptise’ and *xaş-heqesown* ‘be baptised’ which clearly mirror Georg. *natlis-cema*, lit. ‘give light’, and *natlis-ğeba*, lit. ‘take light’, with *xaş* ~ Udi *xaş* ‘light’, contrasting with Udi *xaç* ‘cross’ in *xaçesun* ‘be baptised’ and *xaçdesun* ‘baptise’ which obviously reflects Russian *krest* ‘cross’ in *krestit* ‘baptise’.

A calque of both Armenian and Georgian may be assumed for *qüw-ma-ne* ‘consolation’, lit. ‘(may) fear not be (there)’, in *qüwmane-pesown* ‘console’, lit. ‘speak consolation’, and *qüwmane-heqesown* ‘be consoled’, lit. ‘take consolation’, which corresponds to Arm. *m-xit’ar-* and Georg. *nu-gešinis-* ‘do not fear’ in *m-xit’ar-el* and *nu-gešinis-cema-* ‘console’ (lit. ‘give consolation’).

5.3 Unexplained elements

All these examples notwithstanding, a larger part of the Albanian lexicon still lacks a secured etymological explanation, which might hint at earlier contacts with hitherto unknown languages. This is true, e.g., of words like *al’eg* ‘cloud, sponge’, *axal* ‘nurse’, *bal* ‘ill’, *beteown* ‘cave’,⁸³ *bicxesown* ‘show’, *biki* ‘white’, *bis-esown* ‘smear, anoint’, *bfaç* ‘judgement, court’, *ē* (= *ey*) ‘good’, *gow* ‘rod, stick’, *kaṭ’ak* ‘own, proper’ (if not pertaining to Mİran. *kadag* ‘household’), *qod* ‘jar, jug’, *xal’owm* ‘star’, *zexesown* ‘put, place, fix’ (if this is not concealed in *ex-*, present stem of Udi *pesun* ‘say’), and many abstract nouns such as, e.g., *fafesown* ‘tempta-

⁸⁰ Cf. Gippert (2017: 185–188).

⁸¹ Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst (2004: 5 s. v. *’lwp*) and McKenzie (1971: 7 s. v. *āluh*).

⁸² The reading *sašowrzel* in the edition (cf. Gippert et al. 2008: I, IV-37) must be corrected.

⁸³ The reading *beçeown* in the edition (cf. Gippert et al. 2008: I, IV-8) must be corrected.

tion', *cegowown* 'splendour', *gâxown* 'glory', **ki* 'wealth, power' (in *ki-nowt* 'poor', *kiye* 'rich' and *ki-boqesown* 'be able', lit. 'bring wealth'), or *oțan* 'law, prayer'. Among the newly detected words, this is true, e.g., of those appearing in John 21.8–12 as mentioned above (*et* 'net', *șow* 'fish', etc.), but also for *axaown* 'garment' (John 13.4: A66va, 9) and *axa-pesown* 'put on (clothes)' (Acts 12.8: A57vb, 12–13), *șagâown* 'rejection' (John 8.49 and 12.48: A55rb, 18 and A59va, 15), *bowmbež-* 'neighbour' (John 9.8: A54rb, 14), *çaraqos* 'towel' (John 13.4: A66va, 10), *çidi* 'breast' (John 21.20: B39rb, 11), *giin* 'bile, gall' (if not < Arm. *gini* 'wine'; John 19.29: B8vb, 16), *gowâhown* 'alms' (John 9.8: A54rb), *haçowl* 'girdle' (John 21.18: B39rb, 1 and Acts 12.8: A57vb, 9),⁸⁴ *he-beqesown* 'acquire' (if not < **he-biqesown* 'seize hither'; John 5.40: A101rb, 4), *hüwl* 'alien' (II Corinthians 5.6: A39va, 20), *mowç'in* 'reconciliation' (in *mowç'in'a-ih-a-nown* 'be reconciled', Matthew 5.24: A15ra, 2–3), *nfa ta-boqesown* 'row' (lit. 'boat lead-thither'; John 6.19: A107vb), *qirmir* 'care, attention' (John 21.22: B36vb, 20),⁸⁵ *vol'a* 'wave' (James 1.6: A57ra, 6–7),⁸⁶ *xown* 'place' (e.g., Luke 4.37: A34vb, 13) and *çown* 'side, direction' (e.g., John 20.7: B14va, 12).⁸⁷

5.4 The Albanian month names

In the Albanian text materials that are available today, there are no month names attested. However, as early as 1832, the French scholar Marie-Félicité Brosset published a list of Albanian month names that is preserved, in Armenian script, in an 18th-century Armenian manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (*ancien fonds* 114, now *arménien* 252, f. 43v), which contains calendar treatises. Variants of the same list, which is arranged synoptically in tabular form with month names of six other traditions (Egyptian, Ethiopian, Athenian, Bithynian, Cappadocian, and Georgian; see Fig. 2),⁸⁸ were later revealed in Armenian manuscripts containing the works of Anania Shirakatsi and Hovhannes Imastaser,⁸⁹ as

⁸⁴ The reading *vakahaçown* proposed in the edition (Gippert et al. 2008: I, II-15 with n. 64 and IV-38 s. v.) must be corrected; *vaka* is an adessive form of the 2nd person pronoun.

⁸⁵ The reading is not certain; instead of *qirmir*, *qirqir* could also be assumed.

⁸⁶ Gen. pl. *vol'arowğoy*, erroneously read *vocarowğoy* in the edition; in the given form the *-r-* is more likely to be the plural suffix than part of the stem as assumed in Gippert et al. (2008: I, IV-39 s. v. *vocar*).

⁸⁷ The two words are clearly distinguished by *x* vs. *ç* and *n'* vs. *n*; the edition (Gippert et al. 2008: I, IV-22 s. v. *xown/n*) must be corrected accordingly.

⁸⁸ Brosset (1832: 526): "concordance entre les mois égyptiens, éthiopiens, athéniens, bithyniens, cappadociens, géorgiens et albaniens".

⁸⁹ Manuscripts 1971, 1973, 1999, 2001, 2068, and 2180 of the Matenadaran, Yerevan and arm. 178 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi.

The image shows a page from a manuscript with a grid of 12 columns and 12 rows. Each cell contains a name in Georgian script, likely representing months. The handwriting is cursive and somewhat difficult to decipher. The names are arranged in a regular pattern across the page.

Fig. 2: The list of month names in ms. Paris, BNF, arm. 252 (ancien fonds 114), f. 43v.

well as in Georgian manuscripts containing the lexicon of the 17th-century scholar Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani;⁹⁰ the diverging appearance of the names is illustrated in Table XXI.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Manuscripts A-288, A-873 and S-277 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi.

⁹¹ The columns contain the lists according to the following manuscripts: a) Paris 114=252, fol. 43v as read by Brosset (1832); b) the same as re-read by Dulaurier (1859: 167; cf. also Patkanov 1871: 42); c and d) Matenadaran 1999, fol. 217 and 1973, fol. 34 as part of the works of Anania Shirakatsi, quoted after Abrahamyan (1944: 118); e through h) Matenadaran 2001, fol. 41 / 2068, fol. 358 / 2180, fol. 265 / 1971, fol. 17 as part of the works of Hovhannes Imastaser, quoted after

Table XXI: The Albanian month names in Armenian and Georgian manuscripts.

	Par.114-B	Par.114-D	M 1999	M 1973	M 2001	M 2068
1	<i>Navasardos</i>	<i>Nawasardows</i>	<i>Nawasardon</i>	<i>Nawasardown</i>	<i>Nawasardown</i>	<i>Nawasardon</i>
2	<i>Toulen</i>	<i>Towlën</i>	<i>Towlen</i>	<i>Towen</i>	<i>Towlën</i>	<i>Towlini</i>
3	<i>Namotsn</i>	<i>Namoc`n</i>	<i>Namoc`</i>	<i>Kamoc`</i>	<i>Namoc`</i>	<i>Nama</i>
4	<i>Hile</i>	<i>Yilë</i>	<i>Šili</i>	<i>C`ilë</i>	<i>C`ilë</i>	<i>C`ili</i>
5	<i>Bocavon</i>	<i>Bokavoh</i>	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>Bokaon</i>
6	<i>Maré</i>	<i>Marë</i>	<i>Marë</i>	<i>Bičowkën</i>	<i>Marë</i>	<i>Marë</i>
7	<i>Bodjconé</i>	<i>Bdčkowë</i>	<i>Bočkonë</i>	<i>Mreli</i>	<i>Awčakonë</i>	<i>Bočkon</i>
8	<i>Tzukhoulé</i>	<i>Caxowlë</i>	<i>Caxolen</i>	<i>Caxowli</i>	<i>Cakowlën</i>	<i>Caxowlën</i>
9	<i>Bontocé</i>	<i>Bondokë</i>	<i>Bowndokë</i>	<i>Bondowkë</i>	<i>Bondokën</i>	<i>Bondokë</i>
10	<i>Orili</i>	<i>Öreli</i>	<i>Orelin</i>	<i>Orelin</i>	<i>Orëlin</i>	<i>Orelin</i>
11	<i>Ikhnaí</i>	<i>Exnay</i>	<i>Exnea</i>	<i>Exna</i>	<i>Exna</i>	<i>Exnea</i>
12	<i>Bakhniaí</i>	<i>Baxneay</i>	<i>Xabnea</i>	<i>Xibna</i>	<i>Xebna</i>	<i>Xaba</i>

	M 2180	M 1971	Arm. 178	A-288	S-277	A-863
1	<i>Nawasardown</i>	<i>Nawasardown</i>	<i>Nawasardown</i>	<i>navasartun</i>	<i>navasartun</i>	<i>navasartun</i>
2	<i>Towlën</i>	<i>Towlën</i>	<i>Towlën</i>	<i>t'ulen</i>	<i>t'ulen</i>	<i>tulen</i>
3	<i>Namoy</i>	<i>Namoy</i>	<i>Namoy</i>	<i>namuc</i>	<i>namuc</i>	<i>namuc</i>
4	<i>C`ilë</i>	<i>C`ilë</i>	<i>Yilë</i>	<i>cile</i>	<i>cile</i>	<i>cile</i>
5	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>Bokawon</i>	<i>bak'aon</i>	<i>bok'aon</i>	<i>bokaon</i>
6	<i>Bočoykën</i>	<i>Bočokën</i>	<i>Bočokën</i>	<i>mare</i>	<i>mare</i>	<i>mare</i>
7	<i>Marili</i>	<i>Mareli</i>	<i>Mareli</i>	<i>avč'uk'ine</i>	<i>avbuk'ine</i>	<i>avč'uk'ine</i>
8	<i>Caxowli</i>	<i>Caxowli</i>	<i>Caxowli</i>	<i>nak'ulion</i>	<i>c'ak'ulin</i>	<i>c'ak'ulin</i>
9	<i>Pondowk</i>	<i>Pontowkë</i>	<i>Pontokë</i>	<i>bunt'ok'e</i>	<i>bont'ok'e</i>	<i>bondoke</i>
10	<i>Arelin</i>	<i>Arelin</i>	<i>Arelin</i>	<i>vorsilin</i>	<i>vorsilin</i>	<i>vorsilin</i>
11	<i>Exneay</i>	<i>Exneay</i>	<i>Exneay</i>	<i>iexan</i>	<i>iexan</i>	<i>ivxan</i>
12	<i>Xebnay</i>	<i>Xebnay</i>	<i>Xebnay</i>	<i>xebna</i>	<i>xebna</i>	<i>sebna</i>

It will be clear from this conspectus that in quite a similar way as the letter names in the alphabet list, the month names must have been distorted to a considerable extent in the manuscript tradition yielding the given spelling variation. Nevertheless, half of the items can be restored with a sufficient degree of probability, either by applying an Udi etymology⁹² that matches the semantics of the Old Armenian or Old Georgian counterparts of the names, or by identifying them directly with the latter. This is especially true for those names that reflect the

Abrahamyan (1956b: 75); i) through k) mss. arm. 178 and (Georgian) A-288 and S-277 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, containing Saba's lexicon, quoted after Shanidze (1960: 177–178: mss. 'H', 'T', 'K'); l) ms. A-873 of the Centre, containing the same lexicon, quoted after Janashvili (1908: 119). Broutian (2021: Tabl. 2) adds the list (in Armenian letters) contained in ms. 817 of the Matenadaran, which mostly matches that of ms. 2068.

⁹² For previous attempts cf., among others, Ingoroqva (1931–32: 300–315), Aghayan (1946: 61–64), Shanidze (1960: 175–178 and 1963: 513–514), Gukasyan (1969: 73), and Schulze (1982: 284–285).

Tab. XXII: Reconstruction of six month names.

Albanian	meaning	source	Armenian	meaning	Georgian	meaning
1. * <i>nawasard-own</i>	‘New Year’s (m.)’	Iranian	= <i>nawasard-i</i>	‘id.’	<i>axalç-isay</i>	‘id.’
2. * <i>ṭowl-en</i>	‘(m. of the) grape’	Udi <i>ṭul</i>	~ (<i>kt¹-oc³</i> : 3.)	‘vintage’	<i>stul-isay</i>	‘vintage’
5. * <i>boḡa-own?</i>	‘(m. of the) plucking?’	Udi <i>boḡ-sun</i>	~ <i>k¹al-oc³</i>	‘pluckings’		
7. * <i>mareḡon-ē?</i>	‘(m. of) Mithra’s feast’	Iranian	= <i>mehekan-i</i>	‘id.’	<i>mihraḡn-isay</i>	‘id.’
10. * <i>marel-in?</i>	‘(m. of) Mid-Year’	Iranian	= <i>marer-i</i>	‘id.’	<i>marial-isay</i>	‘id.’
11. * <i>ex-n’a</i>	‘(m. of the) harvest’	Udi <i>ex</i>	~ <i>marg-ac³</i>	‘meadows’	<i>tib-isay</i>	‘hay-crop’

Middle Iranian festival calendar. In all cases, the Albanian names are genitive formations (‘month of the X’) in just the same manner as their Armenian and Georgian equivalents; Table XXII resumes the results thus achieved.⁹³ The remaining six items are hard to account for, even in the light of the lexical and grammatical evidence provided by the palimpsests; the corresponding considerations are summarised in Table XXIII. Only two of the names have successors in Vartashen Udi, namely, **exn’a* (no. 11) which is contained in *exna-xaš* ‘June’, lit. ‘month (*xaš*, Alb. *xaš* ‘light’) of the harvest’, and **ṭowlen* ‘(month) of the grape’ (no. 2) which reappears in *ṭul-afereḡal-xaš* ‘August’,⁹⁴ lit. ‘grape-blessing month’ (cf. 5.2.1 above as to Udi *afu/erepsun* ~ Alb. *afre-pesown* ‘bless, praise’). In Nij Udi, the names *navars* ‘January’, *namoç* ‘February’, *xibna* ‘March’ (cf. *xib* ‘three’), *biḡna* ‘April’ (cf. *biḡ* ‘four’), *mayis* ‘May’, *exna* ‘June’, *eçna* ‘July’ (cf. *eç* ‘threshing floor’), *boḡna* ‘August’ (cf. *boḡsun* ‘burn?’), *ereḡna* ‘September’ (cf. *ereḡ* ‘walnut’), *ṭule* ‘October’, *sile* ‘November’ and *əʒna* ‘December’ (cf. *əʒ* ‘snow’) are used today.⁹⁵ To what extent these names represent an unbroken tradition or were remodelled after the Albanian month names (besides *exna* ~ **exn’a* and *ṭule* ~ *ṭowlen* cf. *navars* and *nawasardown*, *namoç* and *namoy/namoc*, *xibna* and *xebnay*, *boḡna* and *boḡawon*, *sile* and *cilē/yilē*), must remain open.

⁹³ Cf. Gippert (1988) and Gippert et al. (2008: I, II-95) for more details.

⁹⁴ Cf. Gukasyan (1974: 123 and 211).

⁹⁵ E.g., in the calendars published annually by the Udi community in recent years; cf. <https://www.mobili.az/news/0471.html> (last accessed 14. 2. 2023).

Tab. XXIII: Considerations on the remaining six month names.

Albanian	Comment
3. * <i>nam-oy?</i> * <i>sam-oy?</i>	Genitive formation of either Ud. <i>nam</i> ‘humid, moist’ (not attested in the palimpsests) or a stem * <i>sa(h)m-</i> also present in the Arm. counterpart, <i>sahm-i?</i> ⁹⁶
4. * <i>cil-ē?</i>	Genitive formation of <i>cil</i> ‘seed’ (now attested in II Cor. 9.10: A49vb, 20)?
6. * <i>boč-oy?</i>	Genitive formation of a noun underlying <i>boči</i> ~ Ud. <i>boçu</i> ‘dense’?
8. * <i>žagowl-in?</i>	Genitive formation of a noun corresponding to Ud. <i>žogul</i> ‘spring’ (not attested in the palimpsests)?
9. * <i>bowndok-ē?</i>	Genitive formation of a noun related to * <i>bownağown</i> ‘dwelling, housing’ (~ Arm. <i>bnakowt’iwn</i> ‘id.’ < Mİran.)? In connection with Arm. <i>ahekan-i</i> (‘month of the Sun feast’), we would rather expect * <i>areğon-ē</i> which might have left its traces in the following name beginning with <i>are-</i> instead of * <i>mare-</i> .
12. * <i>xib-n’a?</i> * <i>bâğ-n’a?</i>	Genitive formation of the cardinal number <i>xib</i> ‘three’ or the adjective <i>bâğn’i</i> ‘worthy’? None of the proposals would match Arm. <i>hrotič</i> , lit. ‘(month of the) souls of the dead’ (< Iran. * <i>frawarti-</i>) or Georg. <i>kueltob-isay</i> (‘month of the underworld feast?’).

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⁹⁶ Cf. Gippert (1988: 39) for this proposal which presupposes the confusion of the Armenian majuscules Ն and Ս as elsewhere, and Gippert (1989: 3–12) as to the etymology of the Armenian name.

- Հաշարակական գիտություններ / *Известия Академии Наук Армянской ССР. Общественные науки* [Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR. Social Sciences] 5. 61–64. <https://arar.sci.am/dlibra/publication/117359/edition/107010/content>.
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Figure 1: Jost Gippert.

Figure 2: Microfilm, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b100871574/f50.item>).

Wolfgang Schulze[†] and Jost Gippert

5 Caucasian Albanian and Modern Udi

Abstract: The present Chapter¹ discusses the relationship between the language of the Caucasian Albanians as attested in the Sinai palimpsests and its alleged modern successor, the Udi language as spoken by a small linguistic minority in two different varieties (Nij and Vartashen Udi) in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and elsewhere.

1 Albanians and Udis

On 20 March 1724, one year before his death, the Russian Tsar Peter I (also named the Great) received a letter in Armenian with a petition from a Christian community in the Caucasus. The letter reads:²

To the Most Worthy King

Magnificent and most glorious, praiseworthy and honourable, the crown and the pride of our nation! Raising [our] face[s] to [You, O] most worthy king, prostrating [ourselves], with tearful eyes we kiss the soles of Your feet.

With supplications and implorations we bring to Your Majesty's notice all the crimes [committed here] and the [deplorable] state of this country. For [this is] what the lawless and faithless [ones] have for so many years brought upon our heads. First, they burnt churches and caused us much evil [in acting] against our faith: they induced priests to apostasy, killing some; they took into captivity women with their sons [and] sons with their mothers. Monasteries and hermitages, rendered uninhabitable, remain [so even] today, and we, the survivors, eke out our existence in the midst of sufferings, neither alive nor dead.

1 The chapter is mostly based upon relevant publications by Wolfgang Schulze (especially Schulze 2015), with additions by Jost Gippert that are based upon the new readings of the Albanian palimpsests (cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 1.5). Most regrettably, Wolfgang Schulze did not live to see the present chapter due to his untimely death on 13 April 2020.

2 The letter, preserved in the former Archive of Foreign Policy of Russia (АБПР, ф. 100, 1724 г., д. 4, л. 27 и об. Подлинник), was published as item no. 232 in Hovhannisyan (1967: 90–91). A first translation of the letter into English was kindly provided by Hasmik Sargsyan in January 2022. The present translation was worked out in May 2022 by Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev who also provided the pertinent notes and, in Chapter 5A below, a historical evaluation of the letter.

We are Albanians,³ and Udis⁴ [as regards our] stock.⁵ Through the preaching of the apostle Elisaeus, our ancestors became believers in God. The site of the holy apostle's martyrdom is near us. It is known to Your Majesty that in ancient times our people held no authority to build a sumptuous monastery on the site of the holy apostle's martyrdom. [Therefore,] our ancestors built [there] only a modest church: we lived around it.⁶ Now the lawless have burnt [it] down and have forced us into apostasy. Secretly we observe our religion, both old and young, [but] openly [the lawless ones] force us by the sword to become Turks.⁷

Now we have heard that Your auspicious⁸ foot is set to come [and] tread upon our heads: we shall beseech good tidings from Christ that he may shorten our lives and lengthen Your Majesty's, so that You may set us free from captivity and lead us to the glory of God. And with our sinful mouths we shall forever entreat the Lord [to grant Your Majesty] long life.

What other speech should we utter? We are servants of [Yours, O] most worthy king. Out of fear we cannot write everything; You will certainly learn of [our] love of Christ and of every [concern] of ours from this wretched priest and these people [attending him] who are coming [to You]. Our prayer is this: that some skilful servants of Your Majesty may come here with these people [...], that You may draw up a written document as a help,⁹ [thus procuring] a little joy to St Elisaeus the apostle, [a document to be transmitted] through these [people]'s hands to [us who are] suffering here, [where] on the site of the [burnt] church a monastery may in [due] course be [erected on] the orders of [Your] heralds.¹⁰ May the deeds of those lawless be counteracted by Your Majesty's supreme command!

3 The term *Atuank'* renders in Armenian both the name of the country, 'Albania', and the collective noun 'Albanians'. In the text it is spelt *աղուվանք* (*Atu-vank'*), i.e. 'Country-of-Pleasant-Dwellings', certainly following a popular etymology: unlike highland Armenia, most of Albania's territory is characterised by a mild climate, in which livestock can winter in the open, whilst its soil is much better watered than the Armenian high plateau. Since antiquity, these climatic conditions favoured the development of husbandry and agriculture in the country. Cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut and Gippert), 1. with n. 3 as to the etymology of *atuank'* and 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 as to its connection with *alu* 'sweet' in earlier Armenian sources.

4 *Ուտիք* (*Owtik'*). The petitioners, Udis (*udiyux* or *udiyox* in Udi, cf. Mobili 2010: 278), thus identify themselves with that ancient Armenian province situated along the Middle Kura's right bank.

5 Or 'by parentage': *ազգով* (*azgov*).

6 'Around it': *նովան* (*novaw*, for *znovaw*). Numerous churches dedicated to St Elisaeus are documented on both banks of the Kura. Most likely, the authors come from the region of the ancient Albanian town of Gis (often identified with present-day Kiş) on the stream Sani (a left tributary of the river Alazani) flowing down the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus. A church of St Elisaeus near Kiş (Kish) was built in 1244; see Karapetyan (1988: 225–230).

7 The massive Islamicisation of the inhabitants of the area of Kiş is documented in scholarship; see Karapetyan (1997: 84, nos. 310–312).

8 'Auspicious': *սայալու* (*sayalu*, < Azeri).

9 *չաղանաթ* *šatawat'* < *šatawart*).

10 *դովաթ* (*dolvat'* < *dovlat'*).

We are a [small] remnant in [this] land,¹¹ [and] there is neither understanding in [our] heads nor light in [our] eyes. The authority belongs to Your Majesty [alone]. [Holding] little knowledge in [our] minds, we have written little, but may Your Wisdom understand much.

[May we be] a sacrifice for Your soul! Be a remedy for us, alive in our glorification.

Written in the year 1173, on the 20th of the month of March.¹²

Added to the petition is a small postscript, as well in Armenian:

We have meekly drawn up this request for solace from Your Majesty. In whatsoever manner Your Greatness should dispose [of authority], [the power] to command belongs to Your Majesty [alone]. And until the arrival of Your army, whenever You dispatch our people [who are now on their way to You] back: until their arrival we shall not lift our eyes from the road. May the heavenly King be Your protector and [that] of Your army and may Your Majesty [be the protector] of all faithful Armenians,¹³ [both] rich and poor.¹⁴

By identifying themselves as “Albanians, and Udis [as regards our] stock”, the senders suggest a peculiar relationship between the two ethnonyms, with “Udis” representing a subsection of “Albanians”. This suggestion is corroborated by linguistic observations: in the light of the linguistic materials that were brought about by the decipherment of the Sinai palimpsests (see Chapters 3 and 4 of this Handbook), it can safely be stated today that the language of the present-day Udis is a close relative, if not a direct descendant, of the Caucasian Albanian language of the Middle Ages, with an interrelation which is similar to the one between Old Armenian (Grabar) and Modern East Armenian. In the following sections, the relation between Albanian and modern Udi will be examined in more detail.

11 Numerous biblical references may be recognised in the text of the Petition; e.g. Isaiah 1.7–9: “Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. [...] Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom”; Jeremiah 44.28: “Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah”.

12 I.e. 20 March 1724 according to the Julian calendar (31. 03. 1724 according to the Gregorian calendar).

13 *ամենայն հաւատացեալ հայոց* (*amenayn hawatac'eal hayoc'*). The petitioners thus claim a triple identity, attaching themselves at once to ancient Caucasian Albania, to the Armenian province of Utik', and to the flock of the Armenian Christians.

14 A Russian archivist added the following “Note: Notices of Armenians, whose content is ancient, translated from their letters. This has been told [us] by the Armenian Luka”.

2 The Udis and their language

2.1 The Udis as an ethnic group

Since the Azerbaijanian-Armenian clashes of 1989–90, the only place where Udis reside compactly has been the village of Nij (also spelt Nizh; Azeri *Nic*, Udi *nəʒʒ/niž*), which is located in Northwestern Azerbaijan and inhabited by some 6,000 people.¹⁵ Until 1989, a second more or less compact group of ethnic Udis was present in the village of Vartashen (now Oğuz), located some 25 km northwest of Nij and inhabited by some 5,000 people until then.¹⁶ Together with the local Armenians, most of the Udis from Vartashen were forced to leave the village in 1990 and to move to various places of the former USSR, among them some hamlets in Armenia¹⁷ and the village of Zinobiani (from 1938 to 2000 named Okտomberi) in Eastern Georgia, which had been founded by emigrants from Vartashen in 1922 in the context of the Armenian-

15 40°55'48" N, 47°39'12" E. In 2009, some 65 % of the inhabitants of Nij declared themselves to be ethnic Udis, the rest being chiefly Azerbaijanis. Məhyəddinqızı (2009: [58]) talks about 6,200 inhabitants and adds that 4,000 of them are Udis. On the other hand, Qafarlı (2012) reports that only 50 % of the Nij population belong to the Udi ethnic group. The census of 2015 mentions 3,697 Udis for the whole of the Qabala district; Maisak (2023: 55) provides a number of "ca. 3,500 Udis" for Nij. Compared to the figures given for the 1979 census (4,528 Udis, 1,109 Azerbaijanis out of a total of 5,914 inhabitants) we can thus observe a gradual decline of the portion of Udis in the village of Nij (cf. Schulze and Schulze 2016: 513). – The first mention of Nij is found in Eichwald (1834–1837: II, 16: *Nidsh* / 1838a: 180: *Ниджъ*); the latter form also appears in Yanovskiy (1846: 166).

16 41°4'23" N, 47°27'53" E. The inhabitants included roughly 40 % Armenians, 15 % Jewish Tats, 30 % Udis, 15 % Azerbaijanis, Lezgis and others; cf. Schulze and Schulze (2016: 514). – The first mention of Vartashen is found in Klaproth (1814: 177), where it is misspelt as *Waratschin*. The name was explicitly corrected to *Wartaschin* by Sjögren (1836: 118; cf. also Yanovskiy 1846: 166 with *Вартауун*). The name form *Wartaschen* appeared – alongside *Wartaschin* – first in Eichwald (1834–1837: II, 16–20); cf. also Schiefner (1863: 1), according to whom it is "more usual" ("gewöhnlicher").

17 The villages in question are Bagratashen (41°14'32" N, 44°49'2" E), Ptghavan (41°13'40" N, 44°51'34" E), Debedavan (41°16'49" N, 44°48'53" E), and Haghtanak (41°12'51" N, 44°54'36" E). Bagratashen (2,732 inhabitants in 2011) is located on the right bank of the Debed river. In Tsarist times the town was called Lambalo and inhabited mainly by Azerbaijanis. It was renamed in 1972 in honour of Bagrat Vardanyan (1894–1971), a hero of socialist labour. Since 1994, its Azerbaijani population has been replaced mainly by Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan. Ptghavan (some 900 people in 300 households) was founded in 1948 and is located some 4 km southeast of Bagratashen. Debedavan (also Debetavan, formerly Lalvar, renamed in 1978) is located on the Debed river. It is inhabited mostly by Armenians (700 people) and situated 5 km north of Bagratashen. Haghtanak, located some 6 km southeast of Ptghavan, is inhabited by some 1,200 people (cf. Schulze and Schulze 2016: 511).

Azerbaijani conflicts of 1918–1920.¹⁸ The number of Udis who have remained in the Oğuz region after 1990 is difficult to determine; Azerbaijani sources talk about 79 Udis in 2009. Even before 1989, USSR-internal migration (especially in the 1970s) had conditioned that quite a number of Udis are now to be found in scattered places of the former USSR, especially in the Russian Federation¹⁹ and in Kazakhstan (Aktay, Shakhtinsk).

In sum, we can assume that the number of ethnic Udis does not exceed 10,000 people today. This estimation, however, does not match the actual number of people who use the Udi language in every-day communication. In many places outside Nij, Udi has become an endangered variety, being replaced by the local language as a general means of communication.²⁰

Although details may be a matter of debate, it can be safely stated that the cultural traditions of the Udi people are characterised by a long-standing contact with Armenians,²¹ a fact that manifests itself nicely in the petition to Tsar Peter being written in Armenian. The “Armenian layer” in the cultural traditions of the Udis is especially determined by the historical dynamics of the religious traditions of this ethnic group. After the abolishment of a quasi-autocephalous “Albanian” bishopric in 1836 and up to 1990, most Udis had related themselves to either the Armenian Apostolic Church or the Georgian Orthodox Church; the reestablishment of a “Caucasian-Albanian Christianity” in 2002 marked the end of these relations at least among the Udis of Azerbaijan.²²

18 41°53'50" N, 45°56'10" E. Today, some 200 ethnic Udis live in Zinobiani, together with a similar number of Georgians; cf. Beridze, Archvadze and Shurghaia (2003: 110–111) for 2002 (Oktomberi), Schulze (2005b), Schulze (2011b), and Schulze and Schulze (2016: 514).

19 E.g. in Moscow, Ekaterinburg, Balabanovo (near Moscow; 56°10'34" N, 37°44'0" E), Dubovyi Ovrage (near Volgograd, 48°20'3" N, 44°37'6" E), Krasnodar, Taganrog, Volgograd, and Barnaul; cf. Schulze and Schulze (2016: 515).

20 The documentation of the Udi language of Georgia was one of the objects of two projects run by Jost Gippert and Manana Tandashvili from 2002–2010 within the programmes “Documentation of Endangered Languages” (DoBeS) and “Between Europe and the Orient – A Focus on Research and Higher Education in/on Central Asia and the Caucasus” of the Volkswagen Foundation (projects “Endangered Caucasian Languages in Georgia”, cf. <https://dobes.mpi.nl/projects/svan/> and <https://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/ecling/ecling.htm>, and “The sociolinguistic situation of present-day Georgia”, cf. <https://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/ssgg/ssgg.htm>).

21 Cf. Schulze (2011b).

22 Cf. Schulze and Schulze (2016: 515–518) and Chapter 16 of this Handbook (Tchilingirian) for further details.

2.2 The Udi language

The Udi language as spoken today is clearly divided into two dialects, that of the community of Nij and that of the former community of Vartashen. The first material of modern Udi that was made available to the scholarly world was a list of 12 words plus one short sentence, which was compiled in Vartashen and published in Latin script in 1814 by Julius von Klaproth in his “Description of the Russian provinces between the Caspian and the Black Sea”.²³ This material comprises words like “Weib – Schuwuk” (Udi V *čubux*, N *čuhux* / *čupux* / *čuvux* ‘wife, woman’),²⁴ “Bruder – Witschi” (Udi VN *viči* ‘brother’), also in “Mein Bruder – Bis witschi” (Udi VN *bez viči* ‘my brother’), and “Brod – Schum” (Udi VN *šum* ‘bread’), also in the sentence “İß Brod mit uns, mein Bruder – Mieeke arza schum uka his witschi” (Udi V *mia eke, arca, šum uka, bez viči*).²⁵

In order to provide material for a comparison of the Udi language with that of the (Finno-Ugric) Udmurt (or Votyak) people in Russia, an endeavour that had been suggested by Ed. Eichwald on the basis of the similarity of the ethnonyms,²⁶ a more comprehensive word list comprising c. 325 entries with a Russian translation was compiled and printed on behalf of the exarch of Georgia, Isidor (Nikol’skiy), in 1853.²⁷ Unfortunately the “Dictionary” seems not to be available for inspection; however, a short list of about 70 items that was possibly derived from it was published, in Cyrillic letters, in the same year in the journal *Кавказъ* (‘Caucasus’) and again, in Latin transcription, in 1854 by Anton Schiefner.²⁸

The latter author was then also the first scholar to provide an account of the grammar of Udi, together with a set of text specimens and a large vocabulary, in

23 Klaproth (1814: 177–178); cf. Gippert (2018b: 118–119).

24 Hereafter, “V” denotes the Vartashen dialect and “N”, that of Nij.

25 Literally, the sentence means ‘Come here, sit down, eat bread, my brother’; a Nij version would only differ in using *memiya eki* for ‘come here’. – Note that two items of the word list remain undetermined, viz. “Mädchen – *Ssengi*” (‘girl’) and “Knabe – *Galli*” (‘boy’); the usual equivalents, Udi V *xinar* / N *xüyär* and VN *ğar*, are listed under “Tochter” (‘daughter’, *Chinar*) and “Sohn” (‘son’, *Gari*).

26 Eichwald (1838a: 180; 1838b: 349 and 364); cf. also Yanovskiy (1853: 81).

27 Nikol’skiy (1853); for details cf. Schiefner (1863: 2) and Gukasyan (1974: 8).

28 Schiefner (1854: 649–650). The publication in *Кавказъ* no. 61 is signed by one “A. C.” from Kutaisi who has been identified as Andrey Stepanovich Sankovskiy by Nineli Melkadze, National Parliament Library of Georgia, Tbilisi (e-mail of 12 August 2022 to Emzar Jgerenaia); our sincere thanks are due to both colleagues for solving his riddle: even Schiefner did not name the author. Unfortunately Sankovskiy gives no information as to the provenance of his list (1853: 266 note *). A similar but not identical list was published by Shopen (1866: 483); more extensive new word lists were provided by Starchevskiy (1891: 494–508) and Erckert (1895: 23–204). Cf. Gippert (2018b: 119–122).

a “Mémoire” of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1863.²⁹ The first more comprehensive text materials in Udi were a fairy tale on a shepherd named *Rustam* published by Mikhail Bezhanov, a native speaker from Vartashen, in 1888, and the translation of the four Gospels accomplished by the same author in supporting his brother Semyon, which appeared in Cyrillic script in 1902.³⁰ The first Udi primer was published in 1934 in Latin script with several extra letters and diacritics by Theodore and Mikhaki Jeirani under the title “First Lesson” (Udi *samži däs*); it comprised an introduction into writing and 30 pages of short texts, synoptically arranged in both dialects.³¹ The first full-fledged dictionary of Udi appeared in 1974 in a Cyrillic-based alphabet, with *ɸ*, *I*, and an accent-like sign being used as diacritics; the work, authored by Voroshil Gukasyan, covers both dialects and provides translations and explanations in both Azeri and Russian.³² The Udi-Azeri-Russian dictionary by R. Mobili (2010) is mostly based on Gukasyan’s.³³

Since the 1990s, there has been a steady increase of printed materials in Nij Udi,³⁴ especially in the context of the reestablishment of an independent Christian community. Among the relevant materials, we may mention the translation of the books of Ruth and Jonah from the Old Testament³⁵ and of the Gospel of Luke from the New Testament.³⁶ Recently, a large set of further translations of biblical texts have been published online;³⁷ besides the Gospel of Luke and a new version of Jonah, they comprise the books of Exodus, Numbers, Psalms, Proverbs, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, and the Letters by James and John, all down-

29 Schiefner (1863). Later accounts of the grammar were published by Erckert (1895), Dirr (1904), Jeiranishvili (1971), Panchvidze (1974), and Schulze (1982); cf. Gippert (2018b: 120–125).

30 Both these works (Bezhanov 1888 and Bezhanov and Bezhanov 1902) appeared within the journal *Сборникъ матеріаловъ для описанія мѣстностей и племень Кавказа* (‘Collection of materials for the description of the localities and tribes of the Caucasus’). Further text materials were provided in the works cited in note 29 above and in Dirr (1928); cf. Gippert (2018b: 120–125).

31 Jeirani and Jeirani (1934); cf. Gippert (2018b: 124). The primer as well as most other Udi texts that were published before 2000 are available online for research at <https://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/texte2.htm#udica>.

32 Gukasyan (1974); cf. Gippert (2018b: 125–126).

33 Recordings of spoken Vartashen Udi (from Zinobiani, compiled by Manana Tandashvili, Jost Gippert, Tariel Sikharulidze and others in the documentation projects of 2002–2010, cf. n. 20) are available at The Language Archive (<https://archive.mpi.nl/tla/islandora/search/udi>) and on the TITUS server (<https://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/ecling/ecling03.htm> and <https://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etce/cauc/udi/udissgg/udiss.htm>); a corpus of spoken Nij Udi was compiled by Dmitry Ganenkov, Yury Lander and Timur Maisak in the 2000s (cf. Maisak 2021: 337).

34 Cf. Maisak (2021: 338) for a list of works comprising a total of “ca. 90,000 words”.

35 Published anonymously as *Rut’ – Iona* (2009).

36 Ağacani et al. (2011); cf. Gippert (2018b: 126).

37 Cf. <http://www.udibibliya.com> (last accessed 13. 2. 2023).

loadable in PDF form and accompanied with audio recordings of the texts. A thorough analysis of these materials has not yet been possible.

In accordance with the turn from Cyrillic to a Latin-based orthography in Azeri, the writing system used in the last-named publications is Latin-based, too, with several special diacritic combinations used. In Table I, the different graphical renderings used in publications of Udi texts are contrasted with the transliteration system applied in the present treatise.³⁸

38 The Table covers the following publications: Klaproth (1814), Sankovskiy (1853), Schiefner (1854), Schiefner (1863), Shopen (1866), Starchevskiy (1891), Erckert (1895), Bezhanov (1888), Bezhanov & Bezhanov (1902), Dirr (1904), Dirr (1928), Jeirani & Jeirani (1934), Karbelashvili (1935), Jeiranishvili (1971), Panchvidze (1974), Gukasyan (1974), Schulze (1982), Mobili (2010). In order to provide a general picture, minor variants and inconsistencies in the rendering of Udi, especially in 19th-century publications, are ignored in the Table. In some cases, the actual appearance of special characters may differ. For previous comparative charts cf. Karbelashvili (1935: 273–274) and Lolua (2010: 13–15).

Tab. 1: The rendering of Udi sounds in various publications.

	<i>a</i>	<i>aʳ</i>	<i>ä</i>	<i>äʳ</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>ç</i>	<i>č</i>	<i>č̣</i>	<i>č̣'</i>	<i>č̣'</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Klaproth	a	-	-	-	b	z	-	(t)sch	-	-	-	-	e(e)
Sankovskiy	a	a	a	a	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	-	ч	-	А
Schiefner ₁	a	a	a	a	b	z	z	tsch	tsch	-	tsch	-	d
Schiefner ₂	a	ə	ä, ə	-	b	c	ç	č	č	č	č, ç	-	d
Shopen	a	a	-	a, à	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	ч	-	-	А
Starchevskiy	a	a	ə	ə	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	ч	ч, ц	-	А
Erckert	a	a	ä, a	ä	b	c	tc	č	dč	č	dč, c	-	d
Bezhanov ₁	a	á	ä	ä	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	ч	ч	-	А
Bezhanov ₂	a	á	ä	ä	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	ч	ч	-	А
Dirr ₁	a	á	ä	ä	б	ц	ц	ч	ч	ч	ч	-	А
Dirr ₂	a	á	ä	ä	b	c	c'	č	č'	č	č'	-	d
Jeirani	a	ħa	ə	ħə	b	ɸ	ɽ	ц	c	ɸ	e	-	d
Karbelashvili	a	ə	ä	ä	b	ð	t	θ	t	θ	-	-	d
Jeiranishvili	ʷ	ʷ	ʷ	ʷ	ð	ɔ	ʋ	β	ʒ	β	ʒ	-	ɖ
Panchvidze	ʷ	ʷ	ʷ	ʷ	ð	ɔ	ʋ	β	ʒ	β	ʒ	-	ɖ
Gukasyan	a	aʰ	ab	ab	б	ц	цɽ	ч	цɽ	ч	чɽ	ц	А
Schulze	a	a'	æ	æ'	b	c	ç	č	č	č	č	č	d
Mobili	a	-	ə	ə	б	с	с'	ç	с'	ç	ç'	-	d

Tab. I (continued)

	eʳ	ə	əʳ	f	g	ǰ	h	i	iʳ	k	ḳ	l	m	n
Klaproth	oe	-	-	-	(g)	g	-	i(eh)	-	k	-	(ll)	m	n
Sankovskiy	e, ə	-	-	φ	-	ɾ	-	и, i	-	к	к	л	м	н
Schiefner ₁	e(i)	-	-	f	-	g	-	i(i), y	-	к	к	л	м	н
Schiefner ₂	e	(y)	(y)	f	g	ǰ	h	i	y	ќ	к	л	м	н
Shopen	e, ə	-	-	-	ɾ	ɾ, к	-	и	и	к	к	л	м	н
Starchevskiy	e	ы	ы	φ	ɾ	ɾ(h)	h	и	и	к(h)	к	л	м	н
Erckert	e	ü	ü	f	g	gh	h	i	ü	kh	к	л	м	н
Bezhanov ₁	e	v	v	φ	ɾ	ɾ	h	i	v	ќ	к	л	м	н
Bezhanov ₂	è	ы	ы	φ	ɾ	ɕ	h	i	ы	ќ	к	л	м	н
Dirr ₁	e	ы	ы	φ	ɾ	ɕ	h	i	ы	қ	к	л	м	н, ы
Dirr ₂	è	-	-	f	g	ɣ	h	i	i	k'	к	л	м	н
Jeirani	he	ь	һь	f	g	oi	h	i	һь	қ	к	л	м	н
Karbelashvili	è	ə	-	f	g	ǰ	h	i	ı	q	к	л	м	н
Jeiranishvili	ɔ ^ɔ	ə	(ə ^ɔ)	φ	ə	ə	ʒ	o	o ^ɔ	ɟ	ɟ	ə	ə	ə
Panchvidze	ɔ ^ɔ	ə	(ə ^ɔ)	φ	ə	ə	ʒ	o	o ^ɔ	ɟ	ɟ	ə	ə	ə
Gukasyan	eʳ	ы	ыь	φ	ɾ	ɾь	ɾь	и	иь	к	кI	л	м	н
Schulze	e'	ə	ə'	f	g	ɣ	h	i	i'	к	қ	л	м	н
Mobili	è	ı	ı'	f	g	ǰ	h	i	ı'	к	к'	л	м	н

	o	oʳ	ö	p	p̣	q	q̣	r	s	š	ś	t	ʈ	u
Klaproth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	r	ss	-	sch	-	-	u
Sankovskiy	o	o	-	-	п	x	к	p	c	ш	ш	т	т	y
Schiefner ₁	o	-	-	-	p	ch	к	r	s	sch	sch	t	t	u
Schiefner ₂	o	o	ö	p̣	p	x̣	q̣	r	s	ś	ś	ʈ	ʈ	u
Shopen	o	o	-	п	п	к	(r)к	p	c	ш, c	ш, c	-	-	y
Starchevskiy	o	o	o	п(h)	п	x, к	к	p	c	ш	ш, c	т	т	y
Erkert	o	o	ö	ph	p	xk	q	r	s	š	š(š)	th	t	u
Bezhanov ₁	o	ó	ö	ḥ	п	к̣	q̣	p	c	ш	ш̣	ʈ	ʈ	y
Bezhanov ₂	o	ó	ö	ḥ	п	к̣	к̣	p	c	ш	ш̣	ʈ	ʈ	y
Dirr ₁	o	ó	ö	п̣	п	к̣	q̣	p	c	ш	ш̣	ʈ	ʈ	y
Dirr ₂	o	ó	ö	p'	p	к̣	q̣	r	s	š	ś	ʈ'	t	u
Jeirani	o	ho	e	β	p	q̣	q̣	r	s	š	ś	ʈ	t	u
Karbelashvili	o	o	ö	φ	p	q̣	к̣	r	s	ш	ш̣	ʈ	t	u
Jeiranishvili	o	oʳ	ö	ϑ	з	з	y	é	б	ö	öʳ	o	ʈ	ʊ
Panchvidze	o	oʳ	ö	ϑ	з	з	y	é	б	ö	öʳ	o	ʈ	ʊ
Gukasyan	o	oʳ	ob	п	nI	xʳ	кʳ	p	c	ш	шI	т	тI	y
Schulze	o	o'	ö	p	p̣	q̣	q̣	r	s	ś	ś	t	ʈ	u
Mobili	o	ó	ö	p	p'	q̣	q'	r	s	š	ś	t	t'	u

Tab. I (continued)

	u ^r	ü	v	x	y	z	ž	ž	ž	ž	ž
Klaproth	-	-	w	ch, k	-	s	-	-	-	-	-
Sankovskiy	y	ю	в	х	й	з	-	ж	-	-	дз
Schiefner ₁	u	-	w	ch	i	s	-	j	-	-	ds
Schiefner ₂	ü	ü, u	w	x, h	j, i	z	ž	ž	з	ž	з, ž
Shopen	y	-	в	х	-	з	ж	ж, дз	-	дж	дз
Starchevskiy	y	-	в	х	й	з	-	ж	-	дж	дз
Erckert	u	ü	v	x	j	z	ž	(ž), žž	-	dž	dž
Bezhanov ₁	y	y	в	х	j	з	ж	ж	дз	ү	ү
Bezhanov ₂	y	ü	в	х	й	з	ж	ж	з	ү	ү
Dirr ₁	y	y	в, w	х	й	з	ж	ж	з	ү	ү
Dirr ₂	ü	ü	v, u	x	j, i	z	ž	ž	-	j	j
Jeirani	hu	y	v	x	j	z	z	з	dz	ç	dз
Karbelashvili	ü	ü	v	q	y	z	f	t	d	d	d
Jeiranishvili	ʝ ^p	ʝ	з	б	а	ʙ	ʝ	ʝ ^p	д	ʝ	ʝ ^p
Panchvidze	ʝ ^p	ʝ	з, ʝ	б	а	ʙ	ʝ	ʝ [~]	д	ʝ	ʝ [~]
Gukasyan	y ^b	y ^b	в	х	й	з	ж	жл	дз	дж	джл
Schulze	u [~]	y	y [~]	x	j	z	ž	ž	з	ž	ž
Mobili	ü	ü	v	x	y	z	j	j	-	c	č

2.3 Udi and Albanian Gospels

The fact that we possess a considerable amount of parallel text materials in form of the Gospel translations allows us to establish a clear picture of the mutual relation of Albanian and Udi. Taking Matthew 17.1 as a first example, we can show that many words from the basic vocabulary and primary elements of grammar (verbal markers and case endings)³⁹ are more or less the same in Albanian and the Vartashen Udi version provided by the Bezhanov brothers in 1902; cf. Table II where identical words are marked in bold characters and identical grammatical elements are underlined.⁴⁰

Tab. II: Matthew 17.1 in Albanian and Vartashen Udi.

CA	<i>űwxar ğiown esa heğayne I(sow)sen <u>Pe</u>trosax own <u>Ya</u>kobax own <u>Yo</u>hananax ...</i>
Udi V	<i>u'ğ ği <u>ç</u>ebakitxo osa, Isusen aneği <u>Pe</u>trax, <u>I</u>akovax va' <u>Io</u>anax ...</i>
	<i>"After six days, Jesus took Peter and James and John..."</i>

Identical are the word for 'day', *ği*, and the name of Jesus if its Albanian sounding is reconstructed correctly from the abbreviation. Identical are the case endings *-en* for the ergative marking the agent, Jesus, and *-ax* for the dative marking the three object persons, Peter, James and John. Near to identical are the numeral 'six', *űw*x vs. *u*'ğ, with the pronunciation of the Albanian digraph *űw* remaining uncertain,⁴¹ and the postposition 'after', *e*sa vs. *o*sa, where only the initial vowel differs; the sound change involved is regular in the position before a retroflex consonant such as *ś*.⁴² The verbal forms for 'he took' illustrate a more severe development in the history of Udi: in Albanian *he-ğay-ne*, the 3rd person marker *-ne* is still attached after the ending of the past, *-y*, whereas Udi *a-ne-ği* shows the same element inserted between *a-*, the remnant of the preverb *he-* 'hither', and the verbal root *ğ*; in addition, the formation of the past changed from a stem in *-a-* (*-ğ-a-y*) into a stem in *-e-* (**-ğ-e-y > -ği*).⁴³

³⁹ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 5.1 for a survey of lexical correspondences between Albanian and Udi, 3.1.3 for the case endings and 3.5.2 for the personal markers of Albanian.

⁴⁰ In the following specimens, the Cyrillic spelling of the Udi Gospels of 1902 has been replaced by a rendering in Latin script; "CA" stands for Caucasian Albanian. Note that in the Albanian script, the vowels *u* and *ű* are rendered by digraphs (*ow* and *űw*, see Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 2.1).

⁴¹ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 2.2.1 as to the Albanian digraph *űw*.

⁴² Cf. Gippert (2018b: 130).

⁴³ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.5.3, and 3.2.3 below on the past formation in Albanian and Udi.

Other differences are caused by the fact that the Udi translation by the Bezh-anov brothers was based on the Russian Bible, which was printed together with it verse-by-verse in parallel, whereas the Albanian text most probably relied upon a Graeco-Syro-Armenian model;⁴⁴ this is obvious from the names of Peter, James and John being *Peṭr-*, *Iaḱov-* and *Ioan-* in Udi vs. *Peṭros-* (maintaining the Greek nominative ending as in Arm. *Petros-*), *Yaḱob-* (corresponding to Syriac *Yaḳōb* vs. Arm. *Yakovbos-* which mirrors Greek *Ἰάκωβος*),⁴⁵ and *Yohanan-* (corresponding to Syriac *Yōhanān* vs. Arm. *Yovhannēs* which mirrors Greek *Ἰωάννης*).⁴⁶ An influence of Russian on the Udi text is also manifest in the rendering of ‘after six days’ by *uʹq ġi čebakiṭxo oša*, which literally means ‘after six days had passed’ with a nominalised form of *čebaksun* ‘pass by’ in the ablative depending on the postposition *oša*⁴⁷ and which clearly reflects the Russian *no ppošestvii dneĭ šestĭ* (*po prošestvii dneĭ šestĭ*) ‘after the passing of six days’; in contrast to this, the Albanian directly translates Arm. *յետ վեց աւուր* (*yet vec’ awowr*) ‘after six days’, in its turn matching Syr. *bāṭar šittā yawmīn* (rather than Greek *μεθ’ ἡμέρας ἕξ* with a different ordering of the numeral and the head noun). The genitive ending *-own* in Albanian *ġiown* is regularly triggered by the postposition *eša* following it,⁴⁸ and the use of the plural marker *-ar* with the numeral (*üwχ-ar*) is an intrinsic feature of Albanian that is no longer met with in Udi.⁴⁹

With the new translation of biblical texts into Nij Udi, we can now even contrast the Albanian Gospels with both dialects of the language. In the Nij version, Matthew 17.1 reads: *Uʹq ġinaxun oša Isusen Ičuxun Peṭera, Iaḱova saal iz viči Ioana exti*,⁵⁰ which can be rendered as ‘After six days, Jesus himself took Peter, James and also his brother John’. Leaving aside the explicative additions *ičuxun* ‘(from) himself’ and *iz viči* ‘his brother’ and the conjunction *saal* ‘and again’,⁵¹

44 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 2.2.

45 In the Greek New Testament, *Ἰάκωβος* is the name form used for the apostle while *Ἰακώβ* is only used for the Old Testament patriarch (e.g., Matthew 1.2, 1.16, 8.11).

46 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 3.3 as to the two forms of the name of John occurring in the Albanian palimpsests.

47 Actually, *čebakiṭxo* is the ablative of the referentialised form of the past of *čebaksun*, lit. ‘from the passed one’ (cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.2 as to comparable forms in Albanian).

48 The Udi (V) equivalent would be *ġinun* as appearing in *ġinun baxtin* ‘for the day’ in Luke 23.17.

49 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.4 as to the Albanian numerals.

50 Cf. <https://www.udibibliya.com/en/matthews-gospel/> for the Nij version of the Gospel of Matthew. The rendering of Udi in Latin characters was adapted to the system used in the present Chapter.

51 *N saal* is likely to consist of *sa* ‘one, but’ and the additive particle *-al* ‘also’; it does not occur in the Vartashen Gospels. In Albanian, *sa-al* is only attested in I John 1.5 (Sin. georg. NF 13 = A104va, 21) in the sense of ‘even one’ (hereafter, A stands for Sin. georg. NF 13 and B, for Sin. georg. NF 55). Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.8 as to conjunctions in Albanian.

the main differences consist in the reduction of the dative ending (-*a* instead of -*ax*), in the ablative ending -*xun* relating *ġina* ‘day’ directly to the postposition *oša* ‘after’, without addition of ‘passing by’, and in the verbal form, *exți* ‘he took’, which reveals no person marking and whose relation to Albanian *heqesown* and Vartashen Udi *aqsun* remains unclear.⁵²

As a second example, we may take Luke 4.16–18 which is among the best readable passages of the palimpsests⁵³ and provides a telling picture. For the sake of clarity, the verses are divided into phrases in Table III, and literal translations are given for all three versions. Note that the two Udi versions differ from the Albanian one in placing the phrase “he started to read” not in the middle of Luke 4.17 but at the end of the preceding verse, a divergence that is already observable between different Greek and Syriac witnesses of the New Testament;⁵⁴ the Russian Bible, on which the Vartashen translation is based, follows the more widespread Greek text version.

It will be immediately clear that the Nij version is again more explicative than the Vartashen version or the Albanian text, in adding “the town” (*šähär*; a loan from Persian via Azeri) to Nazareth, “from the holy scriptures” in 4.16, and “these words” in 4.17; on the other hand, the Vartashen version introduces several phrases with *vaʹ* ‘and’ (a loan from Arabic via Azeri) mirroring Russian *i* ‘id.’ where the two other versions have no conjunction. A more salient feature of the Nij version consists in the use of participial constructions instead of relative clauses as in *Iz kalabaki Nazareṭ šähäre-*, lit. ‘to (His) own having-grown-up Nazareth town’, contrasting in Luke 4.16 with *nazarētaḡ bāni-hamayke-va-hē* in Albanian and *Nazareta, maate kalanebakei* in the Vartashen Gospels, both displaying a relative construction with finite verbs;⁵⁵ the preference for participial phrases in Nij Udi may be taken to indicate a strong influence of Turkic (Azeri) syntax (if not even a translation via Azeri).⁵⁶

⁵² The verb in question is listed as *ēxst’un = e’xstun* in Mobili (2010: 106).

⁵³ In the “Lectionary” part of the Albanian palimpsests, the following lections from Luke are preserved: Lk. 1.57–80 (lection for the Nativity of John the Baptist, A35vb–A36rb); Lk. 2.1–7 (Nativity of Jesus Christ, A36vb–A35vb); Lk. 4.14–22 (Prophet Isaiah; A37ra–A44va); Lk. 4.25–36 (Prophets; A44va–A44rb); Lk. 7.1–10 (Kings; A8rb–A42vb); cf. Chapters 3 (Gippert) and 6 (Renoux) of this Handbook for more details. The given passage covers A34vb, l. 2 – A37rb, l. 15.

⁵⁴ Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 3.3 with Table VI showing the divergent arrangements.

⁵⁵ Cf. Gippert (2011b) and 3.3 below as to relative clauses in Albanian and (Vartashen) Udi. The verbs for ‘grow up’ incorporate different words for ‘big, tall’, CA *bān’i* and Udi *kala*; the former seems not to have left a trace in the modern language.

⁵⁶ With the name of Peter appearing as *pyotr* throughout in the Nij version of Luke (Ağacani et al. 2011), a Russian text can be proven to have been the underlying basis of this translation; in the new online version of the same book (<https://www.udibibliya.com/en/luke-gospel>), the name has been replaced by *pēter-* (e.g., in Lk. 8.45) as also in the Gospel of Matthew.

Tab. III: Luke 4.16–18 in Albanian and both dialects of Udi.

CA	<i>Ari-na-va nazarētaḡ bân'i-hamayke-va-hē :</i> He came to Nazareth where he had grown up (<i>lit.</i> become tall).
Udi V	<i>va^f arine Nazareta, maate kalanebakei</i> And he came to Nazareth where he had grown up (<i>lit.</i> become tall)
Udi N ⁵⁷	<i>Isus Iz kalabaki Nazareḡ šähärene hari</i> Jesus came to the town of Nazareth where he himself had grown up (<i>lit.</i> become tall)
CA	<i>baha-bähē-na-va zahown-anke-va-hē šambaḡtown ḡjya e ž̄[~]daḡ :</i> He entered, as he was used (<i>lit.</i> taught), on the day of Sabbath into the synagogue.
Udi V	<i>va^f baineçi, ič hammašanun vardiša görä, šamaḡ ḡena meçita,</i> And he entered, according to his overall habit, on the Sabbath day into the synagogue,
Udi N	<i>saal Iz ädäten U^fqu^fmži ḡine sinagogane taci.</i> And according to (<i>lit.</i> by) his habitude, he entered on the Sixth day into the synagogue.
Udi V	<i>va^f aynezeri ḡalpesan.</i> and he started (<i>lit.</i> stood up) to read.
Udi N	<i>Šo ə^vel Camurxoxun ḡalpseynaḡ turele hayzeri.</i> He started (<i>lit.</i> stood up on [his] foot) to read from the holy Scriptures.
CA	<i>daḡē-n-oowxow d'ip̄ isai marḡavenown :</i> (They) gave him the book of Isaiah the prophet.
Udi V	<i>šoḡu taḡundi Isai pexambari käḡzax</i> To him they gave the book of Isaiah the prophet
Udi N	<i>Šoḡo Isaya xavartašali ḡirkätun tadi.</i> To him they gave the book of Isaiah the prophet.
CA	<i>hay-zari-na-va owpesa :</i> He started (<i>lit.</i> stood up) to read (<i>lit.</i> speak).
CA	<i>aḡay-pē-anke-oen e d'ip̄ baḡē-n-ooow e xown' cam-pē-hamay-ke-hē</i> When he opened the script, he found the place where (it) was written:
Udi V	<i>va^f šeḡinal, qaypi käḡzax, boḡanebi ganux, maate camnei:</i> and he, having opened the book, found the place where (it) was written:
Udi N	<i>Isusen ḡirkä qaypi me äyitmox cameçi ganune bäḡḡä^fbi:</i> Jesus, having opened the book, found the place where these words were written:
CA	<i>hel ž̄[~]ē zal hala</i> “The spirit of the Lord is upon me” (Is. 61.1).
Udi V	<i>elmux bixoḡoy bez laxone</i> “The spirit of God is upon me”.
Udi N	<i>Qonžuḡoy Uruf Bez loxole.</i> “The spirit of the Lord is upon me”.

⁵⁷ The orthography used for the Gospel of Luke as well as other publications in Nij Udi since the 1990s differs in many points from the Latin transcription used here, which is aimed to match that of Vartashen Udi and Albanian.

Beyond this, both Udi versions show a clear tendency towards using different lexical items especially for concepts that do not pertain to the basic vocabulary. A striking example is the word for ‘synagogue’, which the Nij version renders as such (*sinagog-*, corresponding to Russian *sinagoga*) while the Bezhanovs’ choice was *mečit*, which represents Arab. *masǧid* ‘mosque’ (probably via Russian *мечеть*, vs. Azeri *māscid*). In contrast to this, the abbreviation *ẓ̌d* appearing in the Albanian text clearly represents Armenian *žolovowrd* ‘crowd, congregation’, which is used elsewhere, too, in referring to the building. To express the ‘habitude’ of Jesus, the Albanian text uses the verb *zahown-ihesown* which literally means ‘being taught’, while the translators of the Udi versions recur to different loan words again, namely, *vārdiš* < Azeri *vərdis̄* (< Middle Persian *wardišn* ‘turning, change’) and *ādāt* < Azeri *adət* (< Arabic *‘adat*), even though the underlying term, *zahown* ‘teaching’, has been preserved in both dialects in *zom-baksun* ‘be taught’ and *zom-besun* ‘teach’. The word for the ‘book’ in Albanian is *d’ip*, a remarkably old loan from Iranian (Old Persian *dīpī*), while Vartashen Udi uses *kāğz* ~ Azeri *kağız*, lastly an Arabic word meaning ‘paper’;⁵⁸ the Nij version has *girk-*, which obviously reflects Arm. *girk’* ‘book’, a *plurale tantum* based on *gir* ‘letter’. The ‘prophet’ is named *marǧaven* in Albanian, a Middle Iranian compound literally meaning ‘bird-seer’ (alongside Arm. *margarē*, with a different verbal element),⁵⁹ while the Vartashen Gospels use *pexambar*, another Iranian term originally denoting a ‘message-bearer’ which occurs in Azeri as *peyğəmbər* and, in an older form, in Arm. *patgamawor*;⁶⁰ the Nij version has a hybrid formation with a similar notion, *xavartašal*, lit. ‘news-bearer’, with *xavar* representing Azeri *xəbər* (< Arab. *ḥabar*) ‘news’ and *tašal*, a participle of *tašsun* ‘carry, bring’.⁶¹ In some cases, the Vartashen Gospels show a wording that is still closer to the Albanian text, with only the Nij version deviating; this is true, e.g., for the denomination of the ‘spirit’, Albanian *hel*, which persists in Vartashen in the *plurale tantum*

58 Wehr (1985: 1079) notes *kāğid* (كاغد) for Tunisia and *kāğit* (كاغت) for Morocco; the same Arabic word has also yielded Persian *kāğiz/kāğid*, Azeri *kağız*, Turkish *kāğit*, and Georgian *kağald-i* ‘paper’. The Azeri form is used in both varieties of Udi today (*kağız* in Gukasyan 1974: 131; *kağız / q’ağız* in Mobili 2010: 160).

59 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 5.2.1.

60 E.g., in Lk. 7.10 (*patgamawor-* in the Ejmiacin Gospels, fol. 129v is a spelling error); for the Iranian etymon cf. Hübschmann (1895: 222–223, no. 512).

61 Cf. Alb. *il’owx-hečal-* ‘messenger’, lit. ‘words-bringer’, which renders Arm. *patgamawor-* in Lk. 7.10 (A45ra, 21–22); Udi *tašsun* represents the same verb as *-hečal* but with a different preverb, quasi **ta-č-esown* ‘bring thither’ vs. **he-č-esown* ‘bring hither’. The Vartashen Gospels and the Nij version have *yaqabakior* ‘the sent ones’ and *yaqabi amdaxo* ‘the sent persons’ in Luke 7.10, both matching the Russian participle *посланные* which in its turn reflects Greek ὑποστρέψαντες.

elmux, whereas Nij Udi uses *uruf*, obviously rendering Azeri *ruh* (< Arab. *rūḥ*).⁶² A remarkable idiosyncrasy of the Nij version is the replacement of the ‘Sabbath’ by the ‘sixth’ day, with *u^hqu^hmžī* representing the inherited numeral, *u^hq* ~ CA *üwχ*, in combination with the Azeri ordinal suffix *-ncI* (as in *alti-ncI* ‘sixth’).

It will be clear from these observations that there is no textual interrelationship between the Albanian and the two Udi versions of the Gospel of Luke: the latter were both translated anew, independently of each other and independently of the Albanian text as preserved in the palimpsests. Wherever the three versions agree in their wording – more exactly, in the lexical and grammatical material used –, this is due to the persistence of the given elements across the centuries, which is typically observable in verbal forms and concepts such as, e. g., CA *ari* ‘came’ (in *ari-na-va* ‘he came’ ~ V *ari-ne* and N *hari* ‘(he) came’ with secondary *h-*); CA *hay-zari* ‘stood up’ (in *hay-zari-na-va* ‘he started’ ~ V *ay-ne-zeri* and N *hay-zeri* ‘id.’); CA *aḡay-pē* ‘opened’ (in *aḡay-pē-anḡe-oen* ‘when he opened’ ~ VN *qay-pi* ‘(he) opened’); *cam-* ‘writing’ (in CA *cam-pē-hamayḡe-hē* ‘where was written’ vs. V *cam-ne-i* ‘it was written’, quasi **cam-ne-hē*, and N *cameci* ‘written’, quasi **cam-ne-acē*; *daḡē-* ‘gave’ (in CA *daḡē-n-oowxow* ‘(they) gave him’ vs. V *ta-ḡun-di* ‘they gave’, quasi **ta-edḡon-daḡē*, and N *tadi*, quasi **ta-daḡē*, with additional preverb *ta-* ‘thither’); possibly also *baḡē* ‘found’ (in CA *baḡē-n-oow* ‘he found’, vs. V *boḡḡa-ne-bi*, quasi **baxa-ne-biyay*, and N *bäḡḡä^h-bi*, quasi **baxa-biyay* ‘(he) found’, lit. ‘(he) made found’). ‘Reading’ is expressed by *owpesown* in Albanian, a word usually meaning simply ‘speak’ which consists of the light verb *-pesown* with a petrified preverb *ow-*;⁶³ the Udi versions use the same light verb in *kal-psun*, lit. ‘call’, with *kal-* probably representing CA *kal* ‘voice’. As to preverbs cf. also CA *baha-* ‘into’ in *baha-bāhē-na-va* ‘he entered’ ~ V *bai-* in *bai-ne-ci*, quasi **baha-ne-acē* ‘id.’, vs. N *ta-* in *ta-ci*, quasi *ta-acē* ‘(he) went thither’.

Less consistent is the preservation of nouns but we may again note CA *ḡi* ‘day’ with the dative form *ḡiya* ‘on the day’, contrasting with V *ḡena* and N *ḡine* with secondary stem augmentation,⁶⁴ or CA *ž^hē*, probably standing for **žowḡē*, genitive of **žowḡ* ‘lord’, vs. N *ḡon-ž^huḡ-*, quasi **ḡod’in-žowḡ* ‘house-lord’;⁶⁵ and V *bixog^h-* ‘God’, quasi **bixa-žowḡ-* ‘creating lord’. Well preserved are pronominal stems such as *z-* ‘I’ in CA *zal* ‘on me’ (superessive) and VN *bez* ‘my’ (CA *bezi*), or *ma-* ‘where’ in CA *hamay-* and V *maa-* ‘id.’; in contrast to this, the Albanian

⁶² In the Nij version of Luke, *elmux* does appear, too, but only in the meaning of ‘soul’ (Luke 12.19 and 23).

⁶³ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.5.9 as to the preverbs of Albanian.

⁶⁴ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.1.4 as to stem augmentation in Albanian.

⁶⁵ In the Nij version of Luke, the word is spelt with *q^h-* = *ḡ-* throughout; other sources show the expected *ḡ-* instead (Panchvidze 1974: 188; Gukasyan 1974: 144). The variation is well reflected in Mobili (2010: 176).

demonstrative pronoun *e/o*, often also used as an article, has no direct successor in Udi, which has developed a more variegated system of deictic elements comprising the stems *še-/šo-* (in the dative forms V *šoṭu*, N *šoṭo* ‘him’ and the ergative form N *šetin-* ‘he’) and *me-/mo-* (probably built upon the CA adverb *eme* ‘here’).⁶⁶

3 Survey of the differences between Albanian and Udi

3.1 The sound systems

In general, the sound system of the two Udi dialects matches that of Albanian well. This includes the distinction of alveolar-palatal and postalveolar-retroflex fricatives and affricates (here transcribed *š*, *č* etc. vs. *ś*, *ć* etc.),⁶⁷ which is a peculiar trait among the East Caucasian languages. On the other hand, Udi has given up the series of palatalised dentals of CA (here transcribed *d'*, *t'*, *n'* etc.), which have merged with alveolar-palatals as in CA *ḳod* ‘house’ ~ Udi *ḳoṣ* ‘id.’, CA *xod'i* ‘shadow, shade’ ~ Udi *xoṣi/xoṣi* ‘id.’, CA *d'ed'er* ‘lip’ ~ Udi *žežer* ‘id.’, CA *aqat'i* ‘naked’ ~ Udi *aqači* ‘id.’, CA *laq* ‘way, road’ ~ Udi *yaq* ‘id.’, CA *bil'a-* ‘kill’ ~ Udi *biya-* ‘die’, CA *pon'e* ‘then’ ~ Udi *ḳoy* ‘id.’, or the conditional marker *-en'e-* ~ Udi *-iyi-*.⁶⁸

A notable difference between Albanian and modern Udi consists in the manifestation of pharyngealisation. Whereas in Udi pharyngealisation must be regarded as a secondary articulatory correlation of vowels (*a'*, *o'*, *i'* etc.), Albanian still seems to attest a consonantal value of this feature, with a special character denoting a discrete, most probably voiced pharyngeal consonant (here transcribed as *ʕ*); cf., e. g., CA *ʕaxi* ‘far, distant’ ~ Udi *a'xi'l* ‘id.’ (superessive?) and CA *ʕi* ‘ear’, pl. *ʕi-mowx* ~ Udi V *i(mux)*, N *u'mu'x* (plur.tant.) ‘id.’ with the pharyngeal in word-initial position, or CA *vʕan* ‘you’ (pl.) ~ Udi *va'n* ‘id.’, CA *bʕefi* ‘your’ (pl.) ~ Udi *e'fi* ‘id.’, CA *bʕeg* ‘sun’ ~ Udi *be'g* ‘id.’ or CA *ḳʕa* ‘two’ ~ Udi *ḳa'* ‘id.’ with the pharyngeal in post-consonantal position.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.3.2.

⁶⁷ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 2.2.2 for the consonant system of Albanian.

⁶⁸ Cf. Schulze (2015: 154–156) for details.

⁶⁹ Note that in the Udi primer of 1934, the pharyngealisation is still indicated by an individual letter (*h*) placed before the vowel as in *bḥeoi* ~ *bḥeg* ‘sun’ or *ḫa* ~ *ḫa* ‘two’ (Jeirani and Jeirani 1934: 34 / 41; cf. Table I above). In Albanian, there is a certain inconsistency in the use of the character in question; e.g., *bḥefi* ‘your’ is once written without the *ʕ* (John 8.56: A51rb, 12), and *iḥâl* ‘cross’, once with initial *ʕ* (Matthew 23.34: B3va, 12). The latter term might be the basis for Udi *i've'l* ‘holy’ which has replaced CA *mowç'owr* ‘holy, pure’.

In comparison with Albanian, the vowel system of Udi has been extended by the addition of an open *ä*, a fronted *ö*, and a centred *ə* vowel, most probably under the influence of Azeri (*ə*, *ö* and *ɪ*). On the other hand, the Albanian vowel transcribed as *â* has merged with *o*, mostly with a pharyngeal co-articulation as in Udi *to'xa'n* 'fig tree' ~ CA *tâxan'in* 'id.'.⁷⁰ Possibly, both *â* and *ü* (spelt *üw*) were already pharyngealised (inherently) in Albanian as suggested, e.g., by CA *üwɣ* 'six' ~ Udi *u'q* 'id.' or CA *hüwqen* 'bone' ~ Udi V *u'qe'n* (vs. N *üqen*) 'id.'.⁷¹

As the latter example shows, CA *h* was usually lost in Udi; other examples illustrating this are CA *hel* 'spirit, soul' ~ Udi *el(-mux)* 'id.' and CA *zahown-* 'teaching' ~ Udi *zom*.⁷² In word-initial position before *a*, *h-* seems to have been preserved in Udi N *hay-zeri* 'stood up' ~ CA *hay-zari* vs. Udi V *ay-zeri* 'id.', but this may also be secondary as in Udi N *hari* 'came' vs. CA and Udi V *ari* 'id.'. The frequent verbal form CA *hē* 'was, became', also used as an auxiliary of the imperfect tense, has yielded the imperfect suffix *-i* in Udi; in a similar way, the diphthong *-ey-* represented by *ē* in Albanian developed to Udi *-i* in other past tense forms as in *qay-pi* 'opened' ~ CA *aɣay-pē*, as well as in the possessive pronoun Udi VN *vi* ~ CA *vē*. The loss of an initial *a-* in an open syllable as in *qay-pesun* 'open' is also attested elsewhere; cf., e.g., the preverb CA *aci-* 'down, under' in *aci-pesown* 'pour down, bend down' ~ Udi *ci-psun* 'id., shatter'. The same loss even applies to initial *ha-* in CA *hamay-* 'where' ~ Udi *ma(y)-a* 'id.', CA *hašow* 'who' (< **ha-išow* 'what a man') ~ Udi *šu-a* 'id.' (vs. *išu* ~ CA *išow* 'man, husband'), and *hala* 'on, upon' ~ Udi *la-xo* / *lo-xo* 'id.' (vs. *ala* 'upward').⁷³

Another salient diachronic change is the syncopation of vowels in word-internal open syllables. This is typically met with in infinitive (masdar) formations such as *aci-pesown* ~ *ci-psun* 'pour down' (see above); cf., e.g., CA *owkesown* 'eat' ~ Udi *uksun* 'id.', CA *efesown* 'hold, have' ~ Udi *efsun* 'id.', or CA *karxesown* 'live, be saved' ~ Udi *karxsun* 'id.'. In some cases, this process can be seen in connection with other changes as in the case of Udi *besun* 'do, make' ~ CA *biyesown* 'id.' where *e* seems to have merged with the *i* of the first syllable; Udi *taysun* 'go' ~ CA *ta-* 'thither' + *iğesown* 'go' and Udi *-desun*, light verb forming causatives, ~ CA *dağesown* 'give' with loss of intervocalic *ğ*; or Udi *aksun* 'see' ~ CA *aķesown* 'id.' where the syncope seems to have prevented the loss of the initial *a-* by leaving a closed syllable. Consonant clusters that resulted from the syncope are often sub-

70 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 2.2.1 for further materials.

71 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 2.2.1 for further materials.

72 The loss of intervocalic *h* is likely to have begun early as frequent misspellings such as *zaown* instead of *zahown* in the Albanian palimpsests show (Galatians 1.12: B24rb, 6).

73 Probably the later form without initial *h-* is already attested in the inscription on the pedestal of Sudağilan (see Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 4.1).

ject to further changes as in Udi *bışun* / *bişun* which corresponds to both CA *bişesown* ‘sow’ and *bitesown* ‘fall’. The frequent Udi verb *baksun* ‘be, become’, which has replaced CA *ihesown* ‘id.’, is thus likely to represent CA *batkesown* ‘turn’.⁷⁴

3.2 The morphological systems

Within the morphological system, the most striking divergences between Albanian and modern Udi concern the appearance and distribution of deictic elements, the reduction of the inventory of nominal cases and, in the verbal domain, the reconfiguration of the present and past tenses and the positioning of personal clitics.

3.2.1 Deictic elements

Contrary to Udi, Albanian possesses a sort of gender classification that shows up in a system of definite articles, which are alien to Udi. The system comes close to the three-gender systems of other East Caucasian languages, e.g. Avaro-Andian, even though we do not deal with a typical system of noun classification here that would manifest itself in class prefixes or suffixes appearing as agreement markers for subjects or objects in verbal and adjectival forms; as a matter of fact, the typical East Caucasian class markers have only been preserved in petrified form in verbs such as, e.g., CA *biyesown* ~ Udi *besun* ‘do, make’ (with *b-* representing the former marker of a non-human or pluralic object).⁷⁵ Instead, Albanian marks male, female and non-human (or, rather, non-rational) referents with a system of sexus-specific demonstrative pronouns that are also used as definite articles (*o*, *ağ*, *e* etc.).⁷⁶ In Udi, there are no traces of this system except for *o* having been preserved in the function of a nominaliser (or referentialiser); cf., e.g., *kala-o* (> *kalō*) ‘the big one’. Obviously, Udi has undergone a stage of reducing the system to the male and/or neuter variant before dropping it except for its use as a nominalising suffix. In terms of deixis, Udi has replaced the Albanian system, which did not differentiate between degrees of distance, by a system of demonstratives

⁷⁴ Cf. German *werden* ‘become’ ~ Latin *vertere* ‘turn’ etc. The connection of CA *batkesown* with Udi *batsun* ‘sink, drown, vanish’ is less probable as the latter shows a *ķ* in other forms (*batķalo* ‘sinking’, *batķio* ‘sunk’; cf. Gukasyan 1974: 71).

⁷⁵ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3. and Gippert (2018a: 26–27) for examples.

⁷⁶ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.3.2 with Table IX for details as to the case forms.

that indicate proximity to the speaker (*me-*), the hearer (*ka-*), and distance (*te-/še-*);⁷⁷ while *me-* and *te-* can be traced back to adverbials in Albanian (*eme* ‘here’, *ete/etiš* ‘there’),⁷⁸ the origin of *ka-* and *še-* remains obscure.⁷⁹

3.2.2 The case system

To a much greater extent than Udi, Albanian has preserved the inherited East Caucasian two-storey system of case formation distinguishing between grammatical (absolutive, ergative, genitive, and three datives) and locative cases, most of which are built upon one of the datives. Of the total of 19 distinct case formations attested in the Albanian palimpsests,⁸⁰ Udi has only preserved the primary ones (absolutive, ergative, genitive, and datives I and II, but no vocative) and a few locative cases such as an ablative in *-xo* (Vartashen Udi, built upon the dative II and corresponding to the CA ablative II in *-xoc*), superessives in *-l* (~ CA superessive I in *-l*) and *-xol* (~ CA superessive III in *-xol*), and an adessive in *-ç* (~ CA adessive II in *-ç*); the Nij comitative in *-xun* seems as well to be built upon the dative II but its actual origin remains unclear.⁸¹

In contrast to the scope of the inventory, the functional distribution of the cases has remained by and large the same from Albanian into modern Udi. This is especially true for the marking of direct objects in either the absolutive or the dative II, depending on definiteness, with the remarkable peculiarity of *verba sentiendi* combining with both the subject (the experiencer) and the object of perception in a dative case form (with the dative I for the experiencer and the dative III for the object).

3.2.3 The tense-aspect system

Albanian knew only two basic tense-aspect categories, namely a non-past and a past (derived from an aspectual distinction between imperfective and perfective), both originally nominal (participial) formations. The non-past is marked by a stem in *-a*, whereas the past stem knows two variants, in *-a* (“weak” stem) and *-e*

⁷⁷ Cf. Schulze (1982: 129–130).

⁷⁸ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.3.2.

⁷⁹ A connection of *ka-* with CA *kanay* ‘each, every, all’ is improbable because of the different semantics.

⁸⁰ Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.1.3 for details.

⁸¹ Cf. Schulze (2015: 161–162) with Table 3.

or \emptyset (“strong” stem), and adds a suffix $-y/-i$; cf., e. g., present *heqa-* ‘taking’ vs. past *heqa-y-* (weak) ‘having taken’, present *beqa-* ‘looking’ vs. past **beqe-y-* (strong, > *begē-*) ‘having looked’, or present *bowra-* ‘standing’ vs. past *bowr-i-* ‘stood’. The alternation of the two stems could include ablaut (cf., e.g., present *baqa-* ‘seizing’ vs. past *biqa-y-* ‘seized’, present *aha-* ‘be(com)ing’ vs. past **he-y-* > *hē-* ‘been’, and present *owka-* ‘eating’ vs. past *ka-y-* ‘eaten’), infixation (cf., e.g., present *boc-e-ka-* ‘washing’ vs. past *bocka-y-* ‘washed’ or present *i-l’e-ga-* ‘striking’ vs. past **ige-y-* > *igē-* ‘struck’), and suppletion (cf., e.g., present *iga-* ‘going’ vs. past **ace-y-* > *acē-* ‘gone’, present *hega-* ‘coming’ vs. past *ar-i-*, present *owka-* ‘speaking’ vs. past **pe-y-* > *pē-* ‘spoken’, or present *lowga-* ‘giving’ vs. past **daqe-y-* > *dagē-* ‘given’); the verb *bow-* ‘being, existing’ was defective as it had no past stem of its own. Secondary tense formations were an imperfect and a pluperfect (built with the auxiliary *-hē* ‘been’ added to the present and the past, resp.) and a future (built upon the present stem with a suffix *-l*). In addition, Albanian possessed an imperative with a stem usually matching the past stem but ending in *-a* as in *biqa-* ‘seize!’ or *beqa-* ‘look!’; peculiar formations are, e.g., *owpa-* ‘speak!’, *iha-* ‘be!’, *owpar-* ‘kill’, and *hekal* and *owkal* ‘come!’ and ‘go!’. A fourth stem was the basis for the formation of nominal derivatives; it was characterised by an *-es*-suffix (originally a stem in *-e* with a dative ending) yielding infinitives in *-es-a* such as *biy-es-a* ‘to do, make’ and verbal nouns (masdars) in *-es-own* such as *biye-s-own* ‘doing, making’. The modal categories of an optative and a conditional as well as negation were built upon a system of clitic particles.⁸²

This system has only partly been preserved in Udi. The most salient change was the replacement of the former present by the infinitive in *-sa* as in *uksa* present (vs. CA *owkesa* infinitive) ‘eat’, which obviously represents a copular construction in the sense of ‘be at/in eating’ as indicated by its extension *-sa-i* forming imperfects as in *uksa-i*, with *-i* representing former *-hē* ‘been’. This development exactly matches that of modern East Armenian where a present in *-um* (originally a locative form) + copula has replaced the Old Armenian finite present as in *utum em / ēi* ‘I am / was (lit. at/in) eating’ replacing older *owtem* ‘I eat’. A second striking parallel to Armenian diachrony consists in the fact that the simple present of Albanian developed into a subjunctive, Udi *uka-z(u)* ‘I may eat’ matching Arm. *utem* ‘id.’ (vs. CA *owka-z(ow)* ‘I am eating’) or *uqa-z(u)* ‘I may say’, Arm. *asem* ‘id.’ (vs. CA *owqa-z(ow)* ‘I say’). For the latter verb, Udi exceptionally provides a present tense that is not based on the infinitive, with the stem *ex-* ‘saying, speaking’; this might reflect the CA verb *zexesown* ‘put, fix’ if the initial *z* was not preserved⁸³ and the former present stem *ze-le-xa-* lost its infix. Another present

⁸² Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook, 3.5 for further details.

⁸³ It is unclear whether Udi possesses the affricate *z*, i.e. *dz*, at all. Gukasyan (1974: 119) notes two words with initial *dz*, namely, *dzaburi* = *zaburi* (V, vs. *цӀабӀури* = *çäp̄iri* N) ‘funnel’ and *dzax* =

Tab. IV: Verbal categories in Albanian and Udi contrasted.

	Albanian	Udi	
Verbal noun	<i>biqesown</i>	<i>biqsun</i>	Verbal noun
Infinitive	<i>biqesa</i>	<i>biqsa-</i> <i>biqsa-i</i> (< * <i>biqesa-hē</i>)	Present
Present	<i>biq̄a-</i>	<i>biq̄a-</i>	Imperfect
Imperfect	<i>biq̄a-hē</i>		Subjunctive
Future	<i>biq̄a-l</i>	<i>biq̄a-l</i>	Future
		<i>biq̄o</i>	Optative
Imperative	<i>biq̄a-</i>	<i>biq̄a-</i>	Imperative
Past	<i>biq̄ay</i>	<i>biq̄e-</i>	Perfect
Pluperfect	<i>biq̄ay-hē</i>	<i>biq̄e-i/y</i> (< * <i>biq̄ay-hē</i>)	Pluperfect
		<i>biq̄i-</i> (< * <i>biq̄e-y?</i>)	Aorist

stem that has survived in its function is the defective verb Udi *bu* ‘being, existing’ which continues CA *bow* ‘id.’.

Further changes concerned the formation of the past tense. Obviously, the (functionless) distinction of weak and strong past stems was abandoned as such in Udi. Instead it seems to have yielded the dichotomy of two different past tenses usually named “aorist” and “perfect”, with the former being marked by an *-i*-suffix that is likely to represent both CA *-i* and *-ē* (< *-e-y*), and the latter, with a suffix *-e* that might represent CA *-ay*. So we find, e.g., Udi V *ar-i-* / N *har-i-* ~ CA *ar-i-* ‘came’ (aor.) alongside Udi *ar-e-* / *har-e-* ‘id.’ (perf.), which must be an innovation, or, on the other hand, Udi *biq̄-e-* (perf.) ~ CA *biq̄-a-y-* ‘seized’ alongside Udi *biq̄-i-* ‘id.’ (aor.), in its turn an innovation.⁸⁴ Remarkably, some irregular and suppletive forms have survived; note, besides Udi V = CA *ari* ‘came’ (N *hari*), Udi *pi* ‘spoken’ ~ CA *pē* < **pe-y* or Udi *k̄äy* ‘eaten’ ~ CA *kay* ‘id.’. Probably, the irregular imperatives Udi V *eke* / N *eki* ‘come!’ and V *take* / N *taki* ‘go!’ reflect CA *hekal* and *owkal* ‘id.’, at least partially.⁸⁵ The main correspondences between the verbal categories of Albanian and Udi are summarised in Table IV using the verb *biqesown* / *biqsun* ‘seize’ as an example.

ɟax (only V) ‘left (hand)’; both are noted with *z-* instead in Mobili (2010: 295). Cf. Schulze (1982: 83) for a discussion.

⁸⁴ Cf. Schulze (1982: 154–155) as to the difficulty of differentiating the aorist and the perfect functionally in Udi; cf. n. 87 below as to some observations.

⁸⁵ *Take* / *taki* obviously contain the preverb *ta-* ‘thither’. Cf. Schulze (2015: 165) for further discussion.

3.2.4 Clitic person marking

Udi is notorious for its system of “endoclititics”, i.e. personal markers that appear inserted into the verbal form;⁸⁶ typical examples are *bu-za-ḡsa* ‘I want’ (of *buḡsa*, present of *buḡsun* ‘want, desire’), *bi-ne-ḡe* ‘he/she/it seized’ (of *biḡe*, perfect of *biḡsun* ‘seize’), or *ta-ne-di* ‘he/she/it gave’ (of *tadi*, aorist of *tastun* ‘give’). In Albanian, this type of incorporation is not yet attested; here, the clitics always follow either the verbal form or another meaningful element. So we have *bowḡa-za* ‘I want’ (present, of *bowḡesown* ‘love, want’) and *biḡay-ne* ‘he/she/it seized’. Even combinations with preverbs cannot be split; so the equivalent of *ta-ne-di* is *ta-daḡē-ne*. However, there are several constellations where the Albanian and the Udi rules of clitic positioning match. One is the combination with monosyllabic verbal stems as in Udi *pi-ne* ‘he/she/it said’ ~ CA *pē-ne* ‘id.’⁸⁷ Another telling constellation is found in forms with the imperfect auxiliary, CA *-hē* ~ Udi *-i*, which is usually placed at the end of the verbal complex, with personal clitics preceding it; thus, a form like Udi *bu-ne-i* ‘he/she/it used to be’ is an exact match of CA *bow-ne-hē* ‘id.’, and the correspondent of Udi *uka-zu-i* ‘I might eat’ would be the imperfect **owka-zow-hē* ‘I was eating’ in Albanian. The other constellation is the one with a negator introducing the verbal complex; here, clitics usually stand in the second place as in Udi *te-ne-bu* ‘he/she/it is not’ ~ CA *te-ne-bow* ‘id.’ or in Udi *te-z-are* ‘I have not come’ ~ CA *te-z(ow)-ari* ‘id.’. It seems likely that cases like these induced a preference for the clitic to enter into a position after the first accented syllable of the verbal complex, which was then generalised. This process may have been triggered by the existence of infixed presents of the type of *ze-le-xa* ‘fixing’ (vs. past *zexa* etc.) in Albanian.

3.3 Syntactical properties

As was noted above, the most striking syntactical difference between the Gospel versions in the two dialects of Udi consists in the regular use of finite relative clauses that are introduced by relative pronouns in the translation of the Bezhan-

⁸⁶ Cf. Harris (2002) for a detailed account of endoclititics in Udi; when the book appeared, there was no knowledge of the Albanian data available yet.

⁸⁷ With 867 attestations in the Gospels of 1902, the aorist *pi-ne* reveals itself as the most probable successor of CA *pē-n(e)* which has been secured about 110 times in the palimpsests; in contrast to this, the Udi perfect *pe-ne* occurs only 26 times, usually when prophets are cited (e.g., Isaiah in John 1.23). The same picture is provided by the Nij version of the Gospel of Luke, where 210 attestations of *pi-ne* contrast with only one of *pe-ne* (Luke 20.42–43, citing king David).

ov brothers and by participial constructions of a “Turkic” type in the new translations from Nij. In this respect, there is a noteworthy agreement between Vartashen Udi and Albanian, which displays the same strategy regularly in the biblical texts that have been preserved in the palimpsests. However, there is a difference in the linguistic material used: in both Albanian and Vartashen Udi, the relative pronouns consist of interrogative pronouns that are combined with a general subordinator (or complementiser), but the actual subordinators differ: in Albanian, it is *-qe-* as in *-hamay-qe-* ‘where’ in Luke 4.16, obviously a loan element from Middle Iranian (cf. Middle Persian *kē*, Parthian *kē* ‘who, which’),⁸⁸ whereas in Vartashen Udi, we find *-te* as in *maa-te* ‘where’, in its turn probably a borrowing of Armenian *(e)t’e* ‘id.’.⁸⁹

4 Outlook: the genetic affiliation of Albanian and Udi

As we have seen, many divergences between Caucasian Albanian and the modern Udi language can easily be explained as diachronic changes that were induced either by system-internal factors or by the influence of neighbouring languages, and Albanian may thus well be regarded as an ancestor of Udi.⁹⁰ This implies that for the question of their affiliation with other East Caucasian languages, Albanian must be taken as the starting point. However, with the abandonment of class agreement, the introduction of a system of person markers, the abundant use of clause subordination including relative clauses, and many other features, Albanian had already moved away considerably from what can be assumed to have been the common linguistic basis of the Lezgian subgroup of East Caucasian before the translations of biblical texts that we find in the palimpsests were accomplished.

⁸⁸ The frequent particle *ki* of Nij Udi meaning ‘that’ (complementiser), ‘as’ or ‘like’ is probably a secondary borrowing from Azeri *ki* ‘id.’, in its turn a loan from New Persian.

⁸⁹ Cf. Gippert (2011b) for details as to the relative clauses in Vartashen Udi.

⁹⁰ If the pronouns of the 1st person plural in Albanian (*žan*) and Udi (*yan*) reflect an older differentiation of exclusive and inclusive ‘we’ as recently proposed by G. Authier (2021: 217), this would speak in favour of an early dialectal split; however, there are not many other indications of such a split.

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5A The Udis' Petition to Tsar Peter

The Petition translated by the present writer for Chapter 5 above, composed by a community of Udis and signed 20 March 1724 according to the Julian calendar (i.e. 31 March 1724 according to the Gregorian calendar), is one of those letters which were dispatched in the course of the years 1723 and 1724 by various public figures of South Caucasian Christians (mainly, Armenian clerics and Karabagh meliks) to Russian authorities. At the background of these diplomatic efforts was the “Persian Expedition” launched by Tsar Peter I along the Western Caspian shore in the spring of 1722. Some of the missives were addressed directly to the emperor, whilst others were written on the name of the colonel Andrey T. Yunger, the superintendent (28 August 1722 – 18 March 1728) of the Russian garrison stationed in Derbent (seized by the Russians on 23 August 1722). Liaising with the Christians of the Caucasus, ransoming Christians from Muslims and providing them succour lay within Yunger’s competences.

The letters were inspired by the hope of a durable consolidation of Russia’s conquests in the South Caucasus and of the support that the Russians might extend to Armenian and Georgian political constituencies. South Caucasian Christians were also greatly impressed by the political aspirations that Peter (certainly under the spell of Israyēl Ōri, a melik of Sisian, with whom he had conducted discussions between 1701 and 1711) revealed to various embassies reaching Derbent during the emperor’s stay in the fortress between 23 August and 5 September 1722. However, the advance to the highlands of the Lesser Caucasus, where the majority of the Christian population was concentrated, proved to be more complicated than had initially been suspected by the Russians, and from the autumn of 1722 onwards the emperor preferred to focus on the pre-Caspian regions. He envisaged to colonise the Persian cities captured, settling Armenians and other Christian populations there and even founding an “Eastern Petersburg” in the Kura’s estuary (on the model of St Petersburg founded on the estuary of the Neva). The “Eastern Petersburg” was intended to become a new centre of the Russian commercial activities in Asia. Later, however, the Russians ought to discover that the South Caucasian Christians were much less inclined to settle under unreliable Russian protection in the pre-Caspian plains, which had since long been the most exposed to Muslim invasions, rather than receiving military assistance in their ancestral homelands. The Udis’ attachment to their sacred landscape – most likely in proximity to the ancient city of Gis on the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus – can notably be discerned on the lines of the present petition.

From the beginning of Peter's campaign, various Armenian detachments joined the Russian army. On 22 September 1722, a detachment (which, admittedly, also included Udis) sent by the Catholicos of Albania, Esayi (Hasan-Jalalean, 1702–1728) joined the forces of the king of Eastern Georgia Vakhtang VI at Cholak (Č'olak) near Shamakhi (Shemakha). It was planned to facilitate the Russian troops in their progression to Shamakhi, a city with an Armenian majority, thence even advancing as far as Yerevan; the Armenians and Georgians remained, however, deceived in their expectations. Nonetheless, in June 1723 a united Armenian cavalry detachment was formed under the commandment of Petros Gilanents (in Russia also known as Pyotr Sergiev) in order to support the Russian troops progressing to Baku and, further south, to Persia's south-western Caspian province of Gilan; the fortress of Baku was indeed seized on 26 July 1723. In point of fact, the capture of Baku could facilitate the Russians' long-expected move to Shamakhi which is situated on the southeasternmost slopes of the Greater Caucasus, thus approaching the regions inhabited by Udis; this however, was not to materialise. These conquests also ignited the rebellions of Armenians against Persian rule in Syunik and in Artsakh.

The Russian advance further west, which provoked a Turkish invasion of Tiflis and Yerevan, was definitely stopped by the Russian-Ottoman treaty signed in Constantinople on 12 June 1724, which partitioned the South Caucasus into the Russian and Ottoman spheres of influence. In spite of that, the idea of building a fortress on the Kura was still pursued by the Russians in the years following Peter's death on 8 February 1725: the new city had to serve as a strategic point of communication with the Georgians and the Armenians in view of a feared confrontation with Turkey. Yet the most important of the new territorial acquisitions made by Russia along the Caspian coast, whose defence and administration were now judged too expensive, were ceded to Persia under the treaties of Rasht (21 January 1732) and Ganja (21 March 1735).¹ The official Russian correspondence shows that the Russians' prejudices against the Caucasian Christians, temperamentally and culturally different from the Russians, also played a role in the abandonment by the imperial authorities of Peter's initial projects. The Russian retreat provoked waves of refugees to Russia – mainly Caucasian Christians who had been settled and employed by the imperial administration on the territories that were now returning to their former rulers.²

¹ In the present Chapter, all dates are indicated according to the Julian calendar unless otherwise specified.

² Kobak and Petrova (2019); Kurukin (2019).

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III The Caucasian Albanian Church

Charles Renoux

6 Albanians, Armenians and Georgians: a Common Liturgy

Abstract: The Chapter gives a detailed account of the biblical text material contained in the Albanian palimpsests of Mt Sinai concerning three intriguing questions: Do they represent a (fragment of a) chronologically arranged lectionary? What is their relation to the contemporary Armenian and Georgian lectionaries, which represent the so-called Jerusalem rite? What do they tell about the structure of the Albanian liturgy?

1 Introduction

The biblical lections in Caucasian Albanian that have been discovered in the undertexts of the two Georgian palimpsests Sin. georg. NF 13 and NF 55 (10th–11th century) of the Convent of St Catherine on Mt Sinai, have still remained loaded with unsolved questions after the remarkable first scientific approach that manifested itself in their edition of 2008,¹ which comprised a skilful decipherment of the Albanian language and script² and a thorough reconstruction of the texts, contrasted with parallel versions in various languages³ and analysed philologically, historically⁴ and liturgically.⁵ The application of new imaging technology⁶ has now thrown important new light on these questions, especially by a hitherto unintelligible marginal note at the top of fol. 25r of Sin. georg. NF 55 that has recently been decoded by J. Gippert.⁷ The five Albanian words the note contains turned out to correspond exactly to the heading of the long introduction to the Armenian *Čaşoc* (hereafter styled “LA”), i.e., the oldest witness of the liturgical lectionary representing the Hierosolymitan rite of about 439 CE,⁸ which is pre-

1 Gippert et al. (2008: I and II). For a general description of the palimpsests and their contents cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert).

2 Cf. Chapter 4 of this Handbook (Gippert and Schulze).

3 English, Armenian, Georgian, Greek, Russian, Udi, and Syriac.

4 Gippert et al. (2008: I, vii–xxiv, I-1–37, and II-1–102).

5 Gippert et al. (2008: II, VII-1–3); for a more thorough analysis cf. Renoux (2012).

6 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1.4 and 1.5.

7 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1.

8 The Armenian *Čaşoc* contains the texts that are necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist, from the beginning of the liturgy until the lection from the Gospel pericope; it must have existed

served in its entirety in several ancient manuscripts; it reads ‘Memorial of the synaxes that are performed in Jerusalem’ (*yišatakaran zołovoc’ n ork’ kataren yerosalēm*), now matched by <*üwğa-biyesown hüwķ>el-baliğoy bai-ba-h’ ke kanay p̄fiya-al er~ma* in Albanian.⁹ In the *Čašoc’* manuscripts that contain this introduction,¹⁰ it always precedes the first biblical lection of the first feast day celebrated in the Armenian church, i.e., Epiphany (5–6 January), thus representing the usual beginning of the ancient Armenian liturgical year. For the sake of clarity, we repeat here the full text of the introduction after manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arm. 44 in an English translation:¹¹ “Memorial of the synaxes that are performed (*lit.* fulfilled) in Jerusalem at the holy places of Christ, with the date of the month and the lection of the day as well as the specific psalm of the feasts and memorials indicated. If in this book we have repeated the same thing twice, three times, or even more, may no one impute this to our ignorance but rather to our diligence – we did it so that as a result, every one will find the lection he is looking for with ease at the place of the synaxis in question”.

Even though the Albanian palimpsest transmits only the first words of this introduction, it is clear that it witnesses to the same tradition, in a similar way as the Georgian variant of the Jerusalem Lectionary (hereafter styled “LG”), which is introduced by the slightly more verbose heading “This [is] the regulation and institution by the orthodox leaders that they perform in Jerusalem” (*ese gančinebay da gančesebay mozğuarta mier martlmorçmuneta romelsa h̄qopen iērusalems*).¹² For the Georgian Lectionary, we may safely state that it must have emerged after 450 because it presupposes the rite of the Foot-washing on Maundy Thursday¹³ and the Feast of Transfiguration on 6 August;¹⁴ it must have been the liturgical *ordo* of a Georgian community living outside the Holy City, due to the absence of several intramural liturgical stations during the year.¹⁵ As we will see, the Albanian palimp-

by 436 (cf. Renoux 1989: 427–439 [13–25]). The dating has recently been challenged by H. Méndez; cf. 7 below for a discussion.

9 The first 16 letters are missing as the left part of the folio has been burnt off, but the reconstruction, which fits the gap neatly, is highly probable given the Armenian parallel.

10 Yerevan, Matenadaran 4687, between 1312–1371 CE; Jerusalem, Convent of St James, 121, of 1192 CE; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arm. 44, 10th century; Vatican Library, Archivio Cap. S. Pietro, B 77, of 1221. The number of relevant manuscripts is undoubtedly much greater, because most of the 344 witnesses of the *Čašoc’* examined by the present author (cf. Renoux 1989: 491–520 [77–106]) are acephalous, often beginning within the *ordo* of the feast of Epiphany but with a mutilated *incipit* and thus not revealing the rubric that may have preceded it.

11 For the Armenian text and a French translation cf. Renoux (1971: 210 [72]).

12 Cf. Tarnichschvili (1959a: 1 / 1959b: 9, no. 1).

13 Cf. Renoux (2012: 562–564 [34–36], 694 [166], 701 [173] and 707–708 [179–180]).

14 Cf. Renoux (2012: 603–605 [75–77]).

15 Cf. Renoux (1969: 22–24).

sests share several features with the Georgian lectionary, including those determining its dating; however, by the decryption of the five Albanian words which more strictly mirror their Armenian counterpart, the basic uncertainty concerning the origin and the content of the biblical pericopes that are contained in the Sinai palimpsests has been removed: the translator of these words must have had in hand a full-fledged lectionary in the Armenian language. The note thus reveals, beyond the existence in its time of an Armenian version of the Lectionary of Jerusalem, the original source of the liturgical material of the Albanian Church, namely, the Greek liturgy of the Holy City, on which also depended the Armenian *Čašoc'*, including the version the Albanian translator relied upon.¹⁶ This is undoubtedly one of the reasons why only the name of Jerusalem is mentioned in the Albanian note and not the holy places of Christ where the synaxes were held daily, as we know from the account of the pilgrim Egeria.¹⁷ Did the author of the Albanian note intend to underline the Jerusalem origin of the liturgy of his Church? Is this indicative of his own special attitude towards this place or, rather, of the connection between the Albanian Church and that of Jerusalem in general?

Even though it is not certain that the Albanian note was written by the same scribe as the main text on the page, a lection from St Paul's letter to the Romans,¹⁸ and that it was intended as a heading – it might have been added later, as a secondary addition –,¹⁹ it does prove the existence in Albania of an underlying lectionary from Jerusalem, of an ancient type.²⁰ In the same way as the Armenian and the Georgian Churches, the Albanian Church must have based its liturgical year with its celebratory structure on an existing model, that of the Church of Jerusalem, in which the three Caucasian Churches were in communion, even though with some differences as we will see.

16 We have to note here that in Jerusalem, Greek remained the language of the liturgy (cf. Renoux 1971: 162 [24]) even after the Persian and Arab invasions.

17 Cf. Renoux (1969: 19–21) and 7. below.

18 Romans 8.9–27, a pericope not contained as such in the Armenian and Georgian lectionaries; however, the latter provides the two pericopes of Romans 8.10–17 and 8.17–27 successively among the general commemorations of martyrs (cf. Tarnischvili 1960a: 80 / 1960b: 65, nos. 1477 and 1478; the text of Romans 8.10–18 is found under the 3rd Sunday of Lent, cf. Tarnischvili 1959a: 65 / 1959b: 56, no. 393).

19 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.2.

20 We will not take up here in more detail the question already dealt with in Renoux (2012: 556–565 [28–37] and 692–699 [164–171]) concerning the date of the original Albanian Lectionary

2 A special witness of the Hierosolymitan liturgy

If the missing allusion to the holy places of Christ has no meaning in itself, one can nevertheless not avoid noting the continual absence of details and concrete and particular liturgical information which would be required to determine the identity and purpose of the Albanian “lectionary” as it appears in the palimpsests. To be true, it must be stated right at the beginning that the lections the palimpsests contain reveal, in contrast to the Armenian and Georgian lectionaries, no clear-cut chronological or liturgical order; instead, they obviously follow a different principle which manifests itself, among others, in the fact that pericopes from the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, and other parts of the Bible are sharply separated from each other: there is no transition between the three types in any one of the extant folios. What we find in the palimpsests thus presupposes an authentic lectionary (hereafter styled the “Original Albanian Lectionary”) that must have been dismantled by an unknown individual and deployed as a collection of materials for a purpose other than immediate liturgical usage.

The fact that the compiler of the collection we find in the palimpsests intended to produce a truly specific work becomes visible many times, as we shall see later. We will not repeat here previous analyses of each of the texts of the eight contiguous sets of lections that have been preserved.²¹ It seems more useful to investigate the pericopes themselves that are gathered in the textual magma of the sets, constituting a true puzzle of biblical texts, partly extracted from a Jerusalemite lectionary which was fundamentally Armenian but sometimes enriched by pericopes from a later Georgian model, and partly stemming from peculiar collections provided by either the creator of the Original Albanian Lectionary or even by its dismantler. The question is whether the sets can be taken as indications of a deliberate project: Were the biblical texts grouped together to elaborate a new lectionary but yet without any chronological order? Or do they represent the starting point for some other literary enterprise?

To give an example of the extent of the sets, and also of the difficulty of determining their possible purposes, I here list the contents of one of the five sets containing Gospel lections, with the titles and “liturgical” glosses attached to each text.

as used by the compiler of the undertexts of Sin. georg. NF 13 and NF 55 who dismantled its content; it must have been between 450 and 614. The Armenian text version underlying the biblical pericopes of the Albanian palimpsests deserves exegetical research.

²¹ Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.2 with Table V as to the reconstruction of the codicological setting.

(Matthew 5.13b–16).²² || Lection from the Holy Gospel of Matthew (5.17–24).²³ || *Gospel (lection) of the Cross; Alleluia-Psalm 95*:²⁴ “*The Lord has become king, may the earth rejoice*”. Lection from the Holy Gospel of Matthew (24.29–35). || *Gospel of the women*. Lection from the Holy Gospel of Mark (15.39–41). || *Gospel of kings and rulers. Alleluia-Psalm 20*: “*By your strength may rejoice*”. At that place,²⁵ from the commemoration of kings. Lection from the Holy Gospel of Luke (7.1–10). || *Gospel of Aaron and Joshua* (?).²⁶ Lection from the Holy Gospel of Matthew (22.23–33).²⁷ || *Gospel of Mary*. Lection from the Holy Gospel of Luke (2.1–7). || *Gospel of the Birth (?) of John (the Baptist), Alleluia-Psalm 123*: “*If the Lord had not been...*”.²⁸ From the Holy Gospel of Luke (1.57–80).

3 Composing a new lectionary?

As stated above, one might be surprised not to see the “holy places of Christ” mentioned, which means the churches of Jerusalem that were well known to the Christians in late Antiquity; in the palimpsests, only the name the Holy City itself appears, and only in the note thematised above.²⁹ As the summary of the set of Gospel lections shows, the compiler of the collection was no more verbose about the various biblical texts he used: he copied lections that were obviously read in very real celebrations of the Albanian liturgical year, but only rarely does he indicate objects, places and purposes, and he does not follow the ecclesiastical

22 The lection is acephalous, thus lacking its title and gloss. – Hereafter, information contained in glosses is given in italics; parentheses indicate what is not made explicit in the palimpsests. Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1, Table IV for a full account of the titles and glosses of the lections contained in the palimpsests.

23 The lection has its own title (Sin. georg. NF 13, fol. 14rb, ll. 3–4, not yet deciphered in the first edition); whether it also had a gloss remains unclear. – Hereafter, folios from Sin. georg. NF 13 will be indicated by “A” and folios from Sin. georg. NF 55, by “B”.

24 The number 95 is indicated in the palimpsest (A15ra, l. 5 of the marginal gloss) but the verse is actually Psalm 96.1. In general, the numbering of psalms in the Albanian tradition follows that of the Greek Bible (Septuagint), in accordance with the Armenian and Georgian traditions.

25 “At that place” probably refers to Jerusalem, which is mentioned immediately preceding the title (as the last word of the pericope of Mark 15.39–41); cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1. Note that this information appears not in a gloss but in the main text, together with the title (A8ra, ll. 17–18).

26 The purpose of the lection has recently been corrected (vs. Amos in Gippert et al. 2008: II, VI-1), cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1, Table IV. The reading of the second name is uncertain but *yešo-* does appear in another gloss (concerning Hebrews 11.17–27a, see 5. below).

27 In Gippert et al. (2008: II, VI-1) erroneously noted as Mt. 22.23–25 instead of Mt. 22.23–33.

28 Ps 123.1. The reading of the gloss (A35vb) has only recently been deciphered (vs. Gippert et al. 2008: II, VI-1), cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1, Table IV.

29 I.e., if not within pericopes.

year. In the arrangement of the palimpsests, e.g., he inserts the pericope of Titus 2.11–15, which belongs to the celebration of Epiphany on 6 January in the Jerusalem rite, after those of the Twelve Martyrs of Caesarea of Palestine (6 February), of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (9 March), of Cyril of Jerusalem (18 March), etc. Only rarely does the name of a biblical patriarch, prophet, or apostle appear in the accompanying glosses,³⁰ even more rarely the name of a feast for which a lection was used (Epiphany, Alb. *aḱowḱ-hēownown*,³¹ Transfiguration, Alb. *en'eg-lam-batkēown*,³² and the Nativity of John the Baptist, Alb. *bixēownown yohanēsi*),³³ and never the place where Christ performed the miracle alluded to, the place where the celebration takes place,³⁴ a peculiar saint or martyr commemorated,³⁵ an individual king or bishop remembered. What is the point in introducing the commemoration of martyrs, bishops and kings, without mentioning their names and dates of celebration?³⁶ By the omission of these details, which are customary and indispensable for any liturgical lectionary, the compiler effects a neutralisation of the content of the Hierosolymitan lectionary as represented by the Armenian and Georgian witnesses which he must have had in front of him. This suggests that he had the intention of producing a specific work that was completely independent of the genre of a liturgical lectionary, which is always provided with calendric dates.³⁷ In the leaves of the palimpsest, these omissions clearly manifest the intention on the part of the compiler to compose something different from the Original Albanian Lectionary of the Armenian-Georgian type that he was using or, rather, dismantling.

In addition to these “regular” omissions, there are other indications in the palimpsests proving that the texts of the eight sets of lections were not compiled

³⁰ E.g., Aaron in the gloss pertaining to Matthew 22.23–33, see above. – It must be stated here that by their mere arrangement, the glosses appear like secondary additions, possibly by a later hand, rather than original elements.

³¹ Lit. ‘becoming visible’ (Titus 2.11–15).

³² Lit. ‘turning into another shape’ (Matthew 17.1–9), now corrected from *en'eg-lamen-hēown* ‘becoming of another shape’ as proposed in the edition (Gippert et al. 2008: II, VI-2).

³³ Lit. ‘birth of John’; reading now ascertained.

³⁴ Cf. n. 25 above as to ‘at that place’ introducing the lection of Luke 7.1–10.

³⁵ *Psaqāarowgoy*, lit. ‘of the forty’, in the gloss accompanying Hebrews 12.1–11 is likely to refer to the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste; astonishingly enough, it is connected with the preceding *mowç~râ'y* ‘of the saints’ by *own* ‘and’. Note that in the Albanian texts, there is no differentiation of “saints” and “martyrs”, only the term *mowç'owr* ‘pure, holy, saint’ being used.

³⁶ Cf. 5. below and Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.2 as to the “general commemorations” provided in the Georgian lectionary.

³⁷ This is particularly noticeable in the sets comprising “Apostolic” pericopes from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles (see 5. below).

in order to constitute a liturgical lectionary, as a project or in preparation. This is the number of psalms mentioned across the sets which is, in fact, greatly insufficient for normal celebrations of the Eucharist. According to the established rite, each celebration requires both an entry psalm and an alleluia-psalm before the Gospel is read. Likewise, a normal celebration contains three (or at least two) pericopes, one of which is often taken from the Old Testament, plus a Gospel lection; none of the sets meets this requirement. In the palimpsests as they have been preserved, we find only one lection from the Old Testament, and the 16 psalms that have been identified with more or less certainty are highly insufficient for the 58 lections implied by the sets. Let us also note that the synaxes that were held in Jerusalem (and, by consequence, in the Albanian church) obeyed a regulated and often repetitive *ordo*, in particular for the celebration of saints who did not (yet) have their own canon; in the palimpsests, however, only one text passage appears two times.³⁸

There is one more important irregularity. The Georgian version of the Lectionary of Jerusalem, which the compiler of the palimpsested material must have had access to, includes chants, troparia or psalms that were sung at the beginning of the liturgical office, before the proclamation of the lections introducing the celebration, and before and after the reading of the evangelical pericope. We do not know how these chants were performed, but even before the modal voices were adopted in the liturgical offices as attested in the Georgian Lectionary,³⁹ the liturgy celebrated in the churches was furnished with musical interludes. Nothing of this type is indicated in the palimpsests, which only announce the alleluia-psalms, i.e., the psalms chanted before the Gospel lection, or, rarely, antiphons, i.e. psalms used as refrains,⁴⁰ but give no information as to the musical arrangement. We might even say, the “liturgy” in the palimpsests is only composed of lections, a very dismal liturgy in the absence of chanting!

Finally, it would be necessary in this context to examine one by one the links that may exist between the few psalms mentioned and the lections that follow them. In the set of Gospel texts outlined above, e.g., is there really an intrinsic

³⁸ This is Matthew 5.17–20 which appears once in its own right as a “lection of the prophets (and) altars” (marginal gloss in A10va, also indicating Psalm 83.2) and once as part of a longer pericope (Matthew 5.17–24) with no discernible gloss.

³⁹ Cf., e.g., Tarchnischvili (1959a: 1–2 / 1959b: 9–10), nos. 3–10.

⁴⁰ Explicitly denoted as such by the term *kor-baale*, lit. ‘returning’, in the gloss accompanying the lection of Ephesians 2.4–8 (Psalm 66.2; B23va) and the title of I Timothy 3.14–16 (Psalm 25.8; A28rb, l. 12–13), possibly also at the beginning of the sequence of psalm verses following the OT pericope of Isaiah 35.3–8 and beginning with Psalm 25.8 on A73vb, l. 13.

relationship between Psalm 123, on thanksgiving for deliverance, and the pericope concerning the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1.57–80)?

It was therefore not for the purpose of preparing a regular liturgical lectionary for the Albanian Church that the compiler of the Albanian undertext of the palimpsests amassed psalms and lections taken from an Original Albanian Lectionary which he had before his eyes and which he dismantled, thus producing a collection whose structure is no longer comprehensible. As they are, the Albanian palimpsests do not contribute to the history of Christian liturgy that learned scholars have established; in fact, they suggest no correspondence with any known lectionary. Only the pericopes themselves can yield some information on the state of the liturgy in Albania at the end of the 5th century and beyond, provided they are made accessible via modern translations and compared thoroughly with the neighbouring traditions, a task of utmost importance.

4 The Pauline pericopes, a Christological collection?

Even though nobody can claim to have found the ratio of the disorderly compilation of feasts, psalms and biblical pericopes we find in the palimpsests, it is nevertheless improbable that the long work of compiling and copying the texts was undertaken without any aim. Why is there such a long sequence, the largest within the palimpsests, of 26 uniquely Pauline pericopes in the set that is headed by the introductory note dealt with above? What kind of project might be announced and initiated by this massive recourse to texts of the apostle Paul alone, who was venerated by all Churches and whose writings did not give rise to any dispute? By referring only to his Epistles, would the compiler of the collection not try, if only in broad outline and in disorder, to end up in his own personal way with a presentation of the Word becoming flesh and our Saviour, which was fully topical in the turbulent years following the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE)? Here are the first 10 pericopes of this set of apostolic lections together with their titles and, where available, glosses:⁴¹

⁴¹ In the following list, italics again indicate content provided in glosses; information in brackets is restored or only implicit in the palimpsest. The || sign indicates the separation between pericopes. Note that all passages from Paul's Epistles in this set construct the image of the Word made flesh.

(1.) *Lec*(tion from the Epistle to the Romans of Paul the Apostle, 8.9–27.)⁴² || – (2.) *Lec*(tion of the Saints).⁴³ *Lec*(tion from the Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians (4.7–18).⁴⁴ || – (3.) *Lec*(tion of the Saints). *Lec*(tion from the (Second) Epistle to the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle (5.1–10).⁴⁵ || – (4.) *Lec*(tion of the Saints). *Lec*(tion from the Epistle to the Romans of Paul the Apostle (12.1–17a).⁴⁶ || – (5.) *Lec*(tion of the Saints). *Lec*(tion from the First Epistle to the Corinthians of Paul the Apostle (15.51–58).⁴⁷ || – (6.) *Lec*(tion of the Saints). *Lec*(tion from the Epistle to the Romans of Paul the Apostle (8.28–39).⁴⁸ || – (7.) *Lec*(tion of the Apostles and Prophets).⁴⁹ *Lec*(tion from the Epistle to the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle (11. 32–40).⁵⁰ || – (8.) *Lec*(tion of the Apostles). *Lec*(tion from the First Epistle to the Thessalonians of Paul the Apostle (2.5b–12).⁵¹ || – (9.) *Lec*(tion of the Apostles and Prophets).⁵² *Lec*(tion from the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians of Paul the Apostle (2.13–15... 17b–3.3a...).⁵³ || – (10.) *Lec*(tion of

42 “He who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you”. This pericope, an exaltation of Christ, does not exist as such in either LA or LG (but see n. 18 above as to the lections of Romans 8.10–17 and 8.17–27 appearing successively among the general commemorations of martyrs in the latter); it must therefore have been chosen by the compiler of the palimpsested texts in accordance with his project. The purpose of the lection must have been indicated in a gloss in the lost left margin of the folio in question (B25r; cf. Gippert et al. 2008: II, VII-42–43), since all the pericopes of this set are provided with glosses.

43 I.e., lection for the commemoration of (unspecified) saints.

44 Christ’s sufferings of death.

45 “We must appear before the tribunal of Christ”. As such, this pericope appears in neither LA nor LG (only the Latal manuscript of the latter provides a longer pericope consisting of II Corinthians 4.16–5.10 among the general commemorations of bishops; cf. Tarchnischvili 1960a: 86 / 1960b: 69, no. 1521–1527Cb), so it must have been chosen by the compiler according to his project: Christ presented as the judge.

46 “We are one body with Christ”. This pericope does not exist as such in either LA or LG (the latter provides only the two distinct pericopes of Romans 12.1–5 and 12.6–17 to be read on the Mondays of the 2nd and 3rd weeks of Lent; cf. Tarchnischvili 1959a: 58 and 66 / 1959b: 52 and 57, nos. 360 and 398). The text was therefore chosen by the compiler according to his plan: he sees the Christ emerging in the believers. The gloss (on A39v) has only recently been deciphered; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), Table IV.

47 “We will not all die, but we will all be transformed”: our resurrection is dependent on that of Christ.

48 “Christ Jesus, who died, who is resurrected, who is at the decree of God”.

49 I.e., lection for the commemoration of (unspecified) apostles or prophets. The second addressee was not yet detected in the first edition.

50 “Some have allowed themselves to be tortured” – in the hope of a better fate, the resurrection promised by Christ.

51 This pericope does not exist in either LA or LG, so it was chosen by the compiler; it returns the reader to the kingdom of God and to His glory.

52 The wording of the gloss has now been confirmed; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 3.1, Table IV.

53 “He called you... to make you acquire the glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ”. This and the following lection are incomplete because one folio (the conjugate “partner” of A67) is missing in the palimpsest.

the Saints and the Forty.⁵⁴ Lection from the Epistle to the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle (12.1–2a... 3–5a...).⁵⁵

This group of lections is finished by a sequence of Psalm verses, of which Psalms 115.6 and 18.5 can be made out with certainty.⁵⁶ The set ends with the following seven lections:

(19.) (Hebrews 2.14b–18).⁵⁷ || – (20.) *Lection of Epiphany*.⁵⁸ Lection from the Epistle to Titus of Paul the Apostle (2.11–15).⁵⁹ || – (21.) *Lection of the Kings*. Lection from the First Epistle to Timothy of Paul the Apostle (2.1–7). || – (22.) (Lec)tion⁶⁰ (from the Epistle to the Hebrews of) Paul (the Apostle, 3.1–6)⁶¹. || – (23.) *Lection of the Supplications. Psalm-antiphon 66: “God have mercy on us”*. Lection from the Epistle to the Ephesians of Paul the Apostle (2.4–8a).⁶² || – (24.) *Lection of Aaron the priest and the Ark*. Lection from the Epistle to the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle (9.1–7).⁶³ || – (25.) *Lection of those being in hope*. Lection from

54 Sic, see n. 35 above. This pericope for the feast of the XL Martyrs of Sebaste, celebrated on 9 March in Jerusalem (cf. Renoux 1971: 230–231 [92–93]), here placed before that of Epiphany (6 January, see below), proves that dates do not matter in the collection.

55 The pericope does not exist in either LA or LG; it was chosen on behalf of the verses which invite us to “fix our eyes on the author and the consumer of faith, on Jesus Christ who suffered on the cross and now sits at the right hand of the throne of God”.

56 B26ra; unfortunately most of the column containing the psalm verses was burnt off.

57 A gap has caused the loss of the usual title and the gloss. The lacunar *incipit* suggests that the pericope began with Hebrews 2.14: “Since therefore the children shared a nature of blood and of flesh, He also took a very similar nature”. This lection, read according to the LA on 9 May in memory of the Children of Bethlehem slain by Herod, is placed before the following one which refers to the feast of Epiphany on 6 January. The affirmation of the human nature of Christ takes precedence over the slaughter of the children. Again we see that it is not a liturgical lectionary that the compiler intends to compose.

58 I.e. lection for the 6 January, improperly copied after that of 9 May; dates do not count for the compiler of the collection.

59 “The grace of God has been manifested” – in anticipation of the glorious manifestation of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus.

60 A marginal gloss indicating the purpose of the lection probably existed in the left margin of the folio in question (B16v), which was burnt off with most of the left column.

61 “Consider the apostle and the high priest in whom we profess to believe, Jesus”. The title of the lection is damaged, the gloss is lost.

62 “God has brought us back to life with Christ, for it is by grace that you are saved”.

63 LA and LG prescribe a slightly longer pericope (Hebrews 9.1–10) for 2 July, the feast of the Ark of the Covenant in Kiryat Ye’arim, of which Aaron was the performer. By omitting, here as elsewhere, the date and place of the feast, the compiler of the collection provides a typological lection of the priesthood of Christ who alone offered with blood (Hebrews 9.7).

the (First) Epistle to the Thessalonians by Paul the Apostle (4.12–17).⁶⁴ || – (26.) *Lection of the Supplications*. Lection from the Epistle to the Hebrews of Paul the Apostle (12.18–19a).⁶⁵

Can the apology of Christ, which the Pauline texts of the set outlined above and also, sporadically, those of other sets constantly exhibit, be a mere reminder of the attributes of the divine and human Person of the Word made flesh? In the biblical passages he puts together, the compiler of the collection indeed draws, in broad strokes, a comprehensive image of the Word made flesh: *He is Christ the Saviour; the Lord of Powers, our Hope; He is Glory, He is the Light; the Merciful, the Good Shepherd, Christ Jesus, dead and risen; He took on a nature of flesh and blood, in everything similar to ours, and in His body He knew the sufferings of death; He will judge the world. We are one body in Christ; death was swallowed up by Our Lord Jesus Christ; He now sits at the right hand of the throne of God; He is the Mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus, a man Himself who gave Himself as a ransom for all; He is the Apostle and the High Priest in whom we profess to believe, the High Priest who alone offered with blood; with Himself, He raised us up and made us sit in the heavens.*

From the fifth century onwards, such an accumulation of biblical text passages linked together to serve a doctrine is no longer a new literary genre: *catenae* and *florilegia* flourished between 452 and 800 CE.⁶⁶ The compiler of the Albanian collection that is preserved in the palimpsests could rely upon biblical texts from the Original Albanian Lectionary that he had in his hands, a sacred book recognised by all, to illustrate the Person of Christ-God. The present grouping of biblical texts that were used in liturgy but taken out of their normal environment, the Eucharistic celebration, can only be meaningful with a view to a theological project. As an example of how the compiler of the collection worked in bringing together texts of Christological value but scattered across a lectionary well known to him, we may refer to the anthology of John Damascene (693–751), the *Sacra Parallela*,⁶⁷ a chain of biblical passages preceding a patristic text. By designing a presentation of Christ only on the basis of biblical texts that were inaccessible to any controversy, did the compiler of the collection aim to appease the dissensions between the Churches that followed the Council of Chalcedon? Be that as it may – dismantled from its primitive form as it is in the palimpsests, the Original Albani-

⁶⁴ Lection scheduled in LA for the eve of Palm Sunday, Jesus raising Lazarus from the tomb. The compiler of the collection hides this historical and liturgical reference in order to make it a lection for those who hope for the resurrection, as suggested by the text of I Thessalonians 4.13–17: “If we believe that Jesus is dead and risen, the same will be true of those who died in Jesus”.

⁶⁵ Pericope incomplete due to the gap of one bifolio in the palimpsest.

⁶⁶ Cf. Devreesse (1954: 176–189); Grillmeier (1990: 132–142).

⁶⁷ Cf. *PG* 95 and 96.

an Lectionary was stripped of its primordial liturgical environment and put at the service of a different purpose.

5 The liturgical year of the Albanian Church

With the help of the different categories of lections that we find in the palimpsests, evangelical and non-evangelical, we can nevertheless grasp an idea – fragmentary though due to the many gaps – of the state of the liturgical year of the Albanian Church after 450. To the celebratory indications that accompany the pericopes, we add in the following list those provided in connection with the Gospel of John in the second Albanian codex contained in the palimpsests. In fact, the Gospel codex exhibits several marginal glosses, too, which show that the passages from John must as well have been read during liturgy. E.g., the verses of John 5.19–23, used according to the other witnesses of the Jerusalemite rite (Armenian, Georgian, Greek, and Syriac) for the liturgy of the *Deceased*, were used for the same liturgical purpose by the Albanians, as the marginal gloss on fol. 100r of Sin. georg. NF 13 shows.⁶⁸ There are indeed several signs in the Gospel codex that prove its use during the liturgical year.⁶⁹

In the following list, the commemorations contained in the palimpsests are arranged in the chronological order of their presumed liturgical dates (based upon comparison with the other witnesses of the Jerusalem rite). We have put in brackets the names and dates which do not appear explicitly, in order to indicate that the celebrations in question did not necessarily figure in the liturgical year of the Albanian Church.⁷⁰

(6 January) *Epiphany*: Titus 2.11–15.

(11 January, Peter Apselamus and all Martyrs, or 6 February, the Twelve Martyrs of Caesarea of Palestine): Commemoration of *Saints*: II Corinthians 4.7–18; Matthew 10.16–22.

⁶⁸ The gloss reads *powriã̃y gãen* ‘for the dead’; see Gippert et al. (2008: II, V-22); cf. also Renoux (2012: 555–558 [27–30]).

⁶⁹ In one case, the glosses present in the two underlying codices even coincide: one of the glosses in the Gospel of John alludes to the feast of “John the Holy Evangelist and James the Apostle”, i.e., 29 December; for which the other codex provides a non-evangelical lection (James 1.1–12: “Lection of James the Apostle”, A3ra).

⁷⁰ The two glosses reading *pasek* ‘Easter’ (accompanying John 11.55: B9vb, l. 15) and *pasekown* ‘of Easter’ (John 13.1: A66rb, l. 11) might be taken to indicate lections for Lazarus Saturday (Eve of Palm Sunday) and Maundy Thursday with the Foot-washing, respectively; however, they are more likely to have an explanatory function translating *axsibay* and *axsibayown* (gen.) ‘Easter’ in the facing Gospel text; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 2.3.

- (17 January, St Anthony): Mt. 10.41–42.
- (19 January, Emperor Theodosius) Commemoration of *Kings*: I Timothy 2.1–7 and Luke 7.1–10.
- (9 March) The *Forty Martyrs* (of Sebaste): Hebrews 12.1–5a.
- (18 March, Cyril of Jerusalem) Commemoration of *Bishops*: II Timothy 4.1–8.
- (Good Friday): Hebrews 2.14b–18.
- (Easter tide): Gospel of John and all pericopes from the Acts of the Apostles and the Catholic Epistles.
- (Easter and Ascension): Acts 1.13b–14.
- (Easter Tuesday or Wednesday): James 1.1–11.
- (Second Saturday of Easter) Healing of the *Paralytic*: Psalm 35.10b and Isaiah 35.3–8.
- (Third Saturday of Easter or Fifth Sunday of Easter): Acts 13.17–42.
- (Fifth Saturday of Easter) Patriarch *Abraham*: John 8.31.
- (Sixth Saturday of Easter) Healing of the *Man born blind*: Psalm 6.3 and Isaiah 35.3–8.
- (Eve of Pentecost): Matthew 5.17–24.
- (30 April) Commemoration of the Apostle *Paul*: II Timothy 4.1–8; Matthew 19.27–30, Matthew 20.1–16.
- (1 May, Commemoration of the Prophet Jeremiah): Matthew 16.16b–20.
- (7 May) Feast of the *Cross*: Matthew 24.29–35.
- (9 May) Commemoration of the *Children* of Bethlehem: Hebrews 2.14b–18 and Matthew 2.16–18.
- (22 May, Emperor Constantine) Commemoration of *Kings*: I Timothy 2.1–7 and Luke 7.1–10.
- (10 June) Commemoration of the Prophet *Zechariah*: I Corinthians 12.26–14.2a; Matthew 23.34–37b.
- (14 June, Prophet Elisha) Commemoration of *Prophets*: Luke 4.25–36a.
- (17 June, Prophet Amos): Matthew 22.23–33.⁷¹
- (24 June) *Nativity of John* (the Baptist): Acts 13.17–42; Luke 1.57–80.⁷²
- (2 July) The *Ark* of the Covenant: Hebrews 9.1–7 and Matthew 5.17–20.
- (6 July) Prophet *Isaiah*: Luke 4.14–22a.
- (26 July, St Thecla): Matthew 10.41–42.
- (6 August) *Transfiguration*: II Peter 1.12–19 and Matthew 17.1–5.
- (21 August, Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob): Matthew 22.23–33;⁷¹ John 8.31.
- (25 August, Commemoration of the Prophet Zechariah): Matthew 20.1–16.
- (29 August, Beheading of John the Baptist): Acts 13.17–42; Matthew 14.1–12a.
- (2 September, 4 September, 8 October) Commemoration of *Patriarchs* and *Joshua*: Hebrews 11.17–27a.
- (13–14 September) Feasts of the *Dedication* and the *Cross*: I Timothy 3.14–16 and Ephesians 5.25–29a.
- (20 November, Dedication of St Mary) Dedication of *Churches*: Hebrews 3.1–6 and Matthew 16.13–20.
- (30 November, Commemoration of the Apostle Andrew): I Corinthians 12.26–14.2a.

71 The gloss accompanying the pericope reads *žowdağes~n aharoni yešoi* ‘Gospel (reading) of Aaron (and) Joshua’ (cf. n. 26), which is difficult to explain if the prophet Amos and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were commemorated.

72 Cf. Renoux (2012: 587–591 [59–63]).

- (26 December) Commemoration of the Apostle *James the Just*: Galatians 1.11–19; James 1.1–11.
 (27 December) *Stephen*: John 12.24.
 (28 December) Commemoration of *Peter*: Acts 12.1–17; II Peter 1.12–19.
 (28 December) Commemoration of *Paul*: II Timothy 4.1–8.
 (29 December) Commemoration of the Apostles *James the Great* and *John the Evangelist*: Galatians 1.11–19; Acts 12.1–17; James 1.1–11; I John 1.1–9; and John 21.20.

The liturgical calendar of the Albanian Church must of course have been more developed than the list suggests, considering that the palimpsests have many gaps. It is further possible to increase the calendar proper by taking into account the many text passages that are marked for (or clearly associated with) the commemoration of unspecified saints and other addressees who did not have their own liturgies, thus reminding us of the corresponding sets of lections that are appended to the Georgian lectionary after its chronologically arranged part.⁷³ In the palimpsests, these are the following pericopes and psalms:

- Saints* (or *Martyrs*):⁷⁴ Romans 8.28–39; 12.1–17a; I Corinthians 15.51–58; II Corinthians 4.7–18; 5.1–10; Hebrews 12.1–6; Matthew 10.16–22; 10.24–32a; 10.41–42.
Prophets: Matthew 5.17–20; 23.34–24.1; Luke 4.25–36.
 (Dedication of) *Churches* and *Altars*: Ephesians 5.25–29a; I Timothy 3.14–16; Hebrews 3.1–6 and 13.10–16; Matthew 5.17–20; Psalm 25.8.
Holy Cross: Matthew 24.29–35.
Apostles: I Corinthians 12.26–14.2a;⁷⁵ II Corinthians 11.23–31; Galatians 1.11–19; I Thessalonians 2.5b–12; II Thessalonians 2.13–3.3a; Hebrews 11.32–40; Psalm 18.5.
Patriarchs: Hebrews 11.17–31.
Bishops: II Timothy 4.1–8.
Kings and *Rulers*: I Timothy 2.1–7; Luke 7.1–10.
Pastors: Psalm 22.1.
Women: II Peter 1.12–19; Mark 15.39–41.
Children: Matthew 2.16–18.
Deceased: I Thessalonians 4.13–17; John 5.19.

A peculiar type of “general commemoration” in the Albanian palimpsests is that pertaining to “Supplications” (Alb. *besesownowgoy*); it includes Ephesians 2.4–8, Hebrews 12.18–28 (pericope incomplete) and Hebrews 13.10–16.

From the lists of both types of commemorations, those that are connected with explicit names in the palimpsests and those that are suggested by the “common” pericopes, it appears that the Albanian Church possessed an annual liturgical cycle

73 Cf. Tarnischvili (1960a: 60–89 / 1960b: 74–112), nos. 1433–1696.

74 There is no differentiation of *Saints* and *Martyrs* in the palimpsest materials (cf. n. 35 above).

75 Cf. Renoux (2012: 652 [124]).

close to that of the calendar which reveals itself in the Georgian documents witnessing to the Hierosolymitan tradition after 450 CE: the Georgian Lectionaries, the Hymnary of Saint-Sabas, and the Index of John Zosimus. Considering the amount of materials that must have been lost with the missing parts of the palimpsest, this assumption must of course be formulated with great caution, because other festive commemorations of different orientations could indeed have existed.⁷⁶ It must also be kept in mind that the “common” lections of various categories also offered the possibility of commemorating saints or events that were specific to the Albanian Church, thus reducing its dependence on the liturgical cycle of the Holy City. However, going through the list of “explicit” lections, one will notice immediately that the people, events, and feasts celebrated are all of an ancient (biblical) character or of universal significance and not specific to the Albanian Church: the Ark of the Covenant, the prophets Isaiah and Zechariah, the ancestors of Jesus, the apostles Peter, Paul, James and John, Stephen the protomartyr, the Children of Bethlehem, the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, Cyril (of Jerusalem), the kings (emperors) Constantine and Theodosius, Epiphany, Transfiguration, the Dedication of Churches, and the feasts of the Holy Cross. Whereas the author of the Original Albanian Lectionary thus manifested the native dependence of the liturgy of his Church on that of the Mother Church in Jerusalem, the compiler of the collection we find in the palimpsests blurred it by omitting most indications of local character concerning the Hagiopolitan rite. Note, e.g., the omission of the names of Cyril of Jerusalem and of the emperors Constantine and Theodosius, all highly venerated in Jerusalem, of which the palimpsests contain the texts read for their celebration (I Timothy 2.1–7, II Timothy 4.1–8, and Luke 7.1–10)⁷⁷ while designating Cyril only by the generic term “bishop” and the two emperors, as mere “kings” (even two times).⁷⁸ The compiler of the collection that is preserved in the palimpsests thus produces a deeply “cleansed” work, stripping it of a large number of precise allusions to persons, dates, and locations.

6 Conclusion

As stated above, the palimpsests offer two dates that can be taken as a *terminus a quo* for the emergence of the lectionary underlying the palimpsests, namely,

⁷⁶ It must be stated that here we have found no evidence for a Syriac or Byzantine influence.
⁷⁷ Cf. Renoux (1971: 226–229 [88–91], 230–233 [92–95], and 336–337 [198–199]) for LA; for the Albanian Lectionary, cf. Renoux (2012: 670 [142], 654–655 [126–127], and 585–587 [57–59]).

⁷⁸ In connection with the Gospel lection of Luke 7.1–10 and the Epistle lection of I Timothy 2.1–7.

the celebration of the rite of the Foot-washing on Maundy Thursday and the feast of Transfiguration on 6 August, both appearing in the Jerusalem rite after 450 CE as witnessed to by the Georgian lectionary.⁷⁹ Even though there are still many uncertainties concerning the nature of the work that has been partially preserved in the two palimpsests of Mt Sinai, we may safely posit that in both the Albanian codices that were overwritten in them, recourse to the liturgy of the Holy City breaks out, in quite the same way as in the lectionaries of the Armenian and Georgian Churches. There is no doubt that the three Christian communities of the Caucasus all adopted the Jerusalemite model as the basis for their services throughout the liturgical year, and it is clear that in doing so, they must have closely communicated with each other.

7 Appendix: The dating of the Armenian Lectionary

According to a hypothesis recently published by H. Méndez,⁸⁰ the Armenian Lectionary of Jerusalem (= LA), translated from Greek into Armenian and therefore posterior to its Greek model, represents the Jerusalem liturgy of the years 456–479 and not that of before 439 as its *terminus ad quem*. The new dating cannot be upheld, however, for the following reasons.

Long before 456–479, the Church of Jerusalem had developed its ancient liturgical traditions, and the construction of the three Constantinian basilicas consecrated in 335 led to the establishment of a stationary liturgy celebrated in these three churches as well as others, including those of the hill of Zion and Eleona. We have witnesses of undeniable value to this stationary liturgical geography. In the first place, this is the *Itinerarium* of the pilgrim Egeria, who sojourned in Jerusalem from 381 to 384. The second remarkable historical witness of the Jerusalem liturgical situation is undoubtedly the LA: this document recalls, letter by letter, the local indications and the processional movements mentioned by the pilgrim of the 4th century, and it sometimes even clearly indicates the biblical texts which she mentions. The origins of the LA can therefore not be dated to the 5th century; this exceptional document, translated from Greek into Armenian, is indeed dependent on a ritual and stationary organisation that must have been codified in a Greek liturgical text of the 4th century.

⁷⁹ Cf. Renoux (2012: 562–563 [34–35] and 603–605 [75–77]).

⁸⁰ Méndez (2021: 61–92).

Likewise, we cannot date the LA without taking into account the homilies of the feasts preached in the Holy City by Hesychius of Jerusalem (= HJ) and the liturgical situation of the city that they imply. HJ, priest and preacher venerated in Jerusalem, was in office since 412, the year of the episcopal consecration of Cyril of Alexandria; in 428–429, he attended the dedication of the convent of Saint Euthymius. After this, history is silent about him. However, in eleven of his twenty-one homilies on the feasts figuring in the LA, to which we must add the fifth homily of his Commentary on Job, pronounced in the church of Sion, HJ comments on the liturgical pericopes of the feasts to which he assists, and these are the same as those that the LA provides. As HJ himself says, he is explicitly referring to the biblical text read immediately before, and he sometimes explains it step by step or draws inspiration from it. HJ thus practices a Greek liturgical lectionary similar to the one we have in Armenian, the LA. The Greek model of the latter was the basis of his preaching.

Let us also point out some important elements of the rite as represented in the LA, which reflect a Greek Hierosolymitan euchology. Like Egeria's *Itinerarium* of the years 381–384, the LA still ignores the feast of Christmas on 25 December as well as that of Transfiguration on 6 August, both appearing only later, in the Georgian version of the Lectionary of Jerusalem (= LG); indeed, the LA is characterised by a state of ritual and sanctuary that is much less developed than that of the LG. Together with Egeria, the LA also ignores the solemn rite of Holy Thursday, the washing of the feet, which again is attested in the LG. And only after the synod of Chalcedon in 451, and depending on it, the Apocrypha on the Dormition and Translation of Mary inspired in Jerusalem the liturgy of 15 August as seen in the LG; the LA ignores these new apocryphal pericopes.

The new dates proposed by H. Méndez for the last state of the LA, 456–479 CE, do not correspond to the historical reality of this Armenian text whose Greek archetype must have predated 439 CE.

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PG see Migne.

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7 One or two? On Christological and Hierarchical Disputes and the Development of the “Church of Albania” (4th–8th centuries)

Abstract: In this Chapter I attempt to answer the crucial question regarding the existence of an independent historical Church of Albania and – at least sporadically – its own Christological orientation. This includes the question whether the “Catholicosate of Albania” represented a completely independent church, as is often claimed, or a strongly affiliated, but hierarchically relatively independent part of the Armenian Church. Possible answers can be found in the surviving texts of the Armenian but also the foreign traditions regarding the four ecumenical councils (Nicaea 325 – Chalcedon 451), and the Armenian anti-Nestorian and anti-Chalcedonian church councils of mainly the 5th–7th centuries up to the Council of Partaw (Barda) in 768.

1 Introduction

The establishment of a “Caucasian Albanian Church” (affiliated to the Russian Orthodox Church) by the Udi community in Azerbaijan¹ added fuel to the debate about an independent historical Church of (Caucasian) Albania, in both the hierarchical and the dogmatic sense. Historical sources on the structure of the Christian churches of the South Caucasus between the 4th and 8th centuries may help to answer the question whether the Church of Albania was united with, or even a part of, the Armenian Church, hierarchically and dogmatically, or whether it was independent, hierarchically and dogmatically, and thus separate from the Armenian Church. Was there ever a Church of Albania from the (distant) point of view of the historical Churches of Rome and Byzantium?

The complexity of these questions results from the different perspectives, the existing sources, their historical reliability and, last but not least, the blending of church history (local and global) and local geopolitical events. On the one hand,

¹ In 2003, the “Albanian-Udi Christian Community” based in Nij was registered by the Azerbaijan State Committee for Religious Organizations. The naming is a clear reference to the historical church of Albania. Cf. Chapter 16 of this Handbook (Tchilingirian) for more details.

one must include the perspective from which one examines church history in the region. Viewers from inside the South Caucasus see the region as one geographic area with linguistically-ethnically separated and perhaps differentiated Christian communities. The view from the outside, from the West, to the borders of the East Roman and later Byzantine sphere of influence is different: for centuries the entire South Caucasus region was perceived as one geographic but also one Christian region and entity. When, after the division of the Arsacid Kingdom of Armenia between the Sassanid and Roman Empires in 397, the geopolitical situation changed and Eastern Armenia became Persian Armenia and Armenia's former 10th province, Artsakh and Utik, was incorporated into Persian-ruled Albania (in the so-called Marzpanate period, 428–646 CE), the Southern Caucasus almost vanished out of the (theological) sight of the West. The impression of a “unified” geographical region was reinforced after the incorporation of the South Caucasus into the Arab caliphate and the establishment of the Arab province of *Arminiya* (654–884 CE): the territories of the historical kingdoms of Greater Armenia, Iberia (East Georgia) and Albania were joint as a large administrative unit under Arab supervision based in the Armenian capital Dvin. In fact, as late as the beginning of the 10th century, the entire South Caucasus was referred to as a “single political entity”.² The sources show that political unity was often understood as “religious unity”. This political unity, at least hierarchically administered, makes it difficult for the observer from the outside to grasp internal ethnic, but also religious disagreement between representatives of the Churches of Armenia, Iberia and Albania.

The significance of the Christological affiliation is perceived differently in the West and in the East, which is less due to theological disputes than to the formation and transformation of ethno-religious identities: the distinction of the South Caucasian Christians from the overpowering Church of the West on the one hand and from the Syriac, in particular the East Syriac, i.e. Persian Church on the other hand, is not only a dogmatic, but also a political-cultural one. At the latest with the post-Chalcedonian period in the 6th century, the Churches of the Armenians, Georgians and “Albanians” began to develop a “more ethnic” and independent character. Nowadays, the “great” schism between the miaphysite Armenian and the dyophysite Georgian Churches³ is often viewed not based on dogmatic, but

2 Aleksidze (2018: 47).

3 The term “miaphysite” is used here for the designation of the ancient Oriental Churches. The term “monophysite” rather refers to the adherers of the Eutychian manifestation of the one-nature doctrine. “Dyophysite” labels the large part of the non-Oriental (or Western) churches, including Orthodox, Catholic, as well as Protestant, Anglican, and other Churches. The incorrectly used term “Nestorian” is replaced by “(Syriac) Church of the East”, except in the translations of the historical texts where this term was specifically used for denoting the adherers of Nestorius’

rather on hierarchical disputes and political power games. The same applies, undoubtedly, to the “alleged schism” between the Armenian Church and the Church of Albania – and, strictly speaking, also to the temporary separatist tendencies of the Armenian bishops of Syunik and the sporadic “Christological rift” in the Armenian Church. The contemporary sources of the South Caucasus, but also of the West, above all council acts and canons, help to determine the extent of independence or dependence of the historical Church of Albania, in terms of both hierarchy and Christology.⁴

The present chapter addresses the local church history and the perception of the First Ecumenical council and the Armenian and “Albanian” councils, in particular with respect to the Christological conflicts following the Council of Chalcedon (451).⁵ In doing so, it is essential to look beyond the South Caucasian horizon – and to pursue the question whether a(n autocephalous) Church of Albania appears in Western sources. The historical details are only given as much as necessary for the understanding of the geopolitical background and situation.⁶ The historical-dogmatic analysis starts immediately from the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325 and extends to the Council of Barda (Partaw) in 768/9 and to the relocation of the Catholicosate of Albania from Partaw to Berdak(ur). The post-Chalcedonian period from the 6th to 8th centuries is considered the main period of discord and separationism in the Churches of the South Caucasus.⁷

doctrine (Winkler 2016: 19–29; Lange 2004: 287–308). Cf. Brock (1996: 178): “Whatever may be the truth about the nature of Nestorius’ teaching, it is clear that the term ‘Nestorian’, like the term ‘Monophysite’, is open to two very different understandings, and so serves as an open invitation to misunderstanding. Accordingly, it would seem imperative to drop both terms in connection with the non-Chalcedonian Churches to which they have traditionally, and opprobriously, been applied by the Churches in the Chalcedonian tradition.”

4 Svazyan (2019: 145).

5 As to the Armenian-Albanian church relations cf. the historical writing “Chamber” (Չամբր) by Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi (1873), which deals in particular with the relations between the catholicosates of Ejmiatsin and Gandzasar (English translation Bournoutian 2009). Cf. also Svazyan (2019), Balayan (2009), and Babian (2001).

6 As to the history of Christianisation cf. Outtier (1996), Mgaloblishvili (1998), Van Esbroeck (1996), and Toumanoff (1959).

7 The acceptance or non-acceptance of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon decides on the common Christological-dogmatic classification of the Christian Churches. Since the Council of Chalcedon, the ancient Oriental miaphysite Churches (Armenian-Apostolic, Syriac-Orthodox Church of Antioch, Malankara-Orthodox Syrian Church, Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, Ethiopian Orthodox Church of Tewahedo, Eritrean Orthodox Church of Tewahedo) are separated from the dyophysite Byzantine Church. The East Syriac Church (Assyrian Church of the East, also erroneously called “Nestorian”, cf. n. 3 above) detached from the rest of the Churches already following the decisions of the Council of Ephesus. According to the traditional dating, the Roman Catholic Church separated from the Eastern Orthodox Churches in the “Great Schism” in 1054.

2 Pre-Chalcedonian period. One hierarchy, one dogma: unity in the South Caucasus

2.1 The First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325)

At the time of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325, the South Caucasus was just in the process of its “official Christianisation”. After the Peace of Nisibis in 298 between the Roman and Sassanid Empires, both Armenia and Iberia became Roman vassal states through the transfer of suzerainty to Rome.⁸ According to tradition, Armenia adopted Christianity as the state religion in 301 under King Tiridates (Trdat) III (r. 287–330), Iberia in 337 under King Meribanes (Mirian) III (r. 284–361).⁹ The year 313 as the traditional date of the official acceptance of Christianity in Albania by the Albanian king Urnayr (r. 350–370) is, however, doubted by more recent sources.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, all “traditional” dates can be historically backdated by at least 10–15 years, if not more.

At the time of the Council, St Gregory the Illuminator was the head of the Church not only of Armenia, but he also held the highest hierarchical rank of the Churches of Iberia and Albania. Catholicos Simeon I Yerevantsi (1763–1780) reports in his “Archival Chamber” about the joint letter of Emperor Constantine and Pope Sylvester (314–335) to St Gregory, stating that the autocephalous and supreme patriarch of the peoples of the East and North, i.e. Armenia, Iberia and Albania, has the right to install and ordain the bishops and catholicos of these countries.¹¹ According

8 Dignas and Winter (2007: 122–130).

9 This dating is equivalent to that of Toumanoff (1969: 21–22).

10 The year 313 is argued for by Hajiev (2020b: 29–35); Aleksidze and Mahé (in Gippert et al. 2008: xiii–xv) doubt the date due to historical events and consider it a later addition.

11 Simeon Yerevantsi (1873: 65): *Եւ վասն այսորիկ կարգեցաւ և կանոնադրեցաւ ի բնէ անտի յՄտաքելոց և ի Հայրապետաց և ի Թագաւորաց՝ և մանաւանդ ի Սեղբեստրոսէ Հայրապետէն և ի Կոստանդիանոսէ Թագաւորէն Հռոմայ, որք Հայրապետական և Թագաւորական հրամանագրով և հաստատուն դաշնադրութեամբ ի Սուրբն Լուսաւորիչ յանձնեն զինքնագլուխ և զճայրագոյն պատրիարկութիւն արեւելականաց և հիւսիսականաց՝ այս ինքն Հայոց, Վրաց, և Աղուանից, որոց զեպիսկոպոսունսն և զկաթողիկոսունսն ընդ իշխանութեամբ նորա դնեն, զի ի նմանէ և ի նորին փոխանորդացն առնուցուն զձեռնադրութիւն – “From that time on, regulations were established which had been initiated by the apostles, and then patriarchs and kings, and especially by Patriarch Sylvester and the Roman Emperor Constantine, who, through patriarchal and imperial decrees and other agreements, gave St. Gregory autonomy and the right of supreme patriarchy over the eastern and northern peoples, that is, Armenians, Georgians, and Caucasian Albanians. Their bishops and *kat’oghnikoi* had to obey his rule and were to be consecrated by St. Gregory and his successors” (Bournoutian 2009: 150).*

to Faustus of Byzantium¹² and the later account of Movses Khorenatsi,¹³ Grigoris, the grandson of St Gregory was thus also “Catholicos of the Iberians and Albanians”.¹⁴ Grigoris died a martyr’s death between 330 and 335. It is only a few years after the Council of Nicaea that Ioane I (335–363) is mentioned as the first bishop of Mtskheta (Georgia), which could coincide with the death of the Armenian bishop of Iberia, as is also told in the oldest surviving Georgian historical compilation, the “Conversion of Kartli”.¹⁵ Accordingly, at the time of the Council of Nicaea the South Caucasian Christians were under the hierarchical umbrella of the Armenian Church and thus under the suzerainty of St Gregory. In 325, he had sent his son and succes-

12 *History of the Armenians* III, 5–6 (Faustus 1832: 10, 13): Ապա երէց որդին Գրիգորիս եհաս յեպիսկոպոսութիւն կողմանց Աղուանից և Վրաց, վասն հոգեկիր առաքինի արքայսեացն, բարեհասակ, և զգիտութիւն Աստուծոյ յանձին կրելով: Ոչ ամուսնացաւ նա, այլ ի հնգետասնամեայնից եհաս յաստիճան եպիսկոպոսութեան աշխարհին Վրաց և Աղուանից, այս ինքն սահմանացն Մագղթաց: ... Այլ վասն Գրիգորի եպիսկոպոսի, որդւոյ Վրթմանայ, եղբօրն Յուսկան, որ կաթողիկոսն էր կողմանցն Վրաց և Աղուանից, իբրև եկաց սա յևրոմ պաշտամանն, մինչ դեռ մանուկն ես էր... — “Subsequently, the senior son, Grigoris, who was an attractive, virtuous individual, full of spiritual accomplishments and knowledge of God, attained the episcopate in the areas of Aghuania and Iberia [Georgia]. He did not marry, but already at the age of fifteen became bishop of the land of Iberia and Aghuania, that is to say, of the borders of the Mazk’ut’k’. ... As regards bishop Grigoris (Vrt’anes’ son and Yusik’s brother), he became the *kat’olikos* of the Iberian and Aghuanian areas, occupying this office while he too was still a lad...” (Bedrosian 1985: 8, 12). Cf. also Garsoian (1989: 71).

13 *History of the Armenians* book III, ch. 3 (Movses 1865: 189): Այսմ հաւանեալ երանելին Տրդատ, տայ նոցա եպիսկոպոս զմանուկն Գրիգորիս, զերէց որդին Վրթմանայ: — “The blessed Trdat, trusting in this, gave them as bishop the young Grigoris, the elder son of Vrt’anes” (Thomson 1978: 256).

14 Movses Kalankatuatsi in his book I, ch. 14 confirms Grigoris as the first Church leader of Albania and Iberia and a high-rank representative of the Armenian Church (Emin 1860a: 29): Բանդի զհնգետասն ամօք ձեռնադրեալ զեպիսկոպոսութիւն զմանուկն Գրիգորիս Վրաց և Աղուանից աշխարհին՝ երթեալ լուստորէր զերկոսին աշխարհս և հաստատէր քրիստոսական հաստոյն դնալ. — “For at the age of fifteen the young Grigoris was consecrated bishop of Georgia and Albania, and he went and taught in these two lands and established the Christian faith there” (Dowsett 1961a: 22; similarly Bedrosian 2010: 14). Cf. also Mkhitar Gosh (Alishan 1901b: 339): Եւ ապա խնդրեցին Աղուանք ի Հայոց՝ կաթողիկոս զՍուրբն Գրիգորիս՝ ի հնգետասն ամի ձեռնադրեալ ի հայրապետութիւն, և ի բարբարոսաց վախճան մահու ընկալաւ. Հոռոմ թՎ. ՃՄ (101) էր : — “And then the Albanians asked the Armenians for St. Grigoris, consecrated patriarch at the age of 15 and killed by the barbarians, as Catholicos. It was the 101st year of Rome” (Dowsett 1958: 476; similarly Bedrosian 2007a: 1).

15 Abuladze et al. (1963: 86): Ըստ Մովսէս Կորէնցի մեզ հայտնի Գրիգոր Գործքն ու Գրքն զԵրկրորդին զԱղուանից և Վրաց, զի սա ինքն Գրիգորիս զհայրապետութիւն ինքեան զմանուկն Գրիգորիս Վրաց և Աղուանից աշխարհին՝ երթեալ լուստորէր զերկոսին աշխարհս և հաստատէր քրիստոսական հաստոյն դնալ. — “And the King gave Bishop Iovane and two priests and a deacon and Queen Helene’s letter to Nino and an image of the Saviour and of the Life-giving Tree. After they arrived, King Mirean and Queen [Nana] and all their people received baptism” (Lerner 2004: 142); cf. also Plontke-Lüning (2007: 138); Pätsch (1975: 294).

sor Aristakes to the Council of Nicaea as a representative of the Church of Armenia but also as the Bishop of Iberia and Albania.¹⁶

The Council of Nicaea, convened in 325 by the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (306–337) and headed by the Latin bishop Hosius of Corduba (ca. 298–357/8), dealt with the question of the relationship between God and his Son and thus with the Arian controversy in the Greek-speaking East.¹⁷ The existing research literature exhaustively addresses both the question of the participation of Caucasian Christians¹⁸ and the perception of the First Ecumenical Council in the East. There are extensive sources available in Greek, Latin, Syriac and Coptic but also in the Armenian chronicles of Faustus (III, 10),¹⁹ Agathangelos (chapter 127),²⁰ Movses Khorenatsi (II, 89–90),²¹ and Catholicos Yovhannes of Odzun in the 8th century,²² as well as the later authors Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi in his *History of Armenia* (chapter IX),²³ Kirakos Gandzaketsi (I, 1),²⁴ etc. We learn from these sour-

16 Krikorian (1971: 193–209); Garsoïan (1998: 35–36); Stopka (2016: 54); Garsoïan (1988: 249–285).

17 Arius of Alexandria (256–336); cf. Dunn (2021: 1–8): “Arianism is commonly summed up in two or three phrases: ‘Arius denied the divinity of Christ’ (or ‘the unity of the Trinity’). Arianism was subordinationist: it made the Son a lesser God than the Father.” Cf. Brennecke (2018).

18 Cf. Schwartz (1937); Honigmann (1939: 46); Gelzer, Hilgenfeld, and Cuntz (1898: Latin 28, Greek 66, Coptic 88, Syriac 105, Ebdiso Syriac 129, Armenian 199); Honigmann (1936: 429–449). See also Schaff (1899); Percival (2010); Van Esbroeck (2004: 1–16).

19 Լ 'ի Հայոց էր անդ Արիստակէս, որդի Գրիգորի սքանչելոյ, առաջի կաթողիկոսին Հայոց մեծաց (Faustus 1832: 25) – “Present from Armenia was Aristakes son of the miraculous Gregory, the first kat'oghikos of Greater Armenia” (Bedrosian 1985: 28). Cf. Garsoïan (1989b).

20 Յայնժամ մեծ արքայն Տրդատ եւ սուրբ կաթողիկոսն Գրիգորիոս Հանդերձեցին եւ արձակեցին զԱրիստակէս, որ երթեալ Տասանէր ի մեծ ժողովն Նիկիայ ընդ եպիսկոպոսն ամենայն (Thomson 1976: 414) – “Then the great king Trdat and the holy Catholicos Gregory made preparations and dispatched Aristakēs. He arrived at the great Council of Nicaea with all the bishops” (Thomson 1976: 415).

21 Երթեալ Ռրստակէս ընդ մեծին Ղեւոնդի, Տասնաէ 'ի քաղաքն Նիկիացոց, ուր եղն ժողովեալ Հարք երեքհարեր եւ ութնետասն 'ի քակտումն արիանոսաց, զորս նզովեալ մերժեցին 'ի հաղորդութենէ եկեղեցոյ. Ապա դարձեալ Ռրստակէս արժանահաւատ բանիւ, եւ քսան կանոնեալ գլխովք ժողովոյն, գայ Հանդիպի հօրն եւ արքային 'ի Վաղարշապատ քաղաքի: (Movses 1865: 176–177) – “Aristakēs traveled with Leontius the Great to the city of Nicaea, where the three hundred and eighteen fathers had assembled to overthrow the Arians. (...) Then Aristakēs returned with the orthodox creed and the twenty canonical chapters of the council and met his father and the king in the city of Vałaršapat” (Thomson 1978: 246).

22 Cf. the Council List of Yovhannes of Odzun in the “Book of Letters” (*Girk* 1901: 220–233).

23 Վասն այտորիկ իսկ ապա ժողով եպիսկոպոսաց լինի 'ի հրամանէ Կոստանդիանոսի 'ի Նիկիայ Բիւթանացոց, ընդ որս եւ մերն Արիստակէս կոչեցաւ: (Yovhannes 1912: IX) – “For this reason, a council of bishops met in Nicaea of Bithynia at the order of Constantine and among those who were summoned was also our own Aristakēs” (Maksoudian 1987: 80).

24 Եւ յորժամ եկն Արիստակէս ի ժողովոյն Նիկիոյ, այնուհետեւ սուրբն Գրիգոր ալ ոչ ումեք երեւեցաւ: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 13) – “When Aristakes returned from the Council of Nicaea, Saint Gregory thereafter appeared to no one” (Bedrosian 1986: 10).

ces that the bishops of Lesser Armenia, Eulogius of Sebastia and Euethios of Satala, participated at the Council, as well as the bishop of Greater Armenia, Aristakes I (c. 261–333), son and successor of St Gregory the Illuminator, as a representative of the Armenian Church.²⁵ According to the Armenian tradition, Aristakes brought the council documents with him to Armenia and presented them to Gregory. He made the 20 council canons and the Nicene Creed the basis of Armenian Church doctrine.²⁶ A certain bishop named Kritēs mentioned in some lists of participants remains mysterious, and the addition of his affiliation to “Diospontos” in Syriac sources leads to a dead end.²⁷ As a matter of fact, no bishops or representatives of the Churches of Iberia or Albania appear in the existing lists of bishops and the other sources.

In 359, the Sasanian king Shapur II (309–379) launched new offensives against the East. He repulsed the counterattack of Constantius II (337–361) but was defeated in 363 in the Persian campaign of the Roman Emperor Julian (359/60–363). Julian’s successor Jovian (363–364) agreed to another peace treaty at Nisibis in 363, at the loss of Rome’s earlier sphere of influence in the South Caucasus and the subsequent occupation of Armenia by Shapur. The sources name twelve bishops in Armenia who were under the authority of Nerses I the Great (353–373).²⁸ Concerning Iberia, Ioane I is mentioned as the first archbishop of Mtskheta (326–363), as well as his successors Iakob (363–375)²⁹ and Iob (375–390). The latter is known in the Georgian tradition from the “Conversion of Kartli” as a former deacon of Catholicos Nerses.³⁰ The slightly differing lists of the church leaders of

25 Cf. Honigmann (1939: 46); Gelzer, Hilgenfeld, and Cuntz (1898).

26 Petrosyan (2016: 53); Garsoïan (1998: 35–36); Stopka (2016: 54); Hakobyan (1964: 114–150) including a list of participants. Cf. Kirakos Gandzaketsi I, 1: *Եւ ի կենդանութեան իւրում ձեռնադրեաց գտորբ որդին իւր գկրիստակէս՝ Խպիսկոպոսապետ Հայոց, և Վրաց, և Աղուանից*: (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 12) – “During his life he ordained his blessed son Aristakes head bishop of the Armenians, Georgians, and [Caucasian] Aghbanians” (Bedrosian 1986: 10).

27 Latin Acrites, Greek Krētēs, Coptic Arikēs, Syriac Akrites; in Armenian, Akritēs is unknown. In the non-Syriac sources, Diospont is the next see after Armenia, which may have caused confusion. Cf. Gelzer, Hilgenfeld, and Cuntz (1898: 28, 65, 89, 107); Ališan (1901a: 26).

28 Petrosyan (2016: 64–66).

29 Abuladze (1963: 91): *და მოკუდა იოვანე ეპისკოპოსი და დაჯდა იაკობ, მღვდელი იგი მუნითვე მოსრული, მთავარ ეპისკოპოსად*. – “... and Iovane the bishop died, and Jacob, the priest who came from the same place, was [appointed] archbishop” (Lerner 2004: 146).

30 Abuladze (1963: 91): *და დაჯდა მეფედ ძმად მისი თრდატ, და მთავარეპისკოპოსი იყო ნერსე სომეხთა კათალიკოსისა დაკონი იობ*. – “And T’rdat, his brother was king and Iov, deacon of the Armenian Catholicos Nerse, was archbishop” Lerner (2004: 147); cf. Aleksidze (2018: 135). Cf. Akinian (1910: 54 and 114).

Albania originate from the Armenian sources of Movses Kałankatuatsi (III, 23),³¹ Kirakos Gandzaketsi (II, 10),³² Mkhitar Gosh,³³ and Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi.³⁴

2.2 Councils of Ashtishat (354 and 356)

In order to confirm the decisions of Nicaea and to draw up rules for church administration and family law, Catholicos Nerses I convened two Armenian councils in Ashtishat in 354 and 356.³⁵ According to Movses Khorenatsi, the first one took place immediately after his consecration; nothing is known, however, about the council's subject and the names of the participating bishops.³⁶ The second Council of Ashtishat resulted in the consolidation of the political and social power of the Armenian Church in its entire sphere of influence, including Iberia and Albania. The Council of Ashtishat is considered a turning point in Armenian church history, with it began a new phase of reforms in the Armenian church.³⁷

2.3 Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381)

The Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople was assembled in 381 by Emperor Theodosius to stop the teachings of Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople (342–346, 351–360), and his denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Movses Khorenatsi reports in his *History* (III, 33) about the participation of the Armenian Patriarch Nerses I,³⁸ as does – following him – Catholicos Yovhannes of Odzun (718–729).³⁹ Even the letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Photius I (858–867, 878–886) to Catholicos Zakaria (855–876) reports that Catholicos Nerses I was

31 Emin (1860a: 274–275); Dowsett (1961a: 228); Bedrosian (2010: 143).

32 Melik-Ohanjanean (1961: 192–193); Bedrosian (1986: 156–157).

33 Alishan (1901b: 338–339); Dowsett (1958: 476–477); Bedrosian (2007a: 1–2).

34 Emin (1860b: 19); Brosset (1869: 16). Cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook, 6.1 for a synopsis of the sources.

35 Faustus of Byzantium IV, 4 (1832: 74); Bedrosian (1985: 91). Cf. Ayvazyan (2002: 69–70); *Girk* (1901: 220); Melikyan (2014: 74–75).

36 Movses (1865: 205–206); Thomson (1978: 274).

37 Ormanean (1959: 85).

38 Movses (1865: 220): ...ընդ որս և զմեծն Ներսէս ածեալ առ իւր 'ի Բիւզանդիոն, պահէ մեծաւ պատուով, մինչև ճմարտութեանն ստուգեցաւ հաւատ, որ յողագս ամբարշտին Մակեդոնի հայհոյութեանցն. – “(...) Among these was Nersēs the Great, whom he brought to see him at Byzantium and kept with great honor until the true faith was confirmed with regard to the blasphemies of the impious Macedonius” (Thomson 1978: 290–291).

39 *Girk* (1901: 220).

among the five patriarchs in Constantinople.⁴⁰ The later “Letter of Faith” of the Armenian King Gagik of Vaspurakan (904–937) to Emperor Romanos I (920–944) is obviously based on these sources.⁴¹ Catholicos Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (897–925) describes in chapter XII of his *History* Nerses I as the holder of the highest of the nine ranks of the Armenian Church, to whom the bishops of Iberia and Albania were subordinate.⁴² While the latter information is historically quite comprehensible, other sources contradict the active participation of Catholicos Nerses I at the Council of Constantinople. This is true, e.g., of Faustus according to whom Nerses was poisoned by King Pap at a banquet around 373 and therefore could not be present in Constantinople in 381.⁴³ Three canons of the First Ecumenical Council of Constantinople found their way into the Armenian canonbook and presumably also into the ecclesiastical administration of Albania (and Iberia).⁴⁴ However, in the council lists, which name 150 bishops, representatives of neither the Armenian nor the Georgian or the Albanian Church are given.⁴⁵

Since this council was only marginally noticed by the Churches of the Caucasus due to the political upheavals and since they were not represented in Constantinople, one can assume that from a western point of view the South Caucasus was regarded as hierarchically and dogmatically united. Within the South Caucasus, however, a certain local hierarchical autonomy had begun to develop through the consecration of bishops in the respective kingdoms – albeit by the Armenian Catholicos – in both Albania and Iberia.

2.4 Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431)

In 387 Shapur III (383–388) and Theodosius I (347–395) signed a definitive peace treaty: the former Roman province of Lesser Armenia was incorporated into the

40 Garitte (1952: 74); Dorfmann-Lazarev (2000: 83–86); Laourdas, Westerink and Outtier (1985: Epistle 285, 97–112); Papadopoulos-Kerameus (1892: 179–195.)

41 *Girk* (1901: 295–301).

42 Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi XII, 12 (1912: 48): *Եւ այսպէս ապա նահապետութիւն խորհրդոյ եկեղեցոյ և ՚ի մերումս աշխարհի լցաւ բովանդակաբար՝ ինն միանգամայն դասակարգութեամբ պատուեալ զգլխաւորս արքեպիսկոպոսացն Վրաց եւ Աղուանից՝ արքեպիսկոպոս ընդ ձեռամբ նորա կարգեալ. – “Thus, the hierarchy of the Church was entirely completed in our country as well, since it was invested together with nine ranks, and the chief bishops of the Iberians and the Albanians were placed under Nerses’s jurisdiction as archbishops” (Maksoudian 1987: 84–85). Cf. the *Patmutyun Nersisi* I, 8 (1853: 61–62).*

43 Faustus by Byzantium V, 24 (1832: 221; Bedrosian 1985: 239; Garsoïan 1989b: 220).

44 Hakobyan (1964: 273–276).

45 Gelzer (1903: 126–130); Honigmann (1936: 429–449); Turner (1914: 172). Only two bishops from Lesser Armenia are listed, with the same name: Otreios of Melitene and Otreios of Arabissos.

East Roman Empire, while Greater Armenia became known as Sassanid or Persian Armenia; the former Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik were merged into the new administrative unit “Albania” (Middle Persian *Arān*). Albania itself (Arm. *Bun Ałowank*⁴⁶, located east of the river Kura) had already been annexed by the Sassanid Empire in 252/3. The socio-culturally significant creation of the “South Caucasian” alphabets – Armenian in 405, then Georgian and Albanian according to Armenian sources – also led to a phase of formation of cultural-ethnic identities. Although the South Caucasian Churches appeared united from a Western point of view concerning their Christology, the tendency towards a development of ethnic-national Churches was already discernible. When the Council of Ephesus was convoked, the whole South Caucasus was politically under the spell of Sassanid Persia and its efforts to “re-proselytise” its inhabitants to the Zoroastrian faith. But at the same time, it was also in a process of the Churches’ ethnogenesis – under the supremacy of the Armenian Church.

The Council of Ephesus⁴⁶ was convened in 431 by Emperor Theodosius II to settle the disputes provoked by Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. More than 200 bishops met under the leadership of Cyril of Alexandria; they deposed Nestorius, condemned his teaching, and declared that the two natures of Christ, true God and true man, were united in Christ’s person. The Council and the resulting quarrels, especially between the patriarchates of Alexandria, East Rome and Antioch, led to the first significant schism in Church history: the Syriac Church of the East split off by rejecting the Council’s decisions and continued to follow the teachings of Nestorius. This development would subsequently have a lasting effect on the dogmatic disputes with the Armenian Church, but also within the Armenian Church and with the Georgians and Albanians who were under the Armenian supremacy. Five canons of the council were included in the Armenian lawbook;⁴⁷ however, according to current research, no representatives from Armenia, Iberia or Albania took part in the Council of Ephesus.⁴⁸ There is only a certain *Jeremias (H)Iberos Partium Persidis* mentioned in the council lists, whom some researchers, including Peeters and Van Esbroeck, identified with the Albanian bishop Jeremiah named by Koryun.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ For documents of the Council cf. Schwartz (1927) and Tanner (1990); cf. also Rucker (1930); Cowe (1989).

⁴⁷ Hakobyan (1971: 73–90).

⁴⁸ Schwartz (1937: 27–28 and 70–71) names only Acacius of Melitene. Price (2012: 395–420), however, mentions also “Armenia secunda” as represented by Acacius of Arca, Caesarius chorepiscopus of Arca and Prothymius of Comana.

⁴⁹ Cf. Peeters (1933: 7) and Van Esbroeck (1985: 264); Gabriele Winkler argues against this view (1996: 774), stating that a bishop of the same name does not appear in Georgian sources and cannot be equated with the Albanian bishop Jeremiah mentioned by Koryun in chap. 17 of his

According to the reports of Movses Khorenatsi (III, 61)⁵⁰ and Koryun, the acts of the Council, together with a copy of the Armenian translation of the Bible, were brought to Catholicos Sahak by the disciples of Mesrop Mashtots, Łewond, Koryun and Eznik from Ephesus and Constantinople, respectively.⁵¹ The correspondence between Proclus of Constantinople and Ss Sahak and Mashtots⁵² mentioned by Khorenatsi concerning the Council and the “Nestorian heresy”, but also the letters between Bishop Acacius of Melitene and Ss Sahak and Mesrop⁵³ are preserved in the *Book of Letters (Girk’ T’it’oc’)*. In about 436, the Armenian bishops had turned to Proclus because of the widespread dissemination of the heresies of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Proclus sent his reply to the “bishops of the East” asking them to sign it and join in condemning these doctrines. The bishops

Life of Mashtots (cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 1. for the passage in question; cf. also Winkler 1994: 306, 350). Bishop Jeremiah is also mentioned in the above-mentioned lists of church leaders by Movses Kalankatuatsi, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Mkhitar Gosh, and Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi as the last “Albanian church leader” before the see of Albania was moved from Chol to Partaw.

50 Եւ վասն զի ոչ հանդիպեցան յաճամ ժողովի մեծն Սահակ և Մեսրոպ, գրեն առ նոսա Կիւրեղ աղեքսանդրացի և Պրոկղոս Կոստանդնուպօլսի և Ակակ Մելիտինոյ եպիսկոպոսք, զգուշացուցանելով զնոսա. Գանգի լուան, եթէ ոմանք 'ի չարափառացն աշակերտացն առեալ զգիրսն Թէոդորոսի մամուեստացուց, զվարդապետին Նեստորի և զաշակերտին Թէոդորոսի, գնացին յաշխարհ Հայոց: Ապա եկեալ Թարգմանիչքն մեր՝ զորոց անուանքն յիշատակեցաք յառաջագոյն, գտին զմեծն Սահակ և զՄեսրոպ յԱշտիշատ Տարօնոյ, և մատուցին զԹուղթսն և զկանոնս ժողովոյն եփեսոսի՝ վեց սահմանեալ կանոնաւ գլխով, և զստոյգ օրինակս գրոց: (Movses 1865: 260) – “And because Sahak the Great and Mesrop were not present at that council, the bishops Cyril of Alexandria, Proclus of Constantinople, and Acacius of Melitene wrote to them in warning. They had heard that some of the heretical disciples, taking the books of Theodore of Mopsuestia – the teacher of Nestorius and the pupil of Diodore – had gone to Armenia. Then our translators, whose names we mentioned earlier, arrived and found Sahak the Great and Mesrop in Ashtishat in Tarawn; they presented to them the letters and canons of the council of Ephesus in six canonical chapters, and accurate copies of the scriptures” (Thomson 2006: 330–331).

51 Koryun, ch. 19 (Ananean 1964: 69): Որոց յետ այնորիկ հաստատուն աւրինակաւք աստուածատուր գրոցն եւ բազում՝ շնորհագիր հարց յետ այնր աւանդութեամբք, եւ Նիկիական եւ եփեսոսական կանոնաւք, գալին երեւելով աշխարհին Հայոց, եւ առաջի դէկին հարցն զբերեալ կտակարանսն եկեղեցւոյ սրբոյ: – “Then they came to the land of Armenia, having brought authentic copies of the God-given book and many subsequent traditions of the worthy church fathers, along with the canons of Nicaea and Ephesus, and placed before the fathers the testaments of the Holy Church which they had brought with them” (Norehad 1985: 43).

52 Letter of Bishop Proclus to St Sahak, Patriarch of the Armenians, and to St Mashtots (*Girk* 1901: letter 1, 1–8); answer to the letter of Blessed Proclus by Sahak and Mashtots, the holy Vardapets of the Armenians (*Girk* 1901: letter 2, 9–13). Cf. van Rompay (1985: 425–449).

53 Letter of Bishop Acacius of Melitene to St Sahak, Patriarch of the Armenians (*Girk* 1901: letter 3, 14–15); response of Lord Sahak to the Letter of Acacius (*Girk* 1901: letter 4, 16–18); letter from Bishop Acacius to the Armenians (*Girk* 1901: letter 5, 19–21). Cf. Inglisian (1957: 35–50). For a translation see Garsoian (1999: 412–420).

approved. The South Caucasus showed itself united as anti-Nestorian and pro-Ephesus.

When in 428 Armenian nobles complained about King Artashes IV to the Sassanid king Bahram V, the latter dissolved the kingdom of Armenia and appointed Veh Mihr Shapuh as governor or *marzpan* (428–442) of the Sassanid province of Armenia with the new capital at Dvin. Thus, Greater Armenia, Iberia and Albania were politically in the hands of the Sassanids – in terms of church hierarchy they remained a “Christian” entity under the supremacy of the Armenian Catholicos. Much of the Syrian Christians in the Persian Empire, however, leaned towards the Christology of Nestorius. The dogmatic break actually had become a political one. The decisions of Ephesus did not affect Persian Christianity, which was beyond the reach of the Western fathers and had already confirmed an official break in 424.⁵⁴ The political reorganisation in 428 favoured the so-called “Nestorianism” to flourish throughout the Persian Empire – to the detriment of the Armenians, Iberians and Albanians who were loyal to Ephesus. The rapid spread of Nestorianism and of the supporters of Theodore of Mopsuestia worried the Armenians. Moreover, the Persian kings’ return to Mazdaism flooded in like a torrent against the increasingly self-confident Christianity in the South Caucasian provinces.⁵⁵

2.5 Armenian Church Councils of Ashtishat, Shahapivan and Artashat (435, 444 and 449)

In 435, according to Movses Khorenatsi, an Armenian Church Council was convoked at Ashtishat by Catholicos Sahak I and Mashtots to discuss and confirm the Council of Ephesus.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, nothing is known about this council and its decisions. In contrast, the Armenian Council of Shahapivan, convened in 444 by Catholicos Yovsep I Yolotsmetsi (437–452), is known as one of the exceptional councils in church history because of the participation of 40 important clerics and powerful government officials like Marzpan Vahan Syuni (387–452) or General Vardan Mamikonian as well as the local noble families, and also by the severity of the decisions. The 20 canons affected church ranks and also regulated family

⁵⁴ The Church of the East organised itself at the Council of Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 410 as the national Church of the Sassanid Empire. In 424, at the Council of Markabta and supported by Catholicos Mar Dadisho I, the Church declared itself autocephalous and thus independent from the Church of the Roman Empire. Cf. Baum and Winkler (2010: 19).

⁵⁵ Stopka (2016: 59–61).

⁵⁶ Movses Khorenatsi III, 61 (1865: 259–260; Thomson 1978: 335–336); cf. Ayvazyan (2002: 69–70).

law and jurisprudence.⁵⁷ They strengthened the foundations of the Armenian Church and its role in the absence of Armenian statehood.⁵⁸ They are therefore considered as imperative also for the Churches of Albania and Iberia, although it is not known whether representatives from Albania or Iberia were present among the clergy or the nobility.

In fact, the Christological disputes in the South Caucasus receded into the background in view of the Sassanid religious policy. When Yazdegerd II (439–457) imposed Mazdaism on all his citizens, the Christians of the South Caucasus appeared united and turned to Rome for support.⁵⁹ Grand Vizier Mihr-Narseh sent an edict to the Armenians prompting them to accept Mazdaism unconditionally. Faced with this threat, the Armenian nobility, supported by the Georgians and Albanians, prepared to defend Christianity: in 449, Catholicos Yovsep I convened the Council of Artashat, as an immediate response of the Christians to the edict of Yazdegerd II.⁶⁰ The united Christians of the South Caucasus gave their lives for their religion,⁶¹ while at the same time in the West the Christological discussion reached a peak in the so-called Robber Synod of Ephesus (449). Here, without the participation of the Caucasian Christians, Cyril of Alexandria’s successor Dioscurus I (444–451) supported Eutyches’ one-sided interpretation of Cyril’s teachings. This resulted in areal monophysitism, saying that Christ has only one, namely the divine nature. The following resistance and anathema of Dioscurus prompted Emperor Marcian (450–457) to summon the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This council would change the entire Christian world in a lasting way – and also divide the hitherto united Churches in the South Caucasus.

57 Cf. Akinean (1949: 79–170); Hakobyan (1964: 422–466).

58 Petrosyan (2016: 97–98).

59 Stopka (2016: 61).

60 The edict, the synod and the joint struggle of Armenians, Georgians and Albanians are impressively narrated by Elishe in his *History of Vardan and the Armenian War* (Thomson 1982: 77–79; on the Council of Artashat 81–82).

61 Cf. Chapter 7A of this Handbook (Drost-Abgaryan) for the “Holy Covenant” of the three peoples.

3 The period of Antichalcedonian movements: cultural self-discovery – yet united in dogma and hierarchy: 451–556

3.1 The Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451)

The aim of the Council of Chalcedon in 451⁶² was to reaffirm the decisions of Ephesus against the heresies of Eutyches and Nestorius, thus repealing the “Robber Synod” of Ephesus in 449, and to find a resolution on the natures of Christ. The Council issued the Chalcedonian definition, which rejected the notion of a single nature in Christ, declaring that he has two natures in one person and hypostasis, and emphasising the completeness of both natures: divine and human. The Council also issued 27 disciplinary canons that regulate church administration and authority. The acts further declare as binding two letters by Cyril of Alexandria and the *Tomus Leonis*, a letter sent by Pope Leo I to Flavian of Constantinople in 449.⁶³ Hundreds of bishops took part in the council; none, however, had come from Sassanid Armenia, Albania, or Iberia.⁶⁴

Armenia and its Albanian and Georgian allies were involved in a religious war with the Sassanids and could not actively interfere in the Christological disputes in the West. They had to face the conversions of their own leaders and the Massagetean⁶⁵ invasions from the North-East. Christianity in Persia had meanwhile turned to a dyophysite Antiochian Christology based on Theodore of Mopsuestia (which was interpreted as “Nestorian” from outside), whereas in the West, it was leading to a momentous confrontation on the one or two natures of Christ, which resulted in a schism between Antioch and Alexandria.

⁶² This Council is considered the best documented. Only the following few works that deal specifically with the reception of the Council resolutions by the Armenian and the South Caucasian Churches in general shall be listed: Price and Whitby (2009); Nersoyan (2004); Van Oort and Roldanus (1997); Garsoïan (1996: 99–112); Ashjian (1970: 348–362); Sarkissian (1965).

⁶³ For the original text in Latin and Greek of the *Tomus Leonis* see https://www.earlychurchtexts.com/public/leo_tome.htm; for an English translation see <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xi.vii.html>.

⁶⁴ The Armenian bishops who signed the Council documents as named in the sources are John of Sebastia (Armenia I), Constantine of Melitene (Armenia II) and Manasses of Theodosiopolis. Cf. Stopka (2016: 64); Inglisian (1953: 361–362); Garsoïan (1999: 128).

⁶⁵ The Iranian Massagetae had settled northeast of Albania, on the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea.

3.2 The “Albanian Church Council” of Ałuen (end of 5th century)

Under these circumstances, it may seem surprising that the “Albanian” Council of Ałuen took place exactly during this turbulent period, at the end of the 5th century. Trusting Movses Kalankatuatsi (I, 26),⁶⁶ this council was assembled by King Vachagan III (485–510) of Albania at his summer residence in Ałuen, south of the Albanian capital Kapitalak (Gabalala), as a secular-ecclesiastical council with 18 clerics and nobles from Artsakh and Utik. The 21 canons of this council entered into Armenian church history as “King Vachagan’s canons”.⁶⁷ The Council was intended to secure the power of the Church and settle its disputes with the nobility. Due to the similarities in content with the Armenian councils of Ashtishat (356) and Shahapivan (444) and the differing life dates of the bishops mentioned, critical research tends to place this Council not in the time of Vachagan III but earlier, in the middle of the 5th century⁶⁸ or even in the time of Vachagan II (375–385).⁶⁹ The Council could thus have taken place already in the 4th century, in the temporal vicinity of the Councils of Ashtishat, which particularly reflect the tensions between secular and spiritual leadership but whose acts have not been preserved. In times of serious territorial threats from Sassanids and Massageteans and of the religious struggles with Zoroastrians and “Nestorian” Christians, why should the Church of Albania have met to discuss “administrational” issues? Regardless of the question of its exact dating, this Council is another evidence of the Armenian-Albanian unity and as such definitely of great importance.

Facing this geopolitical background, one should not expect a real discussion of the questions of “Nestorianism” and the *Henotikon* issued by the Byzantine emperor Zeno in 482 before the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th century. Nestorianism was more widespread in the Sassanid-controlled countries, while adherers of Chalcedon enjoyed imperial support in Constantinople.⁷⁰ In the 480s, political turmoil ruled in the South Caucasus or, as Maghakia Ormanean aptly put it, at a time when Vahan Mamikonean himself fought for his faith on the battlefield of Nersehat and Catholicos Yovhannes Mandakuni supported this war, there was not really the time to deal with religious disputes.⁷¹

66 Emin (1860a: 65–69); Dowsett (1961a: 50–54); Bedrosian (2010: 40–43). Cf. Ayyvazyan (2002: 44).

67 Hakobyan (1971: 91–100).

68 Akinean discusses the dating of this council in detail (1949: 91–97).

69 Hovhannisyan (1967: 265–274).

70 Stopka (2016: 64–65); Petrosyan (2016: 113–114).

71 Ormanean (1959: 255): “Ժամանակակցութիւնները դիտելով կը գտնենք, թէ Հենոտիկոնի հրատարակութիւնը տեղի ունեցաւ, ճիշդ այն միջոցին երբ Վահան Մամիկոնեան, ոգի ի բռին կը մտքառէր հաւատոյ պաշտպանութեան համար ներսէհապատի ճակատամարտին մէջ, Մանդակունին

4 The sixth century itch: the vertical separation – hierarchically two, dogmatically one?

The acceptance and final enforcement of the Antichalcedonian doctrine by the Armenian Church will not be discussed in detail here. Instead, the focus is set on the question of dogmatic unity or disunity between the Armenian Church and the Church of Albania. This aims at answering two questions: first, whether the “Nestorian threat” in the Persian Empire represented a more burning issue for the South Caucasian miaphysite Churches than the *Henotikon* and was therefore primarily treated; and second, whether the *Henotikon* was confirmed by the end of the 5th century at the Council of Vagharshapat or at Dvin in 506 or 555. The latter question has already been discussed in detail.⁷² The most important sources for the two councils in Dvin (506 and 555) are the *Book of Letters*⁷³ and the associated reports of Yovhannes of Odzun,⁷⁴ Movses Kałankatuatsi,⁷⁵ Yovhannes Draskhan-

ալ մեծ պաշարին կը հովանաւորէր, կրօնական վէճերով զբաղելու աստնը չէր.”; cf. Garsoian (1999: 503).

72 Some researchers, such as M. Chamchean, A. Ter-Mikelean, M. Ormanean, V. Inglisian and K. Sarkissian plead for an official rejection of the Council of Chalcedon by Babken I in his Council of Dvin. Others like N. Garsoian or G. Garitte argue on the basis of foreign sources such as the *Narratio de rebus Armeniae*, the treatise of Arsen Sapareli, Photius’ letter to Catholicos Zakaria etc. that this only happened during the Second Council in 555. Furthermore, Garsoian is among others of the opinion that Babken I convened two councils, namely one in 491 in Vagharshapat to receive the *Henotikon* and the second in 505/6 against Nestorianism. She concludes that the 6th century documents, especially those of Babken I, represent “plutôt une forme extrême de la doctrine attribuée à Nestorius et encore plus à son maître Théodore de Mopsueste” (Garsoian 1996: 111). Cf. Garsoian (2010: 497–506).

73 According to Garsoian (1999: 167–194; 2010: 497–506), eleven documents of the *Girk’ T’it’oc’* refer to the two councils at Dvin. For the First Council, we have two letters: a) the letter of the Armenians to the orthodox in Persia, 1st letter of Catholicos Babken I (*Girk* 1901: 41–47); b) the letter of the Armenians to the orthodox in Persia, 2nd letter of Catholicos Babken I, dated around 508 (*Girk* 1901: 48–51). The first letter was discovered and recognised as Acts of the First Council of Dvin by Karapet Ter-Mkrtchean only towards the end of the 19th century. For the Second Council on Dvin 555 (*Girk* 1901: 52–77) we may mention c) the letter of the orthodox Syrians to the Armenians (*Girk* 1901: 52–54); d) the response to the letter of the Syrians by Catholicos Nerses (*Girk* 1901: 55–58); e) the letter of the Syrian deacon Abdisho to Catholicos Nerses (*Girk* 1901: 59–61); f) the second letter of Abdisho to Catholicos Nerses about the anathema of the Nestorians (*Girk* 1901: 62–65); g) the third letter of Abdisho about Nestorianism (*Girk* 1901: 66–67); h) the fourth letter of Abdisho about an anathema of all heretics (*Girk* 1901: 68–69); and i) the letter of shame from Catholicos Nerses to the bishops (*Girk* 1901: 70–71).

74 *Girk* (1901: 220–233).

75 Kałankatuatsi relates in his book II, ch. 47 about the First Council of Dvin: Իսկ յետ հարիւր և ութսուն ամ լցելոյ հաւատարմն Հայոց՝ յարագս ժողովոյն Քաղկեդոնի եղև հանդէս ժողովոց ՚ի

akertsi,⁷⁶ Ukhtanes of Sebaste,⁷⁷ Stepanos of Taron,⁷⁸ Samuel of Ani,⁷⁹ Stepanos Orbelian,⁸⁰ and others, including also foreign-language sources such as the Greek *Narratio de rebus Armeniae*⁸¹ as well as scattered Georgian and Syrian sources.

Ժամանակս Բաբկենի Հայոց կաթողիկոսի: Յոյնք և ամենայն Իտալիա, Հայք և Աղուանք և Վիրք միաբանեալ նզովեցին զԺողովն Քաղկեդոնի և զտումարն Ատոնի հրամանաւ բարեպաշտ թագաւորացն Հռոմոց՝ Ջենոնի և Անաստասայ: (Emin 1860a: 214) – “180 years after the conversion of Armenia, a council concerning the Council of Chalcedon was convoked at the time of the katolikos Babgēn I. Greece, all of Italy, Armenia, Albania and Iberia unanimously anathematized the foul council of Chalcedon and the epistle of Leo, in accordance with the order of the blessed kings of the Romans, Zeno and Anastasius” (Dowsett 1961a: 173–174).

76 Draskhanakertsi noted that in addition to Armenian bishops, also bishops from Iberia and Albania had been present at the Council which had shared the *Henotikon* and anathematized the Council of Chalcedon (1912: 62): Եւ այսպէս յայտմ ժամանակի մի հաւատ բարեպաշտութեան առ հասարակ հաստատեալ լինէր յաշխարհին Հռոմոց, Հայոց, Վրաց և Աղուանից՝ հաւատար ամենեցունց... 'ի բաց ընկեցեալ զԺողովն Քաղկեդոնի: – “And thus at that time, there was unity of faith in the lands of the Greeks, the Armenians and the Albanians, who had severally anathematized and rejected the council of Chalcedon” (Maksoudian 1987: 92).

77 Ukhtanes (1871: ch. II / 32–33, 57–59); Brosset (1870: 310–311); Arzoumanian (2008: 79–80). Just like Kałankatuatsi's, Ukhtanes' report concerns only the First Council at Dvin.

78 Stepanos Taronetsi (1885: 82–83); Greenwood (2017: 150–151). Taronetsi reports on the Second Council but does not mention Albania.

79 Ter-Mikelean (1893: 274). Samuel Anetsi refers to the council of Babken I and to the joint, unanimous anathema of the Council of Chalcedon and the *Tomus Leonis* by Greece, Italy, Armenia, Albania and Iberia.

80 Emin (1861: 332): Դարձեալ ժողով 'ի Նոր քաղակի՝ Հայոց և Ասորոց ուղղափառաց, վասն չար աղանդոցն նետորականացն, որ 'ի Իուսիկս և վասն կարգաց եկեղեցոյ Ֆարգեհիւ կաթողիկոսի Հայոց, ընդ որում է, երանելին Մուշէ՝ մետրապօլիտ Սիւնեաց: Դարձեալ ժողով 'ի Դուին յաւուրս նեսիսի կաթողիկոսի, որ վասն քաղկեդոնական սահմանին և նետորի աղանդոցն, որ 'ի պղծալից վանքն Գրիգորի Մանաթիհր Ըռաթկի. ընդ որում էր երանելի մետրապօլիտն Սիւնեաց Պետրոս՝ աշակերտ Մովսիսի քերթողահօրն: – “2. Another council was convened in Nor kaghak' [Vagharshapat] by Armenian and Assyrian orthodox regarding the evil heresy of the Nestorians in Khuzestan, and about the orders of the Church. [The meeting was led] by Babken, kat'oghikos of the Armenians, and [was attended] by the venerable Mushe', metropolitan of Siwnik'. 3. The council held in Dvin in the time of Kat'oghikos Nerse's about the definitions of Chalcedon and the heresy of Nestor [being practised] in the loathsome monastery of Grigor Manazhir E'r'azhik. Present there was Petros, the metropolitan of Siwnik', a student of Movse's K'ert'oghahayr” (Bedrosian 2015: 230). Cf. Shahnazareants (1859: II, 201) and the French translation by Brosset (1864: 252).

81 This text describes the relationship between the Armenian and Greek Churches from a pro-Chalcedonian position, thus also the rejection of the Council of Chalcedon in Dvin, as well as isolated attempts at a reunion in the 6th and 7th centuries. It was originally written in about 700 in Armenian. The original text is lost, today only the Greek translation *Diegesis* from before the 11th century is preserved. The text was known to Armenian authors and had probably also served as a model, e.g. for the Armenian version of the letter from Photius to Zakaria. Even Catholicos Arsen Sapareli of Mtskheta used it as a basis for his treatise on the Armenian-Georgian schism in the 9th century. Cf. Thomson (2005b); Garitte (1952: 16); Aleksidze (2018: 91).

4.1 The First Council of Dvin (506)

Catholicos Babken I Otmsetsi (490–516) convened the First Council of Dvin in 506 in the presence of many bishops of the Armenian, Georgian, and Albanian as well as the Syriac Church. After having clarified the (miaphysite) Christological position of his Church, Babken I writes in his first letter to the orthodox Christians of Persia:⁸² “This is the faith of the Romans, and of us Armenians and of the Georgians and of the Albanians”,⁸³ and reiterates a few lines later that “the Romans, and we, the Armenians, and the Georgians, and the Albanians, do not perceive this blasphemy, do not accept it, do not convey it, and do not believe it, but anathematise it.”⁸⁴ In his second letter, he confirms that the beliefs he describes are in harmony with those of the Georgians and Albanians.⁸⁵ This consensus in the rejection of “Nestorianism” is also discernible in the letter of the Syriac Bishop Simeon of Beth Arsham: “Now also 33 bishops of the place of Gurzan along with their kings and leaders as well as 32 bishops of Greater Armenia of the Persians with their governors and the rest of the orthodox bishops and Christian kings, from Constantine, the true believing king, to emperor Anastasius, alive today, have followed and confirmed these things”.⁸⁶ Unanimous rejection of the Nestorian doctrines among Armenians, Georgians and Albanians is also testified by the above-mentioned Armenian chroniclers.

4.2 The Second Council of Dvin (555)

In 555, Catholicos Nerses II Bagrewandetsi convened the Second Council of Dvin,⁸⁷ at which the “Union Pact” was decided, the teaching of Nestorius anathematised,

⁸² The dogmatic letter was addressed to the Persians at the request of the Syrians participating in the Council. It was intended to show that the religious freedom for “Romans”, Armenians, Georgians and Albanians in the Persian Empire granted by the new king Kavad should also apply to the Syrian miaphysites, since they shared the same faith and did not belong to the “Nestorian” Syrians. Cf. Garsoïan (1998: 438–466); Stopka (2016: 69).

⁸³ *Girk* (1901: 45): Զայս հաւատ Հորոմք և մեք Հայք և Վիրք և Աղուանք ունիմք.

⁸⁴ *Girk* (1901: 46): (...) եթե Հոռոմք և մեք Հայք, և Վիրք, և Աղուանք, գհայհոյութիւնս գայս ոչ ընկալաք, և ոչ ընդունիմք, և ոչ հողրդիմք, և ոչ հաւատամք, այլ և նզովեմք.

⁸⁵ *Girk* (1901: 51): (...) Վրաց և Աղուանից միաբանութեամք իւրաքանչիւր աշխարհի գրով.

⁸⁶ Butts (2022: 315).

⁸⁷ The most important sources on the Second Council of Dvin and its resolutions are Yovhannes of Odzun (*Girk* 1901: 221), Stepanos Taronetsi (1885: 82–83), Kirakos Gandzaketsi (Melik-Ohanjanean 1961: 60–61), Stepanos Orbelian (Emin 1861: 239–334), and Vardan Areveltsi (1862: 84); cf. also the letters in *Girk* (1901: 52 and 77) mentioned above as well as the *Narratio* (Garitte 1952: 130–175).

and the Council of Chalcedon rejected. Moreover, the community with the pro-Chalcedonian Christians was abolished.⁸⁸ This implies that the Armenian Church was still in dogmatic unity and communion with the Albanians and Georgians in the second half of the 6th century, after the Second Council of Dvin. In c. 564, Pseudo-Zacharias-Rhetor emphasises, based on Zacharias of Mytilene’s (465–536) Greek writing:⁸⁹ “Along with them also in this northern region are five believing nations, who have 24 bishops, and a *catholicos* in Dvin, a large city in Persian Armenia. The name of their *catholicos* was Gregory, a righteous and renowned man. (...) Arran is a country in the territory of Armenia, with its own language, a believing and baptised nation, and they have a prince who is subject to the king of Persia.”⁹⁰ Other Syriac sources of the 6th century report on the Armenian Church under Persian oppression, but without mentioning Albania or Iberia.⁹¹

The “nationalism” of the Christian communities of the South Caucasus gradually began to take shape, even though the easternmost part of historical Armenia, i.e. Artsakh and Utik, had just been annexed to the Albanian Marzpanate.⁹²

The first dogmatic discrepancies are noticeable in the correspondence between Catholicos Yovhannes II Gabeleantsi (558–574)⁹³ and the Albanian bishop

88 Stopka (2016: 73–75). Nerses adopted the official title of Catholicos, thereby emphasising the independence of his Church in Persian Armenia from the Patriarchate in Constantinople on the one hand and the Patriarchate of the Church of the East in Seleucia-Ctesiphon on the other hand. 37 canons were handed down at the Council under the title “Canon of Catholicos Nerses and Bishop Nershapuh Mamikonean” and included in the lawbook (Hakobyan 1964: 475–490). The Council also marks the (subsequent) beginning of the Armenian era. It further includes the formula “You were crucified for us” added to the Trisagion (cf. below) as attested in the reply of the Armenian Catholicos Nerses and Bishop Nershapuh Mamikonean to the Syrians (*Girk* 1901: 55–58, here 56), and also in the *Narratio* (Garitte 1952: 168).

89 On Zacharias Rhetor cf. Rist (1998; 2002).

90 Greatrex (2011: 446–447); cf. also Hamilton and Brooks (1899: 327–328); Melkonyan (1976: 221–317).

91 This includes the *Chronicle of Arbela* by Mēšihā-Zēkā (Kawerau 1985; Armenian translation by Melkonyan 1976: 31–118) and the “Church History” by John of Ephesus (English translation by Payne Smith 1860; Armenian translation by Melkonyan 1976: 321–460).

92 Nersoyan (2004: 9). Hakobyan (1987: 139–140, 275) argues that by politically merging the eastern provinces of Armenia (Artsakh and Utik) with Albania and by later moving the seat of government and the catholicosate to Partaw in Utik, the Albanian church was ethnically much more exposed to Armenian assimilation. A large part of the population of these regions were Armenians. This assimilation could also have aggravated the lack of assertiveness of the written Albanian language, but hardly prevent the dogmatic quarrels of the 6th and 7th centuries.

93 Apparently, Yovhannes II, despite all his efforts, could not keep either the Albanians, the Georgians or the Syunetsis from moving away from the Armenian Church. His last years of tenure were additionally marked by his struggle against the renewed efforts of the new Marzpan Suren to re-establish Zoroastrianism. In 571, Yovhannes II went with Vardan Mamikonean to

of Partaw and later Catholicos of Albania, Abas (552–596), when it comes to the Catholicos's order to drive the heretics out of Albania and to the inclusion of the *xac'ec'ar* formula (“You who were crucified for us”) into the Trisagion.⁹⁴ The latter firmly refused, as did Bishop Vrtanes of Syunik.⁹⁵ Abas, who had been ordained in 552 by the predecessor of Yovhannes II in Partaw, succeeded in hierarchically separating from the Armenian Church with the support of the Sassanid king. By consequence, Abas established the seat not only of the Archbishop in Partaw but of the first Catholicos of Albania. He also received a letter from John IV, Patriarch of Jerusalem (570–593), who urged him to remain faithful to the “correct”, i.e. dyophysite doctrine, and thereby also to secure access to the holy places in Jerusalem.⁹⁶ There are some speculations that the Albanian monasteries in the Holy

Constantinople to seek help from Byzantium against the Sassanids but was forced to accept the Council of Chalcedon. He never returned to Armenia (cf. Ayvazyan 2002: 615).

94 Yovhannes II addressed his letter (*Girk* 1901: 81–84) to Abas, Bishop of Partaw, and other Albanian bishops; cf. *Girk* (1901: 83): Այսպէս հաւատամբ և երկապագեմք և փառաբանելով ասեմք. Սուրբ Աստուած, սուրբ և հզոր, սուրբ և անմահ, որ խաչեցար վասն մեր, ողորմեա մեզ: Իսկ զոչ խոստովանողսն այսպէս նդովեցին սուրբ հարքնձ (...) զայնպիսին ի տանց և ի սահմանաց ձերոց հայրածել և զմահաբեր վարդապէտութիւն նոցա ամենեկին ոչ առնել արժանի լսելութեան. – “So we will bow down in faith and glorify, ‘Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, you who were crucified for us, have mercy on us.’ And the holy fathers anathematised those who did not confess in such a way” (cf. also n. 87 above). Movses Kalankatuatsi reports the correspondence with Abas in his book II, ch. 7 (Emin 1860a: 94–97; Dowsett 1961a: 72–74) and gives information about Abas in III, 24 (Emin 1860a: 275): Տէր Աբաս, որ ՚ի սկզբան թուականիս Հայոց փոխեաց զաթոռ հայրապետութեանն ՚ի Զորայ ՚ի Պարտաւ՝ կալեալ ամս քառասուն և չորս, յեպիսկոպոսութենէն Մեծիրանց կոչեցալ: Առ սովա կալան սովորութիւն գրել ՚ի պարտակի թղթոյն «Աղուանից, Լինաց և Զորայ կաթողիկոսի»: Եւ առ սա գրեցին ՚ի Ժողովոյն Դունայ՝ ասել «Մի բնութիւն աստուածութեան և մարդկութեանն Քրիստոսի», և յաւելուլ ՚ի Սուրբ Աստուածն «անմահ և խաչեցար»: – “Lord Abas, who at the beginning of the Armenian Era transferred the patriarchal throne from Çolay to Partaw; summoned from the bishopric of Mec Iranck, he was patriarch for forty-four years. In his time, it became the custom to write ‘Catholicos of Albania, Lp’ink’ and Çolay’ on the covers of letters. They wrote to him from the Council of Dwin to the effect that he should teach the one nature of the godhead and humanity of Christ and should add the words ‘in holy God immortal, who wert crucified’ [to the Trisagion]” (Dowsett 1961a: 228–229). Moreover, Movses discusses in II, 8 the expulsion of heretics from Albania (Emin 1860a: 98; Dowsett 1961a: 74–75). Cf. also Svazyan (2019: 210–211).

95 In his letter to bishop Vrtanes and prince Mihr-Artashir (*Girk* 1901: 78–80), Yovhannes II writes (*Girk* 1901: 78): Դուք ինքնին գիտեք զանհնարին վտանգս, որ այժմ յաշխարհս մեր եհաս. – “You know all too well the great danger that has reached our country.” Cf. Svazyan (2019: 214).

96 Ter-Mkrtschean (1896: 252–256). This letter has only been handed down in Armenian and surprises with its sharp tone. The discoverer of the letter, Vardan Ter-Mkrtschean noted (1896: 215): “Իսկ Հայոց հայրածելու մասին այնպիսի սգեղ ինքնաբաբականութեամբ սուած նկարագրութիւնը մի շատ հետաքրքիր տեղեկութիւն է, որ ցոյց է տալիս, թե ինչպես վաղ և ինչպիսի ընդարձակ սահմաններում է սկսուել քրիստոնեայ հաւատակիցներին կողմից հալածանքը հայոց դէմ :” – “And the description of the persecution of Armenians with such ugly self-sufficiency is a very interesting

Land might have become Chalcedonian by the time of John IV and that these monasteries also exerted some pressure on the Catholicos of Albania.⁹⁷

This new dogmatic disagreement should, however, not be considered solely as nationalistic aspiration; the Armenian Church suffered even from an inner-Armenian schism due to the separation of the influential diocese of Syunik. After the end of the Byzantine-Sassanid War in 572–591, the direct rule of the Byzantine Empire was extended to all western parts of Armenia. Soon Emperor Maurice (582–602) decided to increase his political control throughout the Caucasus region and gained support from the local pro-Chalcedonian faction of the Armenian Church.

4.3 The “Western Armenian” Council of Theodosiopolis (593)

In 593, a regional council of Western Armenian bishops was summoned in the city of Theodosiopolis. The participating bishops confessed the Chalcedonian definition; however, the pugnacious Armenian Catholicos Movses II Eghivardetsi (574–604) stayed away from the bishop’s council.⁹⁸ Yovhannes III Bagaranetsi (–610/615) was appointed as the Chalcedonian counter-Catholicos with residence in Avan; thus dyophysitism was also officially established in Sassanid Armenia.⁹⁹ Not only

piece of information that shows how early and on what large scale the persecution of Armenians by Christian fellow believers began.” In this letter, the Jerusalem (Greek) Patriarch John IV urges Abas not to unite dogmatically with the Armenians. Even more, he demands from Abas to expel the Armenian heretics (seduced by the Syrian Abdisho) from the monasteries in Albania, as he himself had already done in Jerusalem; cf. Ter-Mkrtchean (1896: 252): ... *զորս ես նզովեցի եւ հալածեցի եւ քաղաքս դեռ ալրէր զվանսն մի հայոց* – “... whom I anathematized and chased out while one of the city’s Armenian monasteries was set on fire” (Terian 2020b: 18). For a Latin translation of the letter cf. Vardanian (1912: 64–77).

97 Cf. Thomson (1985) and Chapter 8 of this Handbook (Tchekhanovets) as to the Albanian monasteries in the Holy Land.

98 Movses’s open rejection of this synod of bishops has become famous through the secondary tradition from the Greek *Diegesis* and Arsen Sapareli: “I shall not cross the river Azat to eat baked bread of the Greeks, nor will I drink their warm wine” (Garitte 1952: 243; cf. Stopka 2016: 79). Here the Armenian Catholicos relates to the leavened bread and the wine mixed with hot water (Gk. ζέον ‘boiling’) used in the communion of dyophysite Greeks (but not of the miaphysite Armenians).

99 Cf. the *History* by Sebeos, ch. 19 (Abgaryan 1979: 91): *Բաժանեցաւ ապա և աթոռ կաթողիկոսութեանն յերկուս. անուն միոյն Մովսէս, և միւսոյն՝ Յովհանն: Մովսէս ի Պարսից կողմանէ, և Յովհանն՝ Յունաց:* – “Then the see of the Catholicosate was divided into two: one named Movsēs and the other Yovhan – Movsēs in the Persian sector and Yovhan in the Greek” (Thomson 1999: 37). Cf. also Movses Kałankatuatsi (II, 48; Emin 1860a: 217): *Եւ գՀայս Պարսիկք եւ Յոյնք բաժանեալ էին. եւ սէր Մովսէս էր յաթոռն Սրբոյն Գրիգորի՝ ի Դուինի. եւ կողմանք Յունաց հակառակ նմա նստուցին*

the political border between the Persian Empire and Byzantium had thus moved very far into Central Armenia¹⁰⁰ but also the dogmatic border. Because of this unusual and unfortunate schism, Bishop Petros of Syunik preferred to have the holy Myrrh consecrated and the bishops of Syunik ordained by the miaphysite Catholicos of Albania until the schism was over.¹⁰¹ In fact, all successors of Petros on the throne of the Metropolitan of Syunik, i.e. Gigan, Vrtanes, Grigor and Kristapor were ordained by the Catholicos of Albania.¹⁰² This fact proves a certain autonomy of the Albanian Church and a hierarchical detachment from the Armenian Church, supported by the cohesion with the Metropolitan of Syunik. At the same time the episcopal ordination and consecration of myrrh attests a common miaphysite doctrine and dogmatic unity of the Armenian Church with the Church of Albania.

5 The 7th century – a sporadic horizontal division: different in dogma and in hierarchy

5.1 The Third Council of Dvin (607)

A renewed outbreak of war in Persia in the early 7th century indirectly ended also the period of rift in the Armenian Church. On the initiative of King Khos-

գթովհան ոմն մերձ առ նա: – “The Persians and the Greeks had divided Armenia and Lord Movsēs was on the throne of St. Gregory at Dvin, while a certain Yohan was set up close by on the Greek side in opposition” (Dowsett 1961a: 176).

100 The river Azat acted as a natural border: on the left Persarmenia, with the Catholicosate of Dvin not far from it, and on the right the Byzantine Empire with Avan.

101 Movses Kalankatuatsi (II, 48; Emin 1860a: 219): *Իսկ զերկուանալն հայրապետութեան խոտեցին տեարքն Սիւնեաց, եւ ոչ հաւանեցան ընդ մի ոք յերկուցն՝ հրամանաւ եպիսկոպոսին իւրեանց առաքինւոյն Պետրոսի, որ հասեալ ՚ի վախճան՝ պատուէր ետ վիճակին իւրում առնուլ ձեռնադրութիւն յնորանից եւ զմիւտն օրհնութեան՝ մինչեւ միասցի աթոռն Սրբոյն Գրիգորի*: – “During this schism of the patriarchate, however, the people of Siwnik’ scorned it and submitted to neither side following the command of their bishop, the virtuous Petros, who, when he died, instructed his diocese to accept consecration and the holy chrism from the Albanians until such time as the see of St. Gregory should be reunited” (Dowsett 1961a: 176). Cf. also Stepanos Orbelian (Emin 1861: 65): *եւ սակս աշտարիսի վիճմանց հրամայեաց տէր Պետրոս յետս կալ յարմկէ անտի և յնորանից առնուլ զձեռնադրութիւն և զձէթ, մինչև խաղաղասցի խոտութիւնն, զոր և արարին իսկ*: – “It was because of such contention that the blessed Petros stood back from this noise and disorder and took ordination and chrism from Aghuania, until the disturbance calmed down” (Bedrosian 2015: 50). Cf. further Garitte (1952: 212); Akinean (1903–1904); Mahé (1993: 387–388); Aleksidze (2018: 121); Stopka (2016: 78–79).

102 This is also mentioned in Stepanos Orbelian’s *History* who in his chapter 25 reports that Vrtanes, Simon and their successors Grigor and Kristapor had received episcopal ordination by

row II (590–628), a third Council took place in Dvin in 607, primarily to elect a new Catholicos, secondarily to clarify the hierarchical relationship with the Churches of Iberia and Albania. Presumably the united rejection of the *Tomus Leonis* was not the primary aim. In the course of this Third Council of Dvin, at which Abraham Albatanetsi was elected Catholicos (607–615), the bishop of Syunik, Kristapor, also decided to return to the bosom of the Armenian Church. Thus, at the beginning of the 7th century the Armenian Church was reunited.¹⁰³ Even more, according to Sebeos, Marzpan Smbat IV Bagratuni and Khosrow II programmatically proclaimed miaphysitism.¹⁰⁴ Although Catholicos Abraham had no Chalcedonian rivals among his own ranks, a counter-movement emerged from the Georgian – and presumably also the Albanian – Church. In fact, the Third Council of Dvin has been widely labelled as the starting point of the separation between the Armenian and Georgian Churches, based on a dispute between Abraham I and his former deacon, Kyrion, Catholicos of Iberia.¹⁰⁵ In recent research, the contradictory source situation is examined in particular, and the role of the Albanian church in this separation is also examined more closely.¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, the

the catholicos of Albania. According to his chapter 26, the ordination of the metropolitans of Syunik was terminated with the consecration of Davit, the successor of Kristapor, by the Armenian Catholicos Abraham.

103 According to the sources, no representatives of the Churches of Iberia and Albania took part in this Council. Ukhtanes writes in his book II, ch. 35 (1871: II, 61): *Իսկ Կիւրոն ոչ եղև կոչեցեալ ի հարսանիսն. քանզի խոտան գտաւ սակս երկուցն կորստեան, որ հասեալ էին նմա ի ցաւոցն՝ զոր յառաջագոյն յղացեալ էր, որով և ծնաւ զանօրէնութիւն: Իսկ Կաթողիկոսն Աղուանից, որ յայնժամ Արք եպիսկոպոս էր Կաթողիկոսին Հայոց, հակառակութեամբ ինչ իրիք ոչ եկն ի ժողովն, զոր ապասացից զպատճառն յետոյ: – “Kyrion was not invited to the nuptial, due to his despicable damnation caused by the pangs of his earlier conception which gave birth to his impiety. As for the Catholicos of Albania, who was an archbishop in relation to the Catholicos of Armenia, for some conflict or another, did not attend the council, the reason of which I shall state later” (Arzoumanian 2008: 82).*

104 In his chapter 46, Sebeos quotes Khosrow’s order (Abgaryan 1976: 151): *Յորոյ վերայ հրամանս ետ արքայ խորով, եթէ ամենայն քրիստոնեայք, որ ընդ իմով իշխանութեամբս են՝ հաւատ զՀայոցն կալցին: – “All Christians who are under my authority should hold the faith of Armenia” (Thomson 1999: 118). Cf. also Svazyan (2019: 241–242).*

105 Aleksidze (2018: 100–101); Svazyan (2019: 194–195); Petrosyan (2016: 132–134); Stopka (2016: 81–82); Garsoïan (1999: 516–583). Cf. Mahé (1996); Akinean (1910).

106 In the opinion of Aleksidze (2018), Garsoïan (1999 and 1998), and others, the early tradition based on the *Book of Letters* contradicts the later reports by Movses Kalankatuatsi as well as, especially, Ukhtanes and Stepanos Orbelian. Cf. Movses (II, 47; Emin 1860a: 214): *Եւ յետ ութսուն և եօթն ամաց անցելոց ՚ի ժամանակս Աբրահամու Հայոց կաթողիկոսի բաժանեցան Վիրք ՚ի Հայոց միաբանութենէ ՚ի ձեռն Կիւրիոնի, այլ և Յույնք և Իտալիա ընդ նոսա: Իսկ Աղուանք ոչ քակտեցան յուղղափառութենէ և ՚ի միաբանութենէ Հայոց. որոց շրջաբերական թղթով վասն Կիւրիոնի դիմադարձութեանն Աբրահամ՝ և յարգս ամենևին ՚ի բաց կտրելոյն գնա սրով Հոգույ. – “Eighty-seven years later, in the days of Abraham, catholicos of Armenia, the Georgians separated from*

sources do not speak about a possible stronger dogmatic orientation of the Georgians towards Byzantium (or Jerusalem?) as a trigger for the separation, but rather about a hierarchical dispute initiated by the discussion about the clerical hierarchy within the so far united Churches of the South Caucasus.¹⁰⁷ This dispute, which subsequently led to the Armenian-Georgian schism, is preceded by an extensive exchange of letters, which had started even long before the election of Abraham. It just seems to have taken a harder stance in the lengthy written discussion.¹⁰⁸ As a result of this quarrel, in his sharply worded pastoral letter,

the Armenians through the accursed Kiwrion, and Greece and Italy with them; Albania, however, did not abandon orthodoxy or communion with Armenia. Abraham, in an encyclical concerning Kiwrion's disobedience, denounced him to all peoples and cut him off with the sword of the spirit" (Dowsett 1961a: 173–174); Stepanos, ch. 68 (Emin 1861: 332) / 69 (Shahnazareants 1859: 201–202): *Դարձեալ ժողով 'ի Դուին, երկիցս անգամ, Աբրահամաւ կաթողիկոսիւ, որ վասն բաժանման Վրաց պղծոյն Կիւրիոնի և գատելոյն Աղուանից, ընդ որում էր սքանչելին Գրիստափոր՝ մետրապօլիտ Սիւնեաց ալլովք աթոռակալօքն Հայոց, յորում ամենեկին բարձին զընտանութիւն և զխառնումն քաղկեդոնականաց և ահագին նգովիւք փակեցին մեզ անհուպ և անհաղորդ մնալ նոցին:* – “The third council at Dvin under Kat'oghikos Abraham regarding the separation of the Iberians/Georgians [from the Armenian Church] by the vile Kiwrion, and the separation of the Aghuans. This [council] was under the direction of the marvellous K'ristap'or, metropolitan of Siwnik', along with other holders of sees of the Armenians. In this meeting they completely eliminated any familiarity or mixing with Chalcedonians and, under fearsome anathemas, prevented [the Armenian Church] from any closeness or communion with them” (Bedrosian 2015: 230).

107 Cf. the testimony of Movses Kalankatuatsi (ch. II, 48) on the dispute instigated by the Greeks about the 9-rank hierarchy in the Armenian Church (Emin 1860a: 217–218): *Կարգեն զԱբրահամ պատրիարզ, և զԱղուանիցն՝ արքեպիսկոպոս, և զՎրացն՝ մետրոպօլիտ: Խեռեցախ Վրացն, որում Կիւրիոն կոչէին՝ և հակառակութեան բերէր վճիռ. իսկ սուրբ հայրապետն Աբրահամ ասէր, լինել յառաջահավատ քան զՎիրս՝ զԱղուանս, և նոցա անկ է նպիսկոպոսպետութիւն: Յայսմ մաքառուման է 'ի խնդիր ուղղափառ հաւատոյ՝ դարձան Վիրք և եղեն քաղքեղոնիսք:* – “... ranked Abraham as patriarch, the head of the Albanian Church as archbishop, and the head of the Georgian Church as metropolitan. The head of the Georgian Church, Kiwrion by name, rebelled and declared his opposition, but the patriarch Abraham stated that the Albanians had preceded the Georgians in the faith and that the rank of archbishop fell to them. As a result of this dispute the Georgians turned from the orthodox faith and became Chalcedonians” (Dowsett 1961a: 176). Ukhtanes almost repeats the same but adds (II, 63; 1871: 120) ... *ի խնդիր ուղղափառ հաւատոյ դարձան Վիրք և եղեն Քաղկեդոնիկ ի սաղբելոյ սատանայի եւ Կիւրոնի, միանգամայն և ի կամաց կայսերն Մուրկայ, և (ի) Յունական գորավարացն գրգռեալ լինէր լիրբն այն Կիւրոն՝ խնդրել զգահեղեցութիւնն իւր ի վերայ Աղուանից:* – “... the Georgians went astray and became chalcedonians upon the instigation of the Satan and Kyrion, as well as following the will of Emperor Maurice and the Greek generals whom the infamous Kyriion instigated, seeking their support for his supremacy over the Albanians” (Arzoumanian 1988: 123). Later historians have suggested that the Georgian religious policy was strongly influenced by the Georgian monks' intense contact with Greek Chalcedonian clergy in Palestine and Jerusalem. The same is assumed for the Albanians, but less for the Armenians. Cf. Inglisian (1953: 373–375); Mécérian (1965: 62, 727); Thomson (1985: 88).

108 The miaphysite bishop Movses of Tsurtaui expressed his concern about the increasing devotion of the Georgian Catholicos Kyriion in a direct letter to him. This put him in danger; he left

Abraham forbade his people any contact with the Georgians and community of communion with them.¹⁰⁹ Although Movses Kalankatuatsi affirms that this excommunication did not affect the Church of Albania,¹¹⁰ Abraham says in his pas-

Tsurtavi, and about 606 he turned to Vrtanes with the request to confront Kyrion and his princes regarding their Chalcedonian belief. Vrtanes, *locum tenens* during the vacancy of the Catholicosate of Dvin (604–607), first wrote a circular concerning the “threat from Nestorians and Chalcedonians”, which was answered with an unequivocal declaration of unity with Armenia (*Girk* 1901: 130–131). Bishop Movses of Tsurtavi then writes to Vrtanes about the unity of his parish with the Armenian Church (*Girk* 1901: 132). Vrtanes responds to Movses’ letter (*Girk* 1901: 133–134) and writes to Bishop Peter about the incursion of “infidels” into Peter’s diocese (*Girk* 1901: 136–137). He further writes to Kyrion as he has learned of his interest in the Chalcedonian doctrine and warns him (*Girk* 1901: 138–139), followed by some more correspondence between Vrtanes and the Armenian-loyal Movses of Tsurtavi (*Girk* 1901: 140–145.). Only then does the famous correspondence between Abraham and Kyrion start (*Girk* 1901: 164–167, 174–188). Initially, these letters do not show any major dogmatic differences. Kyrion even thinks that Armenians and Georgians have the same faith, although at the same time he affirms the Chalcedonian creed. In fact, Kyrion had been ordained as a miaphysite, but in 600 he converted to the Catholic faith and maintained direct relations with Rome. This is testified to by a letter from Pope Gregory I that bishop Kyrion received in June/July 601. Pope Gregory I informs Kyrion and the other Catholic bishops in Iberia how the returning Nestorians will be received among the Catholics (XI, 52 in Paul and Hartmann 1899: 324–327): *Gregorius I papa Quiricum episcopum et ceteros in Hiberia episcopos catholicos, quo modo Nestoriani ad ecclesiam revertentes in catholicorum numerum recipiantur, docet. Eorum ad se litteras a legatis in urbe Hierosolymitana amissas esse nuntiat*. He tells him that the letters from the envoys in the city of Jerusalem have been lost (cf. Toumanoff 1959: 181). This seems to have been the real background for the tensions, reinforced by the disputes in the southern Georgian diocese of Tsurtavi, which was miaphysite-Armenian. Gregory emphasises that the Georgians represent the faith of Jerusalem and thus refers more to the current situation of the 7th century in Jerusalem which was “ruled” by Chalcedonian Greeks. The Armenians, on the other hand, understood the faith of Jerusalem to be the origin of the Christian faith. The interference of the Patriarch of Jerusalem should not go unnoticed here, nor should the fact of the many contemporary Georgian, Albanian and Armenian monasteries in Palestine; cf. Thomson (1985: 88).

109 The encyclical letter of Catholicos Abraham (*Girk* 1901: 189–195; here 194) is adopted by Movses Kalankatuatsi in his book II, ch. 47 (Emin 1860a: 215): *Մեք գնոյն ի վերայ Վրաց հրամայեցաք, ամենին մի՛ հաղորդել ընդ նոսա, մի՛ յաղաւթս. և մի՛ ի կերակուրս, և մի՛ յըմպելիս, մի՛ ի բարեկամութիւն, մի՛ ի դասկուծիւն, մի՛ աղաւթիւք երթալով ի խաչն որ ի Մցխիթայի տեղաւքն համբաւի. Մի՛ ի Մանգղեաց խաչն և մի՛ ի մեր եկեղեցիս գնոսա ընդունել. Այլ և ամուսնութեամբ ամենևինմբ հեռանալ. Բայց միայն գնել ինչ, եկ կամ գնոյ տալ որպես Հրէից: — “We and the Albanians have laid down the following ordinances concerning Georgia: Do not commune with them in any way whatsoever – in prayer, eating, drinking, friendship, or bringing up children; do not pray at the cross which is said to be at Mcxit’a or the cross of Manglis; do not receive them into our churches and do not intermarry with them, but only trade with them, as with the jews” (Dowsett 1961a: 174). Ukhtanes has an almost identical text in his book II, ch. 70 (1871: 136; Arzumanian 1988: 134). Cf. Brosset (1870: II, 351).*

110 Book II, ch. 47; cf. n. 105 above.

toral letter that his instructions strictly apply to the Albanians as well, in order to shame them and make them return from the wrong path they have already taken.¹¹¹ The later authors, such as Ukhtanes and Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, but also Georgian sources such as Arsen Sapareli's treatise focus on the Georgian-Armenian conflict. Nevertheless, Abraham's statement that the Albanians had already taken the "wrong path" reminds one of the Albanian Catholicos Viroy (596–629). Although Movses Kałankatuatsi, later confirmed by Mkhitar Gosh, depicts Viroy as an upright miaphysite, Sebeos and Stepanos Taronetsi refer to him even as a dyophysite Georgian.¹¹² Viroy was probably only "brought back" to Miaphysitism by the royal decree of Khosrow II in Ctesiphon.¹¹³ This decision could have sealed the dogmatic and hierarchical disputes with Albania, had there not been another power struggle between Byzantium and Persia in the Albanian Marzpanate.

5.2 The Council of Theodosiopolis/Karin (633)

Emperor Heraclius (610–641) struggled for his empire, which was losing influence and ground, especially in the East, but could not hold the region despite a victorious battle. His fears about the loyalty of the miaphysite Christians in Persia prompted him in 633 to convene a council in Theodosiopolis together with the

111 *Girk* (1901: 194): Նոյն հրաման և վասն Աղուանից կացցէ, զի պատկառեալ դարձցին ի թիւր ճանապարհէն. Cf. Aleksidze (2018: 115) and Stopka (2016: 82).

112 Cf. Movses book II, ch. 14 (Bedrosian 2010: 69–75); Mkhitar Gosh's Colophon (Ališan 1901b: 340): Տէր Վիրոյ ամս 19, ալլ սուրբ եւ պայծառացեալ առաքինութեամբ: Հայ թվ. շէ: –“Lord Viroy [reigned as kat'oghikos] for 33 years, a blessed and radiantly virtuous man. Year 75 of the Armenian Era [A.D. 626]” (Bedrosian 2007a); Sebeos, ch. 46 (Abgaryan 1976: 150–151): Իսկ որք զԲաղկեդոնին զՎիրոյ զԱղուանից կաթողիկոսն, եւ ալլ բազում եպիսկոպոսունք ի Յունաց կողմանէ, եւ իշխանք, որք եկեալ էին ի ծառայութիւն Պարսից թագաւորին, որով եւ զգիւքարն իսկ հրամայեաց տալ. – “Those who [supported] Chalcedon included Viroy, Catholicos of Aluank', and many other bishops from Greek territory, and the princes who had submitted to the Persian king. Hence he commanded a disputation to be held” (Thomson 1999: 117). Stepanos Taronetsi (1885: 96): Իսկ որք զԲաղկեդոնին ի վերիոյ [read: Վիրոյ] և Աղուանից կաթողիկոսն, որ էր ի Փայտակարան, ի դրան արքունի, և ալլք ոմանք եպիսկոպոսունք և երիցունք քաղաքաց, որ ի Յունաց կողմանէ, և իշխանք, որք եկեալ էին ի ծառայութիւն թագաւորին Պարսիս, որոց զգիւքարն իսկ հրամայեաց տալ: – “Then he commanded that there should be a disputation with those of Chalcedon, Viroy, the Catholicos of Albania, who was in P'aytakaran, at the royal court, and certain other bishops and priests of cities who were from the sector of the Greeks, and the princes, those who had come into the service of the king of Persia” (Greenwood 2017: 162). Svazyan (2019: 244–250 and 251–256) also discusses the question of the historical dating of Viroy. Cf. Hakobyan (1987: 191). For Viroy's turning into a dyophysite and Georgian cf. Abgaryan (1979: 325 n. 551).

113 Hakobyan (1987: 191–192).

Armenian Catholicos Eyr I of Paraznakert (630–641)¹¹⁴ to attempt a renewed union along the path of monothelitism,¹¹⁵ which ultimately failed and only moved those Armenians closer to the dyophysite Church who were already living in the western Armenian settlement area under Byzantine influence. In the absence of surviving written sources, it is difficult to say whether the Church of Albania was involved in this discussion.¹¹⁶

5.3 The Fourth and Fifth Councils of Dvin (645 and 648)

It also remains unclear whether the desperate attempts of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine II (641–668) to win over the Armenians after the Arab invasion and

114 Ayvazyan (2002: 478–479). Many do not regard this event a church council, since it yielded no canons or decisions, just a decree from Emperor Heraclius. However, Ayvazyan’s encyclopedia contains the “Council Acts of Karin” mentioned in Hakobyan (1971: 244–57), which are attributed to Justinian and Catholicos Sahak (Ayvazyan 2002: 245): *Եւ ժողովեցան բազում եպիսկոպոսք Վրաց և Աղունից ի քաղաքին Թէոդոսուպոլիս եւ միաւորեցան ի հաւատս սրբոց առաքելոցն եւ ի կանոնս սուրբ ժողովոյն (...)* – “And many bishops from Georgia and Albania gathered in the town of Theodosiopolis and were united in the faith of the holy Apostels and the canons of the Holy council (...)” These canons are difficult to classify because they match neither the time of the Council of Theodosiopolis/Karin in 633 nor the lifetimes of Heraclius and Catholicos Eyr I, nor are there timely matches with Justinian I (527–565) and Sahak II (534–539) or Justinian II (685–705) and Sahak III (677–705). In the case of the latter, certain passages in the text would simply not fit into the time.

115 Monothelitism is the doctrine of the “one will”. Because the notion of Christ’s one nature also implied one will, church leaders and Heraclius sought to promote monothelitism as a unified doctrine that could reconcile the divided Christians in the West and East.

116 Cf. Stopka (2016: 84); Garitte (1952: 348–349). Stepanos Taronetsi writes (1885: 87–88): *Իսկ նոքա իբրև սոգէտ գոլով աստուածային գրոց՝ խաբեալ խորամանկութեամբն Յունաց՝ նգովեալ ցամեանայն հերժուածողս բաց ի ժողովոյն Քաղկեդոնի, հարորդեալ նոցա ըստ օրինաց՝ մեծապարգև վառօք դառնային.* – “... then they, being ignorant of the Holy Scriptures, were deceived by the cunning of the Greeks, condemned all heretics except for those of the council of Chalcedon, they took communion in accordance with their rites and returned in magnificent splendor” (Greenwood 2017: 156); Yovhannes Draskhanakertsi (1912: 77): *ապա պատուէր տայ Հայրապետին եզրի երթալ ինել կցորդակից եւ հարորդ Կայսեր ՚ի գործ մասին խոստովանութեան հաւատոյ.* – “The latter ordered the Patriarch Eyr to go and associate with the emperor and enter into communion with him concerning the profession of faith” (Maksoudian 1987: 99); cf. Mahé (1993: 470). Movses Kalankatuatsi does not mention this but reports the community of communion of the bishop of Gardman with Eyr, as well as the story of the hermit Yovsep and his journey to Jerusalem (II, 50 and III, 24; Emin 1860a: 222–224 and 274–278; Bedrosian 2010: 117 and 144). Yovhannes Draskhanakertsi narrates about the dispute between the “bought” Catholicos Eyr and the philosopher-theologian and sacristan of Dvin, Yovhannes Mayragometsi, about Eyr’s contract with Heraclius. Mayragometsi was “in exile” in Gardman until his death; cf. Terian (2020a).

finally mediate a church union at the two church councils of Dvin in 645¹¹⁷ and in 648¹¹⁸ have also affected the Church of Albania. Very little is known about the Catholicoi Yovhan and Ukhtanes of Albania who reigned in this period.¹¹⁹

The Armenian Catholicos Nerses III Tayetsi (641–661) rejected all union offers, even after the invasion of the Byzantine army into Armenia in 652 and despite of a personal visit of the emperor to Dvin and a joint liturgy in Greek rite celebrated there. In 653/4 Theodoros Rshtuni, Marzpan of Armenia, voluntarily acknowledged the Arab suzerainty. The Arabs merged the former Marzpanate of Armenia, Iberia and Albania into the “Ostikanate of Arminiya” (ca. 654–884). Apparently, the political break with the East Romans and the “soft alliance” with the Arabs had a positive effect on the anti-Chalcedonian clergy in Albania, despite the fact that the Church of Albania tried to act independently of that of Armenia. Some clerics were also open to the Chalcedonian doctrine and peered into Georgia. In the 680s, the Catholicos of Albania, Eliazar (680–686)¹²⁰ who is mainly associated with the rediscovery of the cross of Mesrop Mashtots and with the “Christianisation” of the Huns, tried to return to the very roots of Christian

117 The Fourth Council of Dvin entered the Armenian tradition with 12 canons. 17 bishops, princes and nobles took part in it; cf. Hakobyan (1971: 200–215); Ayyvazyan (2002: 277–278).

118 According to Sebeos (ch. 45), all Armenian bishops and princes participated at the Fifth Council (Abygarian 1976: 148): *Եւ ժողովեցան ամենայն եպիսկոպոստունքն եւ նախարարքն Հայոց ի Դուին առ քրիստոսատէր կաթողիկոսն Ներսէս եւ առ բարեպաշտ զաւրավարն Հայոց Թէոփորոս Ռշտունեաց տէրն*: – “All the bishops and nobles of Armenia gathered at Dvin in the presence of the Christ-loving Catholicos Nersēs and the pious Armenian general Tēodoros, lord of Rshtunik” (Thomson 1999: 113). The Armenian doctrine and Christology were finally consolidated at this council, the first three ecumenical councils were acknowledged, Chalcedon was rejected and the dogmatic break with the Georgian Church was also emphatically confirmed. Note that in various secondary sources, these two councils of Dvin appear often combined as the Fourth Council of Dvin (648).

119 Both names are mentioned in the story of the Albanian prince Juansher (637–680), which is only preserved in Movses Kalankatuatsi’s *History*. Juansher, married to the daughter of the prince of Syunik, was torn between alliances with Sassanids, Armenians, Georgians and even Byzantines in the fight against the Arabs. According to Movses he tried to consolidate the position of the Armenian Church in Albania. In the *History*, chapters 18–35 of book II are dedicated to the great prince, only interrupted by the stories about “Bishop Israyel of the Huns” (II, 29 and 33). – Catholicos Ukhtanes was known for his condemnation of the marriage policy of the Albanian princes, see the genealogies in Movses’ book III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 275): *Տէր Ռւխտանէս, ամս տասն և երկու: Սա անէծ զնախարարս Աղուանից վասն ազգաշղախ խառնակման նոցա*: “Lord Uxtanēs, twelve years. He cursed the Albanian *naxarars* on account of their race-polluting marriages, for which they were put to death” (Dowsett 1961a: 229; cf. also Bedrosian 2010: 143). Cf. Svazyan (2019: 260, 266–267).

120 For the dating see Hakobyan (1987: 277); alternatively, Petrosyan proposes 668–682 (2016: 254). Cf. Svazyan (2019: 272–273).

faith.¹²¹ Catholicos Sahak III of Dzorapor (677–703), who had served as bishop in Rot-Parsean in Utik before his ordination as Catholicos, tried to improve the relations with the Church of Albania. It was exactly during this ecclesiastical thaw that Justinian II re-conquered Armenia in 688/9, as a result of which Catholicos Sahak III and some bishops were taken to Constantinople and were forced to sign a formula of union. Due to his alliances with the Armenian leadership and their importance in the fight against the Arabs, the Emperor abandoned his plans after a brief council at Theodosiopolis.¹²² Armenia, Iberia, and Albania remained under Arab rule for the next nearly two centuries.

6 The eighth century: re-united again?

At the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 8th century, the policy of the Arabs changed and they began to restrict the autonomy in the Eastern Ostikanate of Arminiya and to harass the Church. During a turbulent period in the Armenian part of the Ostikanate, which was caused by a rebellion of the local princes, the influential Catholicos Nerses Bakur of Albania (686–704) ruled from the end of the 7th century. Nerses who initially presented himself as miaphysite, became dyophysite under the influence of the former spouse of the Albanian prince Varaz-Trdat, Sparama (Spram), and wanted to spread the Chalcedonian doctrine in Albania.¹²³ The miaphysite bishops of Albania, most notably the charismatic Israyel of Mets Kolmank and Ehiazar of Gardman, responded with a massive counter-movement, in the course of which they also sent a letter to the Catholicos of Armenia, Eha I Archizetsi (703–717). The latter asked the ruling Arab Caliph Abd al-Malik (685–705) for help to remove the heretics and reinstall peace to Albania.¹²⁴

121 Cf. Movses Kalankatuatsi (II, 33; Emin 1860a: 175–176): *Եւ վասն զի նմանակիր առաքելոցն էր, բանիւք և գործովք՝ զպարտանաց զնորս վրէժխնդրաութեամբ վանէր, զորինչ զճշմարտութիւն ծաղկէր: պսակ պարծանաց վարկանէր. – “... the patriarch Ehiazar was like the apostles in word and deed, he revengefully drove out deceptive errors and caused truth to flourish and became worthy of the crown of glory” (Dowsett 1961a: 142; cf. also Bedrosian 2010: 100). Cf. Stopka (2016: 86); Petrosyan (2016: 152–153).*

122 Petrosyan (2016: 143–144); Stopka (2016: 86–87).

123 Movses Kalankatuatsi (III, 7; Emin 1860a: 238): *Եւ Ներսէս կալաւ զաթոռն ուղղափառութեամբ ամս տասն և չորս, և զչարափառութեանն ամս երեք և կէս. – “Nersēs occupied the patriarchal throne for fourteen years as an orthodox priest, and for three and a half years as a heretic” (Dowsett 1961a: 192; cf. also Bedrosian 2010: 126).*

124 Petrosyan (2016: 156–157); Svazyan (2019: 293–294).

6.1 A Council of Partaw (704)

Catholicos Elia I himself went to Partaw, accompanied by Armenian bishops and Arab soldiers, to argue with Nerses. Nerses was removed from his seat, deported to Baghdad, where he died after a few days from the wounds of the interrogation and a hunger strike. In his place, Elia I ordained the pious miaphysite bishop Simeon (704–705) as the new Catholicos of Albania, putting an end to the period of autocephaly of the Church of Albania. Much of this took place during the Council of Partaw in 704,¹²⁵ which Elia summoned in the presence of Caliph Abd al-Malik, Armenian and Albanian bishops and nobility. It became a turning point: this council not only ended the schism created by Nerses but also regulated the administration of the Church of Albania and the ordination of the Catholicoi of Albania – and even their miaphysite doctrine. A list of all nobles was compiled in order to be able to punish them in the case of a renewed turn from Miaphysitism.¹²⁶

The unity of the Churches of Armenia and Albania that followed is marked by important church-political decisions and canons concerning the common doctrines as well as the liturgy, which date back to the tenures of the Armenian Catholicos Yovhannes III of Odzun (717–728) and his successors Davit I of Aramus (728–741), Trdat I of Otmus (741–764), Trdat II Dasnavoretsi (764–767), and Sion I Bavonetsi (767–7–76), as well as the Albanian Catholicoi Mikayel (705–742), Anastas I (742–746), Yovsep I (746–763), and Davit II (767–776).¹²⁷

6.2 The councils of Yovhannes of Odzun: the Sixth Council of Dvin and the Council of Manazkert (719/20 and 726).

Representatives of the Church and of the ruling nobility gathered at the Sixth Council of Dvin which was convened by Yovhannes of Odzun in 719–720. The heretical teachings, including newly emerging groups such as the Paulicians, were rejected and 32 canons were issued, covering parts of the liturgy, the liturgical calendar and rituals.¹²⁸ No participants were named here.

¹²⁵ Petrosyan (2016: 157); Svazyan (2019: 290–291, 303).

¹²⁶ Movses Kalankatuatsi, book III, chapters 8–9 (Dowsett 1961a: 193–197) and 11 (canons of Catholicos Simeon of Albania; Dowsett 1961a: 198–202); cf. Svazyan (2019: 303).

¹²⁷ Datings of the Albanian Catholicoi according to Hakobyan (1987: 277).

¹²⁸ These canons are included in the Armenian *Book of Canons* as “Canons of Catholicos Yovhannes Imastaser of Odzun”, cf. Hakobyan (1964: 514–537); Petrosyan (2016: 157–158).

Yovhannes convoked one more council, the Council of Manazkert in 726, to end the Christian divisions in the Arab Empire and primarily concerning the different conceptions and rites of the miaphysite Churches and thus to reconcile the Armenian and West Syriac Churches. This council brought together 31 bishops and 6 *vardapets* of the Armenian and six bishops of the Syriac Church under the guidance of Patriarch Athanasios of Antioch. The decisions related primarily to the abolishment of the community of communion with the Greek dyophysite Church, but also to the rejection of the teachings of Severus of Antioch and Julian of Halicarnassus and to the return to the original miaphysite doctrine.¹²⁹ The acts and canons of these two councils, but also Yovhannes’ writings, are often regarded as pointing the (right) way for the ethno-cultural independence of the Armenian Church and as a major step towards the development of a national Church of Armenia;¹³⁰ a step that apparently – there are no sources to the contrary – the Church of Albania took part in. While one part of the population of Albania that had settled east of the Kura was Islamised, the “Albanians” of the north-eastern regions started to adhere rather to the Georgian dyophysite Church.

6.3 The (Second) Council of Partaw (768)

The unity of the Church of Albania with the hierarchy and dogmatics of the Armenian Church as restored in 705 was affirmed in the important Council of Partaw in 768¹³¹ at the see of the Church of Albania. The council was convoked by the Armenian Catholicos Sion I Bavonetsi and gathered the influential princely families Bagratuni, Syuni, Artsruni and Armenian bishops like Sadovk of Syunik or Esayi of Gołtn. Catholicos Davit I of Albania as well as bishops and princes of

129 Cf. Stopka (2016: 89–91); Petrosyan (2016: 160–162). Stepanos Orbelian reports (Emin 1861: 333 / Shahnazareants 1859, II: 202–203): *Դարձեալ ժողով 'ի Մանազկերտ յաւուրս Յովհաննու Օձնացոյ, որ զխմորեալ աղանդն եզրայ, որ յաւուրս վեց կաթողիկոսացն՝ մաքրեաց և ահագին նորովիք հեռացոյց զմեզ 'ի Հռոմոց*: – “A council held in Manazkert in the time of Yovhannes of O’dzun, which cleansed [from the Church] the heresy of Ezr, which had continued through the tenures of six kat’oghikoi. With fearsome anathemas [the council] distanced us from the Byzantines” (Bedrosian 2015: 231). The decisions were not written down in the *Book of Canons* but reported by the theologian Khosrovik Targmanich (cf. Hovsepean 1899).

130 Yovhannes emphasised the strong anti-Chalcedonian position in his *History of the Armenian Councils* and included the essential decisions of previous councils and provided answers; cf. *Girk* (1901: 220–233).

131 Petrosyan (2016: 164). The 24 canons of the council were included in the *Book of Canons* under the title “Canons of Catholicos Sion”. They were particularly important for the order of ecclesiastical ranks and the prescriptions concerning the books of the Old Testament; cf. Ghltshean (1905); Stone (1973: 479–486).

Albania also took part in it. This council had no dogmatic decisions and was not aimed at the relations between the Churches of Armenia and Albania – obviously it was a proper-Armenian church council, which for whatever reason had moved to the Catholicosate of Albania, *de jure* belonging to the Armenian Church.

In the last decades of the 8th century, the Arab yoke weighed heavily on the Christians of the Ostikanate of Arminiya, especially during the time of the Umayyad caliph Ubaydallah ibn Muhammad al-Mahdi (771–810/1), the governor of Arminiya and his Ostikan Sulayman (ibn al-Amir, 788–790). They moved the government from Armenian Dvin to Albanian Partaw,¹³² whereby the Albanian Church, headed by Catholicos Solomon (785–796), allied with the Catholicos of Armenia in the fight against the Arabs. Catholicos Esayi I of Ehipatrush (775–788) went to Partaw with some Armenian bishops to ask the Arab governor for tax relief, with the result that the governor even doubled the taxes.¹³³ To evade the pressure of the Arabs, Catholicos Yovhannes III (796–821) moved the see of the Albanian Church to Berdak(ur) on the river Tartar/Trtu.¹³⁴

132 Reported by Movses Kalankatuatsi in his book III, ch. 20. The Armenian historian Lewond also reports about this in ch. 41 of his *History* (1887: 166): *Եւ յետ նորա Սուլէյման ոմն քան զամենեսին ժանտ և չարագործօր: Յետ սորա և ինքն իսկ Ովբեղլա եկն ի քաղաքն Պարտաւ, և Հաստատէր զՍուլէյման իշխան աշխարհիս, եւ տայր ի ձեռս նորա զԺողովուրդս տեառն իբրև գոչխարս ի մէջ ապականիչ գալլոց. – “Following him was a certain Sulaiman [...] who was a greedy malefactor and the worst of them all. That same 'Ubaidullah came to the city of Barda'a (Partaw) and confirmed Sulaiman as prince over the land, entrusting to him the Lord's people, who were like sheep surrounded by evil wolves” (Bedrosian 2006: 45). Stepanos Taronetsi also writes about the oppression and tax burdens under Ubaydallah (1885: III, 133–135; Greenwood 2017: 164–165). Cf. Svazyan (2019: 320–321); Ter-Ghewondyan (1977: 113 and 276).*

133 Movses Kalankatuatsi (III, 20; Emin 1860a: 262): *Եւ որպէս զառաջինն աթոռ իշխանութեանն իւրեանց արկին 'ի Դամասկոս Ասորեստանեայց, նոյնպէս աստ յԱղուանս նստուցին 'ի Պարտաւ կալ արքունեացն՝ և ծծել զպարարտութիւն երկրիս, և մի ոմն յարքունեաց եկեալ բնակեցաւ 'ի Պարտաւ: Եւ Հայաստանեայց սակս աշխարհին հոգոց զՀայրապետին իւրեանց գտէր Եսայի հանդերձ եպիսկոպոսօք առ նա առաքեն. – “Just as they had established the primary seat of their realm in Damascus in Syria, so here in Aghuania they established their court in Partaw and sucked dry the wealth of the land. One of them came from the court to Partaw. Then the Armenians out of concern for the people of the land sent their patriarch Lord Esayi and his bishops to him” (Bedrosian 2010: 134). Stepanos Taronetsi places this episode not in Partaw but in Dvin (1885: 133): *Առ որ Ժողովեալ ամենայն նախարարքն և կաթողիկոսն Եսայի՝ աղաչէին թեթևացուցանել զանուր ծանրութեան հարկին զոր պահանջէր. և ոչինչ օգտէին. Ալ անդրէն յլէր պահանջողո՞ւ կրկին քան զառաջինն Ժողովել ... – “All the Nobles and the Catholicos Esayi gathered before him and he begged him to lighten the heavy collar of tax which he was collecting. And they obtained nothing. But again, he dispatched tax-collectors to collect double the previous (assessment)” (Greenwood 2017: 195).**

134 Movses Kalankatuatsi, book III, ch. 23 (Emin 1860a: 277; Dowsett 1961a: 230; Bedrosian 2010: 144).

Being distant from the worldly government, the Church of Albania was visibly weakened by the political turmoil of the time and, as a former independent church, gradually lost its importance and power in the South Caucasus, depending on the geographic location of historical Albania, whether east or west of the Kura within the cultural orbit of the region’s leading religions: the miaphysite Armenian Church west of the Kura, the dyophysite Georgian Church to the north, and Islam east of the Kura. This assimilation – linguistic, religious and partly cultural – was somewhat inevitable when one considers that the Christians of Albania were members of different ethnic groups, and these included not only various Caucasian tribes, as did the population of Georgia, but above all – west of the Kura – also Armenians.

7 Conclusion

A look at the (ecclesiastical) history of the South Caucasus from its official Christianisation in the 4th to the end of the 8th century, including the acts of the ecumenical and national councils, shows that the West viewed the three kingdoms of Armenia, Iberia, and Albania and its associated “Churches” as a geographic and hierarchical-dogmatic entity. The tendencies towards ethnic independence and internal hierarchical differences that were noticeable from the 5th century onward were hardly noticed by the West. According to the historical sources, the “ethnic” tendencies in the three Churches are closely intertwined with the respective historical and religious-political environment – the Roman, Byzantine, and Sassanid Empires, the Arabs and, last but not least, the Huns. Before the schism with the Georgian Church (hierarchically and dogmatically), the Churches of Iberia and Albania were nominally and *de facto* united under the supremacy of the Armenian Catholicos. The Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451 seems to have led to tensions between Armenians, Albanians and Georgians, but only much later than the second half of the 5th century: *de jure* by the Councils of Dvin in the 6th century but *de facto* triggered by hierarchical – and thus more power-political – disputes. This resulted in a split only much later. In the pre-Arab period, the church leaders of the Sassanid Marzpanates of the South Caucasus were still joint against the Church of the East. From the second half of the 6th century and at the beginning of the 7th century, hierarchical but also dogmatic disputes affected the Churches of Armenia, Iberia and Albania, and resulted in internal schisms or desolidarisation, including the hierarchical but not dogmatic detachment of the Armenian bishops of Syunik and the bishops of Albania from the Armenian Catholicosate or the period of the co-existence of a Chalcedonian and an anti-Chalcedonian Armenian Catholicosate. Christological differences arose

mainly due to individual catholicoi in the period of autocephaly of the Church of Albania (590–705), but the common and fundamental miaphysite doctrine of the Church of Armenia and Albania was hardly in question. And if it was, then the hierarchically higher Armenian Church made sure that this was prevented.

The Church of Albania, also taking into account the changing geopolitical borders between the 4th and 8th centuries, was closely related to the Church of Armenia, hierarchically and dogmatically, and even in times of autocephaly it was in constant communication with the Armenian Catholicosate. The nationalisation tendencies of the Churches in the South Caucasus and the resulting hierarchical and, much less, dogmatic separation have shaped the religious landscape in the South Caucasus. Not least because of the complex, heterogeneous ethnic composition of the region – such as the strong presence of Armenian Christians in the regions of Albania west of the Kura and Georgian Christians in the north-western regions – the Church of Albania hardly shifted out of the shadow of the Armenian Church.¹³⁵ It should not be forgotten that the individual catholicoi and bishops, with their respective Christological convictions and political affiliations, played a key role in practically all the great dramas of South Caucasian Christianity during the Roman, Byzantine, and Sassanid Empires and the Arab Caliphate, and also afterwards. An autonomous Church of Albania, both hierarchically and above all Christologically and dogmatically, seems to have been only an interlude in the ecclesiastical history of the South Caucasus.

135 Hakobyan (1987: 275).

Tab. 1: Simplified overview of the hierarchical and Christological unity or disunity of the Armenian Church and the Church of Albania.

Period	Participation of Armenian Church	Participation of Church of Albania	Supremacy of Catholicos of Armenia, Armenian Church hierarchy	Christology
Early Christianity: Nicaea 325	+	+ as part of Armenian Church	+	Nicene. United
Armenian Councils 4 th c.	+	+ partly	+	Nicene. United
Constantinople 381	-	-	+	Nicene. United
Ephesus 435	-	-	+	Nicene. United
Pre-Chalcedonian Armenian councils 5 th c.	+	-	+	Nicene, anti-Nestorian. United.
Chalcedon 451	-	-	+	Nicene, anti-Nestorian, anti-Chalcedonian. United. Miaphysite
“Albanian” Council Aduen 5 th c.?	+	+	+	Nicene, anti-Nestorian, anti-Chalcedonian. United. Miaphysite
Armenian Councils 6 th c.	+	+ partly	590–705 Autocephaly of Church of Albania	Nicene, anti-Nestorian. Partly anti-Chalcedonian. No real schism, partly united.
Armenian Councils 7 th c.	+	-	-	Sporadically Dyophysite. Mainly Miaphysite
Armenian Councils 8 th c.	+	+ Partaw	+	Nicene, anti-Nestorian, anti-Chalcedonian. United. Miaphysite

8 Some last thoughts

After trying to find dogmatic differences or similarities between the Churches hidden in the sources of the (ecclesiastical) history of the South Caucasus between the 4th and 8th centuries, the question naturally arises as to whether other testimonies could not also represent Christological views in a snapshot. These include the Albanian palimpsests.¹³⁶ Charles Renoux has no doubt that the three South Caucasian Churches not only used the Jerusalem model as the basis of their liturgical year (and lectionary), but also that at the time of the production of the Albanian lectionary they were in very close contact and exchange with each other – i.e. they were Christologically not (yet) separated from each other.¹³⁷ There are no traceable essential Christological or dogmatic differences visible in the oldest lectionaries of the three Churches in the South Caucasus.

The same may apply to the church architecture in the area of Albania (in the understanding of the Sassanid Albania enlarged by Artsakh and Utik), but also of the large area administered under the Arabs as the Ostikanate of Arminiya. But unfortunately, as Annegret Plontke-Lüning states, “the reconstruction of the liturgical equipment and the furnishings of the churches in Caucasia is only possible in isolated cases such as the buildings excavated in Pitiunt, Gantiadi, Sukhumi or the citadel basilica of Dvin, because in contrast to Palestine or Syria, where the excavated or ruined churches mostly present the state at about the time of the Arab conquest and also allow conclusions to be drawn about older phases, the Caucasian buildings remained in use for centuries and, by consequence, younger liturgical requirements often led to the destruction of older and to the erection of more modern facilities”.¹³⁸ In addition, as Armen Kazaryan and Patrick Donabédian point out in Chapters 9 and 10 of this Handbook, the inventory of “Albanian” churches dating back to the “autocephalous period” is simply too small to allow conclusions about dogmatic differences expressed in their architecture. The geopolitical and cultural turmoil in this region has “wiped out” many things in the past. Restoration and overbuilding and also the assumption that different

136 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert) as to the palimpsests and their contents.

137 Cf. Chapter 6 of this Handbook (Renoux)..

138 Plontke-Lüning (2007: 346): “Die Rekonstruktion der liturgischen Ausstattung bzw. Einrichtung der Kirchen Kaukasiens ist nur in Einzelfällen wie bei den ergrabenen Bauten in Pitiunt, Gantiadi, Suchumi oder der Zitadellenbasilika Dvin möglich, da im Unterschied zu Palästina oder Syrien, wo die ergrabenen oder ruinös erhaltenen Kirchen meist den Zustand etwa zur Zeit der arabischen Eroberung präsentieren und auch Rückschlüsse auf ältere Phasen erlauben, die Bauten über Jahrhunderte in Gebrauch blieben und demzufolge jüngere liturgische Erfordernisse häufig zur Beseitigung der älteren und zur Errichtung zeitgemäßer Anlagen führten.”

ethnic groups used the churches over the centuries and under changing political and ethno-religious conditions make it even more difficult to utter “dogmatic” statements.

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Armenuhi Drost-Abgaryan

7A The Holy Covenant

In the *History of the Armenians* by Agathangelos (5th century), we learn that a brotherhood in arms of the three peoples of the Southern Caucasus had existed already in pre-Christian Armenia.¹ After the Christianisation of the three countries in the 4th century and in the context of the subsequent religious and ecclesiastical community of the three peoples, the military alliance became even more a recurring theme among Armenian historians and chroniclers: through cooperation in the areas of common independent church politics and the common defense of their borders, the newly baptised Armenians, Georgians and Albanians attempted to secure their common spiritual and cultural property and to preserve their heritage against the claims to power of Romans, Persians and Arabs.

In the middle of the 5th century CE, the Iranian king Yazdegerd II (438–457) attempted to force the Christian countries of the Southern Caucasus to reintroduce Zoroastrianism, which the representatives of the three peoples rejected vehemently.² In response to this courageous rejection of the South Caucasian allies, the Sasanian king arrests the rebellious princes in his court and threatens them with the destruction of their lands and families. To avoid this, the nobles decide to undergo a faked conversion in order to be released. It is not easy for them, however, to convince their spokesman and leader, the Armenian commander Vardan Mamikonean, to formally renounce Christianity. In doing so, they argue for the legitimacy of such a temporary, feigned “unfaithfulness” to Christianity by referring to biblical examples.³

“Take upon you” they said, “to be accursed figuratively. You are not greater and more just in faith than the blessed Apostle of Christ, Paul. But the Armenian, Iberian and Albanian people are more numerous than the Jewish people crucifying [Jesus Christ].”

To strengthen their community, they then stroke up an oath on the book of the Gospels, which was written down and sealed:⁴

1 Cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut and Gippert), 1.1 for Agathangelos’s wording.

2 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 2.5 as to the historical setting and Drost-Abgaryan (2019: 240-245) for further details.

3 Łazar Parpetsi, *History of the Armenians* 27: «Առ յանձն, ասեն, և դու լինել վասն մեր առակաւորս, նգովս. շես մեծ և առաւելեալ ի հաւատս արդարութեան քան զսուրբ առաքեալն Բրիստոսի Պօղոս, բայց ժողովուրդքն Հայոց, Վրաց և Աղուանից յոժ շատ են և առաքինի քան զժողովուրդս խաչահանուացն Հրէից:» (Ter-Mkrtchean and Malkhasean 1904: 53); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1985: 90). The biblical passage alluded to is probably Romans 9.3–4.

4 Łazar Parpetsi, *History of the Armenians* 27: բերէին այնուհետև և գտուրբ Աւետարանն, եղեալ ամենեցունց առ հասարակ գծեռս ի վերայ՝ երդնուին ասելով. «Եթէ դու և եթ առ վայր մի կարացես

Then they brought the holy Gospels and all of them placed their hands on it and swore: “If only on a pretext you will but temporarily consent to what the king has said, and free us from the attacks of the enemy who has set this trap for us, we shall hear and obey everything that you say, giving our lives for the blessed covenant, and shedding our blood for the salvation of the entire land. Should it happen that we choose to leave the land and all of our belongings and flee into exile with our women and children, we will gladly accept poverty and mendicancy. [...] Should someone out of weakness violate this oath and treacherously withdraw from the vow [made] on the holy Gospels, and withdraw from the alliance of this multitude – as did Judas, who quit the band of the blessed Apostles – may he, without repentance and forgiveness, share [Judas’] fate and be betrayed to the inextinguishable fires which God has readied for Satan and his accomplices. May everlasting vengeance be sought from such an individual and from those who ally with him for whatever damage, captivity and agitation befall the three lands. As for the good and useful steadfastness with which the Savior Christ has endowed many souls of the three lands, may it be the remaining legacy for the eternal salvation and pardon of your soul and of your stock, for your temporary acceptance of us.”

In this way, they managed to convince their leader.⁵

When Vardan, the general of Armenia and the lord of the Mamikoneans, heard all of these words from the mouths of the nobles of the three lands and saw how all of them had sworn and sealed an awesome oath on the holy Gospel before them, with tears streaming down his face he agreed on a pretext to temporarily be wounded [in the faith] for the sake of the three lands and the multitudes of men and women inhabiting them.

յանձն առնուլ պատճառանօք զասացեալս թագաւորին և զերծուցես զմեզ յորոգալթադիր թշնամտն յարձակմանց՝ ամենայն ասացելոց ի քէն լուիցուք և արասցուք, դնելով զանձինս մեր ի վերայ ուխտին սրբութեան և հելլով զարինս մեր ի վերայ ամենայն աշխարհին փրկութեան: Եւ եթէ դիպեսցի մեզ թողուլ զաշխարհ և զամենայն ստացուածս և փախչել յօտարութիւն՝ ընտրեսցուք հանդերձ կանամբք և որդւովք, և սիրով յանձն առցուք զաղքատութիւն և զմուրողութիւն. միայն ի բարկութենէս և եթ ապրեսցուք: Եւ որ ոք թուլացեալ ի բանիցս յայցանէ ստեսցէ ուխտիս այսմ, և ննպութեամբ որոշեսցի յերմանէ սուրբ Աւետարանին և ի միաբանութենէ բազմութեանս այսորիկ՝ որոշեալ ճեղքեսցի և նա նման Յուդայի, որ ճեղքեալ մեկնեցաւ ի գնդէն սուրբ առաքելոցն, և բաժին այնպիստն առանց ապաշխարութեան և թողութեան ընդ նմին լիցի մատնեալ անշէջ բոցոյն, զոր պատրաստեաց Աստուած սատանայի և արբանեկաց նորա: Եւ որ ինչ վնասք և կամ գերութիւնք և դրդմունք աշխարհաց երեսցունց հասցեն՝ յանձնէ այնպիստն և միաբանելոցն ընդ նմա խնդրեսցէ վրէժխնդիրն մինչև ցլախտեան: Իսկ զբարի և զօգտակար պահպանութիւնն, զոր շնորհեալ Փրկչին Գրիստոսի պարգևեսցէ բազում ոգւոց երեսցունց աշխարհացս, վասն քո առ վալր մի հաւանելոյք մեզ՝ եղիցի մնացեալ ժառանգութիւնն այն ի փրկութիւն թողութեան ոգւոյ քո և ազգի մինչև ցլախտեան» (Ter-Mkrtchean and Malkhasean 1904: 53); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1985: 90–91).

⁵ Lazar Parpetsi, *History of the Armenians* 27: Եւ լուեալ զայս ամենայն բանս ի բերանոյ երկց աշխարհաց ազատանտն՝ զօրավարին Հայոց Վարդանայ տեառն Մամիկոնէից, տեսեալ և զկնքեալ ամենեցուն հաւաւորապէս երբմամբ զուրբ Աւետարան ուխտին, որոյ առաջի ուխտեցին և աւանդեցին կնքով՝ յարտասուս հարեալ յանձն առ առ վալր մի զպատճառանօք վիրաւորիլն վասն երեսցունց աշխարհացն և բազմութեանց ի նոսա արանց և կանանց: (Ter-Mkrtchean and Malkhasean 1904: 53); cf. the English translation by Bedrosian (1985: 91).

Even though the three allies were defeated in the subsequent Battle of Avarayr (451), the covenant formed the basis for a revitalisation of the common Christian faith and a long-lasting unity of the three peoples. Its impact ended only in the early 7th century with the “great schism” between the miaphysite Armenian and the dyophysite Georgian Churches.⁶

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⁶ Cf. Chapter 7 (Dum-Tragut), 5. above as to details.

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8 Albanians in the Holy Land – Absence of Archaeological Evidence or Evidence of Absence?

Abstract: The existence of Albanian institutions in Jerusalem during the Late Byzantine – Early Islamic periods is attested by two historical texts: the list of Anastas Vardapet, mentioning four monasteries that belong to the community, and *The History of the Country of the Albanians* by Movses Daskhurantsi (or Kałankatuatsi), which contains a list of ten Jerusalemite monasteries that belong to the Albanians. The discovery and decipherment of the Albanian palimpsests of the collection of St Catherine’s Monastery in the Sinai open a new chapter in the study of the Albanian community of the Holy Land. Apart from the Sinaitic manuscripts, the Caucasian Albanians left no material traces in the Holy Land, and no archaeological finds clearly associated with Caucasian Albanians were discovered. However, the accurate analysis of archaeological evidence may shed light on the obscure history of the Albanians in the Holy Land and testify to the relations between the Churches of the three Caucasian countries.

1 Introduction

Of all the national communities of Byzantine Palestine,¹ the Caucasian Albanians remain the most mysterious group, and their history in the region is obscure. Their presence is unattested in the large corpus of Palestinian hagiographies, numerous pilgrims’ accounts, or other literature. During the Late Byzantine – Early Islamic periods, Albanian institutions in Jerusalem are attested only by two historical texts of Caucasian origin, written in the Armenian language: the list of Armenian monasteries by Anastas Vardapet, and *The History of the Country of the Albanians* by Movses Daskhurantsi (or Kałankatuatsi). The only clear material evidence of the Albanian monastic presence in the region are the palimpsests discovered in St. Catherine’s Monastery on the Sinai.

1 Di Segni and Tsafir (2012).

2 Manuscripts

The discovery of a forgotten cellar room in St Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai in 1975 brought to light, *inter alia*, an extensive collection of ancient Georgian manuscripts.² Especially significant was the discovery of the Albanian palimpsests, the only surviving specimens of the Albanian literary school, and the sole material evidence to the presence of this national community in the Holy Land. The two codices found (Sin. georg. NF 13 and NF 55) contained Georgian texts from the 10th century, with Albanian discovered in the under-writing, the early layer of the manuscripts. The decipherment of the Caucasian Albanian texts, started by Zaza Aleksidze in 1998 and proceeded by an international group of scholars, showed that the early-layer texts contained fragments of the Gospel of John and a Lectionary.³ The codicological and palaeographical development of the manuscripts is exceptionally high and shows a well-advanced system of manuscript writing – liturgical comments written in small letters on the manuscript margins, wide use of abbreviations, etc.

The palimpsest studies *per se* and a recently proposed numismatic perspective⁴ point towards the independent literary work of the Albanian school and date the manuscripts to the period between the beginning of the 6th century and the beginning of the 10th century. It is not certain whether the manuscripts were produced in the Sinai or were brought there with other books from the Monastery of St Sabas or another Palestinian scribal center during the turmoil and insecurity of the 8th–9th centuries.⁵ It is also impossible to establish who could have been responsible for such a hypothetical transfer – Albanian monks moving from Palestine to Sinai or the new owners of the books, the Georgians.

In any event, the palimpsests attest to the existence of a significant and educated Albanian monastic community in the country, while only scarce information regarding the monastic movement in Albania itself can be gathered from the *History of the Country of the Albanians*.⁶ One may assume that similar to the cases of Armenia and Georgia, monasticism came to Caucasian Albania from the East, from Syria and Palestine.⁷

2 Catalogued in Aleksidze et al. (2005).

3 Aleksidze and Mahé (2001); Gippert and Schulze (2007); Gippert et al. (2008); Gippert (2012b; 2015); for further information see Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert).

4 Akopyan (2021a).

5 Patrich (2011); Schick (1995).

6 Book I, chapter 14 (Arakelyan 1983: 40; Dowsett 1961a: 24).

7 Garsoian (2005–2007: 188); Haas (2009); Martin-Hisard (1985–1986).

3 The Albanian monasteries in Jerusalem

Two ancient texts mention the monastic presence of Caucasian Albanians in Jerusalem. The first is the *List of Armenian Monasteries*, traditionally attributed to Anastas Vardapet, who came to the Holy City to prepare the visit of his country's rulers.⁸ This document, written in Armenian, survived only in later copies – the earliest known version is dated to the 16th century – and can hardly be considered reliable. However, at its core, it seems to retain a faithful rendition of an earlier text that is now lost, which dates to the Early Islamic period or even slightly earlier.⁹ Anastas Vardapet lists all the major and secondary Christian sanctuaries of Jerusalem as being Armenian and states whether they remained Armenian or were transferred to foreign hands. The latter includes four Albanian monasteries and one Georgian.

The list comprises all the churches of Jerusalem and its vicinity, including the Nativity and Holy Sepulchre, not only the Armenian ones. Nevertheless, the list of the holy places itself, regardless of the declared ownership, can be relevant, considering the date of its core. Several churches listed by Anastas Vardapet such as the Lamentation of St Peter, the Forty Saints (the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste?), St John the Baptist on the Mount of Olives and others are known from various Byzantine and Early Islamic sources, but not from Medieval ones. All were destroyed or abandoned during the early period of the Arab rule, most probably during the Abbasid period, i.e. in the 8th–9th centuries.¹⁰ The numerous repetitions of the sentence “now occupied by *tačiks*” show that the author of the original document visited Jerusalem sometime after the Arab conquest of the city in 638, but before the abandonment or destruction of the mentioned churches. As it seems, the document's original core must reflect the situation of the Holy City in the Early Islamic period. It is worth noting that despite the Medieval location of the Armenian monasteries on Mt Zion, the author of the list describes them as located on the Mount of Olives and in the northern part of Jerusalem, in the locations where Armenian structures dated to the Byzantine period were later discovered in archaeological excavations.¹¹

⁸ Sanjian (1969); Terian (2016).

⁹ Sanjian (1969: 266); Terian (2016) dates the original core of the document to the 6th century.

¹⁰ Schick (1995: 337, 348, 356).

¹¹ I am grateful to Michael E. Stone for this important remark regarding the reliability of the source. For Armenian monastic structures discovered in Jerusalem, see Stone and Amit (1997); Amit and Wolff (2000); Stone (2002); Re'em et al. (2021); for a summary of the archaeological evidence see Tchekhanovets (2018: 41–125).

The source mentions four monasteries that belong to the Albanian community, and one is particularly named:

- The monastery of Pand, dedicated to St Karapet [i.e. St John the Baptist], is located to the east on the Mount of Olives, which to date is owned by [Caucasian] Albanians; it too was built by royal expense, and named after the Holy Cathedral in the city of Vagharshapat.¹²
- Three other [Caucasian] Albanian monasteries, now occupied by *tačiks*.¹³

The second text testifying to Albanian presence in Jerusalem is the *History of the Country of the Albanians* by Movses Daskhurantsi, the only extant historical chronicle concerning the Albanians, probably compiled in the 10th century by an Armenian or by an Albanian who preferred to write in the Armenian language.¹⁴ The final chapter of the compilation¹⁵ contains a list of ten Jerusalemite monasteries that belong to the Caucasian Albanians according to the author. One of the monasteries in this list, the monastery of Pand, also appears in the list of Anastas Vardapet. Possibly, both texts derive from an unknown common source.¹⁶

The monasteries mentioned in the text are the monastery of Pand, to the east of the Mount of Olives; the monastery of Mruva, named after the Forty Martyrs, not far away from the Pand monastery; the monastery of Mežay, named after the Forty Saints; the monastery of Kałankatuyk';¹⁷ the monastery of Artsakh, to the south of St Stephen; the monastery of Amaras, named after St Gregory;¹⁸ and the monastery of Partaw, dedicated to St Mary, Mother of God, near the Tower of David: "half [of it] is held by a woman named Miriam from Šamk'or;¹⁹ and half by the Arabs". Another monastery is located "in the middle of the *sūq*", and three more in unknown places, all "seized by Arabs".²⁰

A few locations given in the text are directing towards well-known monastic agglomerations of Byzantine Jerusalem: the Mount of Olives, the Tower of David, and the environs of the Church of St Stephen.

12 Translation by Sanjian (1969: 276). Vagharshapat, today Ejmiatsin, is the spiritual centre of the Armenians and the See of the Catholicos, the head of the Armenian Church. However, the cathedral in Vagharshapat is dedicated to the Holy Mother of God, not to St John the Baptist.

13 Translation by Sanjian (1969: 277).

14 Howard-Johnston (2020); for the historiographic context see Rapp (2020).

15 Book II, chapter 52 (Arakelyan 1983: 285–286; Dowsett 1961a: 184–185).

16 Sanjian (1969: 286–287).

17 Kałankatuyk' is located in the Utik region, on the borders of ancient Albania.

18 Amaras is located in Artsakh (Mountain-Karabakh region; 39°41'2.4" N, 47°3'25.2" E).

19 Shamkhor (Šəmkir) is located near the border between modern Georgia and Azerbaijan, not far away from the monastery of David Gareja (40°50' N, 46°1'25" E).

20 Translations by Dowsett (1961a: 185).

3.1 The Mount of Olives

The Mount of Olives to the east of the city becomes the central Christian location of Jerusalem already during the 4th century, with the foundation of the churches of Eleona and the Ascension; a few dozens of churches and monasteries were established at the site during the Byzantine period.²¹ It is tempting to identify the Albanian monastery of Pand dedicated to St Karapet with the monastery of St John the Baptist, established at the end of the 4th century by a monk named Innocent and mentioned under various names in numerous Byzantine sources.²² According to J. T. Milik, the remains of this monastery were discovered at the plot of the Russian convent of the Ascension, which was excavated in the 19th century. Nevertheless, the identification of the site with the ancient monastery of St John can be disputed because of the topographical coordination given by the sources as “to the east of the Mount of Olives”, whereas the Russian site is actually located on the summit, closer to the western slope of the mountain. The Greek and Armenian epigraphic evidence discovered at the site provides no connection to St John and tends to testify to the existence of a nunnery.²³ The name of the monastery is not echoed in Jerusalem’s sacral topography of the Byzantine period; perhaps one should look for its meaning in the Caucasus region: it was proposed by M. Hajiev that the monastery holds the name of the Albanian catholicos Pand / Pant.²⁴

3.2 The Tower of David

The Tower of David, the ancient citadel of Jerusalem, is located in the western part of the city, near Jaffa Gate. During the Byzantine period, the area between the citadel and Mt Zion, the modern Armenian Quarter of the Old City, was occupied by numerous monastic institutions. This was probably the last intramural area of Byzantine Jerusalem that was still available for large-scale construction, and was developed in the 5th–6th centuries under ecclesiastical patronage. Numerous institutions – churches, monasteries, and pilgrim hospices – which were built here are known from literary sources.²⁵ However, the archaeological evidence for the area from the Byzantine period is scarce, restricted to the Byzantine founda-

²¹ For archaeological research see Corbo (1965); Tsafirir (1999: 331–336).

²² Milik (1960: 562–563, no. 34; 1960–1961: 184, no. 24).

²³ Tchekhanovets (2018: 227–228).

²⁴ Hajiev (2004; 2021a).

²⁵ For an overview see Tsafirir (2013: 255–256).

tions of the Armenian Monastery of Ss James²⁶ and the remains of another church, dated to the 5th century and identified by the excavators with the nunnery of Bassa known from Byzantine sources.²⁷ Recently, the remains of an additional ecclesiastic complex dated to the Byzantine period were revealed between the Citadel and Mt Zion, where a large structure decorated with mosaic floors was partially excavated.²⁸ The sparse Byzantine remains discovered on Mt Zion and in the area between its sanctuaries and the Tower of David preserve no material evidence that could be clearly identified with the monastery of Partaw (see also below).

3.3 St Stephen

Two ancient churches dedicated to St Stephen are known from Byzantine Jerusalem: the large basilica containing the remains of the saint, to the north of the city walls,²⁹ and an additional church on the traditional place of his martyrdom, to the east of the city walls and St Stephen's Gate. The location of the Albanian monastery to the north of the city is very plausible: a large extramural agglomeration of monastic institutions with pilgrims' facilities was discovered here, containing among others also the Armenian monastery.³⁰ Possibly, the monastery of Artsakh located "south of St Stephen", i.e. closer to the city walls, was placed somewhere within this sizeable monastic agglomeration, the largest of its kind in Byzantine Jerusalem and still not fully exposed. According to the results of the excavations, the extramural monastic complex was established during the 5th–6th centuries and was finally abandoned during the Abbasid period, in the 8th–9th centuries. Unfortunately, the available archaeological evidence gives no possibility to identify the monastery of Artsakh with any discovered ancient site within the large monastic quarter.

Most of the monasteries in the list cannot be identified today, but it is clear that they were commonly known according to the origins of their builders: the toponyms point towards the ancient Christian centres of the Caucasus, Artsakh, Amaras, Kałankatuyk', Shamkhor, all within the limits of Caucasian Albania or close to its borders.

²⁶ Tchekhanovets and Berjekian (2017).

²⁷ Tushingham (1985: 65–104).

²⁸ Avner and Ghazarian (2021: 213).

²⁹ Vincent and Abel (1922: 766–804).

³⁰ Amit and Wolff (2000); Stone (2002).

In addition to the information regarding the monastic institutions, the chronicle of Movses Daskhurantsi³¹ also presents evidence for the pilgrimage of Caucasian Albanians and describes the journey of a monk named Mkhitar and his two companions from Artsakh to Jerusalem, where they receive relics of St George and St Stephen. Three years later, the journey was repeated by another clergyman from Artsakh, Joseph, who hoped to bring home with him the relics of St John the Baptist but came back disappointed, for “all the people of Jerusalem were affected by the contagion of Chalcedon”.³²

4 The inscription from Umm Leisun

Of particular interest for the study of Caucasian Albanians in Jerusalem is a Georgian burial inscription, discovered in the excavations in the village of Umm Leisun, in the south-western suburbs of the modern city. A small rural Georgian monastery from the Byzantine period can be classified as an additional link in the chain of Byzantine cenobitic monasteries built along the road leading from Jerusalem to Bethlehem and the Monastery of St Sabas.³³ After discovering a Georgian funerary inscription at the site, the excavations were continued in cooperation with a group of Georgian scholars headed by I. Gagoshidze.³⁴ The excavation exposed a modest rural monastic settlement, measuring 70 × 40 m, arranged around a central courtyard, with various service rooms, cisterns, and a small chapel, all dated by ceramic and other finds to the 6th–8th centuries.

Under the monastery, two well-preserved burial vaults were found. The northern crypt was cut into the bedrock and built of hewn ashlar blocks and preserved 24 burials; of the securely identified individuals, most were adult males. The main tomb, settled in a niche in the western end of the crypt, contained the remains of an elderly man. The tomb was covered with a stone slab, bearing a Georgian inscription in ancient *asomtavruli* script, dated by G. Gagoshidze to the 5th–6th centuries; it reads (cf. Fig. 1).³⁵

³¹ Book II, chapter 50 (Arakelyan 1983: 280–282; Dowsett 1961a: 181–183).

³² Stone (1986: 103).

³³ Seligman and Abu Raya (2002). The site is situated at 31°44'24" N, 35°14'32" E.

³⁴ Seligman (2015: 177).

³⁵ Gagoshidze (2015: 181).

ႂႃႆ ႂႃႆႃႆႃႆႃႆ	<i>Ese samarxoy</i>
ႂႃႆႃႆႃႆ ႃႆႃႆ	<i>Iohane Powr</i>
ႂႃႆႃႆႃႆ ႂႃႆႃႆႃႆႃႆ	<i>ṭavel episkopo</i>
ႂႃႆႃႆ ႃႆႃႆႃႆႃႆ	<i>sisay kartve</i>
ႂႃႆႃႆ +	<i>lisay +</i>

“This is the grave of Iohane bishop of Purtavi, a Kartvelian.”

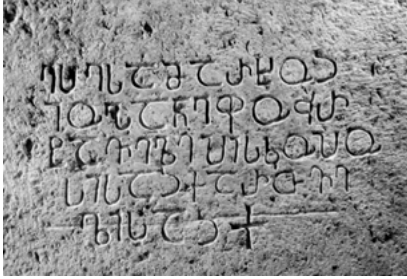


Fig. 1: The Old Georgian Inscription of Umm Leisun.

The tomb of bishop Iohane is situated at the most prestigious place in the burial crypt. It was proposed that he was the founder of the monastery of Umm Leisun or played some other important role in the life of the Georgian community, in the Holy Land, or outside its borders.³⁶

However, the deceased bishop’s name and his seat, Purtavi, cannot be correlated with any known personalities and toponyms. The use of the word “Kartvelian”, meaning “a person from Kartli” or Eastern Georgia, was a great surprise to Georgian scholars. From the 7th century on, the word “Kartvelian” became a self-defining national term in the Georgian language, but nothing was known about its use in earlier periods. It is generally agreed that the inscription from Umm Leisun is the earliest known example of this term in Georgian epigraphy. The need for a national definition seems unclear since the text itself is written in Georgian. An interpretation proposing that the name *Purtavi* has mixed Semitic and Georgian roots and derives from the Aramaic *pwrta* or the Hebrew *pwra*³⁷ seems unconvincing. Besides, if that were true, it would mean that *Purtavi* is the original name of the Umm Leisun monastery, yet nothing is known of such a bishopric seat in Byzantine Palestine.

A possible interpretation of the inscription from Umm Leisun and the complex as a whole is that its origin should be sought in the mysterious “Purtavi”. It

³⁶ Gagoshidze (2015); Mgaloblishvili (2015).

³⁷ Mgaloblishvili (2015: 189).

is possible to assume that the name of the bishopric seat is derived from the toponym Partaw, once an important political and ecclesiastic center of Caucasian Albania, today the regional center Barda in north-west Azerbaijan.³⁸ The city of Partaw was established in the 4th century, and a hundred years later, during the reign of King Vache II (459–481), it became the country's capital. For the following centuries, the bishop of Partaw was also the head of the Albanian Church or catholicos. The city name is mentioned in the list of the monasteries owned by Caucasian Albanians in Jerusalem: the monastery near the Tower of David, dedicated to St Mary Mother of God, is called *Partaw*.³⁹ However, as G. Gagoshidze pointed out, in Georgian texts the city of Partaw is known exclusively as Bardavi, starting from Leonti Mroveli's compilation of the Georgian chronicle *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (11th c.).⁴⁰ Nevertheless the meaning of the Umm Leisun text becomes clearer if “the bishop of Purtavi” is interpreted as “the bishop of Partaw”, and *Kartveli* not as “Georgian” but as “from Kartli”. The person buried in the vicinity of Jerusalem was a native of the Kartli kingdom but had served far away from his country, in Albania. Otherwise, why would the Georgian inscription on the gravestone stress his Georgian origin?

The bishop of Partaw served at the same time as the head of the Albanian church. This can explain the inordinately large number of deceased buried in the monastery crypt: Iohane, bishop of Purtavi, was an important figure, revered by his community, and its members desired to be buried next to their shepherd.⁴¹

In the list of the Catholicoi of the Albanian church, the name of Iohane appears twice.⁴² The first Iohane led the church in the 4th century, before transferring the capital to Partaw. The second was head of the church in the years 644–671. These dates correspond to the archaeological dating of the Umm Leisun complex, but it seems too early to confirm this personal identification. The sources give no information regarding pilgrimage, migration, or death in the Holy Land of any of the Albanian Catholicoi. The bishop buried in Umm Leisun could be one of the active leaders of church hierarchy during the unity of the Caucasian Churches or, on the contrary, one of the schismatics who escaped to Palestine from the endless tangled Caucasian conflicts. These are all questions that remain open for future studies, but there is no doubt that the archaeological research of the Holy Land has implications beyond the confines of the region.

³⁸ Geyushev (1971); Nuriev and Wordsworth (2020). Cf. Chapter 9 of this Handbook (Kazaryan), 2.3.2 for details as to Partaw.

³⁹ Dowsett (1961a: 51).

⁴⁰ For discussion and expanded bibliography, see Gagoshidze (2022: 93–94).

⁴¹ For comparison see Goldfus (1997: 241–243).

⁴² Book I, chapter 15 (Arakelyan 1983: 41–42; Dowsett 1961a: 24).

5 Conclusions

Summarising the evidence of the Albanian presence in the monastic circles of the Byzantine Holy Land, it is worth noting that, in fact, the history of this community is only known through Armenian and Georgian media:

- the list of the Albanian monasteries as preserved in the Armenian text of Anastas Vardapet and in the chronicle of Movses Daskhurantsi, both existing only in Armenian
- the institutions in the above-mentioned lists appearing alternatively as Albanian or Armenian monasteries – probably ownership had passed from one to the other by then
- the only known Albanian literary fragments with extracts of Bible translation being preserved under a layer of Georgian text
- additional information regarding the Albanians found in the Georgian epitaph of bishop Iohane from Umm Leisun.

Although fragmentary and sometimes circumstantial, this combined evidence may testify to close ties between the Caucasian communities in the Holy Land.⁴³ Back home, such connections are well attested, both in historical documents and in epigraphic evidence.

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⁴³ See also Chapter 6 of this Handbook (Renoux).

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Figure 1: Photograph Jon Seligman, 2015.



IV Architecture and Archaeology

Armen Kazaryan

9 Urban Planning and Architecture of Caucasian Albania. Main Monuments and Trends of Development

Abstract: The present account of towns, fortifications, churches and other architectural constructions on the territory of Caucasian Albania provides descriptions of the monuments as well as an attempt of their understanding in the context of architectural evidence from several parts of this early medieval country. Therefore, beside the architectural and archaeological materials themselves, many scholars' opinions have been considered and compared. In result, a common picture of the architectural features as developed in both main parts of the region during the 5th–8th and even up to the 11th century is drawn. Impressive examples of late antique and early medieval cities such as Qabala/Kapalak, Derbent and (as part of the country) late-5th century Tigranakert help us understand the level of urbanisation of the region and its integration into the Near East traditions of development and town planning. The most outstanding monuments of ecclesiastic architecture can be attributed to the last period of the era of the Marzpanate, when the institution of self-government in the person of the “Prince of Albania” was established in the country. A specific style of the Early Christian buildings in Albania proper developed within the framework of the provincial branch of Armenian architecture. The builders of the right-bank (Armenian) provinces of the Marzpanate demonstrate the same characteristics, typology and stylistic features in the frames of their elaboration as do the main regions of Armenia. Several questions concerning the architecture of Caucasian Albania can only be solved after an extension of archaeological excavations.

1 Introduction

The peculiarities of the development of urban planning and architecture in Caucasian Albania reflect directly the historical traditions and events of that country and the Iranian Marzpanate, the Arab province and the individual Christian kingdoms formed on its basis on the same territory. The connections of each of these political formations both with world empires and with neighbouring countries, first of all with Armenia and Georgia, manifested itself in the spread of certain building traditions and architectural ideas on the territory of Albania. The confessional specifics of the Albanian Church and the facts of the legal subordination

of the Albanian Catholicosate and local dioceses can explain some characteristics of the typology and style of the ecclesiastical architecture in the region. Numerous issues of historical geography, military-political and church history can only be resolved by comparing the information from written sources with the data of archaeology and the results of architectural and art history research. This unconditional statement is especially relevant to the problems of studying territories that are connected in some way with the concept of Caucasian Albania. Unfortunately, due to the uneven state of research on the archaeological and architectural monuments of these territories, we are only fragmentarily able to restore the historical picture of their architectural and urban development, and often not with sufficient reliability. A certain deliberation in estimates will help us avoid large-scale errors; although some inaccuracies in our representation are possible, they might be eliminated in the coming decades due to the replenishment of scientific insight.

The present chapter is limited to the Early Christian era, which includes the last centuries of the late classical kingdom of the Arshakids, abolished by the Sasanians in about 510 CE, and the period of the Iranian Marzpanate of Albania. There are no earlier data available on the architecture of Caucasian Albania. The architecture of later periods on the territories of the former Marzpanate is not to be considered because of its development under fundamentally new conditions: the formation of four kingdoms, each of which claimed to have inherited the glory of the Albanian kingdom, belauded in historiography. As Aleksan Hakobyan declares, “even in the beginning of the 7th century, the institution of self-government known as the ‘Prince of Albania’ was entrusted to the right-bank Armenian princely family of Gardman, a branch of the descendants of the legendary ‘Haykids’ of Arran (later the ‘Mihranids’); and in the 9th century, it passed on to the Armenian Bagratids from Shaki and the ‘Aranshahiks’ of central Artsakh-Khachen... During the period of feudal fragmentation, the status of kingdoms was achieved not only by the principalities of Shaki/Hereti (in Albania proper) and Parisos (in the early medieval region of Gardman, on the right bank of the Kura River), but also by Goroz (in southern Artsakh, later Dizak) and Khachen”.¹ Whereas in the kingdoms on the right bank of the Kura the development of

1 Накобуян (2020: 358): “Учрежденный в нач. VII в. ... институт самоуправления ‘Князь Албании’ был доверен правобережному армянскому княжескому роду Гардманацци, ветви потомков легендарного Арана hАйкида (впоследствии – ‘Михраниды’), а в IX веке он перешел к армянским Багратидам из Шаки и ‘Араншахикам’ центрального Арцаха – Хачэна... В период феодальной раздробленности статус царств получили княжества не только Шаки/Эрети (в Собственно Албании) и Парисоса (в раннесредневековом крае Гардманаццик’, на правом берегу Куры), но и Горозу (в южном Арцахе, впоследствии – Дизак) и Хачэн.”

architecture and art was kept in close connection with other Armenian lands and, during the period of the accession of these territories to the Bagratid Kingdom of Ani, their development could be regulated by the impulses of the metropolitan school of architecture, the architecture in Shaki/Hereti had an opportunity to build upon the traditions of Albania proper. However, the proximity of Georgian lands and, as a result, the absorption of the kingdom by Kakheti in the beginning of the 11th century predetermined a significant influence of Georgian architecture.

2 Cities and fortresses

There are three major cities of medieval Albania/Alvank: Qabala/Kapalak, Chor/Choł (identified with Derbent or with the settlement of Torpakh-kala to the south of modern Derbent), and Partaw, which were successively the capitals of that administrative-territorial entity.

2.1 Qabala/Kapalak

Qabala/Kapalak (also named *Kabalaka*, *Kabalak*, *al-Khazar*; in Armenian *Kapatak*, in ancient Greek Χαβαλα) was first mentioned in antique sources: in the second half of the 1st century by Pliny the Elder, and in the 2nd century by Ptolemy. From the 330s to 462 CE, there was an Albanian bishop's see there. That ancient city, which was the oldest centre of the Albanian kingdom, served as the administrative centre of the Khazars in the 7th century. In the 16th century, it was destroyed by the Safavids. The urban development continued in neighbouring Kutkashen, where – until the beginning of the 18th century – the majority of the inhabitants were Christians: Udis and Armenians.

The ancient city is identified with the ruins of fortifications near the village of Chukhurkabala (Çuxur Qəbələ) of the Qabala district of Azerbaijan.² An artificial ditch divided the territory of the citadel of 25 ha into two parts: the southern one, called Gala, had a five-sided wall with towers, and the northern one, Selbir, had a more developed fortification system, with ten towers.³ The most impressive monuments are four towers in the part of Gala, connected with sections of the wall. One of the city gates was located between two wide towers, round at their bases.

² 40°53'29.5" N, 47°42'29.4" E.

³ Akhundov (1986: 180); Sharifov (1927: 176–177).

These structures are built up to a third of their height with masonry of cleanly hewn outer surfaces of deep-lying golden-hued blocks and rubble-concrete core walls. Above this level the structures are laid with burnt red bricks. To the east of the citadel, there was an ecclesiastic complex (more than 50 ha).

2.2 Chor/Chot

According to written sources, the religious centre of the kingdom of Caucasian Albania was Chor (in Armenian also Choł, mentioned by Faustus of Byzantium, Elishe, Lazar Parpetsi, Agathangelos, Movses Khorenatsi, Movses Kałankatuatsi, and other Armenian historiographers), which is identified by some scholars with Derbent; by literally interpreting the words of Movses Kałankatuatsi about the location of Chor near Derbent, other specialists proposed to look for Chor in its neighbourhood and not to take Derbent itself for it. Probably the name Chor was attached to a certain part of Derbent such as the old *Shahrestan-i Yazdegerd*, which was located on the top of a spur and, judging by archaeological data, existed until the 7th century.⁴ Below it, in the area adjacent to the Caspian coast, the Sasanians founded the fortified city of Derbent (cf. Persian در بند *darband* ‘closed (tied) gates’), located on a spur of the Tabasaran Mountains of the Greater Caucasus, perpendicular to the coast of the Caspian Sea. It had a peculiar linear layout with two parallel walls extending far into the sea (cf. Figures 1 and 2) and was the most important part of the 42-km Mountain Wall (*Dag-bary*) with numerous fortresses,⁵ which stretched along the ridge and blocked access of northern nomads to the Sasanian Empire. The monument, which is an organic part of modern Derbent, has been well preserved, systematically studied by archaeologists, and included in the UNESCO World Heritage List (Republic of Dagestan, Russian Federation). A comprehensive study of the *Limes Caspius* – a colossal system of cordons of “long walls” and fortifications – was conducted by the Derbent Archaeological Expedition.⁶

The first stage of the construction works, which included the citadel and the northern wall of Derbent, took place in 568–569 CE and was associated with a special military-political situation. The successes of the Sasanian emperor Khosrow I Anushirvan in the war against Byzantium forced the latter to pay tributes, part of which was used to finance the grandiose construction works in Derbent.⁷

⁴ Hajiev (2001: 166–167); Hajiev (2016).

⁵ Hajiev (2008: 8–36).

⁶ Hajiev (2020a: 19–21).

⁷ Hajiev (2008: 14–15).



Fig. 1: The city wall of Derbent.

It is noteworthy that before the construction of the now well-preserved stone “long walls” of Derbent, some adobe walls were erected at the same place, using a technique widespread in the area. Mikhail I. Artamonov, who examined the adobe wall in 1936 when significant fragments of it were still in place, was inclined to date it back to the time of Yazdegerd II (439–457).⁸ Since the Arab authors of the 9th–10th centuries connected the construction of the Derbent defensive system with the names of the Iranian emperors Kavad (488–531) and Khosrow I Anushirvan (531–579), there is the assumption that Kavad erected either one of the walls south of Derbent or the adobe walls of Derbent, which were then replaced with stone walls under Anushirvan.⁹

The adobe walls were laid on clay mortar. The height of the preserved part of the wall is 4–5 m, the width is up to 3 m. The size of bricks in one section is 41(43) × 41(43) × 11 cm, in the other 50 × 50 × 13 cm. At a height of 2.5–3 m, there is one row of small stones in the adobe wall.¹⁰ The data obtained during the exami-

⁸ Artamonov (1946: 136); Hajiev (2008: 2).

⁹ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 44–47 and 53); Kudryavtsev (1979: 34–43).

¹⁰ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 48).



Fig. 2: The city wall of Derbent.

nation of a large section of the adobe wall, located about a meter from the northern stone wall of the city, are confirmed by the results of archaeological studies of other fragments of the adobe wall, including the citadel, the walls of which were in adobe, too. It has been proven that a powerful defensive wall made of adobe bricks on a mud platform blocked the entire 3.5-km Derbent passage.¹¹

The stone walls of the city-fortress of Derbent (568–569) are 230–380 cm thick, 12–15 m high, and separated from each other at a distance of 350–450 m. They form the city space from its two sides. The construction of the purely stone walls of Derbent and the Dag-Bary line connected with it was an innovation for Caucasian Albania, introduced by the Sasanians. They relied on that branch of Iranian architectural tradition which dates back to the buildings of the Achaemenid era, in its turn reflecting the technological and architectural achievements of the Roman Empire. The architecture of the stone fortifications of the Derbent defence system is characterised by the rationality of the layout of walls, towers, forts, and bastions, the emphasised monumentality of the image, and the minimalism of

¹¹ Hajiev (1989: 61–74).

forms. The main towers, especially often in the northern wall of the city, are rectangular in shape. There were also towers with a semicircular base in some parts of the wall. They were open to the space of the city, that is, the wall formed their outer perimeter. In the fortifications of Dag-Bary, blind, packed towers were also used, including those in the shape of a three-quarter circle at the corners of rectangular bastions, as well as hollow towers with false vaults. The architecture of the city gates is impressive, their strict forms dating back to the classical period. In the Middle Ages, many gates were rebuilt, yielding images that echo not only the architecture of the Muslim East but also the portals of Christian churches of Armenia and Georgia. This is especially evident at the example of the Orta-kapy gate of the southern wall of Derbent.

The technology of building fortifications is based on shell masonry with an orderly laying out of the outer sides with large stone blocks, cleanly hewn from the side of their outer surface and tightly fitted to each other. In the rows of masonry, two types are regularly alternate, that is, blocks that are narrow from the outside and deeply embedded in the internal rubble concrete with wide, slab-like blocks (100 × 65 × 25 cm) filling the space between the first ones. In the course of studying the Mountain Wall, step-shaped merlons were found (measured by Evgeniy A. Pakhomov in 1928, then by Aleksandr A. Kudryavtsev in 1974 and attributed to the 6th century), as well as blocks of machicolations and a Middle Persian inscription of the 6th century (Fig. 3)¹² – one of 31 Middle Persian inscriptions from the Sasanian time.¹³

Marks of mason masters who built those walls contain signs and symbols that are most similar to those observed in the palace at Pasargadae and in other Achaemenid buildings. They are also similar to the marks on the walls of Armenian and Georgian churches of the 7th century.¹⁴

The main function of Derbent was protection from the Khazar Khaganate and northern nomads. At the same time, it was the largest port in the Caspian Sea and an important trade centre. The urban space was rationally structured. There was a citadel (now known as Naryn-kala; cf. Fig. 4) in the west and a port protected with two walls extending into the sea, in the east; in the middle part of the city there should have been a trade centre and quarters that were rebuilt by Arabs in the 8th–10th centuries. The location of the gates in the fortress walls,

¹² The inscription of a tax collector named Daryush was first published by E. A. Pakhomov (1929) and commented upon by H. S. Nyberg (1929).

¹³ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 159–232 and 300–376); Hajiev and Bakushev (2002: 49–51).

¹⁴ Hajiev (2010: 147–178); for more on mason marks of churches in the South Caucasus see Kazaryan (2012).



Fig. 3: The inscription of Daryush in the Derbend fortification wall (turned by 270°).

with which the main streets were connected, played an important role in the formation of the urban structure of the city.¹⁵

The city and the settlements and forts of the Mountain Wall were of no less importance in the Arab period. In the 8th–10th centuries, they were strengthened,

¹⁵ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 112).



Fig. 4: The Naryn-Kala fortification (citadel of Derbent).

and new fortresses were founded. The settlements became “Islamic centres” and *ribats*, which played a crucial role in the spread of Sufism in medieval Dagestan.¹⁶

2.3 Other fortifications

The Derbent system of linear strengthening of the spurs of the Greater Caucasus and the coastal zone of the Caspian Sea was not the only one. In the depths of the Albanian territory, on the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, other chains of fortifications were built parallel to it in the time of the Sasanians, of which only some remnants have survived.¹⁷

2.3.1 Torpakh-kale

On the territory of Southern Dagestan, the settlement of Torpakh-kale (or Toprakh-kale), usually identified with the royal city of *Shahrestan-i Yazdegerd*, was also explored. The excavations made it possible to enrich the ideas about the fortification architecture of Sasanian Iran and Caucasian Albania in the mid-5th – mid-6th

¹⁶ Hajiev (2012: 93–107); Alikberov (2003: 237–238, 482–483).

¹⁷ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 22–43).

centuries. The ancient settlement has a square shape, 800 × 800 m in size. Above the shaft, the remains of walls and gates are preserved, the masonry of which combined adobe constructions with burnt bricks in the upper parts of the walls and gates.¹⁸

2.3.2 Partaw

On the right bank of the Kura, on the river Tartar (Tərtu, Terter), was situated the last administrative centre of the Albanian Marzpanate, namely, Partaw, which according to some medieval sources was built in the second half of the 5th – early 6th century.¹⁹ From 551/2 to the early 9th century, the see of the Albanian Catholicoi was located there. In the 7th century, Partaw became the capital of the Albanian Principality of the Mihranids. In the late 8th century, the city (named *Barḍa'a* in Arabic, whence the present name Barda/Bərdə) developed to be the second most important centre (after Dvin) of the Arab province of Arminiya; it fell into disrepair after the Mongolian invasion.

2.3.3 Parisos, Gandzak and Tigranakert

Earlier, from the end of the 5th century onwards, Prince Vachagan received the title of King of Artsakh from the Sasanian emperor. The role of the Aranshahik clan, descending from him, in the struggle for liberation from the Arabs in the 8th–10th centuries turned out to be the most perceptible on the territories of Artsakh and Utik. In 887, a significant part of those lands was included in the Armenian kingdom of the Bagratids (Bagratuni); and in the 970s, Yovhannes-Senekerim Aranshahik founded the kingdom of Parisos.²⁰ The place of its capital is known, but almost unexplored. The citadel of Parisos, located on the northern side of the settlement, is organically inscribed on the rocky top of the hill. Sections of the walls and rounded towers have been partially preserved and, in the centre of the citadel, there are remains of a chapel.²¹

The city of Gandzak (Ganja), founded by Arab rulers in the mid-9th century, became an important centre of the region, ruled by the Kurdish Shaddadid dynasty.²² It was there that the Albanian Catholicos moved around 800.

¹⁸ Khan-Magomedov (2002: 18–19); Hajiev and Magomedov (2008: 276–297).

¹⁹ For the dating of the 6th century see Hakobyan (1987: 123–124).

²⁰ Cf. Chapter 14 of this Handbook (La Porta) as to details concerning the king.

²¹ Karapetyan (2018: 104–114).

²² Cf. Chapter 15 in this Handbook (Dorfmann-Lazarev) as to details concerning Gandzak and the Shaddadids.

A city of the classical epoch, Tigranakert in Artsakh,²³ witnessed a new development in the Early Christian era. A new centre and living quarters grew at the foot of the mountain, the slope of which was occupied by an ancient fortress. The walls and towers of the city, uncovered by the archaeological expedition of Yerevan State University in 2005–2020 (headed by Hamlet Petrosyan),²⁴ testify to the involvement of Artsakh in the development of classical culture in the Armenian highlands during the heyday of Greater Armenia. The settlement presents striking examples of the typology of fortification forms and construction equipment, the analogues of which are known from Classical monuments in Artashat, Garni, and Bagaran. The late antique city, which spread on the flat part of Tigranakert as well as its environments, contains remains of churches and memorial structures of the Early Christian era, which, along with some buildings of the modern Hadrut district – in Amaras and Mokhrenes – provide a variety of manifestations of architectural creativity of the period of the spread of Christianity in Artsakh. Unfortunately, the transition of the south of the Artsakh Republic under the control of Azerbaijani troops in 2021 interrupted the systematic work of the Tigranakert expedition, and many issues of its urban planning remain unclear.

Several decuman fortresses are known on the territory of the mountainous regions of Artsakh, called Karabakh since the late medieval period. However, the history of their foundation and development is connected with the Armenian fortification architecture. Despite the fact that, for a short time, two Armenian provinces – Artsakh and Utik – were part of the Albanian Marzpanate, the architecture of their fortresses and churches cannot be considered in the context of the building traditions of Caucasian Albania. Exclusively within the framework of Armenian monastic architecture, it is possible to consider the complexes and functionally diverse buildings of the medieval monasteries of Artsakh and Utik as elements of a memorial architecture, including the art of *khachkars* in this territory as well as the architecture of palaces and other residential buildings.²⁵

3 Churches and monuments of memorial architecture

The ecclesiastic architecture of Caucasian Albania has been studied extremely poorly and inconsistently. The research process and its special focus were ham-

²³ 40°3'55" N, 46°54'21" E.

²⁴ Cf. Chapter 12 in this Handbook (Petrosyan) as to details concerning Tigranakert.

²⁵ For the history and culture of Artsakh and Utik, see Hewsen (1984); Hakobyan (1987); Murad-yan (1991); Ulubabayan (1998); Hakobyan (2020); Dorfmann-Lazarev (2021); etc.

pered not only by the mainly Muslim environment of modern Azerbaijan in most of the territory of this ancient country, but also by the lack of sufficient archaeological data and the poor preservation of all Early Christian constructions. Moreover, the identification and historical linking of the monuments is difficult. Those churches of which we have remains are not found in written sources, and there are no building inscriptions in them. At the same time, we cannot yet find the churches that are mentioned in older sources in the modern landscape. So, for example, we do not even know the specific places of any of the early cathedrals of the Albanian Church, neither in Chor/Derbent, nor in Kapalak/Gabala, nor in Partaw/Barda, where there was a large church of St Gregory (according to Movses Kalankatuatsi), possibly even a cathedral. A different church in Partaw was excavated in 1970. According to archaeological research, it was destroyed by fire in the early 8th century. The walls of this three-aisled basilica (11 × 6 m) are laid with burnt bricks, and the floor is covered with the same bricks as well.²⁶ Obviously, it is not the church of St Gregory. Cathedrals in the centres of episcopal dioceses are mostly unknown to us. They were eight in the second half of the 6th century.

3.1 Churches according to medieval sources

The *History of the Country of the Albanians* by Movses Kalankatuatsi (or Daskhurantsi) contains information about the construction of several churches and martyria. Most of them were associated with the acquisition and deposition of holy relics and are localised on the right bank of the Kura river. Among the known Christian centres are Darakhoch and Sukhar, where the relics of St Gregory the Illuminator were kept in the church of Ss Gayane and Hripsime; Amaras,²⁷ where the relics of bishops Grigoris, Zacharias and Pantaleon were acquired and placed in martyria next to the church founded by St Gregory the Illuminator; Dastakert-Hnchik and Dutakan (the residence of King Vachagan III), where parts of the relics of St Grigoris and other saints are kept; and others. The same king Vachagan III set up a memorial column on the burial of St Elisaeus, allegedly a disciple of the Apostle Thaddeus, in the monastery of Jrvshtik;²⁸ one of the king's courtiers who accepted monasticism spent the rest of his life on that column. King Vachagan himself was buried in the same monastery, which became the centre of the diocese. According to Movses Kalankatuatsi, St Elisaeus is considered the founder

²⁶ Geyushev (1971). For the history and monuments of Partaw in general see Karapetyan (2000: 212–216).

²⁷ 39°41'2.4" N, 47°3'25.2" E.

²⁸ 40°20'8.8" N, 46°41'37.7" E.

of the Albanian church, and he built the first church in Gis,²⁹ which is proposed to be identified with the present village of Kish in the Shaki district of modern Azerbaijan.³⁰

In the 7th century, in the fortress of Gardman, the prince and then ruler of Albania, Juansher, built a richly decorated church “for the whole country of Albania”.³¹ Under this king, an active construction activity unfolded.³² Other ancient churches and martyria are also known for the right-bank part of Caucasian Albania.³³

3.2 Dating of surviving churches

The few surviving churches of the 5th–8th centuries have no exact dating, with the exception of the tomb in Amaras. Datings of Christian churches were established in research literature on the basis of a comparison of their architecture and archaeological material with monuments of neighbouring countries (according to the criteria of spatial solutions, decoration, and construction equipment). This does not allow us to date Albanian buildings earlier than their closest counterparts in the central regions of Armenia and Georgia.

The process of dating is further complicated because of the specific construction technique of Albanian churches and the almost complete absence of carved architectural details. Buildings made in a cruder technique, of crushed and cobbled stone, or in a mixed technique with the addition of burnt bricks and hewn stone, were distributed throughout the country and have analogues in Armenia and Eastern Georgia, especially Kakheti. The mixed stone-brick or cobblestone technique probably served as the basis for the formation of the Albanian architectural school of medieval architecture of the Transcaucasus. In addition, adobe bricks were also used in the Kura valley. All those churches required internal plastering and, judging by the scanty information we possess, some of them were painted. Monuments of church architecture made of cleanly hewn stone are found only in the right-bank provinces of the Albanian (Arran) Marzpanate, which did not lose its cultural ties with other Armenian regions and restored its unity with the Armenian kingdom in the 9th century.

²⁹ *History of the Country of the Albanians*, book I, ch. VI–VII (Arakelyan 1983: 9–12; Dowsett 1961: 5–6).

³⁰ 41°15' N, 47°11'30" E.

³¹ *ամենայն աշխարհս Աղուանից*: *History*, book II, ch. 25 (Arakelyan 1983: 188; Dowsett 1961: 121).

³² *History*, book II, ch. 22 (Arakelyan 1983: 184–185; Dowsett 1961: 119).

³³ Hakobyan (1987: 243 and 260).

There are great differences in the typology of churches in Albania proper and in the provinces of Artsakh and Utik, with the exception of similar simple types of church buildings, such as hall churches. At the same time, the architecture of both these zones of the Marzpanate had something in common with the central phenomena of Armenian architecture, which were especially developed in the 7th century. The trend towards the achievements of the main school of Armenian ecclesiastic architecture continued in the era of the developed Middle Ages (9th–13th centuries), while in the left-bank regions, on the spurs of the Caucasus Range, from the border with Kakheti to Dagestan, a trend towards Georgian architecture was added to it, and there were important historical reasons for that. However, this chapter does not include an analysis of that era of development of the right bank Armenian architecture and is not centred on the post-Albanian or, according to some scholars, Georgian architecture on the left bank. Instead, this chapter is limited to the Early Christian era, which includes monuments of Christian architecture in the kingdom, later the Marzpanate of Albania/Aġvank/Arran. Studying them leads us to the conclusion that, with rare exceptions related to the architecture of the 5th century (to which only the oldest part of the church in Amaras can be considered exactly dated), the typology and style of those churches allows us to date them to the second half of the 7th century or later times.

3.3 Churches of Caucasian Albania proper

3.3.1 Sudaġılan

In 1948, on the left bank of the Kura River, an ecclesiastic complex was discovered in the settlement of Sudaġılan near Mingachevir;³⁴ it was excavated in 1971. At the heart of the complex, three hall-type churches of small size were distinguished. The thick walls of those buildings (1.5–2.05 m) were built of adobe brick with little use of burnt brick. The ceilings were wooden, in the middle part resting on wooden columns, the roofs were tiled. The construction dates back to the 6th–8th centuries.³⁵ One of the churches, surrounded with a fence, had carved architectural details made of white stone and stucco with ornaments similar to Armenian and Georgian works of the 7th century (the Dvin cathedral, Yeghvard, Odzun, the Jvari monastery near Mtskheta, Samtsevrissi). A cube-shaped pedestal or capital that was used to carry an altar cross was found there, with an image of two peacocks on both sides of a lily flower (symbolising the “tree of life”) on

³⁴ 40°47'1" N, 47°2'12" E.

³⁵ Plontke-Lüning (2007: 234–235).

its front face and with an Albanian building inscription running along its four faces (dated to the 27th year of either Khosrow I or II).³⁶ Remnants of an Armenian inscription on plaster fragments excavated in another church building at the same site³⁷ obviously represent a later stratum.³⁸

3.3.2 The Basilica in Qum

At the heart of the composition of the three-aisled basilica near the village of Qum (Qakh district of Azerbaijan; see Fig. 5),³⁹ there is a slightly elongated hall with two pairs of strong T-shaped pillars and an altar in the east. The church was surrounded with a vaulted bypass, the northern and southern sides of which ended in the east with chapels. The church is dated to the 5th or 6th century.⁴⁰ Qum is the only three-aisled basilica on the territory of Albania proper. The monument reflects the iconography of the plan of the 4th-century church in Aghdzk but most of the other features have analogues in the Armenian architecture of the 7th century.

The solution of the eastern part, with an extended apse and square pastophories on the sides of the high elevation of the apse (Armenian *bem*, from Greek βῆμα), schematically goes back to the Armenian churches in Mren (639), Bagawan



Fig. 5: The ruined basilica of Qum (2004).

36 See Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1.2 and 4.1 for further details.

37 Vahidov and Fomenko (1951: 92–93); Vahidov (1961: 142–143).

38 Abrahamyan (1956: 66–72); Vahidov (1958: 119; 1961: 148).

39 41°27'30.7" N, 46°54'39.9" E.

40 5th century: Akhundov (1986: 223); 6th century: Useynov (1963: 31), Baranovskiy (1947).

(631–639), Talin (670s), and the domed cathedral of Dvin (640s). The pylons at the western wall present in the Qum Basilica started to be used only in the second half of the 7th century; and the eight-part intersecting vaults in the pastophoria have analogies in Armenian churches of the 7th century: St Hripsime (613), Irind, Kosh. However, the analogues of the composition of the naos and galleries with open arcades (cf. Odzun, mid-7th century; Samshilde, second half of the 7th century; Vachnadziani, 11th century), as well as the eight-part arches over the tromps in the pastophoria do not allow us to attribute the building to a time earlier than the mid-7th century.⁴¹

3.3.3 Lekit, Mamrukh and Kilsədağ

Centric round churches form a separate group of monuments. There are three such churches in the regions of the slopes of the Caucasus Range, and only one, the largest of them, can be attributed with a high degree of certainty to the second half of the 7th century. This church is located not far from the Qum Basilica in the architectural complex near the village of Lekit (Lyakit) in the same (Qakh) district of Azerbaijan.⁴²

This is a rotunda church, in which a domed tetraconch is inscribed.⁴³ In other words, it is an edifice of the type of the Armenian church of Zvartnots, built by Catholicos Nerses III Tayetsi (Nerses the Builder). Lekit differs significantly both from the alleged prototype and from other buildings of this type: the church of Banak/Bana in Tayk (mid-7th century, early 10th century) and the church of St Gregory the Illuminator (or of Gagkashen) in Ani (about 1001). Some of these differences are due to functional features, including liturgical demands: there is no additional room (staircase) from the east, and two pastophoria with apses are added from the east side, outside the circular perimeter of the walls. All other differences are related to the simplification of the architectural idea of Zvartnots due to the smaller size of Lekit and the technique used to build walls from cobblestone, using burnt bricks in the construction of exedra columns and four pillars. The church did not have a choir above the ring ambulatory of the tetraconch; but it probably retained a three-tier structure in the distribution of the forms of the external composition. The probable dating of Lekit is the second half of the 7th century. Its construction could be a result of one of two trips of the Albanian Prince Juansher to Armenia, the first of which took place on the invitation of

⁴¹ Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 75–80).

⁴² 41°29'35.5" N, 46°51'23.8" E.

⁴³ Baranovskiy (1947); Ishkhanov (1970).

Catholicos Nerses; the second was accompanied by a meeting between Juansher and the *Ishkhan* of Armenia Grigor Mamikonian. It is also possible that Lekit was built during the time of the next Albanian Prince, Varaz-Trdat, who sent Bishop Israel of Artsakh to ask for a piece of the relics of St Gregory the Illuminator that were stored in Zvartnots.⁴⁴

Compositionally related to Lekit are churches near the village of Mamrukh (Zakatala district of Azerbaijan),⁴⁵ measured for the first time in 1974, and on Mount Kilsədağ near the village of Böyük Əmili (Qabala district),⁴⁶ investigated in 1971. Both of them have three entrances, two pastophoria round in plan and an annular ambulatory around the central domed space, formed with four strong pillars in Mamrukh and with eight round columns in Kilsədağ. In Mamrukh, a semicircular apse protrudes from the east with a rectangular pre-altar space; and sowing entrances have small square aisles. The outer diameter of the wall in Mamrukh is equal to the wall of the church in Lekit (18.8 m), in Kilsədağ it is 12.4 m.

The churches are in ruins. The issue of their dating is disputable, their association with some buildings of pagan cults⁴⁷ is not substantiated in any way. Kilsədağ was dated by its first explorers to the 8th century.⁴⁸ Judging by the decoration of the chapels (pastophoria) of Kilsədağ with double semi-columns and the discovery of fragments of unglazed and glazed building ceramics, as well as the shapes and decoration of the lintels of the openings, the building was erected in the 12th–14th centuries.

The forms of the apse, window openings and cornices of the church of Mamrukh made it possible to place the monument in a row of buildings of the 12th–14th centuries that are directly related to the architecture of Kakheti in Georgia.⁴⁹ On the other hand, a dating by the period of the developed Middle Ages would make it possible to consider Mamrukh and Kilsədağ within the framework of Georgian architecture. It is quite obvious that, coinciding in terms of size and many forms with the church of Lekit, these two churches were guided by the architecture of the latter while their architectural compositions reflected their programmatic orientation to Christian rotundas, i.e. an architecture strongly associated with martyrria in the Holy Land (cf. the Anastasis Rotunda of the Church

⁴⁴ Tokarskiy (1961: 140–141); Mnatsakanyan (1971: 180–181); Kazaryan (2015); Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 31–39). On the architecture of Lekit see also Plontke-Lüning (2007: 307–308); Donabédian (2008: 200–201).

⁴⁵ 41°32'42" N, 46°46'28" E.

⁴⁶ 40°51'29" N, 47°44'27" E.

⁴⁷ Akhundov (1986: 206–208).

⁴⁸ Vahidov, Mamedzade and Guliev (1972: 488).

⁴⁹ Mailov (1985: 143).

of the Holy Sepulchre, etc.); and the style, manifested in some architectural details, reflects the features of architecture of the developed Middle Ages in the countries of the South Caucasus.⁵⁰

3.3.4 Orta-Zeyzit, Kish and Yeddi-kilsə

A small church of the free-cross type in Orta-Zeyzit (Shaki district),⁵¹ domed churches in the village of Kish and cross-domed churches with a pair of western free-standing pillars in the Yeddi-kilsə or Upper-Lekit complex⁵² are oriented stylistically towards Georgian or some Armenian constructions of the 11th–14th centuries. Can these churches be considered a result of a new architectural phenomenon called post-Albanian architecture, or the revival of Albanian architecture in close interaction with the neighbouring architectural traditions flourishing at that time? It is difficult to answer such questions based on a few monuments and in the absence of additional information from written sources. There is no general view on the dating of these monuments either. The attempts of Azerbaijani scholars to declare them older only on the basis of the typological similarity of their plans with Armenian and Georgian churches of the 5th–6th centuries⁵³ are not consistent because they ignore important stylistic features manifested in architectural details such as profiles and carvings.

3.3.5 Churches in Dagestan

In Dagestan, early medieval Christian churches were erected under the influence of Armenian and, possibly, Iranian architecture. Two churches with a rectangular altar were discovered at the burial mound of Belenjer, a city in Northern Dagestan.⁵⁴ From the 9th–11th centuries, the Christian architecture of Dagestan was developed in line with the progress in Georgian architecture (the church of Datuna, 11th century, etc.).⁵⁵

In connection with an attempt to Christianise Khazaria, two churches of the 7th–8th centuries can be mentioned; they were found in the settlement of Upper

⁵⁰ Kazaryan (2015: 251–253).

⁵¹ 41°10'5" N, 47°14'57" E; Mailov (1985: 143, Fig. 4); Plontke-Lüning (2007: 286–287).

⁵² 41°29'35.5" N, 46°51'23.8" E; see Chapter 10 of this Handbook (Donabédian) for details.

⁵³ Kerimov (2008); Kerimov and Sturfiel (2003).

⁵⁴ Kovalevskaya (1981: 94–96).

⁵⁵ Murtuzaliev and Khanbabaev (2000):

Chiryurt (now Gel'bakh).⁵⁶ Their rectangular apse could be related with specific Armenian or Iranian (Nestorian) traditions.

With a view to broadening the picture of the development of architecture on the territory of Southern Dagestan, many constructions of Derbent are of special interest, on the basis of which archaeologists made assumptions to link the material culture of the city for two eras of its existence, the Albanian/Iranian and the Arab era. There is the opinion that the large Juma Mosque⁵⁷ emerged in the 8th century as a result of the reconstruction of a large church built as a basilica. The plan of the mosque hints at such a possibility, but the orientation of the pillars and arches does not allow us to recognise this as justified.⁵⁸

In 1976, archaeologist Aleksandr A. Kudryavtsev expressed the opinion that the cruciform underground structure in the Naryn-kala complex, previously considered a cistern, was a church in the Early Christian era, rebuilt as a reservoir for storing water.⁵⁹ Murtazali Hajiev reasonably denies this and other hypotheses as not being supported by archaeological data. At that, the structure of the plan has prototypes not only in Early Christian but also in pre-Islamic Iranian architecture.⁶⁰ The orientation of the cross to the cardinal points and the absence of doors suggest that the building is based on an original, perhaps one-of-a-kind type of underground cistern, which was, at the same time, cruciform and with a dome on pendentives. Details, namely the forms of arches, make us conclude that the structure was built in the late Middle Ages, not earlier than the 15th–16th centuries. In this case, the composition of the building may indicate the penetration of the architectural idea of a cruciform domed structure into the sphere of economic purposes.

3.4 Churches of Artsakh and Utik (right bank of the Kura River)

Some of the monuments of the eastern provinces of Greater Armenia, the ecclesiastic history of which is inextricably linked to the history of the Christianisation of Caucasian Albania, can be attributed to the oldest period of the Christianisation of Armenia itself. According to its researchers, the complex of semi-cave churches

⁵⁶ 43°9'11.7" N, 46°51'22.6" E; Magomedov (1979).

⁵⁷ 42°3'19" N, 48°16'47" E.

⁵⁸ Khan-Magomedov (2002).

⁵⁹ Kudryavtsev (1979).

⁶⁰ Hajiev (2021c).

near Vankasar (Beşikdağ) in Artsakh (Aghdam district of Azerbaijan)⁶¹ belong to the first centuries CE, i.e. to the initial period of the Christianisation of Transcaucasia.⁶² At the same time, decorative elements representing different types of relief crosses have analogues in buildings of the 4th–7th centuries.

3.4.1 Amaras

Amaras was an important centre for the spread of Christian faith and Armenian writing and literature. Here is the tomb of the grandson of St Gregory the Illuminator, Grigoris, who preached and was martyred among the Massagetae (c. 338). The existing semi-underground construction of the tomb is located under the altar of the church of 1858. Initially, three arched staircase passages led into this crypt – two on the sides and one along the axis, from the east. Perhaps it was a separate building since there was a window in its western wall.⁶³ However, its structure is close to the early crypts under the Armenian churches of St Mesrop Mashtots in Oshakan and of Ss Hripsime and Gayane in Vagharshapat/Ejmiatsin, most of which supposedly had entrances from the east side that were walled up in the Middle Ages.⁶⁴ The masonry of large, well-hewn blocks of basalt and the peculiarities of the carved decor, similar to such Armenian churches as the basilica of St Sargis in Tekor (480s) allow us to attribute it to the time of King Vachagan III (489).

3.4.2 Tigranakert

Churches and mausoleums, revealed during the excavations led by H. Petrosyan in Tigranakert, are typical examples of Early Christian architecture in its classical manifestation which developed mainly in the central provinces of Armenia. The monuments of Tigranakert are characterised by a clear layout, masonry with cleanly hewn blocks, setting walls on a stepped socle, and ornamented architectural details. Of greatest interest is the large hall church with an apse hidden in the general rectangle of the outer perimeter of the walls. Architectural forms and proportions, a cornice with large denticles, portal bases, and carved architectural

⁶¹ 40°4'19.6" N, 46°53'14.6" E.

⁶² Simonyan and Sanamyan (2005: 218–220); Petrosyan and Kirakosyan (2016).

⁶³ Hasratyan (1977); Cuneo (1988: 436–437).

⁶⁴ Kazaryan (2003); Kazaryan (2007); cf. Chapter 11 of this Handbook (Petrosyan), 3.3 as to the question of eastern entrances.

details including capitals of excellent quality with crosses in a circle and ornaments, indicate that the monument belongs to the architecture that was shaped in Armenia on the basis of the Late Antique tradition and allow us to date the monument to the 5th–6th centuries. The same “Classical” tradition reveals itself in some Early Christian mausoleums, too; they were excavated in the neighbourhood, at a small distance from the church.⁶⁵

Tigranakert is not the only archaeological site in Artsakh with the remains of Early Christian architectural heritage. For example, in the monastic complex of Bri Eghtsi, in the villages Berdashen and Tartar of the Martuni (Xocavənd) district of Artsakh,⁶⁶ there are ancient capitals and an impost with interesting forms and decoration: a cross in a circle, wether-heads, etc.⁶⁷ Some of them might belong to unpreserved memorial columns with sculptural crosses on the top, which were typical for the Armenian culture before the Arab invasion.

3.4.3 Vankasar

The church on Mount Vankasar, above Tigranakert, is a domed triconch of the free-cross type (9.7 × 8.3 m). Its architectural features, the marks of mason masters on the stones (similar to the Armenian churches in Sisavan, Irind, etc.), Armenian inscriptions of the 7th and subsequent centuries on the walls of the church, and a flourishing relief cross on the tympanum of the western entrance (destroyed by Azerbaijani specialists during the restoration of the building in the late 1980s in order to “Albanise” the monument) indicate that it was built in the last third of the 7th century by a team of craftsmen from neighbouring Armenian provinces (Ayrarat or Syunik), with which Artsakh maintained close cultural ties at that time.⁶⁸

3.4.4 Okhtdrnivank

Another early medieval centric construction of Artsakh is the church of Okhtdrnivank near the village of Mokhrenes (Susanlıq)⁶⁹ and the Gtich Monas-

65 Petrosyan (2016; 2020); Kirakosyan (2016a); cf. Chapter 11 of this Handbook (Petrosyan) for further details.

66 39°51'04" N, 46°58'09" E.

67 Hakobyan (1991: 15).

68 Yampolskiy (1960); Mkrtchyan (1989: 63–64); Kazaryan (2012–2013: III, 601–605).

69 39°34'10" N, 46°55'47" E.

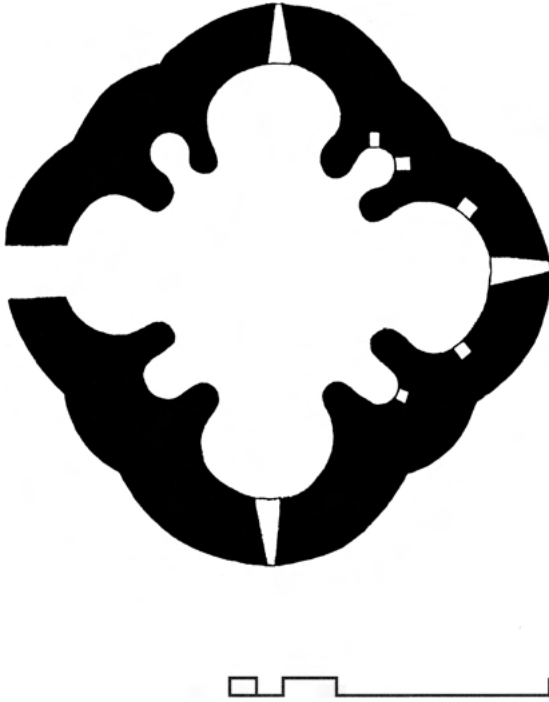


Fig. 6: Plan of the tetraconch of Mokhrenes by axis east-west.

tery⁷⁰ in the Hadrut district of Artsakh. The building belongs to the architectural type of tetraconchs with corner niches common in Armenia and Georgia (the oldest of them is the cathedral of Avan, 590s), but, unlike most of those churches, it does not have corner chambers flanking the eastern and western exedrae. All exedrae, including the so-called corner niches, have horseshoe-shaped outlines smoothly turning into the rounded forms of the undercupola pylons (cf. Figures 6–8). The only entrance is in the western exedra. The dimensions of the church are 8×8.25 m inside and 10.3×10.5 m outside; the dome diameter is c. 4 m. Only the walls of the building and some arches have been preserved. In 671, Artsakh was apparently briefly included in the Syunik Principality, and Murad Hasratyan⁷¹ dates the church of Mokhrenes to that time on the basis of a comparative architectural analysis. At the same time, the character of the masonry of

⁷⁰ $39^{\circ}35'36.8''$ N, $46^{\circ}56'31''$ E.

⁷¹ Hasratyan (1988–1989); cf. also Thierry, Donabédian and Thierry (1987: 556); Mkrtychyan (1989: 71–75); Cuneo (1988: 428).

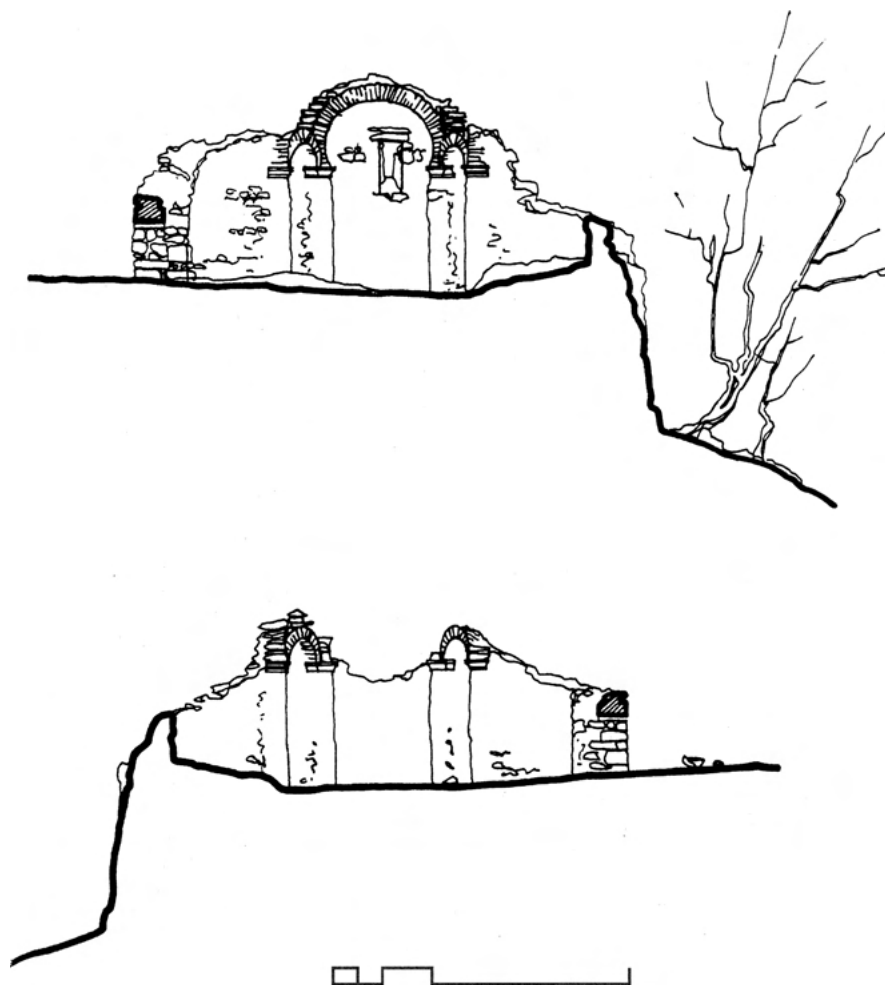


Fig. 7: Section of the tetraconch of Mokhrenes by axis east-west.

the walls made of broken stone, and the closest analogues of the design of the altar capitals (the portal of the Yeghvard Basilica of 660) suggest the construction of the church by local craftsmen in the 7th century.⁷² Near the church there is a fragment of a *khachkar* of 997, and a *khachkar* of 1044.⁷³

⁷² Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 40–48); Kazaryan (2021).

⁷³ Mkrtychyan, Abgaryan and Karapetyan (1982).

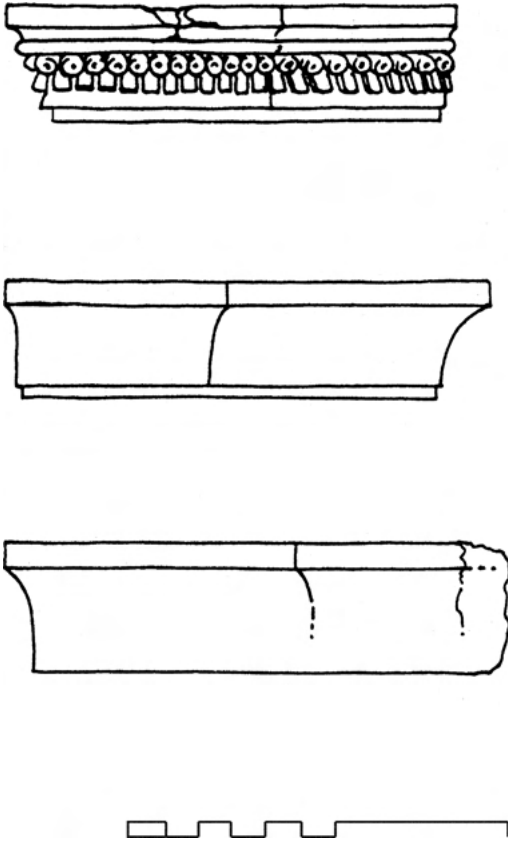


Fig. 8: Imposts of the tetraconch of Mokhrenes: south impost of the apse; impost of the north exedra.

3.4.5 Khachen

On the right bank of the river Khachen in Artsakh, a single-nave church of the 8th–9th centuries was discovered during the excavations of the ancient settlement of Gavurqala (Aghdam district of Azerbaijan);⁷⁴ it has a semicircular apse and an additional room from the northeast. The walls are laid with limestone, the floor is paved with stone.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ 40°11' N, 46°53' E.

⁷⁵ Geyushev (1984: 85); Karapetyan (2000: 222).

3.4.6 Hakobavank

The complex of Hakobavank (10th–11th centuries) in the Martakert (Kalbajar) district of Artsakh,⁷⁶ consisting of two single-nave vaulted churches and a vestibule, belongs to the early period of monastic construction. The entrances to the churches open into a gallery limited on the outside by tripartite arcade. A *khachkar* of 853 is included in a wall of the western church.⁷⁷

3.4.7 Tzakend

In the south of Utik, 3 km from the village of Tzakend (Aghjabadi district of Azerbaijan),⁷⁸ on the Chatatepe Hill, were discovered the ruins of a three-nave basilica with two pairs of cruciform pillars, an altar apse (U-shaped inside and semicircular outside) with pastophoria on either side of it which also end with apses. The external dimensions are 16.5 × 9.25 m. Accompanying archaeological material (ceramics) made it possible to date the monument within the 6th century⁷⁹ and to identify the buildings with the church of St Pantaleon which was erected, according to the *History of the Country of the Albanians*, by the Albanian Catholicos Lazar (before 551).⁸⁰ Some peculiarities of the plan of the Tzakend basilica – the arrangement of the altar part and the shape of the windows – bring the monument closer to the architecture of the churches of the High Middle Ages. An early church on this site might have been rebuilt.

3.4.8 Tsitsernavank

The large three-nave basilica of Tsitsernavank, built on the lands of Syunik near the border with Artsakh,⁸¹ also belongs to Early Christian churches of the region. Specialists disagree in dating the monument (from pre-Christian times to the 7th century) as well as in the issue of the stages of reconstruction of this basilica.⁸²

76 40°0'11" N, 46°36' E.

77 Hasratyan (1992: 82–84); Cuneo (1988: 447).

78 40°6'8" N, 47°19'27" E.

79 Geyushev (1984: 86–87).

80 Karapetyan (2000: 266).

81 39°38'39" N, 46°24'29" E.

82 Hasratyan (1980); Cuneo (1967); Thierry, Donabédian and Thierry (1987: 509); Cuneo et al. (1988); Simonyan and Sanamyan (2001); Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 81–112).

The solid rectangular mass of the building (12.55×25.52 m) rests on a stepped socle, plastically covering the rocky base. The internal structure of the long naos is divided into naves by four pairs of square pillars. The eastern part consists of a deep apse and rectangular pastophories. In the space of the middle nave, an illuminated zone stands out in front of the dark altar, forming a kind of light transept with which the light flow from the arcade of the supra-apsid room intersects; this is a completely original form. The artistic integrity of the work makes us think about its creation according to a single, deeply thought-out plan, not being carried away by ideas about the phased formation of the composition of this church. The solemnity and grandeur of the image of the Tsitsernavank basilica is combined with the monastic austerity and provincial coarsening of the forms as well as an exquisite lyricism that permeates the architecture of this church, which is picturesquely and proportionately inscribed into the landscape of an amazingly beautiful gorge. Without any doubts, there were two groups of monuments of the 7th century which had an impact on the formation of Tsitsernavank. According to the iconography of forms and ornamentation, those were churches of the “classical” architecture of the second quarter of the 7th century as in Bagaran, Mren, Mastara, and Odzun; in terms of construction technique, the use of polychromy, a peculiar embodiment of classical architectural forms and a penchant for archaic motifs, it reminds of the monuments of the second half of the 7th century of Lori-Tashir in Kurtan, Vardablur, Sverdlov, etc.

It should be noted that there is no direct connection between the architecture of Tsitsernavank and Qum. The construction of the Tsitsernavank basilica of roughly hewn stone and the construction of the Qum basilica of cobblestones with fragments of brickwork, refer these two monuments to different building traditions.

3.5 Outlook

Information about the development of memorial architecture in the Early Christian era is extremely scarce in Caucasian Albania. To a greater extent, we know the materials not from Albania itself but from the regions historically connected with it, mainly on the territories of Artsakh and Utik: the described shrine of St Grigoris in Amaras and the monuments in Tigranakert. It was there that the art of carving *khachkars*, typical of the Armenian medieval culture, was actively developed. This circumstance, as well as the appearance of the first *khachkars* in the 8th–9th centuries, much later than the entry of Artsakh and Utik into the Albanian Marzpanate, testify to the development of art of those areas in accordance with the main processes of the evolution of Early Christian culture in Arme-

nia, not in Albania. Single archaeological findings include stone capitals with ornaments and motifs of a cross on the rim discovered in Tigranakert, near the Bri Eghtsi monastery, and in the village of Chartar (Martuni district of Artsakh);⁸³ tops of the arched tetrapylon type on the unpreserved stele from St Stepanos of Vachar (Martakert district of Artsakh, 5th–7th centuries),⁸⁴ an analogue of which was found in Parpi and in the form of a relief on the obelisk of Odzun, confirm the possibility of identifying new early medieval buildings.

4 Conclusions

The architecture of Albania was an organic component of the Early Christian architectural tradition of the countries of the South Caucasus; it was most integrated with the architecture of Armenia. The city-fortress of Derbent, and possibly the citadel of Kapalak, were formed taking into account the traditions of ancient Iran.

The most outstanding monuments of ecclesiastic architecture can be attributed to the last period of the era of the Marzpanate, when the institution of self-government in the person of the “Prince of Albania” was established in the country. The typology of those churches – the basilica of Qum, the church in Lekt – shows a particularly close connection with the Armenian architecture of the 7th century.⁸⁵

A specific style of the Early Christian buildings in Albania proper developed within the framework of the provincial branch of Armenian architecture. The construction technique of cobblestone and brick introduced restrictions on creating expressive images. Nevertheless, judging by the church in Lekt, architects who worked on the princely orders sometimes tried to solve the ambitious tasks of reproducing the most complex examples of Armenian architecture, which successfully and in a peculiar way continued the traditions of Classical Antiquity.

The builders in the right-bank (Armenian) provinces of the Marzpanate demonstrate the same characteristics. However, buildings made of cleanly hewn stone blocks were also implemented here, both in the 5th century when the tomb of St Grigoris was built in Amaras, and in the 5th–7th centuries when the churches of Tigranakert and Vankasar were constructed. In parallel, the buildings made in provincial technique interpreted more complex models of central Armenia, as in the 7th century when the tetraconch composition with corner niches was reproduced in original forms in the church of Mokhrens. On the examples of buildings

⁸³ 39°45'29" N, 47°0'58" E.

⁸⁴ Near Tsmakahogh (Bazarkend), 40°3'32.4" N, 46°35'2.7" E.

⁸⁵ Yakobson (1977).

of the 5th–7th centuries known to us, no direct relationships between the two parts of the Marzpanate, separated by the Kura River, have been revealed. Moreover, they did not appear in the architecture of these territories in the 9th–11th centuries when they were divided by the Muslim emirate.

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- Figures 6–7: Drawings on the basis of measurements by Samvel Karapetyan and Armen Kazaryan, 1987.
- Figure 8: Drawing on the basis of measurements by Armen Kazaryan, 1987.

Patrick Donabédian

10 The Ensemble of the “Seven Churches” – an Ecumenical Monastery Ahead of Time?

Abstract: The ensemble of vestiges called The Seven Churches (in Azeri *Yeddi Kilsə*) is located in the district of Qakh (Qax) in the north-western part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, not far from the ruins of the famous Lekit church, a tetraconch inscribed in a rotunda (probably 7th century). For what remains today, the ensemble consists of the vestiges of two churches, five chapels, buildings, apparently conventual, and some other constructions with perhaps economic use, including a cellar. It was protected by a perimeter wall. The ensemble presents a certain technical homogeneity, however with traces of restorations. This group of remains, still little studied, is of great interest in several respects: its size, its typological diversity, the funerary function of the chapels and the kinship of the ensemble with buildings in the neighbouring Kakheti region of Eastern Georgia.

1 In the heart of Caucasian Albania, then in its medieval metamorphoses

The remains of the ensemble called The Seven Churches, in Azeri *Yeddi Kilsə*¹ (hereafter “YK”), are found at the northeast end of the village of Lekit (Ləkit, Lyakit), district of Qakh (Qax), in the north-western part of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The complex is located almost a kilometer and a half north of the ruins of the famous tetraconch church inscribed in a circle,² probably of the 7th century, on the road leading from Lekit to the nearby hamlet of Kötüklü,³ near the gorges of the Lekit river. Its geographic coordinates are 41°29'36" N and 46°51'24" E.

1 National inventory number ID 4558 according to https://az.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeddi_kilsə%99_monast%C4%B1r_kompleksi kilsə monastır kompleksi.

2 For a recent and comprehensive update on this major monument of Caucasian Albania, with a detailed bibliography, see Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 31–39), as well as Chapter 9 of this Handbook (by the same author). See also Plontke-Lüning (2007: cat., 180–182, pl. 128–130; 2016: 169–173) and Donabédian (2008: 200–201).

3 Karakhmedova (1986a: 11) names it “Monastery of Katuk”, probably a variant of Kötüklü, and online sites devoted to YK locate it not in Lekit but in Kötüklü, perhaps because the land on

This part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, between the Caucasus and the Kura river (the ancient Cyrus), divided today between, from north to south, the districts of Balakan (Balakən), Zaqatala, Qakh (Qax), Shaki (Şəki, until 1968 Nukha), Oghuz (Oğuz, until 1989 Vartashen) and Qabala (Qəbələ, until 1991 Kutkashen, Kapalak in Armenian sources), is in the heart of the ancient Caucasian Albania; Qabala/Kapalak was its capital until the 5th or 6th century. Most of the important monuments of Azerbaijan's ancient Christian heritage are concentrated here. The fairly numerous churches and chapels dating back to the early Christian and pre-Arab period (4th–7th centuries) found there relate to the culture of Caucasian Albania. The region that is home to YK, located on the left bank of the Alazani, the ancient Alazon(ius), the Ałuan of the Armenian sources, is a part of it.

More delicate is the attribution of the monuments built here in the medieval period. Indeed, the last state formations stemming from the ancient Albania gradually ceased to exist in these provinces, the Albanian population which remained Christian gradually became Armenised for its miaphysite part and Iberised for its dyophysite part,⁴ and the political and administrative organisation of the territory changed significantly. The ensemble that interests us, as we will see, probably belongs to both periods, pre- and post-Arab.

Upon emerging from Arab domination, the status of the left bank of the Alazani, as reflected in Arab, Armenian and Georgian sources, had changed. This bank now corresponded to the Iberian province of Hereti, with Shaki (Şak'ē in Armenian) as its capital, a province which had merged with the district of Cambysene (Kambečan in Armenian) located further south-west, with, it seems, a mainly Armenian population.⁵ The Armenian component of this district is attested since Antiquity because, according to Strabo, Cambysene formed the north-eastern end of Armenia, between Iberia and Caucasian Albania.⁶ The Georgian chronicle *Kartlis Tskhovreba* reports that, still under Caliphal rule, in the second half of the 8th century, three Armenian brothers, Bagratid princes of Taron, settled in the Shaki region.⁷ Their probable descendant, Prince Hamam the Pious found-

which the remains of the complex lie administratively depends on the neighbouring hamlet, located a few kilometers northeast of Lekit.

4 Hakobyan (2020: 107).

5 On the history of Cambysene, see Ter-Lewondyan (1988–1989); brief synthesis in Chaumont (1990). Concerning Hereti see, among others, Marjanishvili (2005), according to whom all the monuments of this province, regardless of their date of construction, belong to Georgia, including the churches of YK, called “Lekarti monastery”.

6 Strabo, *Geography* XI, 14, 4 (Tardieu 1873: 459). For testimonies of Armenian population and use of Armenian language in Cambysene and the Shaki district in pre- and post-Arab periods cf. Eghiazaryan (2011: 187–188).

7 Hakobyan (2020: 186, 189).

ed in Shaki in 894 a new kingdom which extended from the valley of the Alazani in the north, i.e. from Hereti, the province of Shaki, to the Kura River in the south, encompassing Cambysene, i.e. the lower course of the Iori River, which is the Antique Cambyses, the Kambeč of the Armenian sources.⁸ This vast region, named at the time Hereti in Georgian, Šaki in Arab sources, and Ałvank' (Aghvank) in Armenian texts, is called “Šak'ē-Kambečan” by Aram Ter-Lewondyan, “Šak'ē-Herēt” by Aleksan Hakobyan, and “Second Kingdom of Albania” by some Dagestanian researchers.⁹

After Hamam reigned his son Adarnase (in Armenian Atrnerseh) the Patrikios (already king in 908–909¹⁰ – d. 942¹¹) who married the Georgian princess Dinar. From this marriage was born a son named Ishkhanik (Išxanak in Armenian sources) who inherited the throne in 942 and who is mentioned in 949, 955 and 958.¹² Georgian sources report that in the second half of the 10th century, under the influence of his mother Dinar, Ishkhanik and most of the population of the kingdom, until then miaphysite (probably composed of Caucasian Albanians and Armenians), converted to Chalcedonism (dyophysite orthodoxy).¹³ The kingdom therefore submitted to Georgian religious and cultural influence.

With the death of Ishkhanik, this dynasty died out and, under unknown circumstances,¹⁴ at the end of the 10th century, the kingdom of Cambysene-Hereti-Shaki was annexed by the Iberian prince David of Kakheti. Under his son Kvirike III (the Great, 1009–1037), the kingdom that one can call, for this period, Kakheti-Hereti, experienced an “enormous boom”, according to Giorgi Chubinashvili.¹⁵ From 1038 until the very beginning of the 12th century, four Bagratid

8 Hakobyan (2020: 183, 185, 223–233, 353; for the date of the founding of the kingdom: 225). See also Zuckerman (2000: 563–569) and Eghiazaryan (2011: 61–71). Aleksan Hakobyan notably renewed the vision we had of these events, rectifying in particular the place until then attributed to the prince of Khachen, Sahl son of Smbat, presumed stock of this new dynasty. For his version of the genealogy see Hakobyan (2020: 433). For the old version, see the genealogy of the “Princes of Schakē and of Hérétie” in Toumanoff (1990: 79–80). Note Constantine Zuckerman's reservations about Hamam's membership of the Armenian Bagratid dynasty and about his identification with a contemporary scholar and exegete named Hamam the Oriental.

9 Eghiazaryan (2011: 195–196); Hakobyan (2020: 185, 228).

10 Hakobyan (2020: 227, 229).

11 Zuckerman (2000: 576).

12 Hakobyan (2020: 433).

13 On the history of the kingdom of Cambysene-Hereti-Shaki, besides Hakobyan (2020: 223–233), see Chubinashvili (1959: 22–24); Ulubabyan (1975: 81–84; 1979); Mkrtumyan (1979); Zuckerman (2000: 563–585, in particular 574–578: chapter “La crise chalcédonienne des années 940–950”); Eghiazaryan (2011: 176–197).

14 Hakobyan (2020: 272).

15 On the princely, then royal Georgian dynasty of Kakheti and in particular on Kvirike III, see Chubinashvili (1959: 24–25) and Toumanoff (1990: 196, Table 92), who qualifies them, like their

Armenian dynasts, from the Kvirikian (Kiwrikan) branch of Lori (or Tashir-Dzoraget), succeeded one another on the throne of Kakheti-Hereti.¹⁶ The first of them was the son of King David Landless (Anhoġin) of Lori, Gagik (1038–1058), whom his maternal uncle and predecessor Kvirike III adopted. Gagik was followed by his three descendants: his son Aghsartan I (1058–1084) who converted to Islam and managed to save his kingdom from the Seljuks, then by Kvirike IV (1084–1102), and finally by Aghsartan II (1102–1104 or 1105). In 1104–1105, the kingdom of Kakheti-Hereti was integrated into the unified kingdom of Abkhazia-Kartli, i.e. of Georgia, by David IV the Builder (1089–1125).¹⁷

2 The discovery of the Yeddi Kilsə site

The first, still indirect, mention of the YK site dates back to the end of the 19th century. It can be found in the report by the Russian-Georgian scholar Aleksandr Khakhanov (Khakhanashvili) on the missions he carried out in the Caucasus in the years 1892–1895. This author reports that, during his visit to Lekit, which he calls Lyaket, then populated by Lezgins, he was impressed by the number of ancient remains that this locality included and by their size, despite their ruined state. One building in particular, of which he mentions the remains of a tripartite chevet and traces of a dome, certainly corresponds to one of the two churches in YK.¹⁸ As he could not find the toponym Lekit/Lyaket in Georgian sources,¹⁹ Kha-

predecessors, as “kings of Albania-Kakheti”. Mamedova (2004: 91–94), for her part, reverses the perspective by writing that “a portion of Kakheti was part of the Cambysene region of historic Caucasian Albania”.

16 On the Armenian Bagratid/Kiwrikan kings of “Albania-Kakheti” see Movsesian (1923: 83–87); Acharyan (1942: 112 s. v. Alsart’an [no. 1] and 435 s. v. Gagik [no. 29]); Chubinashvili (1959: 25, 27–28); Mkrtumyan (1983: 109–119, 130–131); Toumanoff (1990: 125, Table 18; 128, Table 19; 569, par. F, b); Mutafian (2012: 268).

17 Chubinashvili (1959: 27–29); Silogava and Shengelia (2007: 87–88). Despite the territory’s inclusion in Georgia, the Armenian component (possibly also comprising armenised Albanians) held firm there for the following centuries. Thus, in 1404, the missionary and archbishop Jean de Gaillfontaine, who had spent a long time in the region, wrote about the province of Shaki: “The majority of the population is Armenian, Armenia by the way is the country’s southern neighbour. But also Georgians, Saracens, Dargis and Lezgs live here”; see Ter-Levondyan (1988–1989: 321, 323). The latter author points out that the passage relating to the Armenian population and the neighbourhood of Armenia is absent from the Russian translation of this text published in Baku in 1980 by the Azerbaijani academician Ziya Bunyatov.

18 Khakhanov (1898: 35).

19 Khakhanov (1898: 35) mentions Vakhushti Batonishvili’s “Description of the Kingdom of Georgia” of 1745, where the name is indeed missing. In a lengthy article on the *Saingilo* region (i.e.

khanov hypothesised that this locality could be identified with the medieval site of Tsuketi, seat of the diocese of Eliseni of the Georgian Church, which extended its jurisdiction over the entire region.

However, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that scientific interest in YK began to appear. Published in 1963, the work by Mikael Useynov, Leonid Bretanitskij and Abdulvahab Salamzade, after a rather long section on the Lekit rotunda, contains the first – to our knowledge – specific mention of YK; however, this is reduced to a brief paragraph. It indicates the remains of a group of nine buildings, including several cult constructions, “probably chapels-mausoleums built a little later [than the rotunda church], in the 9th century”.²⁰ A few years later, the architect Lev Ishkhanov, writing about the ruins of a single-nave chapel discovered in 1964 not far from there, briefly evokes “a crypt – an underground vault of the kind that was present in the chapels of the upper monastery (‘Yeddi Kilise’) of the village of Lekit, [...] probably dating from the 11th–13th centuries”.²¹

The phase which allowed a notable advance of our knowledge on the YK site was the series of campaigns led by Aliya Karakhmedova between 1980 and 1986. Alongside archaeological investigations, these campaigns provided the opportunity to clear and survey the two ruined churches on the site.²² The results brought to the attention of the public served as a basis for the considerations set out in the publications that followed,²³ and it is from them that this Chapter is still nourished, pending further investigation.

the northwest of Azerbaijan), M. Janashvili (1913: 84) published a short firman of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmed I to the Sultan of Ilisu, Ali-Sultan, of 1607 concerning villages around Qakh, which comprises the name *leketi*; it is not clear, however, whether this firman was written in Georgian or not. In his “History of Georgia”, the same author (Janashvili 1894: 205–206) had published a colophon of a tetraevangelion (named *magalashvilis*, i.e. belonging to the Maghalashvili family), which was written for the archbishop of Kurmukhi (Kürmüx), a certain Kirile Donauri; this colophon (also treated in Kekelidze 1945: 314–315) mentions a church “of St Nino, equal to the apostles, in Lekarti” (ლექართს წმიდის მოციქულთ-სწორის ნინოსი), which seems to have been the primary name form of Lekit / Lyaket (probably deriving from the self-denomination of Lezgians, *leker*). Unfortunately the present whereabouts of the tetraevangelion are unknown.

20 Useynov, Bretanitskiy and Salamzade (1963: 33): “вероятно, это мавзолей-часовни, построенные несколько позднее, в IX в.”.

21 Ishkhanov (1968: 62): “крипта – склеп-подземелье подобное тому, что имело место в часовнях верхнего монастыря («Едди Килисе») в сел. Лекит, ... относящегося, по-видимому, к XI–XIII вв.”

22 Karakhmedova (1986a: 11–16; 1986b; 1986c; 1988; 1990).

23 Let us mention in chronological order: Akhundov (1986: 215, Fig. 240 and 240a); Mamedova (2004: *passim* and especially 59–60, 80–82, 125, 147–148); Hajieva (2012: 3–4, 9–10); Plontke-Lüning (2016: 174); Khalilov (2018: 169, 204–207). YK is also presented in several online sites: the one mentioned in n. 1 above is in Azeri; the sites https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Едди_Килисе and https://www.wikiwand.com/ru/Едди_Килисе are in Russian.

3 Brief description of the ensemble

The YK complex includes two groups of buildings which are badly damaged and still overgrown with abundant vegetation, the site having been almost abandoned since the brush clearing in the 1980s. The main group, quite compact, was made up of religious buildings, numbering seven as its name suggests, and perhaps also of some presumed conventual buildings (Fig. 1). It is on a flattened platform and was protected by an enclosure of which only a few portions are preserved. Two portals opened in it, the main one at the south-eastern end (Fig. 2), the other one, more modest, at the south-western end of this protected area.²⁴ The second group, peripheral, was located on slightly higher terraces, consolidated by low walls, arranged on the side of the hills forming a semi-circle around the worship space. This group has not been investigated; it may have included dwellings and utility buildings.²⁵ A complementary defensive function is attributed to the remains of a building, on a height above the ensemble, called *Kilsə-qala* ('Church-fort'),²⁶ as well as to chapels on the neighbouring hills, which would also have served, it is believed, as a lookout.²⁷

Considering the size of the complex and the number of sanctuaries, the scholars correctly concluded that this was a large monastery. According to the right characterisation of Gulchohra Mamedova (Gülçöhrə Məmmədova), it was the largest monastic complex on the left bank of the Kura.²⁸ The presence, in the same locality, of another complex, also considerable, not far from YK, around the pre-



Fig. 1: Yeddi Kilsə. General view of the complex from northeast (1982).

²⁴ Karakhmedova (1986a: 12).

²⁵ Mamedova (2004: 147).

²⁶ Karakhmedova (1986a: 11); Mamedova (2004: 147).

²⁷ Karakhmedova (1986a: 11); Khalilov (2018: 205).

²⁸ Mamedova (2004: 147).



Fig. 2: Yeddi Kilsə. Southwest portal.

Arab rotunda (Fig. 3),²⁹ confirms that Lekit was a religious centre of very particular importance, as assumed by Aleksandr Khakhanov (quoted above).

The construction technique conformed to the medieval version of the Roman *opus caementicium*. As in the rest of the South Caucasian region, especially in Armenia, both South Caucasian and Anatolian, in most monumental buildings, from late Antiquity to modern times, the core of the wall consists of a lime mortar in which are mixed sand and stone chips; this mixture is poured between two facings. As in the neighbouring region to the north, Kakheti,³⁰ the facings are

²⁹ A schematic plan published in 1947 by P. D. Baranovskiy and then reproduced by several authors, notably Useynov, Bretanitskiy and Salamzade (1963: 33, Fig. 26 which we reproduce here as Fig. 3), gives an idea of this vast complex, possibly dating back to the 7th century. According to Trever (1959: 304), this complex included “another church (?), a palace, baths, an inn (?), a swimming pool and a series of other buildings; that is to say that this church was probably part of a large monastery or castle complex” (“еще один храм (?), дворец, баню, каравансарай (?), бассейн и ряд других строений, т. е. этот храм входил, видимо, в состав большого монастырского или замкового комплекса”).

³⁰ In his brief indications of the construction technique used in Kakheti, Chubinashvili (1959: 4) specifies that the limestone used here, called *širimi*, is travertine.

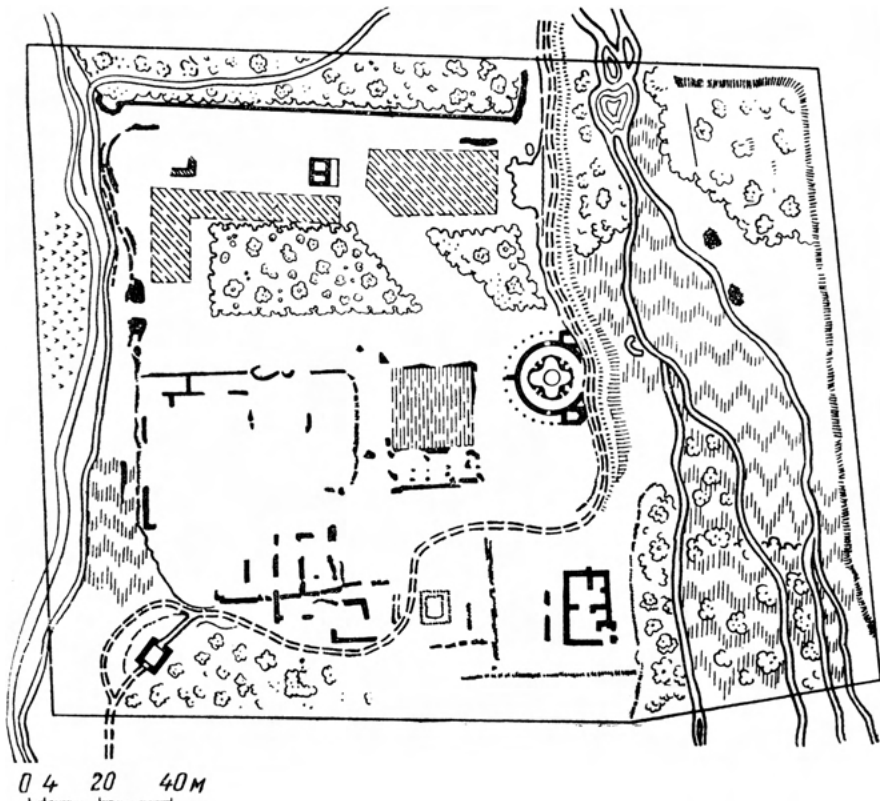


Fig. 3: Lekit. Schematic plan of the complex around the tetraconch church inscribed in a rotunda.

made up of a mixed bond of pebbles and limestone blocks more or less cut on their outer face; brick courses are also used there. As in all regions where materials suitable for cutting are lacking or scarce, only the important parts of the construction are entitled, in principle, to regularly cut stones: angles, door and window frames, and cornices. This results in a rough overall appearance, especially since the carved decoration is, and was most likely from the outset, very modest. The roofs were covered with tiles. The whole presents a technical homogeneity which can in part plead for a relative contemporaneity of the constructions, even if, in reality, the traditional techniques, constrained by nature, cross the ages. At the same time, one can observe in the masonry the signs of several alterations that are not easy to date. In most constructions, remains of plaster on the interior walls may suggest the existence of murals in the past.

In the main group stand out the vestiges of seven religious buildings. In addition, there are the remains of a few other buildings, possibly for residential

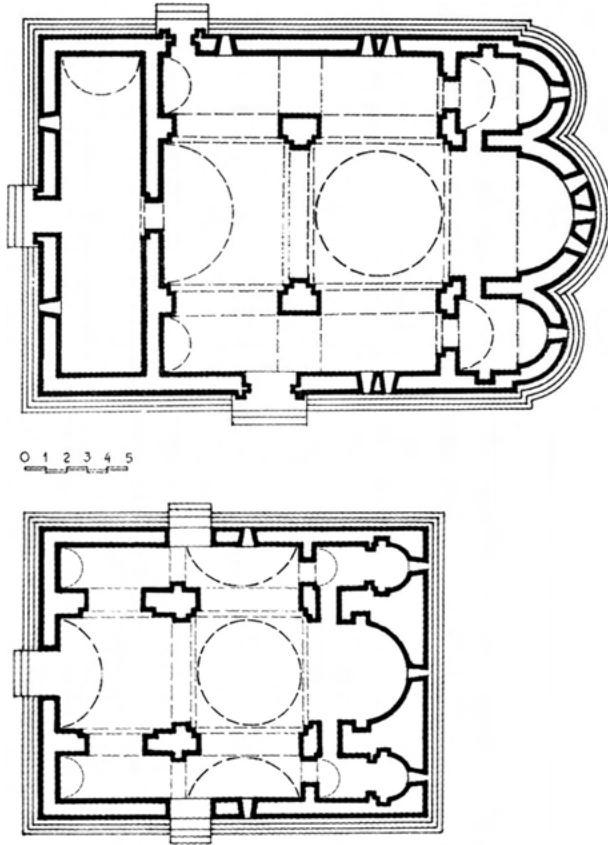


Fig. 4: Yeddi Kilsə. Plans of the two churches.

and economic use, including, it seems, a storeroom.³¹ Of the seven religious buildings, six are close to each other, grouped to the east of the complex. There is a medium-sized church and five chapels. A second, larger church stood a few dozen yards west of the rest of the complex, separated from it by the road that now crosses it and leads to the neighbouring hamlet. Both churches (Fig. 4) were apparently domed compositions, one in the west was believed to be a domed basilica, and the other in the east, an inscribed cross topped with a dome.

³¹ Plontke-Lüning (2016: 174).

4 Brief study of the main constructions

4.1 The western church

4.1.1 Description

The western church suffered great damage, almost all of its western part, most of its apse and all of its superstructures having disappeared (Fig. 5). Nevertheless, thanks to the preserved elements, the observations and the surveys carried out in the 1980s, we can grasp an idea of its plan: a three-nave basilica, with two chapel-sacristies at the northeast and southeast angles, and three projecting apses. More difficult is the reading of the possible successive strata of its construction history. The presence of a dome is also shrouded in doubt. A first sketch published at the end of the investigations (Fig. 6) offers a reconstructed view of the plan and shows certain modifications undergone by the masonry and the western part of the church, as well as the addition of an external staircase, to the south-east, which led to the roof of the *diaconicon* (south-eastern sacristy).³² A second plan, published in 2004, restitutes the hypothetical final state of the composition to which it attributes slightly more (a little too?) large proportions



Fig. 5: Yeddi Kilsə. Western church, general internal view from west to east.

³² Karakhmedova (1986a: 13, Fig. 9).

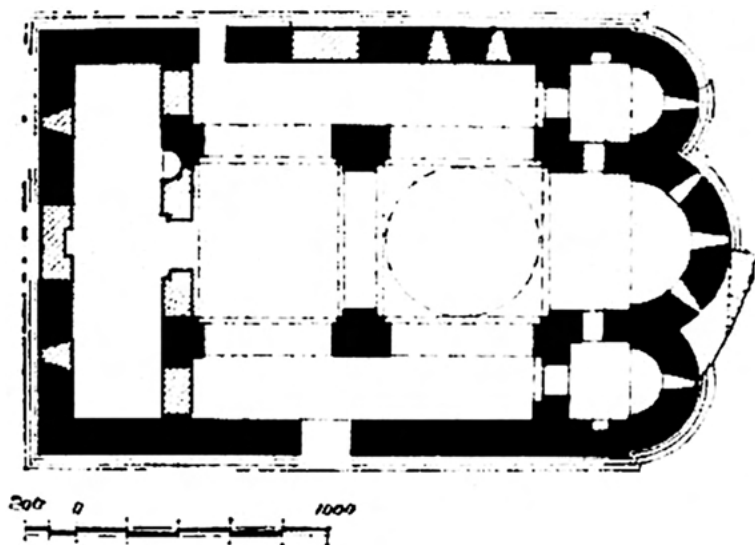


Fig. 6: Yeddi Kilsə. Western church. Plan.

(Fig. 7).³³ The exterior dimensions of the reconstructed building, degrees at the foot of the walls not included, are approximately 27.5×18 m.³⁴ The interior dimensions noted by Aliya Karakhmedova are 24×13.8 m.³⁵

According to the indications provided by the head of the mission, it was a basilica covered with a cupola. The dome has disappeared, but remains of its masonry, according to her, have been identified in the rubble.³⁶ Indeed, the square space almost in the center of the naos seems to have been intended to support a dome. As for the body of the building, Aliya Karakhmedova speaks of a basilica with three naves, but nowhere does she mention any trace of a transept, without which there can be no question of an inscribed cross. We must

³³ Mamedova (2004: 60).

³⁴ These dimensions are evaluated on the basis of the available elements and of the two plans, in particular that of Mamedova (2004: 60), which we have reproduced here with some modifications and additions: straightening of the plan and reduction from three to two of the number of rolls of the central arches.

³⁵ Karakhmedova (1986a: 13). The measurements given by Karakhmedova (1986c: 16) are 23.8×13.8 m.

³⁶ Karakhmedova (1986a: 13). The author does not provide a description or a photograph of the fragments of the dome. Nevertheless Mamedova (2004: 60 and 148), Hajieva (2012: 4) and Khalilov (2018: 206) express no doubt about the existence here of a dome, added, as A. Karakhmedova asserts (see below), during a restoration; G. Mamedova calls the church a “domed basilica”.

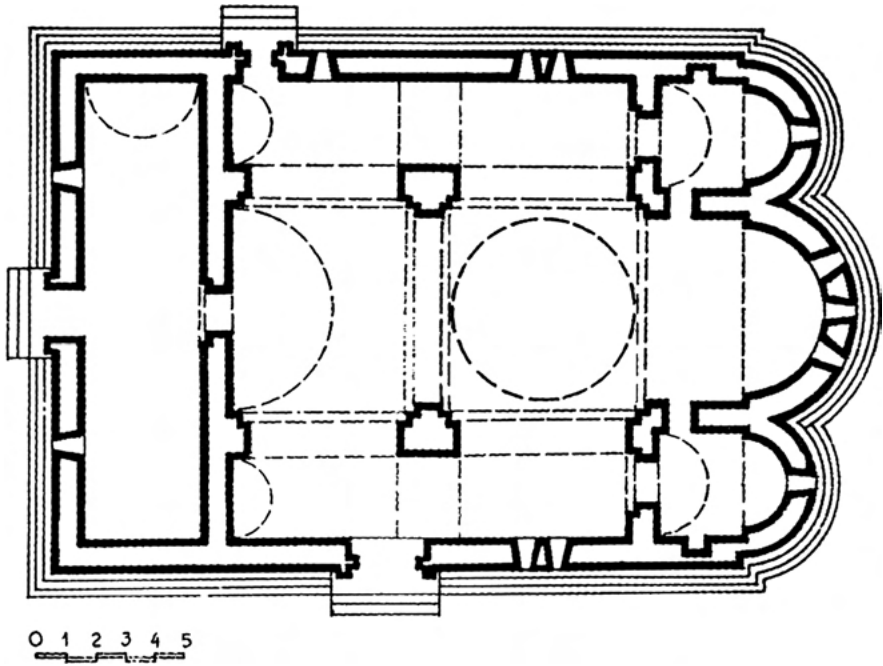


Fig. 7: Yeddi Kilsə. Western church. Plan.

therefore assume, without being fully convinced, that the west church of YK was a domed basilica, a composition relatively familiar to Byzantium but foreign to the South Caucasian region (except for some churches of Nakhichevan in the modern period), which prefers that of the inscribed cross with a dome.³⁷

Almost in the center of the church proper (not including the narthex), slightly offset to the east, an (approximate) square is drawn by two free supports to the west and the two ends of the apsidal massif to the east. It must be assumed that four arches rose from the corners of this square and carried the drum of the dome. To the east of this square, the chevet consisted of a central apse and two fairly wide lateral chapels-sacristies with wide apses. The main apse and the two

³⁷ For a comparative study of these two compositions, “basilica with a cupola” and “inscribed cross with a cupola”, and their main representatives see Mnatsakanyan (1989). Thanks to the crossing of two naves, following the introduction of the transept (present in Tekor, Armenia, probably since the end of the 5th century, cf. Donabédian 2008: 54–55 and 103) which crosses the central longitudinal nave, the base of the drum of the dome is reinforced by the buttresses of four barrels. The inscribed cross is thus endowed with a resistance capacity particularly valuable in a region of high seismic activity.



Fig. 8: Yeddi Kilsə. Western church. North wall and northeast sacristy seen from the south.

apsidiales were manifested on the outside, to the east, by three fairly marked rounded projections. The central apse hemicycle had three windows. The two chapel-sacristies were accessed both from the sides of the apse and from the eastern end of the side naves (Figures 8–9).

The configuration of the angles of the (almost) central square, with a quarter of a pillar housed in the heart of each angle, and the system of support of the drum that it allows to imagine, with arches with two rolls,³⁸ conform to the formula that was traditional in the South Caucasus since the 7th century. Opposite the two free western pillars, two engaged pillars protruded from the inner face of the west wall. There were therefore here, too, two double-roll arches. On the contrary, facing these same two free pillars, there was no pillar engaged in the north and south walls, nor any protruding arm on the posterior face of the central pillars, which means that the two lateral arches (which probably must have existed, especially if one considers the presence of a dome) rested on consoles.

The church had three entrances, one to the west, the other to the south in the western part, which was the widest, and the third one, significantly smaller, at the western end of the north wall. However, archaeological observations en-

³⁸ The plan of Mamedova (2004: 60) shows a configuration with three rolls for the four arches of the square carrying the dome. Assuming this drawing was wrong, we reduced the number of these rolls to two on the modified version of this plan, in accordance with that of Karakhmedova (1986a).



Fig. 9: Yeddi Kilsə. Western church. Northeast sacristy with its two entrances.

abled Aliya Karakhmedova to detect, it seems, among some transformations undergone by the north façade, the walling of a door which, as shown in the plan she published, was located opposite the one that opened in the south façade, and was a little wider.³⁹ Note that these two doors (assuming, in the north, the exis-

³⁹ Karakhmedova (1986a: 14).

tence of the door then walled up) opened in part on the free pillars inside the naos, which could suggest that the former were older than the latter. We will observe the same curiosity in the position of the doors of the eastern church. It is not known whether the small door at the northwest end of the church could be a later addition.

A pair of windows were pierced, according to Karakhmedova’s plan, in the center of the northern end of the transverse bay before the apse (Figures 6 and 8). On the plan of Mamedova (2004), applying a principle of symmetry, a pair of windows is also drawn in the center of the southern end (Fig. 7). If this were indeed the case in the old building, one could see there, in the absence of a transept, the desire to highlight the central space crowned by the dome.⁴⁰

The western façade of YK’s western church was bordered by a transverse narthex (much wider than long) of which little remains. Here again, investigations in the 1980s showed, according to A. Karakhmedova, that the walls separating the narthex from the three naves of the church were not original but were added. According to the same author, taken up in particular by G. Mamedova,⁴¹ this means that the narthex results from a reorganisation of the western part of the church, that there was initially a second pair of pillars to the west of the first, that the three naves extended to the west wall and the church originally appeared as a basilica with three naves without a dome. A. Karakhmedova indeed supposes a radical reworking of the construction in the 7th–8th centuries (see below), marked mainly by the introduction of the dome.⁴²

All the windows were splayed (opening wider inwards; Fig. 8). No element of sculpted decoration is preserved. Certain portions of the internal bond retain traces of plastering which may suggest a painted decoration. A portion of three-step band was unearthed at the bottom of the north façade, indicating that such a device was certainly present all around the building.

After the investigations of the 1980s, Aliya Karakhmedova presented a chronology of the construction in three stages. It is based on archaeological data obtained from surveys carried out under the ground of the church to a depth, she specifies, of two meters, but of which she does not detail the results nor document them; she only invokes “fragments of ceramic and tiles”.⁴³ These sound-

⁴⁰ The basilica of Sanagire in Kakheti, which we will discuss a little later and which is very similar to our church, has such a pair of windows on each of the two sides of the central bay; its central compartment, moreover, is, as here, almost square. However, Sanagire has neither a transept nor a dome.

⁴¹ Mamedova (2004: 60).

⁴² Karakhmedova (1986a: 15).

⁴³ Karakhmedova (1986a: 14).

ings revealed, she says, three strata in the history of the construction of the building: 5th–6th centuries, 7th–8th centuries and 11th–12th centuries. This chronology, the foundations of which are not known, is taken up by most of the successive researchers. According to the author, the decisive stage marked by the introduction of the dome structure would have corresponded to the 7th–8th centuries, but we do not know the basis of this hypothesis. As we have seen, observations of building archeology, for their part, seem to show that the narthex is not original. In the current state of the monument and of the documentation, it is very difficult to judge. However, it seems probable that the disturbances noted in the masonries, as well as the walling of certain doors and windows, reflect repairs and adaptations at various periods which are difficult to date.

4.1.2 Comments and dating

Despite the absence of tangible evidence (at least in the available publications), it is plausible that the church has experienced several reshuffles starting from an Early Christian and/or pre-Arab stratum and that, at this initial stage, the church was a basilica without a dome, with three naves and two pairs of pillars. In such a hypothesis comes naturally to mind the connection with the great basilica, probably pre-Arab, of Qum,⁴⁴ neighbour of Lekit, a connection that several researchers did not fail to make.⁴⁵ We do indeed find some common features: the technique, the two pairs of pillars (if we accept that there was a second pair of pillars in YK), to a certain extent the T-shaped configuration of the pillars, the absence of pilasters opposite the pillars against the north and south walls, and the rounded projection of the apse.

Either way, with the current state of the file, we have to look at the structure as it is today evidenced, as best we can. Thus, despite the uncertainties surrounding the position of the dome on a structure with three naves and not on an inscribed cross, what we see reflects a great kinship with medieval Georgia. In particular, we observe quite familiar technique and forms in the context of post-Arab Kakheti. The plan with two free western pillars among the four supports of the dome, the shape of the chevet with three rounded projections, the opening of the two sacristies both in the apse and in the side bays, the three windows in the apse, all these features are as many links with Georgian monuments and especial-

⁴⁴ Updated notices on the basilica of Qum, accompanied with detailed bibliographies, can be found in Plontke-Lüning (2007: cat., 175–177) and Kazaryan (2012–2013: IV, 75–80); cf. Chapter 9 of this Handbook (Kazaryan), Fig. 1 for an image of 2004.

⁴⁵ Mamedova (2004: 60); Hajieva (2012: 4).

ly those of eastern Georgia, as we will see below. They are not characteristic of Armenia or, as far as we can tell, of Caucasian Albania, except for the triple fenestration of the apse.

In Armenia, in churches with a dome on an inscribed cross, the two western free supports are rare and are found mainly in the 13th century within the framework of Chalcedonian communities, that is to say under Georgian influence.⁴⁶ As for the sacristies, in Armenian churches with a dome on an inscribed cross, where they almost always have two levels, their lower level is generally accessible from the “side aisles” and, less often, from the sides of the apse,⁴⁷ but very rarely from both at the same time.⁴⁸ Such a solution is practically only observed in a few Chalcedonian churches, and only on the *prothesis* side, i.e. the northeast side⁴⁹ (as is often the case in Georgia). Triple fenestration is also not frequent in Armenia: after its introduction, under Byzantine pressure, during the Golden Age of the 7th century,⁵⁰ it is only observed in Chalcedonian monuments of northern Armenia during the Georgian era of the 13th century,⁵¹ and very rarely elsewhere.⁵² As for the transversely elongated narthex, it appears in Armenia only in three 13th–century monasteries with Georgian affinities⁵³ and in a few monuments of the modern period.⁵⁴ These features are also not present in the buildings of Caucasian Albania which are known to us, except, as we have said, the three windows in the apse.⁵⁵ One conclusion is clear: the western church of YK is in all probability part of Georgian architecture or, at the very least, served a Chalcedonian community (of the dyophysite, Orthodox faith) culturally closely related to the Iberian society.

46 Donabédian (2016: 70–85).

47 See the synoptic typological plates in Cuneo (1988: II, 721, 726–733).

48 There are only a few cases of double-access in chapel-sacristies of Armenia in the 10th–11th centuries and only at the northeast corner (*prothesis*): St Saviour of Sanahin (Cuneo 1988: 293) and St George and St John of Horomos (Baladian and Thierry 2002: 37, Pl. 10; 55, Pl. 22). In two atypical monuments, both north and south chapel-sacristies have a double access: Erkan (975) in Upper Armenia, a large three-nave basilica without a dome, probably under Byzantine influence (Cuneo 1988: I, 707), and the Holy Sign (of the Cross) of Charahan (Č‘arahan, 17th century) in Vaspurakan (Cuneo 1988: I, 571).

49 Donabédian (2016: 73 [Akhtala], 76 [Khuchap], 82 [Bgawor]).

50 Donabédian (2008: 93–94 and *passim*: 105, 108, 119, 126–128, 151, 158, 172, 175, 182, 276).

51 Donabédian (2016: 67–69, 71, 76, 82, 84, 86).

52 Holy Mother of God of Erkan (975), St Gregory of Kecharis (1013), Horekavank (1279): Cuneo (1988: I, 154, 247, 707; II, 712, 716, 726).

53 Donabédian (2016: 76 [Khuchap], 79 [Kirants], 81 [Berdavank]).

54 Cuneo (1988: II, 735).

55 Mamedova (2004: 40 [Kabizdara/Qəbizdərə], 66 [Mamrukh/Armatian], 98 [Zeyzit/Orta Zəyzid]).

A church in Kakheti is particularly close (also in a geographical sense) to ours: it is that of the Ascension (*Amaghleba*) in Ozaani (Figures 10–11), which G. Chubinashvili proposes to date from the end of the 9th or the 10th century.⁵⁶ Many traits are common, several of which are spread across Georgia:

- the typology with two free supports to the west
- the chevet configuration with triple rounded protrusion
- the presence of three windows in the apse
- double access to the northeast sacristy; concerning this device, two cases are frequent in Georgia: either only the *prothesis* benefits from it, or the two sacristies have a double access
- the absence of a pilaster on the north and south walls, in front of the pair of west pillars
- roughly the same arrangement of the three entrances
- the presence, in front of the western façade, of a long narthex (added, as in YK)
- the presence, on the inner face of the walls, of a coating bearing painting
- the extreme sobriety of the sculpted treatment of the façades (almost the only decoration being the blind colonnade-arcade of the drum)
- roof covering with tiles.

As for the differences, the main one is that Ozaani is an inscribed cross and not a three-nave basilica; the others are few and relatively insignificant:

- the main material in Ozaani is brick, with limestone rubble here and there
- the absolute dimensions are significantly smaller
- the proportions are a little less in width, if we compare them with the plan of Mamedova (2004) which, on this point, is perhaps not very exact
- the configuration of the pillars is cross-shaped (with barely marked arms).

A view of the recently restored Ascension Church in Ozaani will give a rough idea of the original appearance of the big church in YK, with of course the caveat regarding the transept (Fig. 11). It should be noted that there are other monuments in Kakheti close to the west church of YK. Despite a clear difference in composition, the remarkable domed church of All Saints (*Qvelatsminda*) in Vachnadziani, dated to the 9th century,⁵⁷ has a technique similar to that of YK and an apse with three projecting apses (trigonal, it is true) and chapel-sacristies (cruciform, it is true) with double access.

⁵⁶ Chubinashvili (1959: 354–363).

⁵⁷ Chubinashvili (1959: 287–320; Mépisachvili and Tsintsadzé (1978: 100).

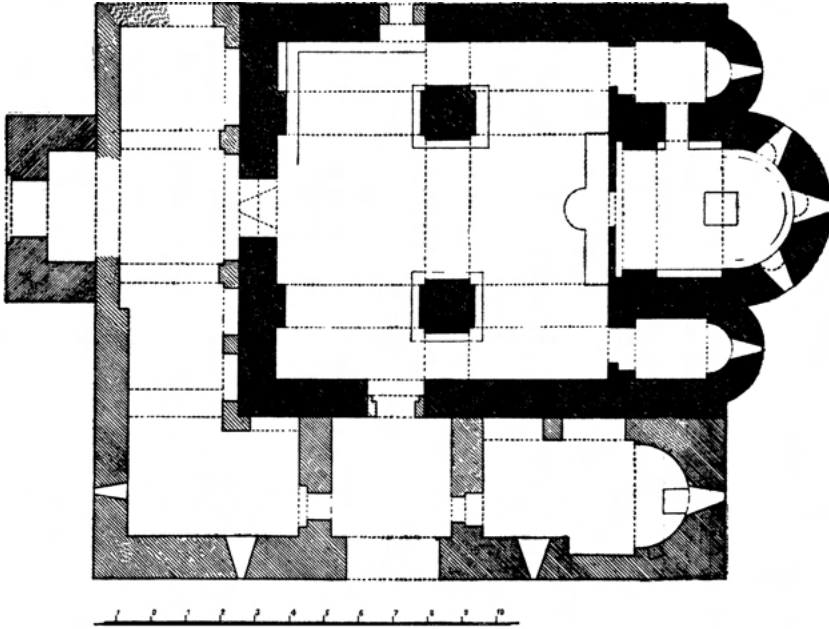


Fig. 10: Ozaani, Kakheti (Georgia). Church of the Ascension. Plan.



Fig. 11: Ozaani, Kakheti (Georgia). Ascension church. General view from northeast.

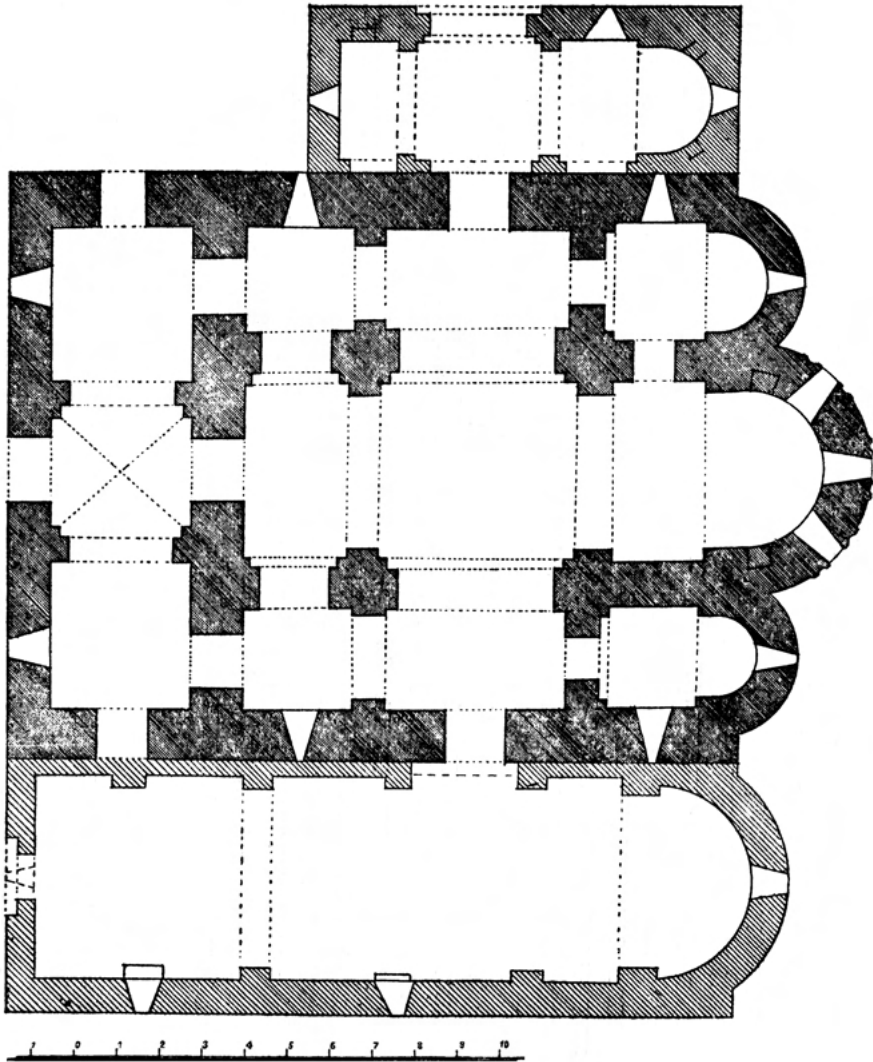


Fig. 12: Vazisubani, Kakheti (Georgia). Basilica of Sanagire. Plan.

Even more similar, although without a dome, the basilica of Sanagire near Vazisubani (Figures 12–13),⁵⁸ datable to the 10th century, has a lot in common with the large church of YK: technique, proportions, two free western pillars, chevet with

⁵⁸ Chubinashvili (1959: 123-129); Alpagó Novello, Beridze and Lafontaine-Dosogne (1980: 466, no. 111).



Fig. 13: Vazisubani, Kakheti (Georgia). Sanagire. General view from northeast.

three rounded projections, three windows in the apse, two windows in the north and south façades in front of the square before the apse, double access to the northeast sacristy, configuration of the pillars, transverse narthex, and interior walls covered with a plaster on which fragments of painting remain. The square shape of the space in front of the apse, as if it were designed to support a dome,⁵⁹ is of great interest and creates a special affinity with the western church of YK. As already noted, many of the above-mentioned traits are also found in numerous churches throughout the rest of Georgia, both in the 9th–11th centuries⁶⁰ and in the 12th–13th centuries.⁶¹

As for the dating of the big church of YK, it must obviously be placed within the framework of the period which we evoked at the beginning of this study: the

⁵⁹ Chubinashvili (1959: 129) does not hesitate to speak here of “a plan of a domed church, precisely of the type of that of Ozaani” (“план, именно такой купольной, типа Озаани, церкви”).

⁶⁰ Bzyb in Abkhazia (Alpago Novello, Beridze and Lafontaine-Dosogne 1980: 309); for the chevet, Pitsunda (Mépisachvili and Tsintsadzé 1978: 112; Alpago Novello, Beridze and Lafontaine-Dosogne 1980: 295).

⁶¹ Cathedral and St George of Gelati, Betania, Kintsvisi, Pitareti, Kvatakhevi, Metekhi of Tbilisi (Mépisachvili and Tsintsadzé 1978: 183, 193, 194, 198, 206, 213; Alpago Novello, Beridze and Lafontaine-Dosogne 1980: 296, 329, 354, 370, 420, 448).

end of the 10th and the 11th centuries, during which the destinies of the two provinces, Hereti and Kakheti, were united and their culture experienced a strong common development. This is roughly the probable date of Ozaani and Sanagire.

4.2 The eastern church

4.2.1 Description

The eastern church of the YK complex was also cleared and studied during the campaigns led by A. Karakhmedova in the 1980s. After a single-line mention in 1986,⁶² the results of these works and investigations were the subject of a short report.⁶³ In a brief preliminary information, Davud Akhundov contented himself with publishing two drawings accompanied by a very short caption: a) a schematic restitution of “the three- nave domed basilica of YK” (Fig. 14, where a door is drawn in the eastern part of the north façade, contrary to what the neighboring plan shows), b) a sketch of plan drawn by G. Mamedova (Fig. 15).⁶⁴ Several years later, the bulk of these results were succinctly presented by a few authors, notably G. Mamedova;⁶⁵ the latter author published a new version of her plan of the church, which we reproduce here with some modifications (Fig. 16).⁶⁶ This plan shows a cross inscribed within a rectangular perimeter. We do not know whether the three steps at the foot of the walls around the entire perimeter were drawn on a documentary basis or simply out of a desire to harmonise with the western church.

The eastern church is smaller than the western one, a difference accentuated by the absence of a narthex. The recorded dimensions are 19.7 × 14.3 m.⁶⁷ These two features – relative smallness and lack of addition to the west – seem to show that the eastern church was relatively secondary, while the western one was arguably the main sanctuary of the monastery. Although both were built accord-

62 Karakhmedova (1986a: 12) simply mentions “the [2nd] domed basilica with three naves and three apses, inscribed in a rectangular plan” (“[...] трехнефной, трехапсидной купольной базиликой, вписанной в прямоугольный план”).

63 Karakhmedova (1988). The author of these lines was unable to access this publication. He borrows its reference and part of its content from Khalilov (2018: 206–207).

64 Akhundov (1986: 215, Figures 240 and 240a).

65 Mamedova (2004: 80–82, 125); Hajieva (2012: 9); Khalilov (2018: 206–207).

66 Mamedova (2004: 81). Our modifications are: slight re-straightening of the plan, reduction from three to two of the number of rolls of the central arches and addition of dotted lines to indicate the dome and the vaults.

67 Mamedova (2004: 80); Khalilov (2018: 206).

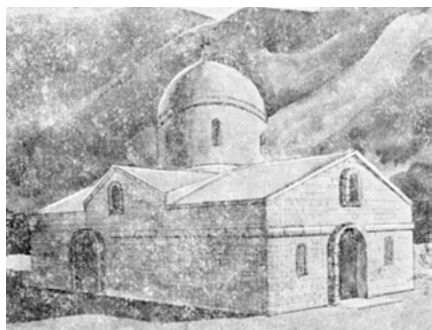


Fig. 14: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. Schematic restitution.

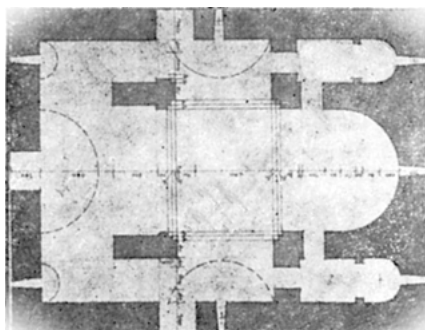


Fig. 15: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. Plan by G. Mamedova.

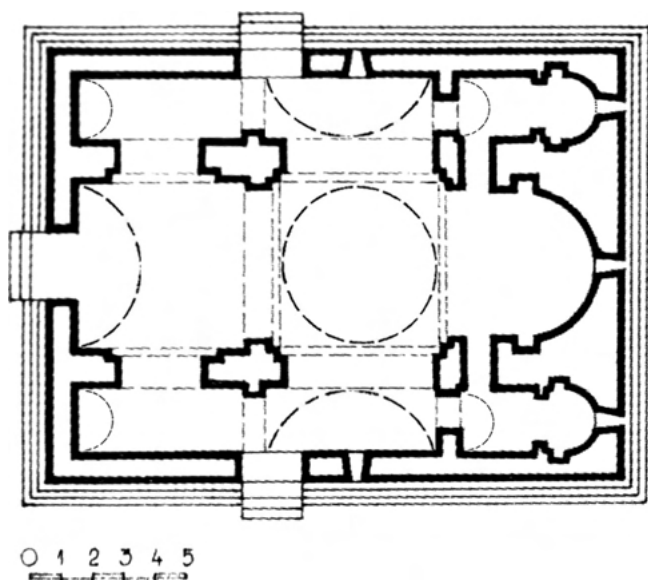


Fig. 16: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. Plan.

ing to the same technique and with the same materials, the eastern church is a little better preserved: a part of its elevations remains, in particular its north and south façades (Figures 17–18), including the gables of the north and south ends of the transept. On the other hand, the superstructures have disappeared. The north and south gables leave little doubt that the church had an inscribed cross composition. This type of structure ensures in principle a good balance of thrusts thanks to the junction of the four barrels which butt against and maintain the central square carrying the drum of the dome. This is undoubtedly the reason



Fig. 17: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. South façade.



Fig. 18: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. North façade.



Fig. 19: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. East façade.

for its frequency in the South Caucasian and Armenian region. The chevet, badly damaged but still partly legible (Fig. 19), had a central apse flanked by two chapel-sacristies with small apsidiole, the whole inscribed in the quadrangular perimeter, that is to say presenting a rectilinear front to the east. This is, after the inscribed cross structure, one of the main differences from the western church. Another important difference, which we will come back to, is that there was only one window in the apse. On the other hand, as in the western church, the two sacristies have a double opening, both on the sides of the apse and on the north and south arms of the cross. The configuration of the top of the chevet, judging from what its exterior looks like, is unclear. We will come back to that as well. Observations on the bond of the north wall seem to show that it was rebuilt or even, which is difficult to imagine, added, “which attests that in the initial construction the lateral [northern] nave was open on its entire length”.⁶⁸

In the center of the church stood a dome on a drum. As (presumably) in the western church, the arches which carried the drum rested, to the east, on the two ends of the apsidal block which formed part of the angles of the chapel-sacristies and, to the west, on two free pillars. At the angles of the square thus

⁶⁸ Mamedova (2004: 81): “Это свидетельство того, что в первоначальной постройке боковой неф был открыт по всей длине”.

formed, the protrusion in a quarter of a parallelepiped lodged between the two faces of each support suggests that the same kind of two-roll arches rested on it. The arches of the transept were apparently slightly pointed.⁶⁹ But, and this is yet another significant difference from the western church (we will see why below), the free pillars had, in plan, a very elongated shape due to a “rear” arm stretched towards the west; echoing these two walls and “coming to meet them”, two pillars engaged in the west wall of the church, in turn, had a strong extension towards the east. Consequently, the western arm of the cross was like flanked by two compartments, if not separated, at least clearly delimited by these two pairs of longitudinal portions of walls. At the same time, as G. Mamedova noted, the extension of the two free pillars to the west improved their solidity.⁷⁰ Another device contributed to their reinforcement: a short arm projecting on the lateral face of the two free pillars served as a support for an arch which, by its presence and that of the lateral vault that it carried, counterbalanced the thrust of the central nave and its vault. The church had three doors, one in each façade (except the eastern one, of course); their layout is quite close to that found in the western church. There is the same curiosity about the side doors, largely opposite the two free pillars. This relative “anomaly” could perhaps betray a reorganisation dictated by the addition to the initial structure, almost opposite the already existing doors, of pillars capable of supporting a dome.

We noted above that the fairly well-preserved gables on the north and south façades make it possible to imagine how the transept, an integral part of the cruciform volume in an inscribed cross composition, appeared above the sides of the parallelepiped. It would be natural that, in such a composition, the western and eastern arms of the cross would be similarly raised and also appear above the side pent roofs, thus allowing the cruciform core of the structure to fully reveal itself in elevation. This is not, however, apparently the case with the eastern church of YK. Indeed, despite the damage and dislocations that its masonry has suffered, the top of the eastern façade, on its northern part where portions of cornice are preserved, seems to show that such an elevation of the central part was almost non-existent or barely marked (Figures 19–20). Perhaps as a result of an earthquake, the two wall masses which form the northern part of the eastern façade are slightly dissociated; we can guess, however, that originally, the cornice formed an (almost) continuous line or at most had a very slight offset between the central part and the edges. It was probably the same on the west side. Despite its schematic character and as unusual as it may seem, the shape sketched out in the restitution published by D. Akhundov (Fig. 14) is therefore probably relatively

⁶⁹ Mamedova (2004: 81).

⁷⁰ Mamedova (2004: 82).



Fig. 20: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. Parts of cornices on south and north gables.

faithful when it restores a single saddleback roof covering with its two slopes the entire west arm of the church. G. Mamedova confirms this.⁷¹ The general photograph from northeast, unfortunately very fuzzy, taken in 1982 before the clearing of the eastern church, at a time when the volumes and in particular their upper parts were perhaps a little better preserved (cf. Fig. 1), allows to get a rough idea of the aspect of the east arm. We also know that, like all other roofs throughout YK, the eastern church roofs were tiled.

Portions of cornices and window frames present on the eastern church, as well as the imposts of the four central arches, are, along with a few other fragments of cornices preserved on the neighbouring chapels, the only elements of sculpted decoration that have persisted (to our knowledge) in the YK complex. Large portions of cornices can be seen at the top of the façades and in particular, as we have just pointed out, on the slopes of the gables (Figures 17–20). The profile has, under the tablet of the abacus, a cavetto completed by a small torus. It is one of the prevalent forms of cornice throughout the South Caucasus, from the Early Christian period until the late Middle Ages. The imposts of the four central arches had a very similar molding: “under a large tablet, a torus transforming into an inclined plane”.⁷² In the centre of the north and south façades, around the window which lighted the transept, a rectangular frame remains, arched in its upper part, fairly well preserved on the south side and very damaged on the north side (Fig. 21). The continuous body of moldings which surrounds the bay was apparently not ornamented, but simply formed of a relatively broad and bulging band between two thinner tori underlined by a groove. Finally, inside the church, on the plaster that covered the walls, traces of painting were recorded.⁷³

71 Mamedova (2004: 82) notes “the lack of heightening of the roof of the central nave compared to that of the side naves” which “distinguishes [this monument] from canonical shrines of this type” (“отсутствие завышения кровли среднего нефа над боковыми отличает его от канонических храмов этого типа”).

72 Mamedova (2004: 82): “Капители подкупольных устоев образованы верхней широкой полочкой и валиком, который переходит в срезанную под углом полочку”.

73 Khalilov (2018: 206).



Fig. 21: Yeddi Kilsə. Eastern church. Central window of the south façade.

4.2.2 Comments and dating

It is possible that, like the western church, the eastern one had an early stage in which it had a three-nave basilica structure without a dome, a stage which could date back to the pre-Arab period. The hypothesis mentioned above, of an alteration aimed at erecting a dome on pillars that one had to place almost in front of the pre-existing doors, seems plausible. However, since it is impossible for us to verify such a hypothesis, we must, here too, start from the state which is documented to us, despite its lacunas and enigmas. The eastern church of YK, as we have seen, is undoubtedly related to the western one by several common characteristics: its technique and its materials, the presence of two free western supports and the configuration of the central square, intended to carry the drum of a dome (if one admits its existence in the western church), the double access to the two sacristies and, to a certain extent, the arrangement of the three doors. It is therefore quite possible that both churches are contemporary, that is to say that the eastern one also dates back to the 10th–11th centuries. We will see that several arguments confirm this. As for the dating hypothesis of the eastern church in the 6th–7th centuries, put forward by some authors, it is not supported by any argument.⁷⁴

At the same time, it is astonishing to find in the same ensemble, in all likelihood monastic, two churches which, although probably contemporary, are typologically and symbolically so different from each other. The rectilinear chevet and the single window in the apse of the eastern church certainly evoke the practices specific to the miaphysites, in particular Armenians and probably also Caucasian Albanians, as opposed to the triple rounded projection and the three windows in the apse of the western church, clearly oriented towards the Orthodox world. Of course, it is not uncommon to see, also in Orthodox countries, for example in Georgia, churches with rectilinear chevet and a single window in the apse, but what is surprising here is the juxtaposition of these differences in the same ensemble, around the same time.

Attention is also drawn, in the eastern church of YK, to the configuration of its western arm, with the partial demarcation of two separate spaces, almost two chambers, on its sides. Such a device is extremely rare in Georgia where it is observed, if we are not mistaken, and in a lesser form, only in the cathedral of Gelati (first decades of the 12th century) and, in a very different type, in the Cathedral of the Dormition (Bagrati Cathedral) in Kutaisi (early 11th century).⁷⁵ On the

74 Mamedova (2004: 82, 125); Hajieva (2012: 9); Khalilov (2018: 207).

75 Mépisachvili and Tsintsadzé (1978: 142, 183); Alpagò Novello, Beridze and Lafontaine-Dosogne (1980: 329, 362).

other hand, a fairly close and very frequent parallel is provided by the numerous churches of medieval Armenia and in particular of the monastic architecture of this country, with inscribed cross and four angular chapels.⁷⁶ Apart from its two free western pillars and the double access to its sacristies, the eastern church of YK seems typologically related to the Armenian monastic sanctuaries. This parallel takes on its full meaning if we accept for the eastern church of YK a dating close to that of the western church: 10th–11th centuries, a period when Georgian and Armenian traditions intersect on several occasions in the concerned region.

Such dating is completely compatible, not only with the composition of the church, with the pointed shape of some of its arches, but also with the general shape and the molding of the window frames (the same is true of the cornices profile, but as it is maintained through the centuries, this clue is not reliable for dating). Such window frames, with a continuous band all around the bay, are unknown on the monuments of the South Caucasus (at least those certainly dated) before the Arab occupation. The very narrow parallels that can be drawn in this regard point to the post-Arab period, both in Kakheti, with for example the apsidal windows of the church of Sanagire (even if the median strip is not convex but concave: Fig. 22), and in ancient Caucasian Albania, with the windows of the churches of Kish, Zeyzit and Calut (Fig. 23).⁷⁷ As we saw at the beginning of the present Chapter, this period was marked by confessional pressures which resulted in the conversion of the population to orthodoxy. In the eastern church of YK, this tension-fusion seems to manifest itself through the marriage of the Chalcedonian pole embodied by the two free western pillars, the large opening of the eastern sacristies and the shape of the window frames, with the miaphysite pole towards which the rectilinear chevet, the single window in the apse and the west angular pseudo-chambers are oriented.

As we will see below, this part of the monastic complex seems marked, through the chapels surrounding the eastern church, by the memorial and funeral function. It seems possible to consider that the link with the memory of past generations encouraged respect for certain traditions that were still alive, despite the conversion that was underway in the second half of the 10th century. On the contrary, the main, western church unequivocally represented the Chalcedonian orientation which was then becoming predominant.

⁷⁶ Cuneo (1988: II, 728, synoptic typological plate).

⁷⁷ Mamedova (2004: 45, Fig. 13; 48, Fig. 17 [Kish]; 99, Fig. 59; 175, Fig. 103 [Zeyzit]). Regarding the Calut chapel, our source of information is a photograph by Samvel Karapetyan.



Fig. 22: Vazisubani, Kakheti (Georgia), Sanagire. External view of the apse.



Fig. 23: Kish, Zeyzit and Calut chapels, Azerbaijan. Moulded frames of windows.

4.3 The chapels, their dating and function

The YK complex had five chapels, arranged near the eastern church. One of them, to the northwest of the church, is almost entirely preserved (Figures 24–25); a second, to the southeast, is partially conserved; a third one, to the northeast, has retained only its eastern end (Figures 26–27) and portions of the first courses of its other walls; the last two chapels are in ruins. These five chapels were small single-nave constructions with, to the east, an internally rounded apse, covered with a conch, the whole inscribed in a rectangular perimeter and topped with a saddleback roof. Two small rectangular niches were often carved into the sides of the apse, intended to receive liturgical objects. The length of the chapels oscillated between 5.5 and 7.5 m, and their width between approximately 4 and 5 m; their height was about 5 m. They were, like churches, oriented and had a door in their western façade.

These chapels are built in the same technique as the churches, with a generally rustic masonry which, added to other arguments mentioned later, makes probable a medieval dating close to theirs (10th–11th centuries). However, the chapel located to the north-east of the church, of which only the apse remains, has a neat bond of well-cut beige limestone blocks, partly preserved on its eastern facade (Fig. 26). The vertical arrangement of several of these blocks corroborates



Fig. 24: Yeddi Kilsə. Three chapels to the north of the eastern church.



Fig. 25: Yeddi Kilsə. Chapel to the northwest of the eastern church.



Fig. 26: Yeddi Kilsə. Vestiges of a chapel to the northeast of the eastern church: Eastern façade.



Fig. 27: Yeddi Kilsə. Vestiges of a chapel to the northeast of the eastern church. Interior view from west to east.

the dating hypothesis put forward above, since such a device was not observed in the South Caucasian/Armenian region in the pre-Arab period. At the top of this façade, we notice the same type of cornice as on the eastern church. Seen from the west (Fig. 27), this chapel presents a “natural section” which makes very visible the technique implemented in this architecture, as in the whole region, with filling in the coffering formed by the two layers of coating. The inner wall of the apse was coated with plaster presumably intended to bear paintings.

Aliya Karakhmedova gives the internal dimensions of this northeast chapel (5.5 × 3.8 m),⁷⁸ specifies that its walls are preceded on the outside by two steps in

⁷⁸ Karakhmedova (1990: 38).

well-cut limestone (which we no longer see today), and makes two important remarks about its apse: a) the floor of the apse is significantly raised compared to that of the nave (two steps are still more or less visible today, see Fig. 27); b) its height has been increased several times, from 48 to 55 cm, then from 55 to 65 cm.⁷⁹ Recall that the elevation of the apse, known as *bem* in Armenian (from Greek βῆμα), is, together with the altar curtain, specific to the sacred architecture of Armenia and was probably also adopted by the Caucasian Albanian communities close to the Armenian Apostolic Church. It differs from the devices which separate the choir from the nave, such as the chancel or the templon, which are practiced in countries with an Orthodox (Chalcedonian) tradition, particularly in Georgia. Let us add that the interventions aimed at increasing, over the centuries, the elevation of the floor of the apse are a phenomenon known in Armenia, where the oldest churches had a low elevation of the apse, while in those of the Middle Age the apse is significantly higher. A height of 65 cm would be entirely in agreement with a dating of the 10th–11th centuries.

The relatively high number of chapels in the YK complex drew the attention of G. Mamedova, who saw it as a characteristic of the monasteries of Caucasian Albania; she based this opinion on two examples taken from the Armenian architecture of Artsakh.⁸⁰ In fact, it is a widespread phenomenon throughout the Armenian monastic architecture of the Middle Ages, regardless of the province considered. Most Armenian monasteries have at least one or two chapels, either attached to the church or to the narthex, or close to them or at a certain distance (we do not take into account, of course, the chapels-sacristies in the interior of churches or narthexes, nor chapels-*khachkars*). And there are many monastic complexes in Armenia which have more than two chapels. Let us quote for example, in the province of Artsakh, the monasteries of the Apostle Elisaeus (7 chapels) and of Bri Eghtsi (4 chapels); in the province of Ayrarat: Bagnayr (3), Harich (3), Horomos (5), Kecharis (4), Teghenyats (4), Khtzkonk (3);⁸¹ Gogarene province: Goshavank (4 or 6), Haghbat (4), Horomayr (4 or 5), Kobayr (3), Sanahin (3 or 4); province of Syunik: Arates (2 or 5), Makenyats (3); Vaspurakan province: Holy Cross of Aghtamar (4), St Thaddeus of Artaz (5 surrounding chapels).⁸² It should

⁷⁹ Karakhmedova (1990: 39).

⁸⁰ Mamedova (2004: 154).

⁸¹ These are three very small sanctuaries (with a dome), too small to be called “church”, and mainly funerary. On this subject see Donabédian (2018–2019: 199–200).

⁸² For these monasteries see Cuneo (1988: I, 152 [Kecharis], 172 [Teghenyats], 248–249 [Harich], 278–279 [Horomayr], 288 [Kobayr], 291 [Sanahin], 302–303 and 310 [Haghbat], 348, 350 [Goshavank], 378–379 [Makenyats], 383 [Arates], 435 [Bri Eghtsi], 456–457 [Apostle Elisaeus], 639 [Khtzkonk], 646–648 [Bagnayr], 673–678 [Horomos]). For Aghtamar see Cuneo (1988: I, 556) and Der-Nersessian and Vahramian (1974: 99); for St Thaddeus, Kleiss et al. (1971: 60).

also be noted that, in most cases, these chapels had a funerary or memorial function.⁸³ It is the same in YK, perhaps because of the pervasiveness of Armenian traditions or related to them. What can be considered as specific to YK is the grouping of five chapels around a church; this creates indeed a certain kinship with St Elisaeus of Artsakh, where the seven chapels are roughly aligned on the same north-south line as the very small central church, and where two of them are undoubtedly funerary.

Annegret Plontke-Lüning specifies that three of YK's chapels had crypts which, she believes, housed the graves of members of aristocratic families.⁸⁴ Indeed, from the 1960s, a memorial and funerary function was noted in the “chapels-mausoleums” of YK.⁸⁵ The scholar responsible for the investigations carried out on the site in the 1980s confirms the presence of several funerary arrangements in the monastic area. Two of them do not seem to be associated, at least directly, with the chapels and have unusual, even enigmatic characteristics.

Aliya Karakhmedova thus indicates, in 1980–81, to the south-west (?) of the complex a “vault/tomb” (*սկլեն*) whose north wall measures 11.4 m in length, a construction that has undergone, she writes, damage and reconstructions and where fragments of ceramic, especially painted and lustred, and tiles from various periods, from Late Antiquity to the 11th–12th centuries have been discovered.⁸⁶ In a later report, the same author specifies that this vault had a rectangular-trapezoidal plan, had preserved traces of a vault, as well as fragments of tiles from its roof and, we are not told why, could be dated to the 4th–5th centuries.⁸⁷ The same author reports the discovery, in 1982, to the north-west (?) of the ensemble, of a semi-hypogeum with a slightly trapezoidal plan (length 5.2 m, width north 2.4 m, south 2.1 m), the ground of which was 1.6 m below the current ground and which was accessed by a staircase with several steps. She calls it again a “vault/tomb”. Like the previous one, this new vault was empty of any burial, had its entrance from the south side and was oriented from south to north. Fragments of lustrous ceramic dishes and tiles from the 11th–12th centuries have been found there, but the building can be dated, she believes, still without providing a basis, to the 7th–8th centuries.⁸⁸

⁸³ The Armenian term *matir(n)*, which is translated into English as “chapel”, comes from the Greek μαρτύριον; in other words, in Armenian perception, a chapel is a small sanctuary with a primarily martyrial (memorial/funerary) function. See Donabédian (2018–2019: 199, n. 15).

⁸⁴ Plontke-Lüning (2016: 174).

⁸⁵ Useynov, Bretanitskiy and Salamzade (1963: 33) mention crypts under “chapels-mausoleums”; see also Ishkhanov (1968: 62) who, without further details, dates the chapels of YK to the 11th–13th centuries.

⁸⁶ Karakhmedova (1986b: 78–79).

⁸⁷ Karakhmedova (1990: 37).

⁸⁸ Karakhmedova (1990: 37).

On the other hand, according to A. Karakhmedova, a funerary function is very clearly attached to the northeast chapel mentioned above (Figures 26–27). There were indeed, near the western entrance, against the remains of the side walls (interior faces of the north and south walls), two tombs, each with two superimposed sepulchres of which the lower, visible only on the south side, was located below ground level.⁸⁹ These facilities were badly damaged and empty when they were examined in 1982. The tomb on the north side, if we understand the description correctly, had the appearance of a longitudinal box made of stones placed vertically (as in medieval Armenian tombs), surmounted by a “two-slope” cover (which therefore looked like the lid of a sarcophagus). The external dimensions noted are 2.8 × 1 m, and 90 cm high, with walls 30–35 cm thick; the internal dimensions were 2 × 0.65 m. On the south side, the tomb was much smaller, almost square (the tank is still partially visible, to the right of the entrance). Its dimensions are according to A. Karakhmedova 116 × 84 cm, and 75 cm high, with walls 14 to 46 cm thick.

It is therefore clear that the funerary function was very present in the monastic ensemble of YK. There was undoubtedly one and very probably several chapels dedicated to this function, necessarily bearing an attachment to ancestral tradition. In addition, a clear Armenian or related tropism emerges from the elevation of the apse in the northeast chapel, obviously funerary.

5 A very provisional conclusion

The important monastic complex of YK, the largest on the entire left bank of the Kura, located in what looks much like a vast religious metropolis, is of major interest as a witness to the history of the northern territories of the former Caucasian Albania. Through the first strata, still difficult to apprehend, of its constructions, it probably illustrates the early Christian and pre-Arab period of this great formation which is still poorly known. Then in the medieval form that its buildings take to us, the complex reflects the situation of a world undergoing profound change. We see the marriage of traits relating to the culture being propagated in the course of the 10th century, that of the Georgian society of Chalcedonian faith, with a substrate from an earlier tradition, marked by the miaphysite confession of a probably mixed population, composed of Caucasian Albanian and Armenian elements.

⁸⁹ Karakhmedova (1990: 39).

The striking reflection of this is the juxtaposition, in the same monastic complex, of a main sanctuary with a clearly Chalcedonian orientation and a second place of worship, obviously secondary, which preserves miaphysite elements in the process of merging with the new dominant orientation. This center of interactions is surrounded by a memorial and funerary environment that seems to embody the resilience of an ancestral heritage. This ensemble, astonishing object of observation, appears to us as a melting pot of ecumenism before its time, but it actually gives, on the one hand, the fleeting image of a past in the process of extinction, while, on the other hand, the powerful mechanism of a metamorphosis is at work.

The present observations and hypotheses should be regarded as provisional conjectures, as they are based on a still very insufficient knowledge of the ensemble. Fortunately, a statement from the Azertac agency dated 31 July 2021 announced the establishment of an Italo-Azerbaijani scientific project to study and conserve the YK monastic complex. To this end, a team of young researchers is placed under the direction of two professors from the Baku University of Architecture and Construction, and the *Politecnico di Milano*. We want to see in this the promise that our knowledge of this complex and enigmatic site will soon be renewed and enriched. Let us wish every success to this new research program, the results of which will be eagerly awaited and closely followed.

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- Figure 10: Chubinashvili (1959: 356).
- Figure 11: Photograph Patrick Donabédian.
- Figure 12: Chubinashvili (1959: 124).
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- Figure 14: Akhundov (1986: 215, Fig. 240).
- Figure 15: Akhundov (1986: 215, Fig. 240a).
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- Figure 18: Online photograph Sefer Azeri: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yeddi_kilsə_monastırının_Şərq_bazilikasının_ümumi_fasad_görünüşü.jpg.

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Figure 20: Details of Figures 17 and 19.

Figure 21: Detail of online photograph Interfase – own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=51437450>: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Seven_church_monastery#/media/File:Seven_church_monastery_21.jpg.

Figure 22: Detail of online photograph Nino Gvazava / Dzeglis megobari: <https://dzeglistmegobari.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/satavo-foto.jpg>.

Figure 23: Kish: photograph A. Plontke-Lüning (2004); Zeyzit: Mamedova (2004: 99); Calut: photograph Samvel Karapetyan (c. 1984).

Figure 24: Mamedova (2004: 152, Fig. 85).

Figure 25: Online photograph Interfase – own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=51437450>: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Seven_church_monastery#/media/File:Seven_church_monastery_11.jpg.

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Hamlet Petrosyan

11 Tigranakert in Artsakh

Abstract: This Chapter deals with the results of archaeological excavations from ancient and medieval times on the historical territory of Karabakh and Utik and the adjacent territory, based on the excavations of Tigranakert and its surroundings, Amaras and Vachar in Artsakh.

In the first section, the late Hellenistic image of the city is presented: the fortification system, the two city districts, the Hellenistic burial ground. A comparative examination of the fortification system confirms that it originates from the system erased in Alexandria in the 3rd century BCE, which with some changes was applied in Artashat and received its classical form in Tigranakert of Artsakh.

The second section discusses the Early Christian square with two churches, remains of a monumental stela with a cross, as well as an Early Christian underground reliquary and a graveyard. The sepulchre-reliquary has only an eastern entrance. As further excavations revealed, the sepulchre-reliquary of St Grigoris in Amaras and the reliquary of St Stephen in Vachar also have only an eastern entrance. All these three structures date from the 5th–6th centuries. In the Early Christian East, the only tomb that had only an eastern entrance is the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The analysis of data on Vachagan the Pious (end of 5th–early 6th centuries), king of Albania (which included since the middle of 5th century the eastern provinces of Greater Armenia, Artsakh and Utik), allows to conclude that at the end of the 5th century the king initiated an ecclesiastical reform, trying to link the origin of the Albanian Church to Jerusalem. A new approach to the structures of the Early Christian sanctuaries in and near Tigranakert thus allows us to compare this sacred area with the sacred Early Christian topography of Jerusalem.

1 Introduction

The late Hellenistic city of Tigranakert,¹ now under Azerbaijani control, is located in the Askeran region of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabagh), in the lower valley of the Khachenaget river, which is the second largest river in the highland. It is spread over the south-eastern slopes of Mount Vankasar² and is adjacent to the slopes near the “Royal Springs” (Şahbulaq). The city was founded at the end of the 90s

1 Cf. Petrosyan (2020 and 2021) for preliminary accounts of the site.

2 40°4'2.5" N, 46°54'21.2" E.

BCE by the Armenian King Tigranes II the Great (r. 95–55 BCE) and functioned until the end of the 13th century.

Tigranakert in Artsakh is one of numerous settlements carrying the name of Tigran; however, it is the only settlement that has a precisely identified location and has been explored archaeologically.

1.1 Tigranakert in Artsakh in written sources

It is most likely that the Greek geographer Strabo (1st century BCE – 1st century CE) was aware about Tigranakert in Artsakh, mentioning it as Tigranokerta near Iberia (i.e. Eastern Georgia).³ The first mention of Tigranakert in Armenian sources belongs to the 7th-century historian Sebeos.⁴ Describing the Persian invasions of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in 622–624, Sebeos names two Tigranakerts situated in Artsakh and Utik. In the letter of the Armenian catholicos Elia (I) describing the Council of Partaw in the early 8th century,⁵ we find the information that a priest named Petros of Tkrakert (in some manuscripts spelt Tigranakert) participated in the assembly as well. Later we have evidence from the 12th, 18th and 19th centuries.⁶

1.2 Excavations

During fifteen years of excavations directed by the present author (2006–2020), the following sections of the city were uncovered (Fig. 1):

- a) the Late Hellenistic⁷ fortified district (1st c. BCE) and the citadel (Fig. 1: 1)
- b) the first and second Late Hellenistic districts (Fig. 1: 3, 9)
- c) the Late Hellenistic cemetery with jug and cist burials (Fig. 1: 8)
- d) the Early Christian rock carved complex and the rocky canal near the city (Fig. 1: 7)
- e) the Early Christian cemetery (Fig. 1: 4)
- f) the Early Christian square with remnants of two churches, a memorial stela, an Early Christian underground reliquary-sepulchre and a graveyard (Fig. 1: 2)
- g) the Early Christian sepulchre and chamber on the top of the Tsitssar mountain south of the site (Fig. 1: 10).

³ Strabo, *Geography* XI: 14.15 (Meineke 1877: II, 747–748).

⁴ Abgaryan (1979: 125).

⁵ Hakobyan (1981: 150); cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 6.1 for details as to the council.

⁶ For a thorough examination of the written sources see Petrosyan (2020: 327–330).

⁷ In case of Tigranakert, the Late Hellenistic period includes the timespan from the early 1st century BCE to the end of the 3rd century CE.

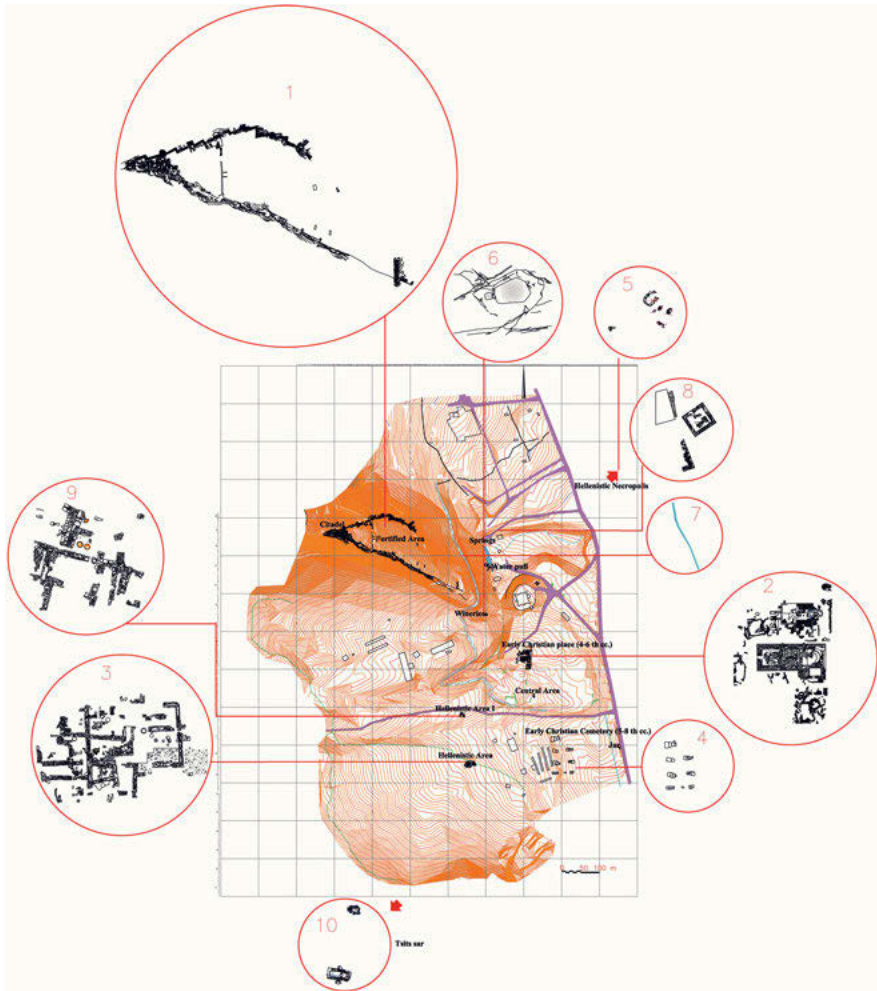


Fig. 1: Layout of Tigranakert with excavated areas marked, 2020.

2 The Late Hellenistic city

As a result of the archaeological research, it is possible to talk about a large residential settlement with advanced urban planning and construction techniques, which was founded in the first century BCE and survived until the end of the 13th century. Ancient Tigranakert was constructed in accordance with the advanced Hellenistic urban planning principles and masonry techniques: a triangle



Fig. 2: Air view of fortified district, Early Christian square and 18th-century fortress, 2020.

model of planning of the fortified district by using zigzag walls, a strong alternation of rectangular and round towers, the foundation of fortifications exclusively on a rocky base, quadras with rustication, facettes with “swallow-tail” connections, and the usage of limestone cement. All structures were made with local white limestone which gave the city a white appearance, making it visible from afar (Fig. 2).

2.1 The fortified district

The fortified district of Tigranakert is situated on the naturally formed, triangular spur in the lower part of the south-western slope of Mount Vankasar, near the “Royal Springs”, and to the north of it, i.e. the fortress occupied not the top of Mount Vankasar, dominating the region, but the lower part of its southern slope (Fig. 3). The district covered an area of about 6 ha. The top of the roughly triangular fortress was the highest point of the structure, and the base was directed towards the plain. Although the spur has high cliffs (followed by walls), its stra-



Fig. 3: Air view of fortified district, 2020.

tegic position was nevertheless weakened because of its being situated at the foot of the mountain. Consequently, massive, supplementary defensive measures were engineered, conditioned by the severe slope (on 500 m the inclination of the area is *c.* 60 m). We think that the builders were obliged to undertake their work in such a difficult terrain so as to be as close as possible to the freshwater springs and to protect them.⁸

If we take into consideration the fact that Mt Vankasar borders the Khachenaiget where it leads to the steppe, it can be seen that the fortress of Tigranakert controlled not only the steppe and the trade-route passing through it, but also protected the entrance to the river valley itself.⁹ From the outset of his rule, Tigranes was certain that a military conflict with the Parthians was unavoidable. The same is true regarding the invasion of the northern tribes sparked by the Parthians. Given that we have written reference to at least two Tigranakerts in the Artsakh foothills adjoining the steppe, it is conceivable that to prevent a

⁸ In 2012, research in the area next to the springs revealed that the cliffs bordering them were also cut down for the bases of some structures. It is more than possible that the springs and the immediate area were also included in the plans of the city's early construction.

⁹ See Kirakosyan (2016b: 63–67) for details.

likely invasion by northern tribes, Tigranes built fortresses on the foothills that controlled the steppe and protected the entrances of the river valleys. As the lower limits of the archaeological complexes of Tigranakert did not extend into the 2nd century BCE, it is more than possible that Tigranes began to realise his project immediately after his campaigns in Cappadocia, between the end of the 90s and the beginning of the 80s of the 1st century BCE. That Tigranakert was founded by the principle of *synoikismos*, involving the Greek populations of Cappadocia and other regions of Asia Minor, is confirmed by three pieces of evidence:

- a) the foundations of all the structures of Tigranakert's fortress excavated to date, including the walls, towers and Late Hellenistic buildings of the citadel, are completely rock-cut, a building technique that was not common in Artsakh previously but widespread in Cappadocia and in the Hellenistic-period cities of Armenia (Yervandashat, Armavir, Artashat)
- b) the existence of Early Christian inscriptions in Greek in the rock-cut church complex situated in the suburb of Tigranakert
- c) references in medieval Arabic sources mentioning a Greek city located on the road from Baylaqan to Barda'a (Partaw).¹⁰

As mentioned above, the fortress of Tigranakert was situated on a triangular spur above the "Royal Springs" and topped by a rectangular tower, from which the southern and northern walls constituting the sides of the triangle originated (Fig. 4). In the main, the rock-cut foundations have been preserved of the southern wall. The northern wall has been preserved in some places up to 5 m in height (Fig. 5). These features suggest that we have an incredible opportunity to consider the technical means of the wall construction in their entirety. Fragments of rock-cut bases, more than 450 m long, of the southern walls that stretch above the slope of Mt Vankasar were visible before the excavations. Their strip- and step-like structure had been considered by Azerbaijani researchers to be steps leading to the church of the 7th century, situated on the top of Mt Vankasar, which resulted in a misinterpretation. The narrow strips cut into the rocks were likened to a path and not linked to the looked-for city.¹¹

We could not imagine before the excavations that the wall foundations would have such a structure. It seemed that a regular base had been dug equal to the width of the wall (a width varying between 2.6 and 2.8 m), in which the blocks of the first row were placed. In fact, the separate bases of the outside and inside rows of the four-row wall were cut in the shape of a strip on the rock (Fig. 6).

¹⁰ Yampolskiy (1959: 366–369).

¹¹ Yampolskiy (1960: 249).

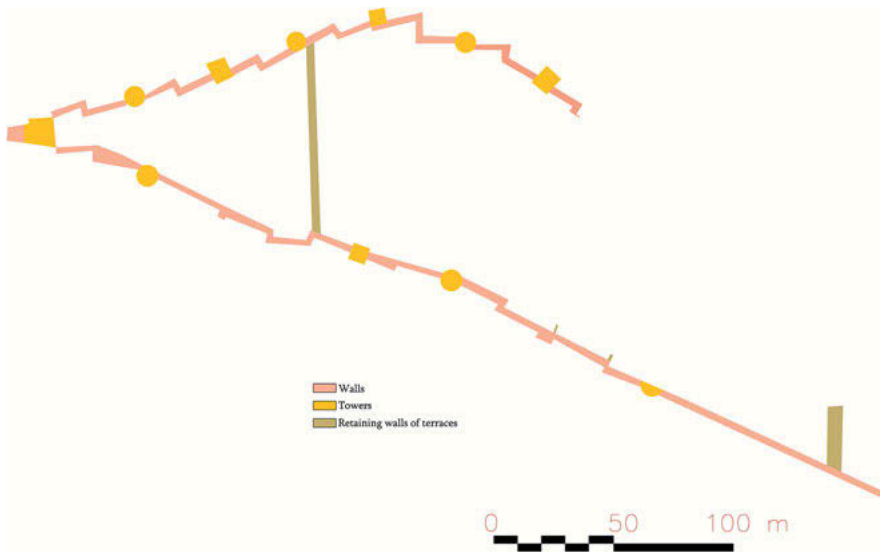


Fig. 4: Layout of the fortified district, 2020.



Fig. 5: Upper part of the northern fortification walls, 2009.



Fig. 6: The rock-cut bases of the southern fortification wall of the fortified district, 2007.

They were carved approximately horizontally,¹² and channels provided for a separate block were cut into them. The channels were filled with a mortar consisting of lime and limestone, into which the blocks were put unfixed. The bottom of the base that was laid between the outer and inner strips was not always elaborated; it was filled with mortar and semi-worked blocks, taking into account that they would have a surface equal to all the four rows but only in the third or fourth row of the wall height. The mortar was used not only for strengthening the blocks of the first row and filling the empty spaces between the blocks but also for filling and plastering the space between the base and the rock. This was intended to prevent rainwater from flowing under the base.¹³ As a rule, the outer strip is

12 Whereas the upper rows of the walls are almost perfectly horizontal, the wall bases follow the slant of the locality. This means that in the first (probably also in the second and third) row the stones had a more slanting lower surface and a more rectilinear upper surface, i.e. instead of bringing the rock to a horizontal plane, separate blocks were elaborated for that purpose, which was obviously a less labourious process.

13 Such a diversified use of mortar in the 1st century BCE is confirmed in the region for the first time. As already mentioned, the fortress of Tigranakert was built on a limestone mountain and the stone needed for the construction was cut locally, as is demonstrated by numerous traces. Such huge supplies of limestone probably played a central role earlier, compared to other places. It should be noted that it is attested in Artashat more than a century later (Khachatryan 2007: 9).



Fig. 7: Horizontal polished surfaces of the quadras, rustic elaboration of the outer faces, facets and “swallow-tail” connections of the northern fortification wall, 2009.

wider than the inner one, and together they take up 60–70 % of the width of the wall. Thus, according to our research, a detailed and well-planned construction was realised, which meant that the wall could fit into the vertical and horizontal deviations of the terrain as closely as possible, by the skilled juxtaposition of different channels, steps and platforms. The wall is based not on a homogeneous, solid mass but on three separate “feet” (the outer and inner rows and the mass laid between them). We think that it also had an anti-seismic role, by dividing shocks between the components near the base.

The blocks of the outer and inner rows of the wall reveal a mix of perfectly worked and “rustic” surfaces, with skilfully built *facettes* (slanted cuts to the outer edges of the blocks). The blocks were either simply placed upon each other, or were connected with additional connections – the so-called “swallow-tails” (Fig. 7).¹⁴ Timber, or in some instances a ballast-mixed lime-concrete, was used as the connection material. This technique was widely known in Asia Minor,

¹⁴ The medium sizes of the blocks are: height 0.45–0.7 m; width 0.3–1.2 m; length 0.4–1.5 m.

Mesopotamia, and the Ararat Valley, but in Artsakh, it is documented for the first time at this site.

The swallow-tail connections were often used in case of small blocks. This might suggest that the wall built with small blocks was less strong and was additionally strengthened. It can also be confirmed that more often the stones of the first and outer rows were strengthened with such connections, perhaps for the same purpose. Such construction techniques are confirmed at several sites in Armenia (Armavir, Artashat, Garni) and Georgia (Bagineti) for the Hellenistic and Late Hellenistic periods.

The whole fortification system of Tigranakert consists of three constructive elements: a rectangular tower, a round tower, and a polyline or zigzag wall connecting the towers. The zigzag wall consists of two wings and a zigzag-shaped central part; the wings are strictly rectilinear, the turns are rectangular or acute. The zigzag wall has different lengths (the shortest length is 7 m, the longest 25.5 m, the length of the zigzag part is 1.5–9.8 m) and directions, depending on the relief.

The fortress of Tigranakert itself is a triangular model, the important elements of which are the towers, rectangular (length of sides 7–8 m) and round (diameter up to 9 m), as well as the wall connecting them, which forms one zigzag. The different lengths and directions of the walls represent the technical means that helped the triangular model adapt to the natural defensive opportunities of the landscape. With the common features of this construction technique (rock-cut base; foundations with stone blocks and dry masonry providing wall strength from the sheer weight of blocks; the wide use of swallow-tail connections, along with lime mortar and the formation of the upper part using mudbricks), and the sizes of the separate elements of Tigranakert's defense system (thickness of the wall, sizes of the quadrangle towers) reveal parallels with other Near Eastern Hellenistic sites (Miletus, Ephesus, Pergamon, Priene, Magnesia on the Meander, Dura-Europos, etc.).

From the point of view of the layout and the architectural solutions, it was very similar to Priene (e.g., the triangular citadel dominating the surrounding area, districts with regular planning spread at the foot, and zigzag walls)¹⁵ and Dura-Europos (wall constructions), dating to the turn of the 3rd–2nd centuries BCE,¹⁶ and especially to Artashat (the triangular citadel dominating the area; districts with regular planning spread around the base of the hills; zigzag walls; and juxtapositions of rectangular and round towers).¹⁷ In some of its details, in terms

¹⁵ See the plan in Wiegand and Schrader (1904: 556).

¹⁶ Renard (1924: Pl. XIII, Fig. 1 and 40–41 [appendix by Franz Cumont]).

¹⁷ The Urartian heritage also played an essential role in the planning and building of Hellenistic cities. As the research at Artashat demonstrates, the city was founded on the site of a Urartian fortress. The builders used the Urartian walls, attaching new towers and mudbrick walls to them.

of structural technique, it was very close in design to the synchronous fortification of Armaztsikhe-Bagineti in Georgia.¹⁸ Thanks to the study of these parallels we can confirm that Tigranakert reflects the full benefits of an advanced architectural mindset and building technique. These circumstances made Tigranakert one of the key sites of the 1st century BCE – 1st century CE, being better preserved than the complexes of the other above-mentioned sites.

Only a few details of the inner construction of the fortified district are known so far. The marked inclines of the area necessitated its construction on a series of terraces. Additionally, as a rule, the strengthened walls of the terraces were put on rock-cut foundations, with only the outer sides being formed of rustic blocks. The terrace platforms themselves were made of stones covered by a thick, rammed layer of clay. Four terraces have been clearly identified, with one being the wall dividing the citadel from the fortified district. It stretches over 63 m in length and was strengthened by wall supports; it had an entrance where it was connected with the northern wall.

The rock-cut bases of the walls in the fortified district of the city, with their huge dimensions, are notable for their regularity of construction, their perfect symmetry, and the neat working of flagstones joined using Hellenistic methods (i.e. swallow-tail connections). All these features undoubtedly attest that they were built collaboratively by skilled and innovative architects and craftsmen. Only tight combinations of thought, materials and labour could result in the reali-

The main principles of the Urartian town plan and fortification (straight lines and possibly rectangular dimensions, location of wall bases on rocks) were probably of local origin (Ghafadaryan 1972: 151–156; Burney and Lawson 1960: 177–196). At the same time, the Hellenistic achievements should also be emphasised when speaking of the planning of Tigranakert, and the importance of the local, traditional experience it reflects should be stressed. Artashat is of particular interest here, with the consistent adaption of round towers and zigzag fortification walls to the local features, a system which was elaborated in all probability in the centres of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean in the 3rd century BCE and then spread to the East. The famous tract by Philo of Byzantium (end of the 3rd century BCE) comes to mind, based on mechanics and architecture from Alexandria, where such systems are described in detail (Lawrence 1979: 75–107), as well as the practical realisations of such systems at the sites of Asia Minor (see Winter 1971: 116–122). In this sense, we think that the semi-legendary antique reports on the planning of Artashat by Hannibal in Plutarch's *Lucullus* (31.4; Ziegler 1969: 403) and Strabo's *Geography* (XI: 14.6; Meineke 1977: 2, 743) can be viewed as an expression of memories linked to the use of Mediterranean practices of Hellenistic fortification building (cf. also Khachatryan 2007: 11–12; Tonikyan 1992: 161–187; Kroll 2012: 219–222). In the sense of construction techniques, what seems more amazing is the similarity, sometimes even the identical practice used, in the fortification wall at Tigranakert and the platform walls of Artashat's cultic-administrative district of the 2nd century BCE (e.g., the rough limestone blocks, the “swallow-tail” connection system, the combination of blocks set in horizontal and vertical positions, etc.; see Khachatryan 2005: 220, 226).

18 Janberidze and Tsitsishvili (1976: 22–23, Figures 12–13).



Fig. 8: Agate gemma with its stamp, 1st century BCE – 1st century CE, 2008.

sation of such a grandiose project in such a demanding setting, reflecting a total state mobilisation, something which confirms again that we are dealing with both royal and administrative initiative and power.

As the excavations showed, attempts were made in the early Middle Ages to maintain the military capacity of the citadel, but it lost its military importance approximately in the 11th–12th centuries. The upper part of the citadel was a densely settled district during the 12th–13th centuries. At the same time, the bases of the monumental buildings from the Late Hellenistic period could be secured. Moreover, not only the walls but also the buildings were rock-cut throughout the whole Late Hellenistic period. The purely Late Hellenistic layer was determined only in isolated locations by means of perfect examples of painted pottery related to the 1st century BCE – 1st century CE. The discoveries of a Late Hellenistic seal-gem (Fig. 8) and Sasanian stamps should be emphasised here, for they demonstrate that Tigranakert had administrative and trade significance.

2.2 The first and second Late Hellenistic urban districts

The urban districts located in the plain, at the foot of the fortress, greatly help in terms of throwing light on the features of Tigranakert. Of the four archaeologically revealed Late Hellenistic districts, a part of the first one was excavated, and test excavations were also undertaken in the second one. The first district was founded at the same time as the fortress and existed until the 7th century CE, after which it was changed into a Christian cemetery. The planning was done



Fig. 9: Layout of first Late Hellenistic district, 2014.

according to a principle similar to the Hippodamus construction, i.e. straight street segments and straight walls using only rectangular sections (Fig. 9). The building base of the excavated section was the straight wall stretching north-south (excavated to a depth of 2.55 m), along two sides of which were located



Fig. 10: Late Hellenistic painted pottery, 2007–2010.

the dwelling and economic complexes, consisting of rooms roughly square in dimension. During the following two construction phases (3rd–7th centuries CE) the reconstructions were completed mainly by repeating the planning solutions of the available buildings. The rooms had clay floors, sometimes with traces of lime plaster. Simple bases were preserved that provided the wooden columns which bore the covering. Some rooms had hearths preserved to a height of 0.3 m above the floor, while to some Late Hellenistic period rooms clay ovens (*tannurs*) were attached. In the paved sections of some rooms, limestone mortars were applied. Finds of fragments of basalt pestles and mills in this area and the remains of *pithoi* fixed in the floor showed that each economy solved the problem of the processing and storage of cereals in its own way. The several dozen conical, pyramidal and flat looms of raw clay made by a spinner revealed the domestic character of this craft. We should emphasise here the Late Hellenistic period pottery of Tigranakert. This was represented by thousands of fragments of both black-polished and red-painted pottery, as well as by several dozen preserved vessels, including large *pithoi* and churns, delicate pitchers and flasks, various cups, and fish plates (Fig. 10). The cluster-ornamented black-polished vessels and the classic examples of painted pottery had roots in Atropatene and attest that

Tigranakert was a centre of cultural significance for regions along the right bank of the Kura. The examples of imported pottery should also be mentioned, the parallels of which reached Seleucia on the Tigris and Dura-Europos.¹⁹

2.3 The eastern Late Hellenistic cemetery

The Hellenistic cemetery was located on a plain, c. 1.5 km to the north-east of the city. In the course of the excavations, one stone-cist grave and six *pithos* burials were found and studied (Fig. 11).²⁰ One burial was also opened during the excavations of the northern wall of the fortified district, within it and not far from the fortification wall. The burials did not have a unified direction and the *pithoi* were placed in a horizontal position directed to the south-east from the north-west, or to the south-west from the north-east. Let us discuss only two of them.



Fig. 11: Eastern Late Hellenistic cemetery, general view, 2018.

¹⁹ For details of the Hellenistic period pottery of Tigranakert, see Karapetyan and Gabrielyan (2016: 48–53); Gabrielyan (2017: 373–384).

²⁰ For the *pithoi* burials, see Petrosyan et al. (2021).

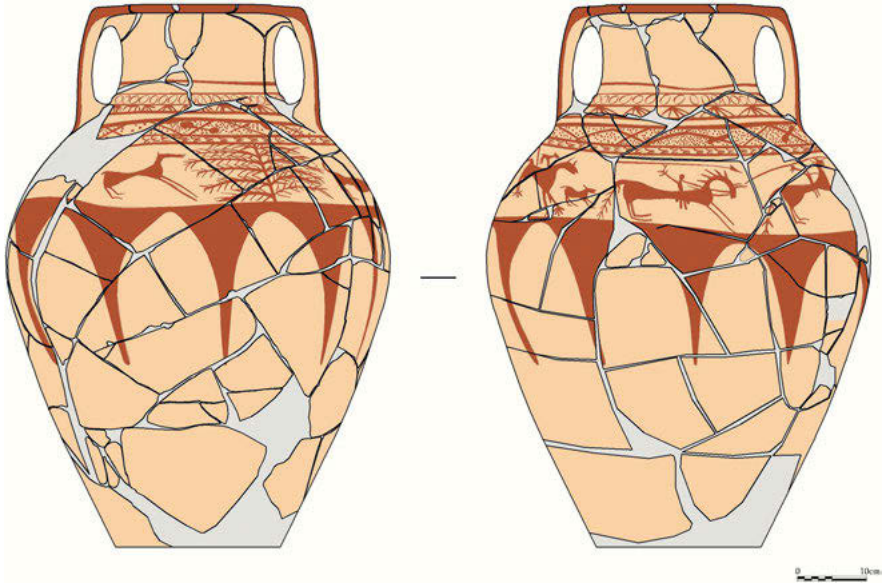


Fig. 12: Amphora-shaped burial pithos with a hunting scene on its shoulder (1st century BCE – 1st century CE), 2018.

The first burial consisted of a *pithos* with the body of the deceased and a spouted jar fastened to the bottom of the *pithos* from outside. Only badly preserved remains of the bones of the skull, ribs, and hand of the deceased were found. Two coins were enclosed, one between the teeth and the other among the ribs; these coins were Parthian silver drachmas, very well preserved and related to Mithridates IV (57–54 BCE) and Orodes II (57–38 BC).²¹ Among the finds were beads covered with golden foil and three iron rings with glass gems. A painted flask was found by accident in the context of this burial. In the fourth burial *pithos*, the skeleton was poorly preserved and the deceased was probably a child. Its head was near the bottom, the face was directed to the east. The *pithos* was amphora-like (height 0.9 m, width 0.83 m) and had two handles. The painted belt around the shoulder demonstrated a hunting scene: a figure on foot and a rider accompanied by their dogs, with bows, arrows and spears, and hunt deer among large, leafy trees (Fig. 12). An iron ring with a glass gem, 50 glass beads, and one Parthian coin were also found in the *pithos*. Near its bottom, a vertically located two-handled vessel with a round rim was retrieved.

²¹ The coins were identified and described by Ruben Vardanyan, head of the Department of Numismatics of the History Museum of Armenia, for which we are most grateful.



Fig. 13: Stone-cist burial (1st century BCE – 1st century CE), 2016.

Pithos burials were widespread just before and immediately after the Christian era. According to present research, this burial rite was typical in southern Caucasia and other regions, discernible by certain features. It was the outright dominant burial form in Artsakh and Utik, and even the small number of finds in Tigranakert seem to attest this tendency. The only stone-cist tomb located in the eastern cemetery was a large structure (the inner sizes of the chamber were approximately 2.75×3.0 m, with a depth of 1.85 m), with an approximate direction of north-south and a northern entrance built of large blocks placed in three rows (Fig. 13). Seven disturbed burials were found, of which only the second and the third were *in situ*, while the other four were under the southern wall. A secondary set of burials was also discovered here; the new burials involved the irregular accumulation of old ashes in the southern part of the chamber. The finds included four Parthian coins that were assigned to the mid-1st century BCE, as well as a well-preserved painted pitcher with one handle, a bronze crescent-shaped medallion, a bronze leaf-shaped pendant, a bronze string-like object, and a cream-glass gem with an image of a bird. According to the finds, the burials were related to the 1st century BCE – 1st century CE.

3 The Early Christian square (Fig. 14) and the large church

Starting with the first steps of our archeological research, parallel to the excavations of the Hellenistic districts, the expedition paid special attention to the medieval remnants of the city. In 2006 a part of the pit, which could roughly correspond to the structure of an apse and the eastern part of a prayer hall, was separated, and excavations commenced. Only a few hours later, the first corner stone of the church's apse and the southern wall were opened at a depth of about 0.5 m. As a result of the excavations in 2006–2009, the ruins of a large Early Christian temple were uncovered at a depth of about 3.5 m (Fig. 15). By its composition, the church belongs to the type of basilicas in Armenia and the Caucasus dating back to the 4th–6th centuries. By its architectural composition and decoration it is the earliest, most extensive and beautifully decorated hall of its size in the Eastern Caucasus. Originally, it was a single-nave basilica type church with a



Fig. 14: Early Christian square, general view, 2019.



Fig. 15: The large basilica church, 5th–6th centuries, general view from the south-west, 2009.

five-faceted outer apse. Later, the five-dimensional volume was incorporated into the rectangular volume, and the southern sacristy was added, which had an entrance from the outside. According to preliminary data, the church was destroyed and burnt down in the 8th–9th centuries. The existence of such a large Christian church is an important argument in favour of the fact that Tigranakert preserved its status as an important settlement in the early medieval times and that the testimonies of the early medieval Armenian sources are in accordance with the archeological results of the city.

3.1 The northern courtyard and the small church

Among the architectural features mentioned above we want to stress the two northern entrances. Considering the size of the church and the presence of a peristyle and a baptistery adjacent to the south, the presence of a northern pair of entrances was extraordinary. Early Christian temples typically do not have entrances from the north, so we assumed that there was an important structure (or structures) in the yard adjacent to the church, which is why a pair of northern entrances was created. So after the church and the immediate vicinity of the southern courtyard, we decided to continue excavating the northern part. The expectations were fully justified as the excavations revealed a large paved court-



Fig. 16: Small basilica church and graveyard, 2014.

yard, with fragments of an Early Christian memorial stela. The stela had a base, a pedestal, a column, a capital and a winged cross. A small church and a reliquary-sepulchre were uncovered under the eastern altar of the church and a graveyard adjacent to the western part of the church (Fig. 16). The archaeological study of this sepulchre served as the basis for considering similar structures in Artshakh and the reforms of Vachagan the Pious. Though of the church only some blocks of the first row and foundations have been preserved, its layout, dimensional features and construction are completely understandable and apparent. It had a rectangular layout with a circular altar with a five-faceted outer appearance, and western and southern entrances (the interior of the prayer hall measures 9.8×4.5 m, the outer dimensions are 16.3×8.3 m). The floor was covered with limestone slabs. The yard between the two churches is about 5 m wide and is covered with rough, irregular slabs. Only the path to the southern entrance of the small church is made up of larger stones, among which an anthropomorphic stela dating to the 8th–7th centuries of the first millennium BCE was used.

3.2 The sepulchre

During the excavations of 2013, a rectangular area surrounded by four large stone blocks was uncovered at the eastern end of the newly-opened small church,



Fig. 17: Air view of the Early Christian sepulchre, 2017.

where the cultural layer was deep in the natural ground. Three polished stairs and the eastern entrance were unearthed. The excavations of 2014 uncovered the southern and northern walls of a building to the west, with polished limestone blocks; separate parts of the vaulted ceiling were also made from polished blocks. In the northern and southern walls niches were embedded. Architectural evidence made it possible to assert that the structure was included in a protective coating for softening the lateral pressure from the church's wall. Obviously, we here deal with a structure that was built with the church and enclosed under the church's altar (Figures 17, 18). We named this construction conditionally a "sepulchre-reliquary",²² based on the small niches in the walls. As the excavations have shown, the whole structure is made of large polished lime blocks, has a clear west-east orientation in accordance with the orientation of the church, a cylindrical ceiling and – which was strange – a single eastern entrance. Despite the devastation, most of the reliquary's stones have been preserved and its fur-

²² Hereinafter until the final conclusion we will name this type of constructions of Artsakh just "sepulchres".

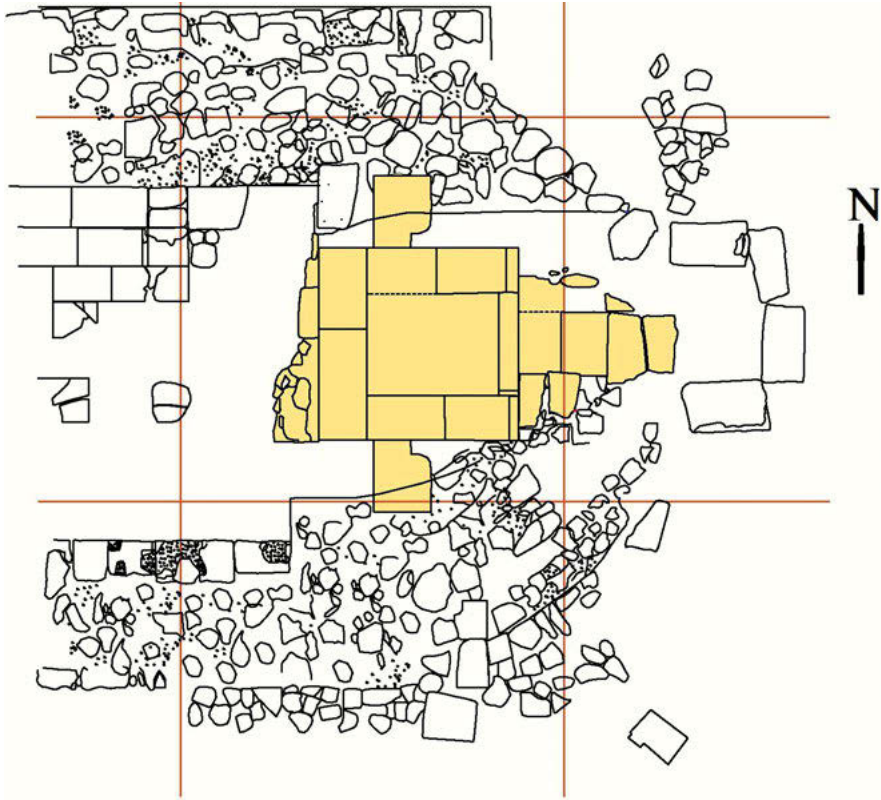


Fig. 18: Plan of the sepulchre, 2014.

ther restoration will not cause any problems. It can be asserted that this is the third well-preserved structure from the Early Christian culture of the region after the royal (Arshakid) Mausoleum of Aghdzk and the St Grigoris Mausoleum in Amaras. Both of these structures also contained bones but no burials.

After the excavations of 2014, it is possible to restore the process of formation of the Early Christian square of Tigranakert as follows (Fig. 19):

- a) building of the sepulchre
- b) construction of a small church with the sepulchre under its altar
- c) construction of a large urban church south of the small church
- d) addition of a southern paved courtyard and a stela
- e) addition of the graveyard in the western yard of the small church.

The fact that the Tigranakert sepulchre has only one eastern entrance is exceptional for Early Christian sepulchres and extraordinary for religious structures in

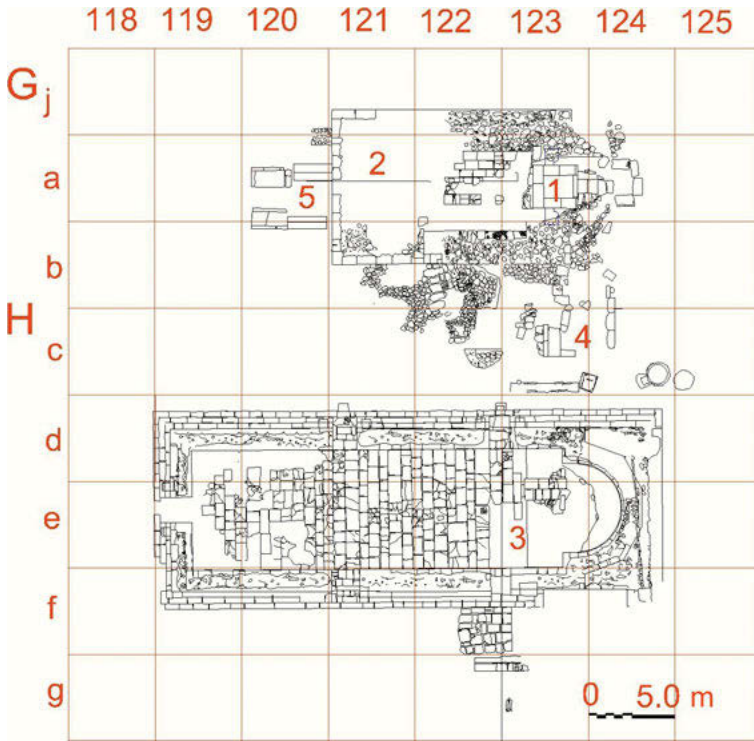


Fig. 19: Plans of Early Christian structures: 1) Sepulchre, 2) Small church, 3) Large church, 4) Monument, 5) Graveyard, 2014.

general. The theological and ritual direction of Christianity from the west to the east – from where the Christ’s Second Coming is expected – conditioned both the ritual movement of the believer from west to east and the orientation of the sacred area from west to east, including individual sacred structures (west-east orientation and stretching, main entrance in the west, location of the altar in the east, etc.). Even in our sepulchre, which has only an eastern entrance, the “movement” to the east is documented by the structure of niches whose eastern parts have been given a rounded solution.

3.3 Parallels to the sepulchre of Tigranakert

The problem of clarifying this peculiarity of the sepulchre of Tigranakert was the reason for initiating excavations in the most prestigious early Christian sepulchre of Artsakh, the St Grigoris sepulchre of Amaras, the main volume of which is



Fig. 20: The eastern entrance of St Grigoris after excavation, 2014.

located under the eastern altar of the present church built in 1858. This sepulchre had two southern and northern entrances and a long corridor instead of an altar which, based on its look, had been cut during the construction of the church so that the continuation of this corridor should be outside of the church behind the eastern wall. The excavations initiated by our expedition at the adjacent part to the eastern wall of the church in 2014 revealed the continuation of the corridor with an eastern portal with pavement and 6 stairs going downwards (Fig. 20). After these excavations we currently have an original plan of the sanctuary (Fig. 21). One of the major results of these excavations was the discovery of a basement crossing over the walls at a depth of 3 m from the current surface, which made it possible to assert that the sepulchre was partly under and partly above the ground. The fragments of more than one hundred early medieval tiles found during the excavations testify that the roof of the structure was tiled.

The third such type of sepulchre (with only an eastern entrance) was uncovered by our expedition in 2016. This is the sepulchre of St Stephen in the historical settlement of Vachar, on the right bank of the Khachenaget river, not far from the Gandzasar monastery (Fig. 22).²³ One of its peculiarities was that it had a

²³ For more details, see Petrosyan (2019: 11–30).

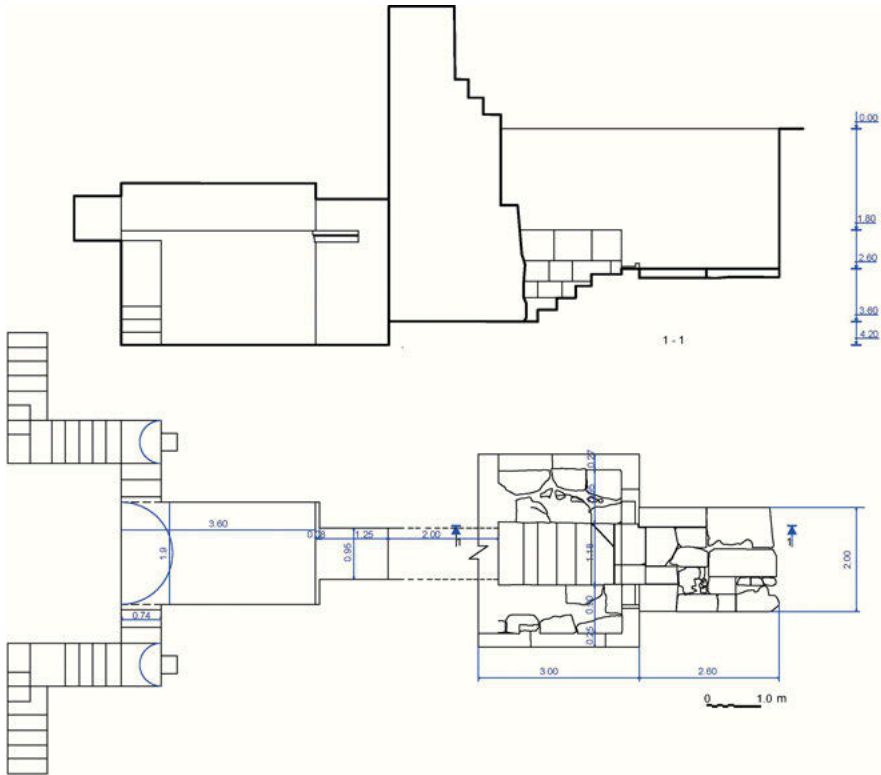


Fig. 21: Plan of St Grigoris after excavations, 2014.

special section for relics constructed inside, in parallel with the western wall. Thus, whereas the sepulchre of Tigranakert is directly enclosed under the church's main altar and the sepulchre of St Grigoris is a combination of underground and upper volumes, the sepulchre of St Stephen initially was a standalone structure, and only in the 13th century a second stair chapel was added. This diversity suggests that architects and builders were essentially trying to find more suitable forms of relationships with the structure holding the relics and the ritual area, which can also speak about the impending chronology of such structures. The sepulchre of St Grigoris can with no doubt be dated to the end of the 5th century. Besides the clarified historical context,²⁴ the sculptures can also be dated to the 5th–6th centuries CE.²⁵

²⁴ In Movses Kalankatuatsi's *History of the Country of the Albanians*, book I, ch. 23 (Arakelyan 1983: 83).

²⁵ Hasratyan (1992: 19–24).



Fig. 22: The eastern entrance of St Stephen's sepulchre in Vachar, 2017.

As we have seen, the sepulchre of Tigranakert was followed by a small church, which preceded the large church. Recently, we have also received data on the carbon analysis of two burial bones from the western side of the small church; according to them, the sarcophagus is datable to the years 420–565, the stone cist to 566–655.²⁶ At the same time, it is obvious that the burials were made when the church was already built, as they immediately touched its western walls. Particularly important are the data of the first carbon analysis, according to which the first sarcophagus burial was performed after 420 but not later than 565. So the dating of the sepulchre of Tigranakert to the second half of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century leaves no doubt. The same date is confirmed by the constructional compositions of the small and large churches of Tigranakert and by the reliefs of the large church.²⁷ An Armenian inscription on a clay disk found in the large basilica can be added as another artefact of importance here; it will be discussed further below.

²⁶ For these analyses, I am grateful to anthropologist Paul Bailey and Armenologists Patrick Donabédian and Anna Leyloyan for their professional, friendly and financial support.

²⁷ Petrosyan (2012: 172–174).

4 The religious reforms of Vachagan the Pious in the light of new archaeological investigations

So far we can speak about three sepulchres whose specific aspect is the eastern entrance. Unfortunately, sepulchres with eastern entrances are otherwise unknown to us in the Middle East. There are no eastern entrances in the well-known sepulchre-chapels known from other parts of Armenia (Aghdzk, St Hripsime, St Gayane, Talin, Oshakan, Nakhchivan, and others). The only known sepulchre that has an eastern entrance is the Lord's Tomb in Jerusalem.²⁸ According to our preliminary hypothesis, we are dealing with a religious reform here, which tried to give the Albanian Church a special religious and ritual identity (in contrast with the Armenian Church) and had essentially political reasons. In the last quarter of the 5th century or at the beginning of the 6th century, Vachagan the Pious initiated reforms, including the new hierarchy of saints venerated in the Albanian Church (Zachariah, Pantaleon, Grigoris, Gregory, Hripsime, Gayane) via “discovering” their relics and constructing chapels and reliquaries for them (St Grigoris in Amaras, St Pantaleon in Dyutakan, St Elisaeus in Jrvshtik). In addition, the old churches gained a new impetus for worship thanks to these relics.²⁹ In parallel with this, as we have mentioned, the ideology of Albania as an eastern country was established by directly relating it to Jerusalem as the centre of the Christian world and the sacred topos of salvation. The hagiography of the Apostle Elisaeus, who was reported to have come to Albania from Jerusalem circumventing Armenia,³⁰ fully corresponds with this line of thought and is an attempt to attest to the Hierosolymite origin of the Albanian church. Thus, we have the sepulchre structures adapted to the direction of the Lord's Tomb at the border of the 5th–6th centuries, the country's eastern ideology, and the legend of the Jerusalem origins of the Albanian Church. And we have a powerful ruler who tried to convey an independent status to his Church by means of religious reforms. In his early studies, Aleksan Hakobyan considered the history of Vachagan (including the canons of the “Council of Aghuen”)³¹ as a “planned legend” created in the mid-6th century and thus questioned the historicity of the king himself. However,

28 Cf. the “Reconstruction of the Constantinian Martyrium and Anastasis as completed before A.D. 348” in Wilkinson (1978: 10).

29 Movses Kalankatuatsi, *History*, book I, ch. 19–24 (Arakelyan 1983: 56–88).

30 Movses Kalankatuatsi, *History*, book I, ch. 6 (Arakelyan 1983: 10–11).

31 Cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 3.2.

our archaeological findings and historical data seem to indicate that these approaches and ideas were formed politically by a real king and via real reforms.³² In our opinion, it was a mighty king who tried to give his Church appropriate autonomy suitable to his reign (at a time when Armenia lost its kingdom, became a Sasanid province and lost its north-eastern provinces Artsakh and Utik); a process that was further clarified and finalised in the following centuries. Vachagan with his reforms, alongside Christian-Armenian traditions, was trying to shape its own traditions for his state and his Church (an eastern country, a Hierosolymite Apostle, its “own” saints). One of the materialised expressions of this were the eastern entrances in the sepulchres.

Returning to the question of the terminology for these constructions, it seems more suitable to use the name “reliquary” instead of “sepulchre”, because in all of these cases we have no evidence for burials but only narratives about the discovery, the gathering and the deposal of the relics of saints in buildings created for this specific purpose.

5 Some more findings

In 2008, inside the territory of the large church, a small ceramic disk was discovered with an Armenian inscription on it that can be attributed to the 5th–7th centuries (Figures 23–24); it can be read as ԵՄ | ՎԱԶ[Ե] (or ՎԱԶ[ԱԳԱՆ]) | ԾԱՌԱՅ Տ[ԵԱՌ]Ն (Es Vač[ē] / Vač[agan], caṙay T[eaṙ]n, i.e. ‘I, Vach[e] or Vach[agan], servant of the L[or]d’).³³ The names Vache and Vachagan were attributed to several people at that time, Vachagan the Pious being the most distinguished among them. This find of Tigranakert is actually one of the oldest records of written Armenian found in the territory of Artsakh, and the best argument for the Early Christian-Armenian background of the city.

Another noteworthy find is a glass bottle in the shape of an *amphoriskos* detected during the excavations in the same church (Fig. 25). In this context, the narrative of St Grigoris’ relics is specifically important since it talks about two glass bottles in which the blood of Ss Zachariah and Pantaleon was kept.³⁴ By its appearance, our *amphoriskos*, made of dark blue glass, can be dated back to the 5th–7th centuries and it is most likely to have served similar purposes. The excava-

³² In his latest work, A. Hakobyan (2021b: 239–248) relates the “Tale of Vachagan” to the very beginning of the 6th century.

³³ Petrosyan & Zhamkochyan (2009: 166–176).

³⁴ Movses Kalankatuatsi, *History*, book I, ch. 23 (Arakelyan 1983: 81).



Fig. 23: Clay disc with Armenian inscription from the excavations of the large church, front side, 2008.

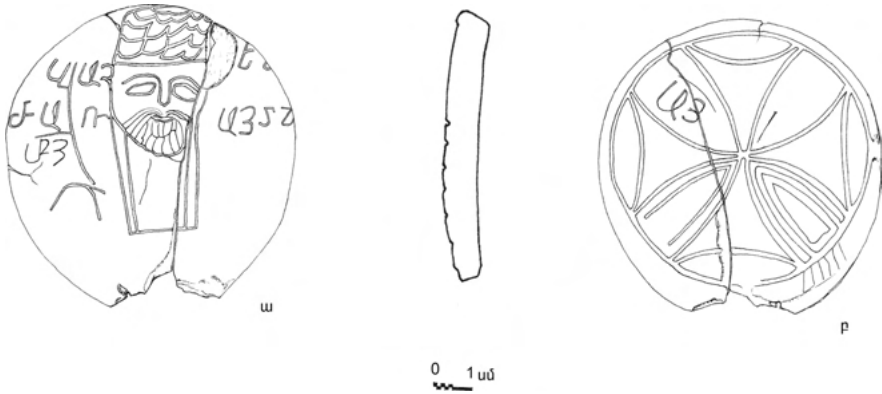


Fig. 24: Clay disc with Armenian inscription from the excavations of the large church, front and back sides, drawing, 2008.

tions of the large church of Tigranakert also unearthed a clay token which probably displays the scene of the Crucifixion; however, its origin from Palestine or Jerusalem is still questionable.



Fig. 25: Glass bottle from the excavations of the large church, 2007.

5.1 The Early Christian rock-cut complex

The rock-cut complex was originally a range of natural karstic caves. In the Late Hellenistic period its upper cave part was adapted into a religious and burial complex. In the 5th–6th centuries, the Hellenistic complex was further adapted and enlarged as a church with its narthex, a graveyard was added, sarcophagus burials took place, the passage with its defensive elements was built, and most of the cross compositions were carved (Figures 26–27), including compositions with Greek inscriptions.³⁵ In the 8th–9th centuries, new crosses (which were mainly simple forms, imperfectly elaborated) and Armenian inscriptions were applied by pilgrims. Later, probably in the 11th century, the site became a shelter for nomadic tribes. Probably at that time a “board game” drawing was carved within the narthex. After the 11th century the complex was abandoned and underwent no further major cultural transformation.

At the end of the 20th century, the inhabitants of the neighbouring Azerbaijani village tried to erase the cross carvings. As a result, on the walls of the complex hundreds of scrawls with their names appeared, which greatly damaged the earlier crosses and inscriptions. If we take into consideration the fact that Tigranakert was founded as a multinational city, including the population brought by Tigranes

³⁵ Petrosyan and Kirakosyan (2016: 165–170).



Fig. 26: Early Christian rock complex, cross-composition, stairs, narthex, 2007.

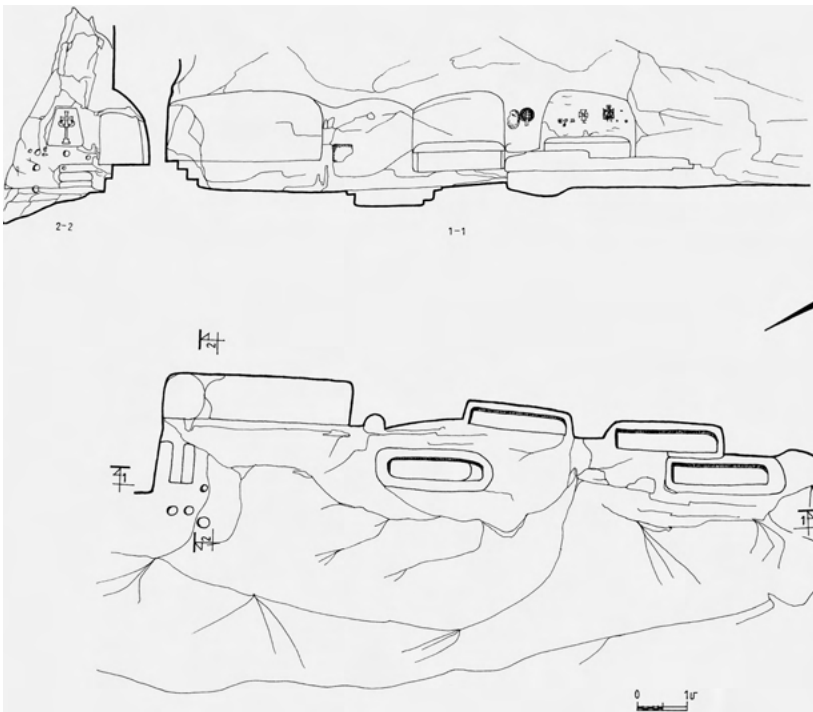


Fig. 27: Early Christian rock complex, graveyard, 2007.

from Asia Minor, the Greek inscriptions can be explained by the presence of a Greek community in the city. The Armenian inscriptions were names probably carved by pilgrims. Among the names that can be identified were *Didoy* and *Hama[m]*.³⁶

5.2 The canal

As a result of our work, a rock-cut canal that passes through the foot of the complex was discovered and partly excavated. The canal begins at the Khachena-get, approximately 1.5 km above the complex, before turning towards Tigranakert, coming out of the steppe. A rock-cut portion of 300 m is preserved, which also had tunnel sections (Fig. 28). On the walls of the canal we found simple cross engravings. Some elements of the canal were built on the ground. In these cases, the floor was first strengthened using small burrs and then tamped using sand.



Fig. 28: Water canal. Excavated rocky tunnel part, 2020.

³⁶ The latter name perhaps refers to the 9th-century prince Hamam of Hayaghvank (Armeno-Albania), whose name was also found in an Armenian inscription on the lid of a sarcophagus from Gavurkala, situated not far from the complex; see Barkhudaryan (1964: 61–64).

Unfortunately, the part of the canal that reaches the city has not been clearly identified, and further excavations are required to reveal its route and remains.

6 Conclusions: on the Christianisation of the landscape

The archaeological investigations of Tigranakert have revealed four Early Christian complexes in the city and its surroundings: the Early Christian square in the central district, the church of 7th century on the top of Mt Vankasar, the Early Christian cave sanctuaries on the bank of the Khachenaget river, and a reliquary and chamber unearthed on the top of Mt Tsitssar in 2019 and 2020 (Fig. 29), which are dated to the same period. So we can see a real reculturalisation of the landscape in the Early Christian period (Fig. 30). It is curious, then, to clarify how this organisation of the landscape of Tigranakert can be connected with the reforms of Vachagan the Pious and the landscape of Jerusalem and the sacred Christian topography. This is a question which we will try to investigate during the next stage of research.

In his list of Armenian monasteries in Jerusalem, Anastas Vardapet, author of the 6th century, also lists the churches belonging to the Albanian Church. This



Fig. 29: Chamber and sepulchre on Mt Tsitssar, 2020.



Fig. 30: The landscape of Early Christian Tigranakert: 1) Early Christian square, 2) Church on Mt Vankasar, 3) Cave sanctuaries, 4) Sepulchre on Mt Tsitssar.

includes eleven Albanian monasteries, seven of which are mentioned with their names. Five of these names can be identified, and all five are located in Artsakh and Utik.³⁷ If the territory of the activities of the first saints, Elisaeus and Grigoris, originally was the left bank of the Kura river (which can be concluded from the fragmentary information available), it is more than likely that the intellectual and ritualistic centre and impact area of Vachagan's religious reforms was the right bank of the Kura, i.e. the Artsakh and Utik provinces of Great Armenia, which had been joined to the Albanian kingdom not much earlier. The reliquaries with the eastern entrance and related archeological findings of Artsakh greatly help us to clarify the civilisational milieu of the religious reforms of Vachagan the Pious. Thus, if in the case of ancient Tigranakert we see the obvious introduction and influence of Hellenistic civilisation in the field of fortification and urban development, contrasting with a higher stability of local traditions in the field of ritual, then the examination of the tombs-reliquaries of Tigranakert, Amaras and Vachar gives an opportunity to assume the primacy of the political-religious situation. As for the use of the written language, although we see the simultaneous use of Armenian and Greek in Tigranakert in the 5th–7th centuries, the number of early Armenian inscriptions (5th–9th centuries) in the territory of Artsakh and

³⁷ See Chapter 8 of this Handbook (Tchekhanovets), 3. for details.

Utik in general reaches about thirty, and this in the absence of any inscription in Albanian up to the Kura river. It can be concluded that although Artsakh and Utik entered a different political and ecclesiastical formation due to the political circumstances, the ecclesiastical written (and, most likely, also oral-conversational) language remained Armenian.

Appendix: Tigranakert during the War of 44 Days

During the War of 44 Days in 2020, the Tigranakert archeological camp was destroyed by hostile shellings (Fig. 31). The Artsakh authorities, the Tigranakert archeological museum and our research team evacuated the materials from the excavations in order to preserve the heritage from further destructions. In case of a peace treaty, they will be returned to Stepanakert and will be exhibited in a museum dedicated to it. Preserving, promoting and passing on cultural heritage is an international and fundamental right for any people. The people of Artsakh worries about what might happen to its cultural heritage since it remembers the



Fig. 31: The archaeological camp of Tigranakert after hostile shellings, November 2020.

destruction of thousands of *khachkars* in Julfa (Jugha) in 2005–2006. My colleagues and I are willing to continue our research on the cultural heritage of Artsakh and its popularisation and will report any act of vandalism. The scientific discoveries in the ancient city of Tigranakert and their importance for the comprehension of the early history of Christianity shows that the Artsakh heritage is part of a larger history that belongs to everybody. It reinforces the need to preserve it with the cooperation of the countries involved in the conflict and international authorities. Tigranakert could thus become a joint project that brings together professionals from both belligerents with a view to the preservation of a heritage that must remain common.

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V Ethnic, Religious and Social Issues

Aleksan Hakobyan

12 The Ethnic Situation in Antique and Medieval Caucasian Albania

Abstract: In the first evidence on Caucasian Albania, which goes back to Greek authors of the 4th–3rd centuries BCE, the name “Albania” refers to the territory between the downstream of the Kura, the Caucasian mountain ridge (up to Derbend) and the Caspian Sea. The analysis of the data of different periods makes it possible to understand this as a term for the territory’s population, conceived primarily as a group of tribes which was formed as a result of the splitting up of the proto-Lezgian ethnolinguistic entity. The analysis of the facts contained in written documents of the chronological period between 3th and 5th centuries CE reveals that the kingdom of Albania did not comprise a single ethnos with a common language and national consciousness. The absence of a written native language led to linguistic and cultural assimilation, which affected the ethnic self-consciousness as well. Only the consolidation of the Christian part of the “Albanian meta-ethnos” resulted in the formation of the ethnos of the Udis in the 9th century.

1 Albania and Albanians in Antiquity

The ethnic processes of antique and medieval Albania cannot be considered sufficiently explored. The generalising works on the history and culture of Caucasian Albania that were published in the middle of the 20th century were not based on a special methodology for studying and characterising ethnic communities, which was developed and brought into a holistic form only in the second half of the last century. In particular, Suren Yeremyan and Camilla Trever assumed, despite some indirect reservations, under the term “Albanians” the existence of a single ethnos (people) which had its own single language, single culture and single self-consciousness.¹ This opinion was sometimes repeated in later works as well.² However, it can only be confirmed if we find reasoned answers to three questions: What were the prerequisites for the formation of an ethnos? How were these prerequisites realised? How did this process end? In other words, what functional load did the term “Albanians” carry in antique and medieval sources?

1 Yeremyan (1958a: 305); Trever (1959: 44).

2 See, e.g., Bais (2001: 59–63); Aleksidze and Mahé in Gippert *et al.* (2008: I, 7–9).

Following the ethnographer Yulian Bromley, we define *ethnos* as “...a stable intergenerational set of people historically formed in a certain territory, possessing not only common features, but also relatively stable features of culture (including language) and psyche, as well as a consciousness of their unity and difference from all other similar formations (self-consciousness), fixed in the self-name (ethnonym)”.³ The term “Albanians” was first used by the Greek authors of the 4th–3rd centuries BCE, Aristobulus, Patrokles and Eratosthenes, who mention as “Albanians” the people living on the lower left bank of the Kura river, between the Caucasus Range and the Caspian Sea.⁴ Today it is still difficult to finally determine the original semantics of the term “Albania / Albanians” and its variants, *Aluank’, Arran, Rani, Hereti*. Some researchers believe that it first denoted the most powerful representative of a tribal union which gave its name to the entire community;⁵ however, this opinion cannot yet be substantiated by real data from sources. In general, experts are still facing an alternative: either the toponym “Albania” originated from some descriptive geographical concept, which later passed on to the population, or some union of tribes was called “Albanians”. Such a union of kindred tribes could have formed in the northeast of Transcaucasia as a result of the ethnic separation of the proto-Dagestanian ethnolinguistic community.⁶

The next type of information about the “Albanians” – the population of the kingdom of “Albania” – dates back to the 1st century BC and goes back to the fellow campaigners of the Roman generals Lucullus, Pompey, and others. These data are already more detailed and enable us to draw the geographic boundaries of the kingdom which arose at the very beginning of the 1st century BCE: in the south, the Kura river; in the north, the Caucasus Mountains and the peaks of southern Dagestan up to the Derbend Pass (the Djalgan Range); in the east, the Caspian Sea from the Kura up to Derbend; in the west, Iberia (Eastern Georgia, *Kartli*) along the border line between later Kakheti and Hereti.⁷

The formation of an Albanian kingdom and its persistence until the 5th–6th centuries CE should be considered an important prerequisite for the formation of an *ethnos* on its territory. According to Strabo, the Greek geographer of the

3 “... исторически сложившаяся на определенной территории устойчивая межпоколенная совокупность людей, обладающих не только общими чертами, но и относительно стабильными особенностями культуры (включая язык) и психики, а также сознанием своего единства и отличия от всех других подобных образований (самосознанием), фиксированном в самоназвании (этнониме)” (Bromley 1983: 57–58).

4 For details cf. Trever (1959: 50–58); Hakobyan (1987: 9–12).

5 Aliyev (1974: 124–127).

6 For the assumption of such an ethnolinguistic community, see Bokarev (1961: 18).

7 For details, see Hakobyan (1987: 21–36; 2020: 40–57 and Appendix I).

1st century BCE – 1st century CE, this kingdom was formed as a result of the union of 26 “languages” (γλῶτται), i.e. tribes, each of which was headed by its own king (βασιλεύς), here to be understood as a “chieftain”. This suggests that the kingdom of Albania emerged from a union or confederation of tribes, even though Strabo’s information about the languages of the Albanian tribes is very scarce. He simply writes that “... there are 26 languages, *for want of mutual intercourse with each other*” (emphasis A. H.).⁸

The Albanian kingdom is supposed to have been inhabited mainly by Lezgi-speaking tribes; the evidence of Strabo therefore indicates that the process of ethnic separation in the proto-Lezgi ethnolinguistic community led to the formation of separate, almost mutually incomprehensible languages. Of course, we should not forget that in addition to the speakers of Lezgi languages, Iranian- and Kartvel-speaking tribes are also recorded for the kingdom of Albania.⁹ However, despite this, we can talk about a peculiar linguistic relationship for the vast majority of the “Albanian” tribes, which goes back to the proto-Lezgi ethnolinguistic community.

On the basis of archaeological materials and information from narrative sources, one can also talk about a cultural and domestic community of the Albanian tribes. A very peculiar archaeological culture was secured on the lower left bank of the Kura River, which dates back to the period from the 5th century BCE to the first centuries CE and was labelled “Yaloylutepe culture” by the researchers.¹⁰ Antique writers talk about special habits of the “Albanians”, thus noting their difference from neighbouring ethnic groups and meta-ethnic groups.

Thus we can see that between the 4th and 1st centuries BCE, the ethno-social development of the tribes in Albania led to the emergence of a potestary-political entity called “Albanians”. Like other well-known potestary entities of Europe on

⁸ Strabo, *Geography* XI, 4, 6 (Meineke 1877: II, 706). Cf. Chapter 1 of this Handbook (Bais), 3. for further details.

⁹ See Aliyev and Aslanov (1976: 218–237); Papuashvili (1971: 6–7).

¹⁰ Ismizade (1956); Trever (1959: 62). To the south of the Kura, another archaeological culture was determined, with a chronological framework extending from the 4th century BCE to the first centuries CE (see Golubkina 1962: 5; Trever 1959: 62–63; Tiratsyan 1968: 17–30; Babaev 1982: 23–24). Specialists in the history of Caucasian Albania usually call this the “Culture of Jug Burials of Azerbaijan” and draw the southern border of its distribution along the ridges of the Lesser Caucasus, meaning by this line the border between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Armenian Republic; and the territory of Nakhichevan is also included (see Golubkina 1952: 451; *Atlas* 1963: 205). However, the area of the “Culture of Jug Burials” actually covers the entire territory of ancient Armenia (see, e.g., Arakelyan 1957: 54; Tiratsyan 1968: 18–20; Esayan 1969: 40–41; Khachatryan 1976: 23; Noneshvili 1992) and undoubtedly characterises the Armenian ethnos of the antique period.

the eve of our era (the Gallic Union, the union of the Suebi tribes, the Illyrians, the Celts, the Dacians, etc.), they “... did not represent close ethnic communities but conglomerates of related tribes as a result of fragmentation and divergence (and, in part, subsequent mixing), inevitable under the conditions of primitive societies, as well as of a periodical growth... of ancient consanguineous associations”.¹¹ It is customary to call such communities *meta-ethnic*, meaning by this a group of ethnoses which “... possess (at least in an undeveloped, rudimentary or residual form) elements of a common self-consciousness based on ethnogenetic proximity or on long-term economic and cultural interaction, and in a class society, on political ties”.¹² Note that *meta-ethnoses*, unlike *ethnoses*, are characterised by constant transition and change. Therefore, the term “Albanians” as used in this period can be regarded as a politonym denoting the entire population of a potestary formation “Albania”. If we assume that the term “Albania” originally denoted a toponym (i.e. it was not formed from an ethnonym), then the transformation of the toponym into a politonym is obvious, and, due to the polyethnicity of the potestary-political entity, there is no coincidence of the politonym with an ethnonym (as, e.g., in the case of Yugoslavia – Yugoslavs, Nigeria – Nigerians, Indonesia – Indonesians, Dagestan – Dagestanis, etc.).

Almost all potestary-political organizations of the era of the decay of primitiveness and the formation of an early class society are characterised by a large ethno-consolidating function. However, the path of development from a union of tribes to an *ethnos* with a higher level of ethnic ties, i.e. to a *nation*, is rather complex, since “... nation, as a special category of class society, is by no means a simple modification of a numerically expanded primitive tribe or even a union of tribes”.¹³ It requires a powerful political and socio-economic development, a transition from tribal to territorial-civil ties, the eradication of intertribal information ties and, as a result of all this, the elimination of tribal identity and the formation of ethnic identity of a higher level.

The analysis of heterogeneous sources from the context of the 3rd century CE shows that the prerequisites listed above were insufficient for the formation of a single-tribe *ethnos* in the Albanian kingdom. The fact is that approximately in

11 “... не столько сплоченные этнические общности, сколько конгломераты родственных племен, возникшие вследствие неизбежного в условиях первобытного общества дробления и расхождения (а частично и последующего смешения) периодически разрастающихся... древних кровнородственных объединений” (Lashuk 1967: 79).

12 Bruk and Cheboksarov (1976: 17).

13 “... народность как особая категория классового общества отнюдь не является простой модификацией численно разросшегося первобытного племени или даже союза племен” (Lashuk 1967: 86).

the first half of the 3rd century CE, the Albanian kingdom consisted only of its eastern, coastal half, and only for the 3rd–5th centuries, sources situate the kingdoms of the Maskut, Balasakan, the Lupenians (*Lpink'*), and smaller “kingdoms” of the mountainous Eastern Albanian tribes on this territory. At the same time, whereas numerous ancient sources used the term “Albanians” for the entire population (including the coastal tribes) of the kingdom, the late antique and early Byzantine, Sasanian, Armenian and Syriac texts mention only individual tribal ethnonyms for the split territory, practically without applying the term “Albanians”.¹⁴ This shows that by the 3rd century, no single *ethnos* had formed in the Albanian kingdom; instead, numerous tribes (at least in the east) retained their *tribal ethnonyms*, and, having left the political entity “Albania”, immediately lost the collective *politonym* “Albanians” (quite as, e.g., “Bangladeshis” lost their former politonym “Pakistani” immediately after leaving the state of Pakistan, and before, “Pakistanis” had lost their former politonym “Hindus” after secession from the state of India).

2 Christianisation and the Sasanian Marzpanate

The Albanian kingdom in the west continued its uninterrupted existence until the years 461/462 CE when it was annexed by the Sasanian king Peroz (for 23–24 years). It was ultimately abolished at the beginning of the 6th century, after the long reign of Vachagan the Pious (485–523). The very existence of this kingdom presupposes the development of ethnic consolidation processes among the western part of the 26 ancient Albanian tribes of Albania.

In 315, Christianity was officially adopted in Albania.¹⁵ According to the “Life of Gregory” (a version of the 5th-century “History” of Agathangelos), the Albanian king was baptised by Gregory, the “Enlightener of Armenia”, in the Aratsani river; after that, Gregory sent Bishop Thomas to Albania. The role of the Christian religion in the formation of a pan-Albanian culture and the homogenisation of the spiritual life of the kingdom is indisputable. However, it is necessary to take into account the difficulties of the real spread of the new religion, which, apparently, faced persistent opposition from the Albanian tribes (as early as the end of the 5th century CE, a powerful sect of “finger-cutters” existed on the left bank of the Kura); in addition it had to rival Zoroastrianism, which was actively propagated

¹⁴ Hakobyan (1987: 99–107).

¹⁵ For details, see Hakobyan (1987: 124–126; 2021a: 71–81). Cf. also Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 2.1.

by the Sasanian state: already from the 3rd century CE on, its influence in Transcaucasia becomes one of the most important factors in the political and cultural development of the region.

An important step in the ethnic consolidation processes in the Albanian kingdom was the socio-economic and cultural rise of one of the tribes and the creation of a pan-Albanian *Koine* based on the language (or dialect) of this tribe. For instance, scholars associate the creation of the Greek Koine with the formation of an alliance of Greek states in their fight against the Persian expansion in the 5th–4th centuries BCE; this Koine was based on the Attic dialect, which was associated with the dominant position of Athens in the anti-Persian struggle.¹⁶ In Albania, the rise of one of the tribal languages could also be expected. This possibility is supported at least by the fact that Mesrop Mashtots and his fellow, the Albanian priest Benjamin, created an Albanian script on the basis of one of the “Albanian” languages (most likely Proto-Udi) at the beginning of the 5th century¹⁷ (approximately in 421–422; in order to spread the script, Mashtots had to specially travel to Albania and Balasakan in 428).¹⁸

The existence of a distinct written language is an important developmental step in the unification of tribes; it plays a huge role, first of all, in strengthening relatively weak diachronic ties.¹⁹ The Armenian historian of the first half of the 5th century, Koryun, attests to the beginning of the translation of the Bible into “Albanian”.²⁰ Lewond, another historian of the 8th century, reports the existence of an Albanian version of the Gospels.²¹ The Armenian “Book of Letters” contains a document that testifies to the existence of an Albanian version of one of the decisions of the First Council of Dvin (506), which was held with the participation of the Georgian and Albanian catholicoi and bishops.²² Thus, the written Albanian language must have become the official language of the Albanian Church, which until 461/462 had the status of a bishopric with its center in the capital of the Kingdom of Albania, Kapitalak, and after that had the status of an archbishopric-catholicosate with its center in the capital of the Marzpanate of Albania, in Chor-

16 Cf. Tumanyan (1985: 40).

17 There are well-known reports about this from the Armenian historiographers Koryun, Movses Khorenatsi, Movses Daskhurantsi (or Kałankatuatsi), and others; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1. as to Koryun’s account.

18 Hakobyan (2020: 87–91).

19 Arutyunov (1986: 61).

20 Koryun, ch. 17; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 1. for Koryun’s account.

21 Lewond, ch. 14; cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert), 2. for the remnants of the Gospel of John and 3. for the lections from the other Gospels in the Albanian palimpsests of Mt Sinai.

22 *Girk* (1901: 51); cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut), 4.1 as to the Council.

Derbend. However, the very fact of the later disappearance of this script allows us to think that, representing the language of only one of the tribes, it apparently did not develop to be the common Albanian Koine accepted by the rest of the Albanian tribes.²³ Moreover, the written Albanian language was not the only official language of the residence of the Catholicosate of Albania. The other official written language used was Armenian. It is known that even the Albanian king Aswagen (Arsvaġen), who contributed to the adoption of the “national” script, left an inscription in Armenian in Jerusalem.²⁴

An analysis of the sources of the 5th century shows that the existence of the (western) Albanian kingdom, with all its noted events, did not become a sufficient basis for completing the process of ethno-consolidation or ethno-commixtion within the meta-ethnic community of the “Albanians” and the adoption of the latter term as an *ethnonym*. In 428, the Sassanids abolished the kingdom of Greater Armenia and formed a system of three “marzpanates” in Transcaucasia under the names of “Armenia”, “Iberia”, and “Albania”. The Marzpanate of Albania (in Armenian sources *Atuank’*, in Iranian sources *Arran*) included (until the 50s of the 5th century) not only the Albanian kingdom and the territories of the mountainous and coastal tribes on the left bank of the Kura, but also two Armenian provinces on the right bank of the Kura – Utik and Artsakh. By the end of the same century, a new semantics of the term *Atuank’* developed in the Armenian historical and geographical tradition: it now became the name of the entire Marzpanate (styled a “country”, *šahr*), thus including the right bank of the Kura river which was inhabited by ethnic Armenians. At the same time, already at the end of the 5th century, Movses Khorenatsi explains both variants of the name of the “country” (Armenian *Atuank’* and Iranian *Arran*) on the basis of Armenian realities of the right bank. This, in particular, means that by the end of the 5th century there was no ethnic group labelled “Albanians” on the left bank of the Kura, which is why it was possible to associate the above terms with the “non-Albanian” component of the Marzpanate. It should further be emphasised that according to the principles of Old Armenian grammar, the term *Atuank’* with its plural ending *k’* could simultaneously mean both “Albania” and the “Albanians” as its population. The easy transfer of the term *Atuank’* to the Armenian right bank of the Marzpanate therefore provides additional evidence that it was not an *ethnonym*, a designation of a certain *ethnos* as a component of the Marzpanate of “Albania”. In parentheses, it should be noted that the new name became so strongly associated with Utik and Artsakh that in the 10th century, during the period of feudal

²³ For details, see Hakobyan and Galstyan (1987: 13–14).

²⁴ Mnatsakanyan (1969: 79–80).

fragmentation and the struggle of the Armenian princes on the right bank of the Kura for “freedom” from the central power of the Armenian Bagratid kings, it was even generalised. The mouthpiece of the noted struggle, the Artsakh-Armenian historian Movses Daskhurantsi, refers with *Atuank'*, i.e. “Albanians”, to all the Christians of the “country of Albania” who were under the jurisdiction of the Albanian Church with its centre on the right bank of the Kura, i.e. mainly the Armenians of Utik and Artsakh, contrasting them with the “Armenians” of central, Bagratid Armenia.²⁵ Not delving into the complexity of the semantics of the term *Atuank'* in the 10th century, some researchers erroneously confuse the “Albanians” of Movses Daskhurantsi with the Albanians proper of the left bank of the Kura river. In reality, if the view of a historian is considered the view of a certain social stratum, then it can only testify that on the basis of the above processes (the transfer of the name *Atuank'* to Utik and Artsakh, the integration of the latter regions in another administrative-ecclesiastical unit for several centuries, the struggle of local princes against the centralising aspirations of the Bagratids), some processes of ethnic separation developed that could lead to the formation of a new *ethnos*, derived from the Armenian. However, the further political development of the region, in particular the invasion of the Seljuk Turks, led to a weakening of the power of the Armenian feudal lords, both in the centre of Armenia and on the outskirts, and to the termination of the ethnic separation process based on centrifugal aspirations.²⁶ Thus, almost six centuries of the existence of the Kingdom of Albania on the left bank of the Kura River did not lead to the formation of an Albanian *ethnos*. However, the multi-tribal population of the kingdom, recorded in antique and early medieval sources under a collective name, the *politonym* “Albanians”, can undoubtedly be considered as a political *meta-ethnic community*. By consequence, one can speak of “Albanians proper” and a “properly Albanian civilisation” (as, e.g., one can speak of Slavs, Scythians, Aztecs, etc., and Slavic, Scythian, Aztec, etc. civilisations).

In 461/462, having suppressed an almost five-year uprising of king Vachē II of Albania, the Sassanids abolished not only the kingdom of Albania, but also the small kingdoms of the mountainous eastern tribes of Albania. The administrative strengthening of the Marzpanate of “Albania” contributed to the formation of a single political, economic and spiritual life within it, i.e. it marked the beginning of the ethnic integration of its properly Albanian (on the left bank of the Kura) and Armenian (on the right bank) population. However, this integration turned out to be segregative. In the first half of the 6th century, the centre of the Marzpan-

²⁵ For details, see Hakobyan (1987: 259–272).

²⁶ For more details, see Hakobyan, Muradyan and Yuzbashyan (1987: 169–174).

ate was transferred from Chor (Derbend) to the newly built city of Partaw, i.e. it was shifted from the properly Albanian left bank to the Armenian right bank. In 552 (or even earlier), the residence of the Catholicosate of Albania was also transferred from Chor to Partaw. At the beginning of the 7th century, the institution of the “Prince of Albania” was formed as the embodiment of a certain autonomy of the Christian population under the Zoroastrian rule of the Sassanids. And the residence of the Albanian princes was also located on the right bank – in Partaw and Gardman.

An analysis of the documents of the first stage of the Catholicosate of Partaw (6th century), the so-called “Tale of Vachagan” and the “Canons of Aghuen”, shows that as a result of the above-mentioned transfer, Armenian soon became the only official language of the Church of Albania.²⁷ This led to a sharp reduction in the application domains of the written Albanian language and to a wide perception of the Armenian culture of the right bank by the left-bank, properly Albanian population. In contrast to this, Albanian writing did continue to function in the Christian communities of the properly Albanian left bank as the language of the local church service. This is proven by the few (less than ten) inscriptions in this language, which are probably later than the 6th century,²⁸ as well as the remnants of Albanian biblical texts that were detected about 30 years ago in a Georgian-Albanian palimpsest in the monastery of St. Catherine’s on Mt Sinai.²⁹ However, deprived of the official support of the Catholicosate and used only by a small part of the tribes of Albania proper, this written language completely fell into disuse over the next centuries. The function of the written language was taken over by Armenian, as well as Georgian which, together with the growing influence of the Georgian dyophysite Church since the 7th century, increasingly spread in the western regions of Albania proper. These processes completely ended the formation of the Albanian *ethnos* from a *meta-ethnic community*. This means that the horizontal info-links between the tribes were interrupted,³⁰ and the process of ethno-consolidation stopped.

27 For details, see Hakobyan (1987: 136–139); within this Handbook, cf. Chapters 7 (Dum-Tragut), 3.2 and 11 (Petrosyan), 4. for additional information.

28 Cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook, 4. for a thorough account of the Albanian inscriptions.

29 See Aleksidze & Mahé (1997: 1239–1257), Gippert *et al.* (2008), and Renoux (2012); cf. Chapter 3 of this Handbook (Gippert) for an up-to-date account of the palimpsests.

30 Instead of increasing the density of info-links, there was a process of incorporation of individual parts of the meta-ethnos into other units that had denser info-links. Cf. Arutyunov and Cheboksarov (1972: 19).

3 Armenisation, Georgianisation, and Islamisation

In this regard, starting from the 6th–7th centuries, one can no longer speak about the Albanians proper and the properly Albanian civilization but only about the cultures of their direct heirs. In addition, the transition to the written Armenian and Georgian languages and the perception of the Armenian and Georgian cultures through them also led to the weakening of the vertical info-links, i.e. inter-generational information links within individual Albanian tribes. As a result of this, part of the Albanian population was de-ethnicised (Armenised and Georgianised). During the period of the Arab Caliphate and the Muslim political formations that succeeded it, the tribes in the eastern regions of Albania proper were subject to Islamisation, with Persian being used as the main means of written communication. On the basis of the literary Persian language and local oral Farsi, the Muslim population (partly of Iranian, partly of Caucasian origin) in the Shirvan kingdom was consolidated, which eventually led to the formation of another ethnos, the direct descendants of which are the modern Tat people.

Approximately by the end of the 9th century, the process of ethnic consolidation of the Christian part of the Albanian tribal population was also completed in the western regions of Albania proper, when in 894 the so-called Second Albanian kingdom (of Shaki or Hereti) arose, headed by Hamam the Pious from the family of the Armenian princes of Bagratuni, who had settled there in the 8th century. As a result of this consolidation process, the *ethnos* of the modern Udis was formed, which was first mentioned by the Armenian catholicos Yovhannes Draskhanakertsi (898–925/929) in his *History of Armenia*.³¹ We should add that later, after the annexation by the Russian Empire, quite active ethnic processes among part of the Islamised population of Albania proper, together with Muslim Armenians and Georgians as well as Iranians and the newly arrived Turkic ethnic element, led to the consolidation (through ethnic commixtion) of the Azerbaijani nationality³² and to the formation of the Lezgi-speaking communities who live

31 Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (1912: 256): (...) և ազգք, որ շուրջ զմեօք են՝ Յունականք և եգերացիք և Գուգարացիք և Ուտիացիք, հիւսիսական ազգք՝ բնակեալք առ ոտամբն Կովկասու: – “... for the neighboring nations surrounding us, namely the Greeks, the people of Egrisi, Gugark’ and Uti, as well as the northern races living at the foot of the Caucasus” (Maksoudian 1987: 185); cf. also Yovhannes (1912: 140, 161, 178) / Maksoudian (1987: 128, 139, 147) and the French translation by Boisson-Chenorhokian (2004: 265; 150, 171, 188). For details concerning the mentioned process see Hakobyan (2015: 129–147).

32 Cf. Novosel’tsev, Pashuto and Cherepnin (1972: 56–58). It should be noted that in recent years, a declarative statement has unconditionally appeared in the works of Azerbaijani researchers, which actually identifies the Albanians (who are declared to be a single ethnic group already

in the southeast of the Dagestan Republic and the northeast of Azerbaijan: Udis, Lezgins, Tabasarans, Tsakhurs, Rutuls, Aghuls, Archis, Kryts (including Jeks, Haputs, and Alyks), Budughs, and Khinalughs.

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established in Antiquity) with the Azerbaijanis. For a detailed critique of this misleading concept, see Hakobyan, Muradyan and Yuzbashyan (1987: 169–174; Arutyunyan (1987: 33–56); Sarkisyan and Muradyan (1990: 146–158).

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Alison M. Vacca

13 The Rebels of Early Abbasid Albania

Abstract: The goal of this Chapter is to analyze Abbasid-era Arabic histories about the many rebellions in Caucasian Albania (Arran) at the end of the Umayyad and start of the Abbasid periods, up to the reign of the caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 170/786–193/809). Organizing geographically around the three rebellious cities of Baylaqan, Tbilisi, and Derbent, each fighting against the caliphal capital at Barda, it showcases the diversity of interests among Muslim communities in Albania. In particular, this provincial approach yields two interventions, one historiographical and the other historical. First, the Arabic sources chronicle Abbasid power. The details preserved about the rebellions are therefore about their suppression, thus celebrating caliphal might and inscribing the contours of caliphal control both geographically and militarily. Second, the reports about the quelling of rebellions in Albania also demonstrate the ways that Albania was an integral part of the Caliphate: the rebels did not advocate for the overthrow of the Abbasids and they frequently claimed connections with rebellious groups in other regions across the Caliphate. The many rebellions in Abbasid Albania demonstrate the region's inclusion in the Caliphate, rather than the desire of its inhabitants to redefine imperial borders.

1 Introduction

The most thorough and detailed information about Caucasian Albania in early Abbasid Arabic texts is found in geographical treatises, which constitute our best chance to illustrate the connections and built environment of Albania in the Abbasid period. Abbasid-era histories also relay information about Albania, though the topics are quite different from what we find in geographies. By far, the most common theme in the construction of Albania in Abbasid-era Arabic histories is rebellion. This fact should not be particularly surprising, nor should it suggest that Albanians were perhaps more rebellious than any other peoples in the early Caliphate.¹ Rather, this focus reflects the concerns of our sources, composed far

¹ The three Armenian rebellions of the 2nd/8th century have been read as such. However, rebellions were a normal part of caliphal rule. See, for example, the many examples of “contention” in early Abbasid Syria in Cobb (2001) and across the Iranian cultural sphere in Crone (2014).

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afield. When Albania intruded into the conversations in Baghdad, the province mattered for what it could say about the extent and tribulations of Abbasid power. The common thread of a rebellious Albania thus weaves through Abbasid discourse of imperial control.

This Chapter provides the first analysis of the rebellions that Abbasid-era Arabic histories locate in Albania. The most obvious point to start is that these rebellions rarely have anything to do with Albanians. Albania instead appears as a fighting zone for several peoples, many of whom have extended networks across the Caliphate. Rebellions locate the extent of empire by pinpointing the places where caliphal troops need to expend energy and resources to constrain rebels. It is tempting, then, to see Albania as a far-off frontier where imperial power was weak or intermittent. However, the stories of these rebellions establish precisely the opposite conclusion. They show how Albania was part of an Empire, drawn into the political and religious infighting that splayed across the Caliphate as a whole. With tens of thousands of troops sent to curtail rebellions in Albania, frequently (purportedly) by the command of the caliph himself, these rebellions demonstrate that the province was significant to Abbasid territorial integrity. In short, extant sources are not about the rebellions so much as they are about the Abbasid ability to quell rebellion and, as such, they celebrate imperial control over Albania.

In order to analyze the rebellions of Abbasid Albania in Arabic histories, we must start with some sense of what constituted Albania in this period, among these sources. This question is far from simple and, in fact, requires a full study in its own right.² There are two main groups of Arabic geographical texts that reveal how an early Abbasid historian might have envisioned Albania. The Iraqi school comprises geographical texts from the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries but shows the traces of earlier layers of geographical knowledge filtered from Greek. The works associated with the Iraqi school usually present Albania and Georgia as provinces of Armenia. The Balkhi school is later, situated in the 4th/10th century, but shows far less influence from pre-Islamic geographical models. As a result, for the purposes of this paper, we draw the borders of Albania as per the geographers associated with the Balkhi school. This Albania stretched “from the border of Bab al-Abwab to Tiflis and the vicinity of the River Araxes up to the region of the Khazars”,³ including the lands on the western coast of the Caspian and on both sides of the Kura River. As Istakhri notes, “there are no cities in Albania larger than Bardha’a, al-Bab, and Tiflis. As for Baylaqan, Warthan, Bardij, Barzanj, Sha-

² For a discussion of the Arabic and Armenian definitions of Abbasid Albania, see Vacca (2020a).

³ من حدّ باب الإبواب إلى تفليس وقرب نهر الرّسّ إلى نواحي خزران 3: Muḥammad Abū l-Qāsim b. Ḥawqal, *Kitāb surat al-ard* (Kramers 1939: 347).

makhi, Sharwan, the Abkhaz [read Layjan], Shabaran, Qabala, Shakki, Janza, Shamkur and Khunan, they are small, equal in size [to one another]”.⁴ Muqaddasi, following suit, delineates the region as follows:⁵

As for Albania, it is approximately a third of the province [of the North, along with Armenia and Azerbaijan], similar to an island between the [Caspian] sea and the River Araxes. The River of the King crosses through it lengthwise. Its capital is Bardha'a and its cities are Tiflis, Qal'a, Khunan, Shamkur, Janza, Bardij, Shamakhi, Sharwan, Baku, Shabaran, Bab al-Abwab, Abkhan [read: Layjan], Qabala, Shakki, Malazkird and Tabala.

In other words, Abbasid Albania was a sprawling province that included regions we would today identify as the Republic of Azerbaijan, eastern Georgia, and parts of Dagestan. For the study of rebellions, the cities of Derbent (Arabic *Bāb al-Abwāb* / Armenian *Darband*) and Baylaqan (*Baylaqān/Paytakaran*)⁶ are particularly important, as are the Abbasid strongholds at Barda (*Bardha'a/Partaw*), where the caliphal troops were garrisoned when they were not actively quelling rebellions, and Tbilisi (*Tiflis/Ṭp'is*), which by the mid-3rd/9th century would become a rebellious city in its own right.

The many rebellions in Abbasid Albania demonstrate the region's inclusion in the Caliphate, rather than the desire of its inhabitants to redefine imperial borders. Textual accounts concern the maintenance of Abbasid control and so remain centered on the success of Empire rather than the concerns of the rebels. This Chapter opens with a brief discussion of the historiographical and historical considerations in studying rebellion during the early Abbasid period in order to explain why the analysis takes cues from the geography rather than the causes of the rebellions or identity of the rebels. It then describes each of the rebellions associated with Baylaqan, Derbent, and Tbilisi in the second half of the 2nd/8th century, starting in the third civil war (*fitna*) when the power of the Umayyad Caliphate waned as far as the reign of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (r. 170/786–193/809). These rebellions are comparatively well documented but have nev-

4 ليس بالران مدينة اكبر من بردعة والباب وتفليس فاما بيلقان وورثان وبرديج وبرزنج والشماخية وشروان 4
 والايخاز والشابران وقبلة وشكي وجنزة وشمكور وخنان فانها صغار متقاربة في الكبر
 Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Iṣṭahārī, *Kitāb al-masālik wa al-mamālik* (de Goeje 1927: 187–188).

5 فاما الران فانها تكون نحو الثلث من الاقليم في مثل جزيرة بين البحيرة ونهر الرس ونهر الملك يشقها طولاً 5
 قصبها بردعة ومن مدنها تفليس القلعة خنان شمكور جنزة برديج الشماخية شروان باكوه الشابران باب
 الابواب الابخان قبلة شكي ملازكرد تبلا
 Šams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad Muqaddasī, *Kitāb aḥsan al-taqāsīm fi marīfat al-aqālīm* (de Goeje 1906: 374).

6 The Arabic *Baylaqān* is particularly difficult to untangle geographically. Its name derives from the Armenian *Paytakaran*. However, the *Paytakaran* mentioned in Anania Shirakatsi's text is the province to the south of the Araxes in Iranian Azerbaijan. The *Baylaqān/Paytakaran* mentioned here is the city to the north of the Araxes in Albania (today Beylaqan).

er before been the object of scholarly interest. Finally, the paper assesses what the story of these rebellions can add to the study of Albania, centered particularly on the varieties of people who made the province their home and the ways that imperial claims were staked out to control the Khazar frontier.

2 The context of rebellion in the early Abbasid Caliphate

The Abbasid state was born in rebellion, spurred by economic and social concerns with an explicitly Alid voice.⁷ The very success of the Abbasids built on the continuous upheaval of the third civil war (*fitna*) and accompanying rebellions across the late Umayyad Caliphate.⁸ The Abbasids emerged as the rebels capable of containing and absorbing the many other rebellions spread throughout the Caliphate.⁹ Rebellions proliferated across the late Umayyad and early Abbasid Caliphates alike for a number of social, economic, religious, political, ethnic, and racial reasons. The modern study of rebellions might be organized around their charismatic leaders (e.g., al-Nafs al-Zakiyya,¹⁰ Umar b. Hafsun)¹¹ or by groups of rebels (Imazighen, Copts),¹² or by cause, whether religious (Alid, Kharijite)¹³ or socio-economic (Zanj Rebellion).¹⁴ The differentiation between these various rebels and motivations for rebellion were hardly ever clear-cut, as the same rebellion can be tagged as Alid in some texts and yet appear to be economically motivated in others.¹⁵ The indeterminate causes of these rebellions are partially the product of extant sources, but also likely reflect the polyvocal nature of pre-modern rebellion. Rebellions might embrace multiple goals and agendas, so offering a single rationale for a rebellion boils down the messy complexities of history

7 The term “Alid” refers to movements in support of the descendants of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muḥammad.

8 The Umayyads ruled from 40/661–132/750, based largely in Syria. The Umayyad family was heavily involved in the governance of the North (Armenia, Albania, and Azerbaijan), mostly due to the strategic significance of the Khazar frontier; see Vacca (2021).

9 On the absorption of earlier rebellions into Abū Muslim’s movement, see Bernheimer (2006).

10 Elad (2016).

11 Fierro (1998); Marín-Guzmán (1995).

12 On the rebellions of the Imazighen, see Blankinship (1994) and Clarke (2013). On the Coptic Revolts, see Wissa (2020), Lev (2012), and Ohta (2004).

13 Hagemann & Verkinderen (2021).

14 Franz (2004); Popović (1999).

15 For a clear illustration, see the summary charts in Haider (2019).

to an unrealistically neat narrative. The Abbasids themselves offer the best example for this, as it seems hardly likely that every faction of their revolution believed they were fighting for the same cause.¹⁶ Allying with other rebels was par for the course.

Except for well-documented cases, the focus on understanding rebels in the early Islamic period may well be misplaced. Historians have asked who they were and why they were rebelling, but the fact that easy explanations and categories continue to elude us suggests that these questions do not align with the nature of our sources. The one thing that all early Abbasid rebellions share is the canon of early Islamic sources such as Baladhuri, Tabari, Mas'udi, Ibn A'tham, and the like. Of course, some rebellions are better documented than others, including in non-Arabic sources. Such rebellions, like the Zanj for example, appear in significant detail and our usual corpus of Abbasid histories incorporates reports from multiple perspectives. However, most rebellions in the early Islamic world appear only in passing in Arabic-language Abbasid histories, so understanding this particular layer of sources is a prerequisite for modern scholarship about rebellions. In focusing on the identity and hopes of the rebels, historians all too often ask questions that the sources do not answer, rather than reading for what they do reveal. Baladhuri *et al.* rarely inform us as much as we might like about the goals and movements of the rebels, but they record the names of the commanders who were sent to quell rebellions, the number of troops assigned to combat them, the location and extent of major battles, etc. These historians did not write histories of rebellions; they wrote histories of the Caliphate. By definition, rebels rise up against the state, so it is tempting to settle the history of rebellions outside the bounds of the Empire. Perhaps counterintuitively, though, rebellions only proliferate across the pages of Abbasid histories because the historians were concerned with telling the story of centralized power. Rebellions thus serve as an opportunity for historians to inscribe the extent of state control ideologically and militarily – in focusing on how rebellions were quashed, our historians assure that rebellions are constitutive of imperial histories.

This Chapter brings together references to rebellions in early Abbasid Albania. The parameters for inclusion are not set by the rebels' identity or cause, but by the geographical boundaries of the province. The rebellions are also presented here geographically, by city. Such an organization is not intended as a model to change the way that we talk about Abbasid rebellions writ large. Rather, it is a thought experiment informed by the concerns about our sources outlined above. However, patterns emerge in the process to suggest that this organization bears

¹⁶ The historiography of the Abbasid Revolution is vast and so cannot be exhaustively described here. See, *inter alia*, Sharon (1983) and Agha (2003).

fruit not just historiographically (how we should read the sources), but also historically (how we should read the province). That is, Baylaqan, Derbent, and Tbilisi emerge as particularly important cities, mapping out the extent of caliphal control across Abbasid texts. These cities were at the edges of Albanian territory, far enough away from the caliphal stronghold at Barda to allow time for independent action before the governor's troops could arrive. For Derbent and Tbilisi in particular, they are also places filled with soldiers who may or may not have aligned with the governor sitting in Barda. At the same time, these cities were also important strategically, on thoroughfares that armies and merchants alike might take in and out of the province. As such, controlling them was particularly important to maintain the territorial integrity of the Empire. While there are brief references to other rebellions in Shirvan (which was also part of Abbasid Albania), such accounts are threadbare in comparison because the region was not as strategically important to the state. Given the frequency of rebellion in these three cities, it is easy to speculate that local elites had established patterns of rule and interactions with the state over generations.

3 The rebellious cities of early Abbasid Albania

Early Abbasid Albania had three main hotspots for rebellion: Baylaqan, Derbent, and Tbilisi (though this last was a caliphal center until the mid-3rd/9th century). Organizing by city allows us to see how rebellious cities emerged against the caliphal stronghold at Barda, while at the same time assessing a variety of rebellions that might otherwise be separated based on the stated (or, more often, the assumed) goals of the rebels.

3.1 Baylaqan

Early Abbasid historians identify Albania as a hotbed for the Kharijites, specifying Baylaqan as particularly important. Mas'udi includes a long list of regions across the Caliphate that were inhabited by the Kharijites in the 4th/10th century, in which he includes “the Kurds who live in the land of Azerbaijan who are known as *Shurat*, among whom is Aslam, known as Ibn Shadalwayh who ruled over the regions of Ibn Abi l-Saj in the lands of Azerbaijan, Albania, Baylaqan, and Armenia”.¹⁷ The term *Shari*, plural *Shurat*, literally ‘sellers’, refers to the Kharijites; it

من سكن من الاكراد بلاد اذربيجان وهم المعروفون بالشرأة منهم اسلم المعروف بابن شادلوويه وقد كان 17
 تملك على اعمال ابن ابي الساج من بلاد اذربيجان والران والبيلقان وارمينية: Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn
 Mas’ūdī, *Murūğ al-dahab wa-ma’ādin al-ğawāhir* (Barbier de Meynard 1869: V, 231).

was a name they claimed for themselves, in reference to Quranic verses that espouse selling one's earthly life for paradise by fighting in the path of God.¹⁸ The traditional origin story of the Kharijites is that they were the first sect of Islam, which broke off from the troops of the caliph 'Ali b. Abi Talib (r. 35/656–40/661) when he agreed to arbitration with the governor of Syria (and future caliph) Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan at the battle of Siffin in 37/657.¹⁹ The Kharijites formulated a political doctrine that allowed any pious man to become caliph, thereby associating leadership with righteousness rather than hereditary claims. They were particularly famous for fomenting unrest across the Islamic world throughout the medieval period, in part based on the expectation that their political and religious convictions predisposed them to rebellion. It is worth acknowledging upfront, though, that the connection between any religious and political goals of Kharijism and the revolts in both Baylaqan and Derbent is exceedingly unclear.

The city of Baylaqan was the site of two rebellions in the early Abbasid period. One of the most famous Kharijite rebels, Dahhak b. Qays al-Shaybani, rose against the last Umayyad caliph Marwan b. Muhammad (r. 127/744–132/750) in Iraq and ravaged Jazira in 1058 AG / 746–747 CE.²⁰ One of Dahhak's generals named Musafir b. Kathir expanded the rebellion into Albania and outlived his former leader. Musafir appears in Arabic sources with the epithet *Qassab*, the 'butcher'. Baladhuri has him gather men from Azerbaijan to populate his rebellion in Albania.²¹

He arrived at Ardabil undercover and a group of *Shurat* among them [the people of Ardabil] left with him. They arrived at Bajarwan and met there with a group who agreed with them and they joined them. Then they arrived at Warthan and a large group from among its people who were of like mind befriended them and they crossed to Baylaqan. Then a large gathering of them befriended them, as they were [also] of like mind. Then he [Musafir] settled in Yunan.

In identifying the rebels as *Shurat* and stressing their agreement with one another, Baladhuri identifies this rebellion as Kharijite in nature. The movements re-

¹⁸ See *sūra* 4:74 and 9:112.

¹⁹ On the early Kharijites, see Hagemann (2021).

²⁰ Harrak (1999: 177).

²¹ واق اردبيل مستخفياً فخرج معه قوم من الشراة منها واتوا باجروان فوجدوا بها قوماً يرون رايبهم فانضموا اليهم فاتوا ورتان فصحبهم من اهلها بشر كثير كانوا على مثل رايبهم وعبروا الى البيلقان فصحبتهم منهم جماعة كثيرة كانوا على مثل رايبهم ثم نزل يونان. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Balāḍurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān* (de Goeje 1866: 209). The last sentence unexpectedly shifts to singular even though most of the passage is in plural to refer to the troops. The next sentence is about Marwān b. Muḥammad, but the subject here is clearly Musāfir if read against Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad Ibn A'ṭam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII, 144).

corded here are all to the south, along the Araxes River that formed the border between Albania and Azerbaijan. The passage ends abruptly at Yunan, halfway between the Kharijite stronghold at Baylaqan and the caliphal capital at Barda, which suggests that the rebels encroached closer to caliphal forces.²²

Ibn A'tham wrote of these affairs slightly later than Baladhuri, in the 4th/10th century, but he includes significantly more information. He identifies Musafir as an inhabitant of Baylaqan, which explains the focus of the rebellion there. Similar to Baladhuri, Ibn A'tham also focuses on how the *Shurat* were of the same mind. He asserts that the caliphal representative in Albania at the end of the Umayyad period was 'Asim b. Yazid al-Hilali,²³ who struck camp on the shores of the River Tartar (mispointed in the edition as نهر البربر, lit. 'river of the Barbarians') at the gate of Barda. Informed of 'Asim's location, Musafir offered a local 300 dirhams to escort his army there by the cover of night. 'Asim, identified here as the emir of Barda rather than by any official governmental position, was killed in the subsequent battle along with many of his men. The rest of the caliphal troops of Barda, including 'Asim's son Zafir, fled while Musafir and his company returned to Baylaqan. The caliph Marwan b. Muhammad, who was then in Syria, received word of what had transpired in Albania and sent 'Abd al-Malik b. Muslim al-Uqayli with a large army "and ordered him to fight the *Shurat*".²⁴ 'Abd al-Malik settled in Barda and set out to fight Musafir halfway to Yunan. 'Abd al-Malik fell in battle. His brother, Ishaq b. Muslim al-Uqayli, moved to avenge his brother: "the war between Ishaq b. Muslim and the *Shurat* persisted, and they slackened in the war neither by night nor by day".²⁵

Ishaq's attempt to put down the Kharijites under Musafir in the vicinity of Barda bridged the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. The first Abbasid caliph Abu l-'Abbas al-Saffah (r. 132/750–136/754) dispatched the governor Muhammad b. Sul to Armenia and Azerbaijan along with 100,000 cavalry. While the fighting continued, it shifted westward to Syunik (*Sisajan/Siwnik*) even as the rebels remained associated with Baylaqan. Muhammad was able to defeat Musafir and send his and

22 On the location of Yūnān, see Iṣṭaḥrī, *Kitāb al-masālik* (de Goeje 1927: 192); Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣurat al-'arḍ* (Kramers 1939: 349); Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm* (de Goeje 1906: 381). This toponym has been represented in many different ways, as recorded by the editors of these texts: موانان, يومانان, توبان (*mūnān, yūmān, tūbān*) are among the possibilities, none of which align easily with any known toponyms from Albania.

23 He appears instead as 'Āsim b. 'Abd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Hilālī in Ḥalīfa b. Ḥayyāt, *Ta'rīḥ* (al-Umari 1967: 407).

24 وأمره محاربة الشراة: Ibn A'tham, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII; 145).

25 ودام الحرب بين اسحاق بن مسلم وبين الشراة، وكانوا لا يفترون ليلا ولا نهرا من الحرب: Ibn A'tham, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII; 145).

his companions' heads to the caliph. After Musafir's death, though, the rebellion continued:²⁶

The people of Baylaqan went up into the fortress of al-Kilab, surrendering the city, whose chief at that time was Ward b. Safwan al-Sami of the clan of Sama b. Lu'ayy. They gathered around themselves a multitude of mercenaries²⁷ and others in the fortress of al-Kilab. Muhammad b. Sul sent Salih b. Subayh al-Kindi against them. He besieged them and killed a great many of them.

Muhammad b. Sul next stopped at Baylaqan, the heart of what had once been Musafir's territories, presumably to assert caliphal authority in the city that had long been effectively governed by Kharijite forces, before moving on to set up Abbasid administration in Barda.

The relationship between Musafir and the famous Kharijite rebel Dahhak and the recurrent references to Musafir's rebels as the *Shurat* confirm their association with the Kharijites. However, careful attention to historiographical norms regarding rebellions is particularly important here.²⁸ While Baladhuri and Ibn A'tham both focus on the Kharijite nature of Musafir's rebellion, Khalifa b. Khayyat also records the rebellion and makes no mention of religious sectarianism or claims to Kharijite concerns. Khalifa records the deaths of the caliphal representatives in similar terms as Ibn A'tham (first 'Asim, though he then has 'Abd Allah b. Muslim fight instead of 'Abd al-Malik), but then he merely asserts that Ishaq b. Muslim and "the people of Bardha'a" fought Musafir.²⁹ Although Khalifa acknowledges Musafir as the general of Dahhak, he makes no explicit reference to the Kharijites. The Kharijite nature of the rebellion is drained from his account entirely, serving as a neat reminder that our reports are informed by the concerns of the compilers. Given the state of the sources, it seems nearly impossible to untangle whether the rebellion was Kharijite in nature, if the rebels just happened to be Kharijites, or if the historians who recorded the rebellions merely assumed that such activities were Kharijite.

Baylaqan continued to be a rebellious hotspot even after the death of Musafir. The city was embroiled in yet another rebellion during the reign of Harun al-

26 وصدّ اهل البيلقان الى قلعة الكلاب واسلموا المدينة ورئيسها يومئذ ورد بن صفوان الساميّ من ولد سامة ابن لوى وجمعوا اليها لفيفا من الصعاليك وغيرهم بقلعة الكلاب فوجه اليهم محمّد بن صول صالح بن صبيح الكندى فحاصرهم وقتل منهم خلقا عظيما: Aḥmad b. Abī Ya'qūb b. Ġa'far b. Waḥb b. Wadiḥ Ya'qūbī, *Ta'riḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 429); English translation by Gordon *et al.* (2018: 1086).

27 I have changed this part of the translation above to reflect the contribution of Crone (2014: 54–59).

28 Although many studies point out that rebellions are ascribed to multiple causes, to demonstrate how this happened across multiple works for specific rebellions see Haider (2019).

29 اهل بردعة: Ibn Ḥayyāt, *Ta'riḥ* (al-Umari 1967: 407).

Rashid (r. 170/786–193/809), this time led by a man named Abu Muslim al-Shari. Harun reportedly dispatched Ishaq b. Muslim al-'Uqayli from Iraq with five thousand cavalry. While Ishaq had indeed defected to Abbasid service after the death of the last Umayyad caliph, Harun came to power more than three decades after Ishaq had served as governor of Albania. Ishaq was, however, the most experienced general to fight the Kharijites from Barda, so he was a viable choice despite his likely age. Abu Muslim campaigned against Ishaq, but Ishaq died in Warthan and the Kharijites reportedly killed many in the aftermath. The caliph then dispatched 'Abbas b. Jarir b. 'Abd Allah al-Bajali.³⁰ Ya'qubi offers the most succinct account of events.³¹

When he ['Abbas b. Jarir] reached Bardha'a, the inhabitants of Baylaqan rose against him. He fortified himself against them in the outer town of Bardha'a. He dispatched Ma'dan al-Himsi against Abu Muslim al-Shari with 6,000 troops. Their forces met and a battle took place between them. Ma'dan al-Himsi was killed, and Abu Muslim al-Shari proceeded to Dabil.³² He besieged the city for four months; then he withdrew and made his way to Baylaqan, where he stayed.

Abu Muslim's rebellion prompted the caliph to send additional troops to both Armenia and Azerbaijan under Yahya al-Harashi and Yazid b. Mazyad al-Shaybani.³³ After Abu Muslim's death, the rebellion continued under the leadership of Sakan b. Musa b. Hayyan al-Baylaqani, whose name indicates that he was identified as an inhabitant of Baylaqan. Sakan moved into Azerbaijan to meet the

³⁰ Ibn A'tam calls him 'Abbās b. Ġarīr b. Ḥālid al-Qasrī, but Ya'qūbī provides another genealogy: 'Abbās b. Ġarīr b. Yazid b. Ġarīr b. 'Abd Allāh l-Baġālī; Ibn A'tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII, 255); Ya'qūbī, *Tarīḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 516–517).

³¹ لَمَّا صَارَ إِلَى بَرْدَعَةَ وَثَبَ بِهِ الْبَيْلِقَانِيَّةُ فَتَحَصَّنَ مِنْهُمْ فِي رِيضٍ بِرْدَعَةَ وَوَجَّهَ مَعْدَانَ الْحَمِصِيَّ إِلَى أَبِي مُسْلِمٍ الشَّارِيَّ فِي سِتَّةِ آلَافٍ وَالتَّقِيَا وَكَانَتْ بَيْنَهُمَا وَقْعَةٌ وَقَتَلَ مَعْدَانَ الْحَمِصِيَّ فَصَارَ أَبُو مُسْلِمٍ الشَّارِيَّ إِلَى دَبِيلِ الْبَيْلِقَانَ فَنَزَلَهَا فَحَصَرَهَا أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ فَصَارَ إِلَى الْبَيْلِقَانَ
Ya'qūbī, *Tarīḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 516–517); English translation by Gordon *et al.* (2018: 1178). I have changed the transcription slightly to follow norms of this chapter.

³² Dabil is the Arabic toponym for the Armenian capital Dvin. Ibn A'tam's account of this rebellion follows Ya'qūbī's nearly exactly, but diverges briefly here. He says that Abū Muslim “went from that place of his to one of the cities of Armenia called al-Qasrī. He took it, secured its taxes, and divided it [the revenue] among his companions. Then he went from it to the city of Dabil in the land of Armenia” (فأخذها). From here, the narrative resumes following Ya'qūbī. The spelling of the Armenian city referred to here, al-Qasrī, is clearly a scribal error in the Hyderabad edition and should read النشوى (*al-Našawā*) instead of القسرى to refer to Nakhichevan in Ibn A'tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII, 255).

³³ Hārūn al-Rašīd reportedly assigned Yazid b. Mazyad over the North in recognition of his success in battling the Kharijites in Jazira; see Minorsky (1958: 22–23 [English] / 1–2 [Arabic]).

caliphal army before they crossed the Araxes, but he was defeated and his son Khalil was taken prisoner. Facing an enormous caliphal army, Sakan fled to Syunik and the people of Baylaqan made peace. Sakan subsequently turned himself in and was sent to Baghdad, thus quelling the rebellion.

The trajectory of Abu Muslim's rebellion under Harun al-Rashid follows Musafir's earlier rebellion during the reigns of Marwan b. Muhammad and Abu l-'Abbas al-Saffah quite closely. Both rebellions appear in our sources as *Shurat*, though the focus on agreement in belief is specific to Musafir and his companions. They were both based in Baylaqan but fled to Syunik when threatened. They both went on the offensive against caliphal centers (Musafir against Barda; Abu Muslim against Dvin) and they both fought Ishaq b. Muslim al-'Uqayli. It is possible, then, that the accounts are confused, contorting one rebellion into two. However, given the many varied details about the Abbasid response to the rebellions (the identity of the generals, the number of troops, the trajectory of the armies, the names of the dead, etc.), it seems perhaps more likely that Musafir set a standard of behavior for the rebellious city of Baylaqan.

3.2 Derbent

While Musafir b. Kathir al-Qassab's rebellion was based in Baylaqan, another rebellion simultaneously unfolded in the north, also taking advantage of the context of the third civil war (*fitna*) that wracked the last few years of the Umayyad Caliphate. Thabit b. Nu'aym al-Judhami rebelled in Derbent. Baladhuri asserts that Thabit named Musafir the governor over Armenia and Azerbaijan, implying a hierarchy where Musafir's activities were absorbed into Thabit's rebellion.³⁴ The suggestion that the two rebellions were in fact one sprawling challenge to the last Umayyads and first Abbasids is not surprising given the purported Kharijite leanings of both, but the two rebellions resulted from different circumstances in different cities and the storylines do not merge in any source other than Baladhuri.

Thabit b. Nu'aym al-Judhami was a Palestinian leader of the tribal bloc Yamaniyya who was first implicated in rebellious activities in the province Ifriqiyya (modern Tunisia) during the reign of the Umayyad caliph Hisham b. 'Abd al-Malik (r. 105/724–125/743).³⁵ Thabit had been ordered to avenge the death of an Umayyad functionary who had been killed during the rebellions of the Imazighen, but he

³⁴ Balādhūrī, *Futūḥ* (de Goeje 1866: 209).

³⁵ Crone (1980: 161). The sources of his rebellion are discussed below, but the rebellion also appears briefly in Ya'qūbī, *Ta'riḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 402–403).

refused. He was relieved of his duty in North Africa and returned to prison in the caliphal court at Rusafa. The governor of Armenia and Albania at that time was the future caliph Marwan b. Muhammad, who relied on support from the Yamani tribesmen along the Khazar frontier. To appease his army and functionaries, Marwan vouched for Thabit, arranged for his release from prison, and appointed him over Derbent.

When the caliph Walid b. Yazid (r. 125/743–126/744) was killed, Marwan b. Muhammad was forced to remain in the North rather than move into Syria because Thabit rebelled against his authority in Derbent. Thabit reportedly rallied more than twice the number of Marwan's men from the Syrians posted at the Khazar frontier who wanted to abandon their posts and return to their homes. Tabari preserves an extended description of Thabit's rebellion, worth including here in an extended passage due to the purported direct speech from both Marwan and the rebels. Marwan first addresses the rebels:³⁶

"People of Syria, what has prompted you to defect and for what conduct on my part have you conceived a dislike for me? Did I not rule you in a way that won your approval and behave correctly toward you and govern you well? What is it that has prompted you into shedding your own blood?" They replied to him: "We were obedient to you because of our obedience to our caliph. Then our caliph was killed and the Syrians gave the oath of allegiance to Yazid b. Walid. We are content to be governed by Thabit and we have made him our leader to march with us under our banners until we return to our *junds*." Then he [Marwan] gave orders to his herald to proclaim: "Truly you have lied! You do not want what you have said you want. Your sole desire has been to act rashly and to seize wrongfully the possessions, food, and fodder of any non-Muslims [*dhimmis*] whom you pass. The only thing between you and me will be the sword until such time as you submit to me."

Thabit's rebellion in the North was short lived, as Marwan was able to contain the damage and send him off to prison. The descriptions of Thabit's rebellion in Derbent offer a glimpse into the rhetoric around rebellion – what was acceptable on the part of both the governor and the rebels. The main question was whether the governor had been just or not. Further, Marwan dismisses the rebels' explanations with the claim that they actually wanted to conduct illicit looting of non-Muslim populations for their own gain. This accusation establishes Marwan as

يا اهل الشام ما دعاكم الى الانعزال وما الذي نقمتم علىّ فيه من سيري اهل الكم ما تحبون واحسن السيرة 36 فيكم والولاية عليكم ما الذي دعاكم الى سفك دمائكم فاجابوه بانّا كنا نطيعك يطاعة خليفتنا وقد قتل خليفتنا ويايح اهل الشام يزيد بن الوليد فرضينا بولاية ثابت وراسناه ليسير بنا على الويتنا حتى نرد الى اجنادنا فامر منادية فنادى ان قد كذبتكم وليس تريدون الذي قلتم وانما اردتم ان تركبوا رؤوسكم فتغصبوا من مرتتم به من اهل الذمة اموالهم واطعمتهم واعلافهم وما بيني وبين الا السيف حتى تنقادوا الى Muhammad b. Ḡarīr Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḥ al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (de Goeje 1885–1889: III, 1872–1873); English translation by Hillenbrand (1989: 241–242). I have changed minor details to suit this chapter.

the righteous champion, given that the Quran itself lays out the protection offered the *dhimmi*s. If Marwan appears as the purveyor of Islamic law, in the process he establishes the rebels as bad Muslims. As an added layer, Marwan had historically relied on Armenian Christian cavalry to hold the Khazar frontier, so championing the rights of non-Muslims bolstered his own position and effectively drove a wedge between the rebel Arab troops and the Bagratuni cavalry along the frontier.³⁷ Above and beyond the question of what behavior could have merited rebellion, this account shows the many ways that rebellion could be described or justified, with no single rationale to make sense of a complicated moment. Tabari centers the rebellion on the tribal bloc Yamaniyya, indicating that the rebellion was about the authority of tribal leaders over the military. The passage refers to the troops returning to their *junds*, a word that here means the administrative regions of Syria though also refers to the units of the Umayyad army. One of the main complaints of Umayyad-era rebels was the long garrisoning, so the desire to return to their homes appears here as a possible explanation for the rebellion.

Although Tabari paints a veneer of just behavior deriving from Islamic law (e.g., the protection of the *dhimmi*s, the possible righteous causes of rebellion), he does not read any specific religious claim into the rebels' actions. Thabit raised yet another rebellion in Jordan and Palestine during the third civil war (*fitna*) before he was executed in Egypt and the details of this later rebellion offer additional readings of Thabit's ambitions. Khalifa b. Khayyat and Azdi do not locate Thabit in Albania, but they do record his rebellion in Palestine: "In it [the year 127/744–745], Thabit b. Nu'aym rebelled and said, 'I am al-Asfar al-Qahtani'."³⁸ The title Qahtani continues the association with the Yamani tribes, but also asserts an apocalyptic claim. It appears as a localized concept of the *mahdi*, the messianic leader from the Yamani tribal bloc who will impose justice over the world before the End. Such stories were associated in particular with Greater Syria during the Umayyad period, among precisely the same genre of soldiers who adhered to Thabit's rebellion.³⁹ Thabit's claim that he was not just the Qahtani, but also Asfar adds a specific religious dimension to his claims. The term literally means 'yellow' and has been interpreted in multiple ways. However, given his personal past in relation to the Sufri rebels in Ifriqiyya and his purported relationship with Musafir b. Kathir, the name likely refers to his association with the Sufriyya, one of

37 On Marwān's reliance on the Bagratuni support during the third *fitna*, see La Porta & Vacca (forthcoming).

38 وفيها خلع ثابت بن نعيم وقال: انا الاصفر القحطاني. Ibn Ḥayyāt, *Ta'riḥ* (al-Umari 1967: 374).

39 Madelung (1986).

the main branches of Kharijite Islam.⁴⁰ Azdi in particular claims that Thabit was induced to rebellion by verses of a certain client (*mawla*) who shared the same moniker, named 'Atiyya l-Asfar, who despaired at the lack of respect shown the mothers and fathers of the Yemen and implored the listener not to abandon the treasury of God to be eaten by the nobles and “the ass of the Jazira” (a reference to the nickname of the Umayyad caliph Marwan b. Muhammad). These accounts all demonstrate that Thabit's later rebellion was cast in apocalyptic terms, with religious underpinning but without explicit call to Kharijite standards. The rebellion in Derbent appears to be centered on tribal politics more than religious leanings; the only connections to Kharijite causes there are Thabit's purported agreement with Musafir b. Kathir and the name Asfar, neither of which confirms that the rebellion itself was sparked as a specifically Kharijite moment.

The rebellion of Thabit b. Nu'aym was not the only one to wrack Derbent. In the aftermath of Abu Muslim al-Shari's Kharijite rebellion in Baylaqan, Harun al-Rashid appointed Sa'id b. Salm al-Bahili as governor over the North. Ya'qubi records a rebellion soon thereafter, but the details are a bit confused with jumps in the chronology and lacunae in the manuscripts. Based on his account, though, the governor Sa'id reportedly killed a man named Najm b. Hashim and (apparently in an unrelated move) offended the patricians in Derbent. Najm's son Hayyun rebelled and killed the functionary who had been appointed over the city by Sa'id, then invited the Khazars to cross into caliphal territory where they reached as far as the Kura River. Harun al-Rashid sent a number of generals to shore up the rebellion-turned-Khazar-invasion, most notably the reviled ex-governor of Khorasan, 'Ali b. 'Isa b. Mahan, whose behavior immediately sparked yet another rebellion in Shirvan, and then Khuzayma b. Khazim al-Tamimi, whose ruthlessness prompted a rebellion by the Sanariyya and the Kakhethians (on which, see below).⁴¹ The rebellion of Hayyun b. Najm in Derbent is thus buried in accounts of other problems, leaving the reader convinced that every corner of the province was in some state of upheaval. This confused assessment can hardly be improved by the state of the narrative preserved in Ya'qubi's record.

If Ya'qubi's brief comments lend the blurry impression of a rebellion by local elites – hence the reference to the patricians of Derbent – Ibn A'tham offers more details that help qualify this assessment. Ibn A'tham explains that Sa'id b. Salm had settled in Barda and sent his functionary Nasr b. 'Ayyan over Derbent along

⁴⁰ Fierro (1993) describes rebels who went by the name *Aşfar*, including *Tābit b. Nu'aym*, and meticulously catalogues the various explanations for the term. On the *Sufriyya*, see Lewinstein (1992).

⁴¹ Ya'qūbī, *Ta'riḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 518); English translation by Gordon *et al.* (2018: 1179–1180). On these two governors, see Vacca (2020b).

with a tax-collector named Harith, the client of the famous Barmaki vizier to the caliph Fadl b. Yahya. The people of the city approached Nasr and explained “O emir! Taxes have never been levied from this city of ours because of its vicinity to the enemy, as its people battle the Khazars”.⁴² Sa’id’s functionary Nasr wrote to ask Sa’id what to do, suggesting that he collect taxes from the city despite precedent. The resistance in Derbent grew around Hayyun b. Najm and, when the tax-collector Harith approached the city, he was not allowed to enter it and his companions were killed. Harith wrote to Sa’id in Barda, who sent for Hayyun’s father Najm to complain about his son. Najm swore that he knew nothing of the rebellion, so Sa’id imprisoned him in Barda. When Hayyun heard that Sa’id had imprisoned his father, he in turn imprisoned Nasr b. ‘Ayyan, Sa’id’s functionary in Derbent. Sa’id heard of this development and promptly executed Najm and sent his head to his son Hayyun. Hayyun retaliated by sending Nasr’s head to Sa’id. Sa’id was infuriated and so gathered all of the troops of Barda to attack Derbent. Hayyun, presumably considering that his future looked quite bleak indeed, wrote to the Khazar khagan with a gift of one hundred thousand dirhams. The Khazars raided caliphal territory, killing many Muslims and taking one hundred thousand men and women captive before returning to Khazaria while Hayyun returned to Derbent. Ibn A’tam includes the same quick turnover of governors in the next few years but he, unlike Ya’qubi, reports the resolution of Hayyun’s rebellion. When Yazid b. Mazyad became governor of the North, he put the tax-collector Harith and the entire administration of Sa’id b. Salm in fetters and sent them to the caliph in Baghdad. Yazid then wrote to Derbent to arrange for the cessation of hostilities.

The rebellion of Hayyun offers another perspective to early Abbasid Albania. Unlike the Kharijite rebellions described above, there is no mention of religious differences. Ibn A’tam’s account fixates on the personal antagonism between Hayyun b. Najm and the governor in Barda, Sa’id b. Salm (which is in line with Ibn A’tam’s descriptions of other rebellions).⁴³ Hayyun’s rebellion attests the stress between the caliphal governor and the practices of local Muslim elites. Ibn A’tam’s version may suggest that the rationale for Hayyun’s rebellion is economic, as the city sought to avoid taxation, but the complaint of Derbent is based in the local practices, i.e., that the city had traditionally provided military service in lieu of taxation. As such, the dispute could be read less as an economic complaint

⁴² ايها الامير! ان مدينتنا هذه لم يؤخذ منها خراج قط لانها في نحو العدو واهلها يحاربون الخزر: Ibn A’tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII, 257).

⁴³ Ibn A’tam also claims that the Armenian rebellion at Bagrevand (*Bağrawand*/*Bagrewand*) was caused when Muṣeī Mamikonian got into an argument with Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Qaḥṭaba over a signet ring.

and rather as a dispute about how, specifically, Abbasid control materialized in the frontier zone. Tax collectors frequently appear as first line in rebellions not only because of the economic implications of their work, but because tax collecting was a visible acknowledgment of caliphal rule.

We might read Hayyun's alliance with the Khazars as an attempted defection, but it is important here to acknowledge that Hayyun's rebellion did not seek to overthrow caliphal control over Albania. In approaching the Khazar khagan, "he wrote to him to ask him to go to him in order to plunder the lands of Islam",⁴⁴ that is, Hayyun hoped for the distraction of a raid, not the overthrow of Abbasid authority or disintegration of the Khazar frontier entirely. Furthermore, the people of the city rose up in fear to protest his actions: "O emir! May God be with us! Should the khagan, king of the Khazars, enter into this city of ours with his army, we will be killed and you along with us!"⁴⁵ Hayyun assured them of their safety and demolished a certain part of the defenses to allow the Khazars access. Ibn A'tham's report stresses Hayyun's personal involvement leading the Khazars to a specific place to breach the defenses away from the city itself, suggesting that transgressing the frontier required the cooperation of Muslim elites. They destroyed only a pass (*fajja*) into Islamic territory and left the bulk of the frontier intact. The details of Ibn A'tham's description confirm that the agreement with the Khazars was a temporary stop gate aimed at diverting Sa'id's approaching army. The specifics of the story – not only reaching out to the khagan, but also the local arrangements to provide military service – suggest that the city Derbent was particularly important because of its status as a frontier. If Thabit b. Nu'aym had previously rebelled there because of the presence of garrisoned troops, the rebellion of Hayyun b. Najm instead suggests that the city was important because of its position at the edges of Abbasid territory. As the spatial delineation of caliphal control, the ramifications of failing to pacify its elites were potentially dire.

3.3 Tbilisi

As we saw above, the descriptions of the rebellion of Hayyun b. Najm in Derbent segue neatly into yet another rebellion, this time by the Sanariyya (Georgian *Çanarni*, Armenian *Canark'*). There are a number of rebellions by the Sanariyya in Kakheti (Arabic *Khākhīt*) in the early Abbasid period, first under the caliph

⁴⁴ كتب اليه يساله ان يصير اليه حتى يغنمه بلاد الاسلام: Ibn A'tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VII, 258).

⁴⁵ ايها الامير! الله الله فينا! فانه ان يدخل خاقان ملك الخزر مع جيشه الى مدينتنا هذه فقد هلكنا وهلكت منها: Ibn A'tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VII, 258).

Abu Ja'far al-Mansur (r. 136/754–158/775) and then again under Harun al-Rashid. Tbilisi (*Tiflis*) consistently appears as the main focal point of these rebellions, since the city served as the landing platform for the caliphal forces as the closest base to Kakheti. Relevant sources typically locate these rebellions in Armenia rather than Albania – such placement derives from the definition of Armenia in the Arabic geographical texts associated with the Iraqi school, which understand both Albania and Georgia to be provinces of Armenia. The Sanariyya were Christians; although one Abbasid-era Arabic source postulates an Arab ancestry, modern scholars assume a local provenance in the Caucasus.⁴⁶ The first description is found in Ya'qubi's history:⁴⁷

Then the Sanariyya grew active in Armenia. Abu Ja'far [al-Mansur] sent Hasan b. Qahtaba to govern Armenia. He engaged them, but he had no strength against them. He therefore wrote to Abu Ja'far about them and their great number; and Abu Ja'far sent 'Amir b. Isma'il al-Harithi to him with a force of twenty thousand men. Engaging the Sanariyya, he fought them fiercely for several days, until God granted victory over them. Of their forces, in one day he killed sixteen thousand people before returning to Tiflis. He put to death all of his prisoners and sent out men to pursue the Sanariyya wherever they were.

The second description of the rebellion of the Sanariyya is in Ibn A'tham's history:⁴⁸

When Hasan b. Qahtaba entered the land of Armenia, the Sanariyya – one of the types of infidels in the land that is called Georgia – rebelled against him. Hasan was not able to pacify them, so he wrote to Mansur. Mansur supplied him with four commanders, among which were 'Amir b. Isma'il al-Jurjani, 'Isa b. Musa al-Khurasani, Fadl b. Dinar, and Muqatil b. Salih. Those commanders came with 30,000 cavalry and Hasan b. Qahtaba went with them to Georgia. He said: the Sanariyya gathered and the people of Kakheti, who were also a type of infidel, gathered against the Muslims in a huge gathering and they battled. God granted victory to the Muslims over them and 10,000 of them were killed in a single battle. God bestowed their wealth, their animals, and their weapons upon them. Mansur's commanders returned to Iraq.

46 Vacca (2017: 85–86).

47 ثم تحركت الصنارية بارمينية فوجه ابو جعفر الحسن بن قحطبة عاملاً على ارمينية فجاربهم فلم يكن لهم قوة فكتب (الى) ابى جعفر بخبرهم وكثرتهم فوجه اليه عامر بن اسماعيل الحارثى في عشرين الفا فلقى الصنارية فقاتلهم قتالا شديدا واقام اياماً يحاربهم ثم رزقهم الله الظفر عليهم فقتل منهم في يوم واحد ستة عشر الف انسان ثم انصرف الى تيفليس فقتل من كان معه من الاسرى ووجه في طلب الصنارية حيث كانوا Ya'qubi, *Tarīḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 447); English translation by Gordon *et al.* (2018: 1106).

48 ولما دخل الحسن بن قحطبة إلى بلاد إرمينية انتقضت عليه الضياربة (كذلك). وهم صنف من أصناف الكفار بأرض يقال لها أرض جرزان فلم يقدر الحسن بن قحطبة على أن يسكنهم فكتب إلى المنصور، فأمدته المنصور بأربعة من قواده منهم عامر بن إسماعيل الجرجاني وعيسى بن موسى الخراساني والفضل بن دينار ومقاتل بن صالح، فأقبل هؤلاء القواد في ثلاثين ألف فارس فسار بهم الحسن بن قحطبة إلى جرزان. قال: واجتمعت الضياربة وأهل حاحط (كذلك) وهم أيضا صنف من الكفار فاجتمعوا على المسلمين في جمع عظيم واقتتلوا، فظفر الله المسلمين بهم، فقتلوا في معركة واحدة منهم عشرة آلاف وأغنمهم الله أموالهم ودوابهم واقتتلوا، فقتلوا في معركة واحدة منهم عشرة آلاف وأغنمهم الله أموالهم ودوابهم ورجع قواد المنصور إلى العراق (Ibn A'tam, *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Bukhari 1968–1975: VIII, 233).

The accounts for this rebellion of the Sanariyya are meager and beleaguered. Both of the words Sanariyya and Kakheti are misspelled in the edition. It is possible that the reports about the rebellion of the Sanariyya merged with the story of the Mamikonian and Artsruni rebellions the following year, in 158/775.⁴⁹

There is no clear sense of who the rebels were or why they rebelled. The concerns of our authors remain with the state and how the state could enforce its territorial parameters. Ibn A'tham offers the most suggestive description by identifying the Sanariyya as “one of the types of infidels in the land that is called Georgia” and, further, by ascribing the rebellion to a combined force of the Sanariyya and “the people of Kakheti, who were also a type of infidel”. However, much like the earlier rebellions by the Kharijites, the passage reads as descriptive rather than analytical – that is, he wanted to indicate who was rebelling more than he wanted to explain why they were rebelling. The passage cannot suggest that the Sanariyya and the Kakhetians rebelled because they were Christians living under caliphal rule. The very fact that Ibn A'tham separates the Sanariyya and the Kakhetians as different types of “infidels” suggests that the rebellion cobbled together a number of different groups. The rebellion does not appear in the Georgian Chronicle *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, so these fleeting references offer only the vaguest sense of what spurred the rebellion. It is possible that an indeterminant reference in the *Martyrdom of King Archil* refers in passing to the rebellion. The Georgian version of the martyrology claims that the Muslim emir of Gardabani⁵⁰ sought revenge against Archil because his uncle had been killed by the Sanariyya who found refuge with the Kakhetians.⁵¹

However, the vague reference in the Georgian martyrology might likewise refer to the later rebellion of the Sanariyya, the same one mentioned during the rebellion of Hayyun b. Najm in Derbent above. The caliphal general who was spurred to action in response to the complaints of the emir of Gardabani was named Chichnaum son of Mohamedi (in the Georgian) or Mahadi (in the Armenian),⁵² whom R. Thomson identifies as Khuzayma b. Khazim. Khuzayma, incident-

⁴⁹ See La Porta & Vacca (forthcoming).

⁵⁰ The Arabic name Ġardmān refers to both the Albanian city Gardman and the Georgian city Gardabani. It is possible that this confusion stems from a scribal error in Arabic where قلعة الجردمان should be read instead as الجردبان, but the two names are confused elsewhere, as well. Both fall into Albania as defined in Abbasid-era geographical texts.

⁵¹ Thomson (1996: 252).

⁵² Rapp (1998: I, 245 for the Georgian and II, 204–205 for the Armenian). The variants for Chichnaum in Georgian are ჭიჭნაუმ, ჭიჭნომ, ჭიჭუნამ, and ჭიჭუმ; there are no variants for this name in the Armenian. The variants for Mohamedi are მოჰამედისი, მოჰამადისი, მოჰამდისი, მომედისი, მიჰმედისი in Georgian and Մահաճեհիսյ, Մահադսյ in Armenian.

tally, did in fact put down yet another rebellion of the Sanariyya during the reign of Harun al-Rashid. According to Ya'qubi:⁵³

Rashid then appointed Khuzayma b. Khazim al-Tamimi, who seized the notables and princes and beheaded them; he treated the people very badly, and so Georgia and the Sanariyya rose in rebellion. He dispatched an army against them, but they killed him. He then sent Sa'id b. Haytham b. Shu'ba b. Zuhayr al-Tamimi with a large army. He fought the people of Georgia and the Sanariyya until he had expelled them from the province. He then departed for Tiflis.

Ya'qubi separates the Sanariyya from “the people of Jurjan” (اهل جرجان); here, we should correct *Jurjan*, the province to the southeast of the Caspian Sea, to *Jurzan*, Georgia), as per Ibn A'tham above.

With the rebellions of the Sanariyya, the information available to authors like Ya'qubi and Ibn A'tham is quite clear: they know that there were rebellions, but they report nothing about the impetus or the goals of the rebels. Instead, they narrate the threat to the Empire and the subsequent resources to curtail it in the form of orders from the caliph, specific generals, number of troops, and safe zones (here, Tbilisi). Most of the reports assure the reader that the threat was dealt with and that God was on the side of the caliphal troops. In other words, the report is about the success of the Abbasids in maintaining their territorial integrity and not on the Sanariyya.

4 The significance of rebellion in early Abbasid Albania

Moving past the reign of Harun al-Rashid uncovers more famous rebellions in Albania, which have seen more coverage in modern scholarship and so do not need to be rehearsed here. In many important ways, the rebellions of the middle of the 3rd/9th century continue the same themes seen above. Tbilisi, for example, becomes an important independent emirate in the 3rd/9th century. During the reign of Ma'mun (r. 198/813–218/833), for example, Muhammad b. 'Attab took control over Georgia with the support of the Sanariyya; the caliph had to send first

⁵³ ثم ولى الرشيد خزيمة بن حازم التميمي فاخذ البطارقة وابناء الملوك فضرب اعناقهم وسار فيهم اسوء سيرة فانتقضت جرجان والصنارية فانفذ اليهم جيشاً فقتلوه فوجه اليهم سعيد بن الهيثم بن شعبة بن ظهير التميمي في جيش عظيم فقاتل اهل جرجان والصنارية حتى اجلاهم عن البلد وانصرف الى تفليس (Houtsma 1883: II, 519); English translation by Gordon *et al.* (2018: 1180). I have changed this for consistency within this chapter.

'Abd al-A'la b. Ahmad b. Yazid al-Sulami and then Khalid b. Yazid b. Mazyad al-Shaybani against the city to maintain control. Khalid defeated the inhabitants of Shaki and the Sanariyya. Soon thereafter, the emir Ishaq b. Isma'il b. Shu'ayb al-Tiflisi rebelled in Tbilisi, forcing Abbasid forces to march on the city without success.⁵⁴ The later caliphs Mu'tasim (r. 218/833–227/842) and Mutawakkil (r. 232/847–247/861) also sent large armies against Ishaq b. Isma'il to ensure the inclusion of Tbilisi in the Abbasid remit; during those campaigns, Abbasid forces battled the Sanariyya and Muslim emirs alike. Interestingly, while some of the generals who were dispatched to curtail the 3rd/9th-century rebellions were Central Asian soldiers in the service of the Abbasids, others were Arabs who next became the independent emirs of Albania after the collapse of Abbasid power in the so-called Decade of Anarchy. The Banu Shayban became the emirs of Shirvan, while the Banu Sulaym ruled over Derbent. The stories of rebellion thus not only demonstrate the extent of Abbasid imperial control, but also establish the patterns visible later under the emirates.

The most striking conclusion about the study of these rebellions is that Abbasid-era Arabic histories present Albania without any Albanians. Some rebels – the Sanariyya and the people of Kakheti – were non-Albanian Christians. However, the rebels who occupy the pages of Abbasid histories are nearly all Muslims living in Albania. One of them – Thabit b. Nu'aym – was Arab. The others do not have tribal identifiers and were likely Kurds, given Mas'udi's 4th/10th-century explanation that the *Shurat* of Baylaqan were Kurdish. However, the definition of Kurdishness in Abbasid-era sources is famously troubled;⁵⁵ it is possible that the *Shurat* of Baylaqan were in fact Kurdish, but they could also have been either Iranian or even Albanian Muslims. The study of rebellions thus offers interesting insight into the communities of Muslims living in Albania, their interaction with the centers of caliphal power, and their religious associations. In particular, the Kharijites stand out as inhabitants of Albania who distanced themselves from the caliphal officers in Barda and sometimes claimed links to rebels like Dahhak in Iraq or the Yamaniyya in Syria.

It is important to clarify that the absence of evidence about Albanians in these accounts cannot suggest that Albanians were themselves absent or somehow did not interact with caliphal authorities in Albania. Historians writing in Arabic were largely unconcerned about the thoroughness of their descriptions of the province. Pushing the chronological parameters of this paper outward after the reign of Harun al-Rashid, two rebellions in the middle of the 3rd/9th century put Albanian Christian actors directly on the center stage. These later rebellions

54 Minorsky (1958: 23 [English] / 2 [Arabic]); Ya'qūbī, *Ta'riḥ* (Houtsma 1883: II, 565).

55 James (2014).

were not included in this Chapter, largely because they have already been the focus of scholarship and because they (unlike the rebellions described here) require balancing between Arabic and Armenian sources.

First, the Khurrami rebel Babak famously disrupted the Caliphate for decades from his base in Badhdh/Baġk' in Azerbaijan, but he also controlled parts of Albania as well. Movses Daskhurantsi (or Kaġankatuatsi) in his *History of the Country of the Albanians* signals that the people of Baġakan rebelled against Babak, which seems likely to refer to our rebellious city Baylaġan.⁵⁶ Babak was ultimately defeated by an Albanian patrician.⁵⁷ Daskhurantsi gives the impression that Sahli Smbatean paused in his own rebellion against the Abbasids only long enough to defeat the other rebel Babak:⁵⁸

In the year 286 of the Armenian era [222/837], 20,000 horsemen suddenly emerged from Baghdad and ravaged the land of Albania. Hereupon Sahli Smbatean, who was of the Zarmirhakan family of kings, having as his ally the great martyr George, lifted up his eyes and met them like an eagle swooping down upon helpless birds. And he smote them and scattered them over the plains and put them to flight. In the same year the same Lord Sahli Smbatean captured the rebel Baban, the murderous, world-ravaging, bloodthirsty beast, and delivered him into the hands of the *amir al-mu'minin*. And for his efforts he received a goodly reward from the court, for he received sovereignty over Armenia, Georgia, and Albania, to rule authoritatively and regally over all.

Despite his own record fighting caliphal forces with divine help, then, in the matter of Babak's rebellion Sahli Smbatean appears as an ally of the caliph Mu'tasim.

The second example showcasing Albanian involvement in rebellions against the Caliphate is only one generation later and similarly demonstrates Albanians fighting both for and against the Caliphate. Abbasid troops under Bugha I-Kabir moved into the North against the various emirs and princes of Armenia and

⁵⁶ Dowsett (1957): 463–465.

⁵⁷ On Bābak's rebellion, see Crone (2014) and Rezakhani (2018); on Sahli Smbatean, see Minorsky (1953a).

⁵⁸ Իսկ յերկու հարիւր ութսուն և վեց թուոյն Հայոց՝ երկոտասան հազար հեծելոց յանկարծահաս լեալ ի Բաղդաստայ՝ արշաւէին յերկիրս Աղուանից: Անդ ակն ի վերայ հարեալ Սահլի Սմբատեան, որ յարքայից Զարմիրհական տոհմէն էր, գորածկից իւր կալեալ զմեծ նահապետն Գէորգիոս, դիմէ ի վերայ որպէս արծուի խոյացեալ ի տկար թուշունս՝ այսր անդր ցրուեալ տապաստ դաշտացն արկեալ վանէր: Եւ ի նոյն ամին նոյն տէրն Սահլի Սմբատեան ձերբակալ արարեալ զապստամբն Բաբան՝ զմարդախողխող, աշխարհաւեր, արիւնարբու զագանն և ետ ի ձեռս ամիր մոմնուոյ: Եւ ընդ վաստակոցն առնու յարբունեացն վարձս բարիս: Զի առնու իշխանութիւն ի վերայ Հայոց, Վրաց, և Աղուանից՝ տիրեալ իշխանութեամբ ամենեցուն արքայաբար: Movsēs Daxsuranc'i, *Patmut'wn Aġuanic' aġarhi*, book III, ch. 21 (Arakelyan 1983: 330); English translation (with slight changes) by Dowsett (1961a: 217).

Albania during the reign of Mutawakkil. While Arabic and Armenian sources alike blame this campaign on the murder of a caliphal governor, this rationale does not explain the extent of the campaign, which sought to shore up the independence of the emir of Tbilisi in particular. The Abbasid army under the command of the general Bugha traveled through Albania on their way back from Tbilisi. The Albanian patrician of Gardman Qitrij (likely Ktrič) allied with caliphal troops, while another Albanian patrician named Abu Musa 'Isa b. Yusuf b. Istifanus (Esayi Abumusē), fought a joint force of Bugha's troops and Bagratuni cavalry at Kithish/Kt'iš near Baylaqan.⁵⁹ These later rebellions confirm the findings of this study, i.e., that the historians writing in Arabic are more concerned with how the state could curtail the rebellion than they are with the rebels themselves. However, unlike the examples of the 2nd/8th century discussed above, they also demonstrate that Albanian Christians participated in the rebellions of 3rd/9th-century Albania, both as rebels against and as allies of the Caliphate.

5 Conclusions

We must understand the nature of Abbasid-era histories before we try to mine them for information on rebels. The rebellions of early Abbasid Albania are particularly good examples to demonstrate this assertion because, unlike the rebels who caught the attention and imagination in the heartlands of the Caliphate, the historians evince little interest in the rebels themselves. They record the names of the rebels and the generals who suppressed rebellions, sometimes with dizzying specificity. They convey the manpower required to maintain the Empire, including the number of men in the armies and the personal involvement of the caliph. They also frequently either explain or insinuate why the rebels were wrong to challenge authority – we see this, for example, in the claim that God granted victory to the caliphal troops, but not to the rebels (even when they won) or in Tabari's record of how Marwan b. Muhammad challenged the rebels to prove that he had not ruled them justly. The records of the rebellions of early Abbasid Albania exist because they demonstrate the work required to keep the Empire intact, so anything we learn about the rebels is incidental. Of course, the same historians record other rebellions in more detail, so it may well be possible to read these same sources to understand other rebels. However, the examples of Abbasid Albania are a good reminder to keep the state-centered parameters of this particular genre of Abbasid-era historical writing in mind.

⁵⁹ Vacca (2017).

Beyond this historiographical concern, the rebellions of early Abbasid Albania also reveal that Albania was an integral part of the Caliphate, a frontier that must be upheld to maintain the territorial integrity of the Empire. The extensive expenditure to suppress the rebels demonstrates the importance of the province. Rebellions appeared in these sources to celebrate the extent of Abbasid power, not to suggest its weakness. To take this a step further, the rebels themselves seem to take the territorial integrity of the Empire for granted. They never appear to break from the Caliphate so much as making a bid to change their own position within the Empire. Albania also appears as a caliphal province in the ways that these rebellions related to other movements outside of Albania. Thabit b. Nu'aym's rebellion was populated by Syrians and then resparked in Palestine. Musafir b. Kathir rebelled as part of Dahhak b. Qays's rebellion in Iraq and Jazira. The rebels of Baylaqan rebelled with inhabitants of various cities of Azerbaijan at their sides. Abbasid-era historians writing in Arabic paint a picture of Albania that would likely look strange to modern scholars who focus on Movses Daskhurantsi to narrate Albanian history, not because the historians writing in Arabic knew Albania better but because they looked for ways to relate the people and events in Albania to the broader political and social environment of the Caliphate. Such a realization confirms that writing the complicated history of Albania requires embracing a variety of sources and communities.

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Sergio La Porta

14 “You say Albanian, I say Armenian”: Discourses of Ethnicity and Power Around an Albanian King of Armenia

Abstract: In the late eleventh century, Grigor, the king of Baghik (*Balk’*) in the province of Syunik (*Siwnik’*), decided to adopt his brother-in-law, the Albanian prince Senekerim, as his successor, since he did not have any children of his own. Although the territory Senekerim eventually controlled only included a part of the province of Syunik, he assumed the title of king of Armenia in one of his endowment documents as recorded by the historiographer Stepanos Orbelian (d. 1304). The present Chapter argues that Senekerim’s deployment of this title reflects a political claim to contested territory at a moment when Seljuk power in the region was weakened. In order to do so, it excavates differing discourses about Senekerim’s identity and positionality, and elucidates how assertions of legitimacy, ideologies of kingship, and historical memory informed those discourses.

1 Senekerim and Shahandukht of Albania

The historian and metropolitan of Syunik, Stepanos Orbelian, recounts the most information about Senekerim in his *History of the House of Sisakan*.¹ In his chapter entitled “Concerning the Kings of Syunik”, Stepanos records that King Grigor of Syunik was married to “Shahandukht from the house of Aghvank, a daughter of their royal family of the great Sewada”,² but they did not have any children. Not wanting his kingdom to remain heirless, Grigor consulted with his princes, and they decided to make his heir “Senekerim from the Aghvank, brother of the same Shahandukht, a child of the royal family, very beautiful in visage and young

1 Sisakan, a term of Persian origin, also came into Armenian usage (Hübschmann 1904: 264–265). Although its earliest appearance is in the Syriac chronicle attributed to Zacharias Rhetor (6th c.), Sisakan is found as the name of a region in Artsakh in the 7th-century *Geography* of Anania Shirakatsi. It is first attested as synonymous with Syunik in book I, ch. 12 of Movses Khorenatsi’s *History of the Armenians* (8th c.?; Toumanoff 1963: 332).

2 Շահանդուխտ ի տանէն Աղուանից՝ դուստր նոցին թագաւորագինն մեծին Սեւադայի: ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 233) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 62).

in age, capable and wise, also fearful of God”.³ The adoption of Senekerim as Grigor’s heir not only made familial sense, but also geopolitical sense. The kingdom of Syunik had been reduced from its larger territorial possessions in the 10th century to the southern canton of Baghk (*Balk’*). Similarly, the Aranshahikid royal house of Albania was not in control of the entirety of Caucasian Albania, but of the more limited region of Ktish (*K’iš*, also known as *Dizak*), to the east of Baghk.⁴ The union of the two territories roughly doubled their respective sizes. Senekerim’s status as king of these united territories was subsequently confirmed by the Seljuk Sultan Malik-Shah (r. 1072–1092), as Stepanos Orbelian reports:⁵

And at that time the dominion of the Arabs (*Tajiks*) arose and became powerful and the entire realm was subjected to their taxes, on account of which also this entire region was usurped and removed from the hands of the natural lords of the realm of Sisakan. And there was on the throne of the Sultanate Malik-Shah, a beneficent and peaceful man, by whom Senekerim was elevated to the honor of the kingdom. And he reigned with very famous glory in the house of Baghk. And he [i.e., Senekerim] widened all the borders of his dominion, and for many years he led his kingdom with a sweet and peaceful life until the death of Malik-Shah who died in 541 [= 1092 CE].

1.1 Activity at Vahanavank

Stepanos remarks that Senekerim and his sister Shahandukht launched many building projects, particularly for the monastery of Vahanavank (also known as *Yovhannavank’*) in the environs of the fortress of Kapan.⁶ He comments that “in

3 յԱրվանից զԱննքերիմ՝ եղբայր նորին Շահանդիստոյ թագաւորազն մանուկ, յոյժ գեղեցիկ տեսեամբ եւ առոյգ հասակաւ՝ հանճարեղ եւ իմաստուն, նաեւ երկիւղած յԱստուծոյ: ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 233) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 62).

4 On the Aranshahikids, see Toumanoff (1963: 257–258). In a series of articles dealing with the Albanian royal succession, Toumanoff (1976a, 1984, 1985) was able to bring some clarity to issues of prosopography and geography, including Senekerim’s genealogy.

5 Ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 234) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 62–63): Յայնմ ժամանակի էր բարձրացեալ և զօրացեալ տէրութիւնն Տաճկաց և ամենայն աշխարհ 'ի ներքոյ հարկի նոցա նուաճեալ կայր. վասն որոյ և յորվ գաւառս չորթեալ հանին 'ի Սիսական աշխարհէս 'ի ձեռաց բնիկ տերանցն. եւ էր յաթոռ սուլթանութեանն Մէլիք շահն՝ այր բարեբարոյ և խաղաղարար, յորմէ մեծարեալ լինէր Սեննքերիմ 'ի պատիւ թագաւորութեան, և յոյժ երևելի փառօք թագաւորեաց 'ի սասն Բաղաց, և ընդարձակեաց զամենայն սահմանս տէրութեան իւրոյ, և բազում ամօք վարեաց զթագաւորութիւնն քաղցր և խախազական կենօք մինչև 'ի մահ Մէլիք սուլթանին, որ մեռաւ 'ի 541 թրուականին:

6 The fortress of Kapan was located in the region of Dzork (*Jork’*). By the time of Orbelian, the region of Dzork was also known as Kapan: “Tenth [region of Siwnik], the region of Jork’, which has the impregnable fortress of Balaberid, and is now called Kapan” (*Տասներորդ՝ Զորք գաւառ, որ ունի զանմաստոց ամուրն Բաղաբերդ, եւ այժմ կոչի Կապան*: ch. 2 [Emin 1861: 7] / 3 [Shahnazareants 1859: I, 51]). Dzork/Kapan was originally a separate region of Syunik from Baghk, which

the days of Grigor, king of Baghik, Vahanavank was further beautified with many and beautiful buildings, by Queen Shahandukht and [her sister] Kata and King Senekerim: great vaults were erected and above this church, a very high and multi-columned hall, as a shelter and place for banquets for princes”.⁷

An inscription of Shahandukht survives on the northern wall of the second floor of the church at the monastery of Vahanavank. In that inscription, Shahandukht evokes both her own heritage as well as that of her husband, who must have been deceased by this time:⁸ “In this year 535 [= 1086 CE], I, Shahandukht, daughter of Sewada, king of Albania, and wife of King Grigor, son of Ashotik – since we did not have together a physical heir – I and my sister Kata built [the church of] the Holy Theotokos in exchange for her compassion”.⁹

The claims of her own Albanian royal lineage were further enhanced by her building at Vahanavank as it was a monastery associated with both the Albanian royalty and religious hierarchy. According to Stepanos, one of the chapels of Vahanavank contained the sepulchers of many kings and queens of Albania and Baghik, and princes of the realm of Sisakan. Indeed, her brother, Senekerim, was

Orbelian lists as the seventh of the province, and as attested by the 7th-century geography of Anania Shirakatsi (Abrahamyan 1944: 350; Hewsens 1992: 65–65A). Elsewhere, Orbelian implies that Kapan belonged to the realm of Baghik: “In the year of the Armenian era 552 [= 1103 CE], there was the beginning of the destruction of the region of Kapan and of the fortified realm of Balk” (*Յամին, յորում էր թուականն Հայոց 552՝ եղև սկիզբն աւերածոյ Կապան գաւառի եւ ամուր աշխարհին Բաղաց*: ch. 50 [Emin 1861: 243] / 51 [Shahnazareants 1859: II, 76]); and the title of the chapter in which that passage is found similarly denotes that Kapan was included in the kingdom of Baghik: “Reason for the destruction of Kapan and the taking of its fortresses, and the complete extermination of the kingdom of Balk, and the final end of the Sisakan race” (*Պատճառ աւերման Կապանին եւ առման բերդիցն, և բնաջինջ սպառումն թագաւորութեանն Բաղաց, և վախճան կատարածի Սիսիական ազգիս*; *ibid.*).

7 ... յաւուրս Գրիգորի՝ թագաւորի Բաղաց, ՚ի Շահանդիստոյ թագուհոյն և ՚ի Կայտայէ և ՚ի Սենեքերիմայ թագաւորէ բազում և գեղեցիկ շինուածովք առաւել գեղեցկացուցին զվանսն Վահանու՝ կանգնեալ կամարս մեծամեծս, և ՚ի վերայ եկեղեցիս և սրահս բազմասիւնս բարձրաբերձ, հովանի և խրախարան իշխանացն: ch. 44 (Emin 1861: 176) / 45 (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 286–287).

8 In documents prior to 1086, Shahandukht’s brother, Senekerim, already refers to himself as king (see below). It is possible that he and Grigor ruled jointly, but there is no indication in Senekerim’s attestation that that was the case. Orbelian’s wording about the beautification of Vahanavank cited above, however, does suggest that Grigor and Senekerim may have reigned at the same time as he says that these projects were undertaken in the days of King Grigor by Queen Shahandukht, Kata, and King Senekerim.

9 Ի : ՇԼԵ : Թվականիս ես Շահանդուխտ դուստր Սեւադաւ Աղվանից թագաւորին եւ ամուսին Գրիգոր թագաւորի որդր Աշոտակ, վասն ոչ գրլո մեր ի միասին ժառանգ (ը)ստ մարմնո, ես եւ քույրս իմ Կատայս շինեցաք զս(ուր)բ Ա(ստուա)ծածին փոխարեն գլթոց նորա: (Barkhudaryan 1960: 138, no. 405).

later buried there, “in a tomb with other kings”.¹⁰ The Albanian Catholicos Stepanos also resided at Vahanavank for a time and was similarly laid to rest there.¹¹

1.2 The endowments at Tatev

In addition to Vahanavank, Stepanos Orbelian extols Shahandukht and Senekerim’s generosity to the monastery of Tatev.¹² The monastery and its cathedral of Ss Peter and Paul was the locus of the episcopal see of Syunik, housed numerous relics, had been the object of patronage of the nobility and monarchy of Syunik as well as by the Bagratuni monarch, Smbat I (reg. 890–912), and included “a sepulcher for the princes and bishops of Syunik”.¹³ At the time of Senekerim’s reign, the bishop of Syunik was Grigor (sed. 1058–1116), who had been ordained by the Catholicos of the Armenian Church in Ani and whose tenure lasted a remarkable 58 years.¹⁴ Although no inscriptions by Senekerim himself have sur-

10 'ի շիրմի ընդ ալլ թագաւորսն: ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 235) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 64).

11 Stepanos left the following undated inscription at Vahanavank: “I, Lord Stepanos, Catholicos of Albania, pressured by the Tajiks, came and rested at the narthex to this church built by the theophilic Queen Shahandukht and Kata” (*Ես տ(է)ր Ստեփանոս, Աղվանից Կաթող[իկոս], նեղեալ ի տանկաց եկա եվ Հանգեայ [Ա(ստուա)ծա]սէր թագուհեայ Շահանդիստին եվ Կատաին շինած եկեղեցոյս դաւթիս:* (Barkhudaryan 1960: 139, no. 408). The dates of Stepanos’s tenure are uncertain. He appears in the list of Catholicoi of the Albanians composed by Mkhitar Gosh (Dowsett 1958: 480) and in Kirakos Gandzaketsi’s *History* (ch. 10; Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 199), but they provide neither the years nor the length of his tenure. Basmadjian (1914: 367), gives 1077–1103 as the dates for his Catholicosate, but it is uncertain how he arrived at those years.

12 Ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 235) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 64–65): *այս Սենեքերիմ և քույրն իւր Շահանդիստ բազումս արարին արդիւնս և շինուածս երեւելիս 'ի վանսն Յովհաննու, նաև բազում պարգևս և ժառանգութիւնս ընծայեցին 'ի սուրբ մայրաքաղաք աթոռն 'ի Տաթև – “This Senekerim and his sister Shahandukht completed many projects and famous buildings for Yovhannavank’ [i.e., Vahanavank], as well as bequeathed many gifts and inheritances to the holy metropolitan throne at Tatev”.*

13 *տեղի դամբանի իշխանաց եւ եպիսկոպոսաց Սիւնեաց:* ch. 40 (Emin 1861: 164) / 41 (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 271).

14 Stepanos Orbelian records that King Smbat of Syunik sent Grigor to Ani to be ordained by the Catholicos, but does not mention his name: *աստուածապալակ թագաւորն Սմբատ ընտրէ այր մի պատշաճաւոր, վկայեալ յամենեցունց, զարդարեալ ամենայն առաքինութեամբ եւ լի գիտութեամբ Գրիգոր անուն, յուղարկէ առ կաթողիկոսն Հայոց յԱնի, եւ տայ ձեռնադրել զնա եպիսկոպոս Սիւնեաց:* (ch. 59 [Emin 1861: 235–236] / 60 [Shahnazareants 1859: II, 65]) – “the divinely-crowned King Smbat chose a suitable man named Grigor, attested by everyone [to be] adorned with every virtue and filled with wisdom, and sent him to the Catholicos of Armenia in Ani, and had him ordained bishop of Syunik”. If this indeed happened in 1058, the Catholicos may have been either Petros I Getadardz (sed. 1019–1058) or Khachik II Anetsi (sed. 1058–1066).

vived at Tatev, Orbelian includes transcripts of endowment documents issued by him or at his behest. The transcript of Senekerim's donation of the village of Arit to the monastery of Tatev in 1084 or 1085, which Stepanos claims was written in Senekerim's own hand (*iwrov jeřamb*), begins:¹⁵

By the will of mighty powerful Jesus, I Senekerim, King of Armenia, living in this realm of Sisakan and Baghik, having read the authentic letter of previous patriarchs and princes, desired to renew and restore [it]. And we wrote this document by my willing heart and command for my pious and Christian sisters, Queen Shahandukht and purely raised maiden Katay, who have forsaken earthly glory of this world and have run after the felicitous voice of Christ with ascetic virtue.

Besides the town of Arit, Senekerim donated or encouraged the donation of numerous other properties and items to the monastery. At Senekerim's order, one of his nobles (*azat*), Hasan, gave the village of Norashinik and the monastery of Dzerati (*Jeřativank'*) to the church of the Holy Sign (of the Cross, *S. Nřan*) at Tatev in 1086. The village had been given by Prince Hrahat in 844 to Bishop David of Tatev; *Jeřativank'* had been donated during the tenure of Bishop Yakob (sed. 918–959) in the 10th century. Senekerim both witnessed and confirmed the gift as well as its tax-free status.¹⁶ In 1091, he ordered two of his other nobles (*azat*), Prince Mahevan and Georg to return three properties, Haržik, Berdkanereč', and the C'ur river, that had apparently been illegally appropriated from Tatev "in a raid and at a difficult time, but now belonged to us [i.e., Mahevan and Georg]".¹⁷ Senekerim made this decision after Bishop Grigor showed him the records of the three previous times these properties had been granted to the monastery by previous kings and princes of Syunik.¹⁸

1.3 Legitimizing royal status

An interesting aspect of these donations is that they involved the restoration or return of properties to the monastery of Tatev explicitly based upon the consulta-

15 Ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 236–237) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 66–67): *Կամաւ կարող հզօրին Յիսուսի՝ ես Սենեքերիմ թագաւոր Հայոց կացեալ 'ի Սիսական և Բաղից աշխարհիս, ընթերցեալ զառաջին հայրապետացն և զիշխանացն հաստատագիծ նամակ՝ կամեցաք վերստին նորոգել և անդրէն դարձուցանել. և գրեցաք զայս վճիռ պայմանին իմ սրտի յօժարութեամբ և հրամանաւ բարեպաշտ և քրիստոսազգեաց քերցս իմոց՝ թագուհւոյս Շահանդիստոյ և սրբասնունդ օրիորդիս Կատայիս, որք Լքին զերկրաւոր փառս աշխարհիս և զհետ երանաւէտ ձայնին Քրիստոսի ընթացան ճգնազգեստ առաքինութեամբ:*

16 Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 239–240) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 70–72).

17 *յաւերման և 'ի նեղ ժամանակի, և այժմ կայր առ մեզ:* Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 240–242) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 74).

18 Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 240–242) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 72–74).

tion and evocation of the endowments of earlier rulers. The documents, as well as Stepanos's compilations of them, portrays King Senekerim as a restorer of rule and order in Syunik and as the defender of the rights of the most powerful spiritual and ecclesiastical institution in the region. Senekerim's endowments therefore, like his sister's building project at Vahanavank, were intended to legitimize and aggrandize his royal status. However, while Shahandukht's patronage of Vahanavank and the Albanian Catholicos Stepanos accentuated her Albanian lineage, Senekerim's patronage of Tatev supported an institution and a bishop located within the jurisdiction and hierarchy of the Armenian Church. Moreover, in contrast to Shahandukht, Senekerim does not refer to his Albanian royal heritage in these documents. This reticence could signify that his father was still alive and held the title of king of Albania, but Senekerim does not use it when referencing him. For example, the conclusion of his endowment document granting the village of Arit to the monastery Tatev simply states: "Written by my own hand, Senekerim, son of Sewada".¹⁹ A similar signature appears at his confirmation of Hasan's donation: "This manuscript belongs to me, King Senekerim, son of Sewada".²⁰

Rather than promote his royal Albanian heritage, or even his status as the king of Syunik, Senekerim refers to himself as "the king of Armenia, living in this realm Baghk and Sisakan".²¹ This downplaying of his Albanian royal lineage or, more precisely, the accentuation of his association with Armenia is similarly found in the Armenian historiographical tradition prior to Stepanos Orbelian.

2 Senekerim and ideologies of kingship

Matthew of Edessa (Matteos Urhayetsi), whose *Chronicle* ends in 1136–1137, provides a list of kings of Armenia in a lengthy passage describing the confused geopolitical and religious situation at the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century.²²

19 Գրեցաւ իմով ձեռամբս Սենեքերիմայ՝ որդւոյ Սևադայի: Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 238) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 68).

20 Այս ձեռագիրք է իմ Սենեքերիմայ թագաւորի որդւոյ Սևադայի: Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 241) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 73).

21 Թագաւոր Հայոց կացեալ 'ի Սիսական և Բաղաց աշխարհիս: Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 59 (Emin 1861: 236) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 66).

22 Matteos (1869: 278–279): էին և այլ թագաւորք Հայոց ի Դարբանդ աշխարհին, որ ասի Կապանք, սահմանակից Աւզաց եւ Արուանից. որք էին թագաւորք անարատք և սրբակրօնք, որ յիշատակին 'ի սուրբ պատարագն ընդ այլ աստուածասէր սուրբ թագաւորացն, որոց էին անուանք այսոքիկ. Վաչական, և Գուշակտակ, նորին որդի. փիլիպէ որդի Գուշակտակին. Սեւադա որդի փիլիպէի. Սենեքերիմ

And there were also other kings of Armenia in the realm of Darband, which is called *Kapank'*, bordering on the Ossetes and Albania, who were stainless and religiously pure kings, who are remembered in the holy liturgy with the other theophilic, holy kings, whose names were the following: Vač'agan and Gušaktak, his son; P'ilipē, the son of Gušaktak; Sewada, the son of P'ilipē; Senek'erim, the son of Sewada; Grigor, the son of Senek'erim, who was still living while we wrote this book.

Already the Mekhitarist historian, Mikayel Chamchean observed that either Matthew or a later interpolator had confused Haband in Syunik with Darband so that Kapan was identified with the Caucasian pass, instead of with Kapan in Baghk.²³ Toumanoff thought that the Haband conjectured here must be the “Other Haband” in neighboring Ktish since “le Bałk-et-Kapan constituait un appanage de la maison de Siounie”.²⁴ With the accession of Senekerim to the throne of Syunik, however, both Baghk and Ktish passed into his hands; it is thus difficult to discern which Haband may have been intended. Regardless of the question of Haband, the wording of Matthew's text referring to “kings of Armenia in the realm of *Haband” (*t'agawork' hayoc' i *Haband ašxarhin*) resembles closely that of Senekerim in his document and may reflect the political claims that his court asserted and that were possibly continued by his son and successor Grigor who was alive when Matthew composed his *Chronicle*.²⁵

In contrast to Matthew of Edessa, the 13th-century monastic scholar, Vardan Arelveltsi, does not ascribe the title “king of Armenia” (*t'agawor hayoc'*) to Senekerim or his family, but implies that he ruled in Baghk and Kapan, as well as curiously asserts an Armenian ethnic origin to Senekerim. He first describes Senekerim as *ark'ayn Haykazni*, “the Armenian king”.²⁶ *Haykazn* literally means “of the race of Hayk”, the eponymous ancestor of the Armenians. Alternatively, *Haykazni* could be a variant of *Haykazuni*, the dynastic attribute of the princely and

որդի Սեւադայի. Գրիգոր որդի Սենեքերիմայ, որ դեռ եւս կենդանի էր մինչեւ գրեալ զայս մատենագրութիւնս մեր; cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 151).

23 Chamchean (1785: II, 1044). He was followed in this conjecture by Dulaurier in his translation of Matthew of Edessa (1858: 423–424), and by the editor of Matthew's *Chronicle* (Matteos 1869: 563 n. 163).

24 Toumanoff (1976a: 169–171 n. 4).

25 As the last dated event in the *Chronicle* by Matthew occurred in AE 585 (1136–37 CE) and Matthew does not mention the death of Grigor or his successor, it would stand to reason that he was still alive at that point as well. Toumanoff's dating of Grigor's death to 1116 (1985: 287) therefore cannot be accepted. It is likely that Toumanoff confused the death of Grigor, the Bishop of Syunik, which occurred in the same year as that of Queen Shahandukht (AE 565 = 1116 CE, see Stepanos Orbelian, ch. 60 [Emin 1861: 245] / 61 [Shahnazareants 1859: II, 79]), with that of King Grigor, the son of Senekerim.

26 *արքայն Հայկազնի*: Thomson (1991: 103); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 195).

royal house of Syunik. As Zuckerman observes when discussing the use of the attribute *Haykazuni* in Movses Daskhurantsi's (or Kalankatuatsi's) *History* in relation to the Albanian prince, Apu Ali, the term does not refer to Apu Ali's being a "native Armenian" but to his belonging to the house of Syunik.²⁷ Thus, it may be possible to read Vardan here to be identifying Senekerim as a member of the house of Syunik upon his adoption by Grigor. Vardan himself appears to have anticipated this reading and to push back against it by emphasizing Senekerim's Armenianness against any particular *Syunetsi*-ness. He clarifies that Senekerim was an "Armenian king, because the kings there [i.e., Baghk and Kapan] were Armenian (*haykakank'*). And it [i.e., the line of kings] was not brought to an end until the last days of the two noble brothers, Smbat and Grigor, who took the young Senekerim of Armenian descent (*hayazarm*) and made him their heir as king".²⁸ He therefore associates Senekerim with Armenianness through three different terms: *haykazn*, *haykakan*, and *hayazarm*. Similarly, Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, writing at the end of the 13th century and possibly basing himself on Vardan, again refers to Senekerim as a king of the Armenian race, *ark'ayn haykazn*.²⁹

All of the sources examined above position Senekerim within a relationship to Armenia and Armenianness. The earlier witnesses, i.e., Senekerim's endowment document and Matthew of Edessa, eschew his Albanian ethnicity and assert him to be the "King of Armenia"; the later 13th-century sources, Vardan Areveltsi and Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi, ascribe an Armenian ethnicity to him, but not the title "King of Armenia". The question is how we should interpret the sources' silence regarding Senekerim's Albanian lineage and the discrepancy between the use of "Armenian king" and "King of Armenia". Are they accidental or the result of confusion? Or do they speak to differing claims to political legitimacy and notions of identity?

2.1 Political legitimacy and identity

In arguing for the latter, it is useful to summarize the political situation at the time of Senekerim's endowments. The endowments date to 1085 and 1086, and they likely date to the beginning of or early part of his reign. At the time, Armenia

27 Zuckerman (2000: 572–573).

28 ... արքայն Հայկազնի, զի թագաւորաքն որ անդ՝ Հայկականք էին. եւ ոչ բարձաւ մինչեւ ի յետին աւուրս եղելոյ երկուց եղբարց անգաւակաց, Սմբատայ եւ Գրիգորոյ, որ առեալ զմանուկն Սենեքերիմ՝ Հայսպարմ՝ եղին թագաւոր ժառանգորդ իւրեանց: Thomson (1991: 103); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 195).

29 արքայն Հայկազն: Patkanov (1867: 76).

and the Caucasus were in a state of political flux. The Artsruni kingdom centered around Lake Van had ceased to exist from 1021 when it was surrendered to Byzantium. Similarly, the Bagratuni kingdom of Ani had been surrendered to the Empire in 1045; and that of Kars in 1064. In that same year, however, Ani was taken by the Seljuks, and Kars was taken the following year. After this point, only the Kyurikian kingdom of Tashir, originally granted to Gurgen Bagratuni in 982 by King Smbat II Bagratuni of Ani; the Bagrationi kingdom of Georgia (1008); and the Kvirikian kingdom of Kakheti, which resisted Georgian attempts at absorption and formally submitted to Alp Arslan in 1068, remained. These smaller royal units vied with each other to expand their authority as well as tried to secure their status with the Seljuks. In 1080, Malik-Shah launched an invasion of the Caucasus and rendered the Georgian kingdom a tributary of the Sultanate. According to the Georgian History of David, King of Kings, shortly after Malik-Shah's invasion, King George II of Georgia went to Isfahan to seek the protection of the sultan, where he was received by him as "a beloved son".³⁰ The 12th-century *Chronicle* of Samuel of Ani, followed by Vardan Areveltsi, adds that King Kyurike II of Lori travelled with King George to Malik-Shah presumably for the same reason.³¹ Shortly, thereafter, the Kvirikian king of Kakheti, Aghsartan, converted to Islam and sought Malik-Shah's protection against the Bagrationi to secure Kakheti.³² The 1080s, then, witnessed a number of Caucasian and Armenian elites seeking legitimacy for their positions from Malik-Shah and it is reasonable that Senekerim similarly sought to secure his title as king of Baghk from the Seljuk sultan as Stepanos Orbelian records.

In this competitive environment, titular and territorial claims were contested and legitimacy carefully constructed. While Senekerim's position as king of Baghk was legitimized by Grigor's adoption of him, his possession of the actual territory, and Malik-Shah's confirmation of his rank, the assertion of being "King of Armenia" found in the endowment documents and echoed in Matthew of Edessa was a bit more ambitious and fraught. The title King of Armenia was more naturally associated with the senior line of the Bagratuni family situated in Ani.

2.2 Ideologies of Caucasian kingship

Indeed, rather than being grounded in any actual political claims, Matthew's denotation of Senekerim as a King of Armenia may represent an idealized geogra-

³⁰ შვილი საყუარელი: Rapp (1998: I, 321); cf. the English translation in Thomson (1996: 312).

³¹ Samuel: Ter-Mikelean (1893: 118) / Matevosyan (2014: 198); Vardan: Thomson (1991: 106); English translation in Thomson (1989: 197).

³² *Kartlis Tskhovreba*: Rapp (1998: I, 322); cf. the English translation in Thomson (1996: 313).

phy of kingship that partitioned the Caucasus into three kingdoms of Armenia, Albania, and Iberia/Georgia. We may observe that in the same passage, Matthew refers to the Kyurikian kings of Tashir as the kings of Albania: “And the kings of Albania – Gagik [read: Gurgēn]³³ and Dawit’ and Korikē, who now sit in the Armenian city of Lōrē”.³⁴ The Kyurikian were a dynasty established by Gurgen Bagratuni, the youngest son of King Ashot III Bagratuni of Armenia, in the province of Gugark.³⁵ Toumanoff argued that the Bagratuni assumed the title “King of Albania” based on their territorial possessions,³⁶ but contemporary inscriptions do not attribute that title to Gurgen or his descendants;³⁷ neither does the more contemporary chronicler, Stepanos Taronetsi, call them by this title. He simply notes that David Anhoġin, “son of Gurgēn, together with his brother Smbat occupied the regions of Taširk’, and the plain of Iberia and Samshvilde, the great city-like fortress. He established this for himself as a royal residence”.³⁸ Contrary to Toumanoff’s conclusion, the ascription of the title “king of Albania”, appears to have been a historiographical move, rather than a political claim asserted by the rulers themselves.³⁹ Toumanoff understands the title “king of Albania” to be the normative one; while the other styles, “with the royal dignity claimed attaching to the place of actual residence”, to be the way “titular kings are occasionally referred to”.⁴⁰ In fact, the reverse seems to be the case, except in the historiographical tradition, whose representatives may be trying to shoehorn a complicated geopolitical reality into a simplified, more readily legible royal geography of three Caucasian kingdoms.

33 See already, Movsēsian (1927: 224).

34 *Եւ թագաւորք Աղղանից՝ Գագիկ եւ Դաւիտ՝ եւ Կորիկէ, որք նստէին աշտմուս ի Լօրէ, քաղաք Հայոց*: Matteos (1869: 278); cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 151). For a summation of other opinions on the origin of the title of king of Albania, see Matevosyan (1968: 202).

35 Movsēsian (1927: 225–234).

36 Toumanoff (1984: 89).

37 Gurgen, Dawit, Kiwrike, and Smbat refer to themselves and are referred to simply as “king” (*t’agawor*) or without any title in the epigraphic record, see Barkhudaryan et al. (2012: 76, no. 127; 101, no. 174; 113, no. 210; 116, no. 218; 127, no. 231; 135, no. 243; 136, no. 245; 138, no. 248; 140, no. 254; 141, no. 255; 164, no. 284; 171, no. 300; 187, no. 358; 239, no. 488; 253, no. 529; 436, no. 991; 438, no. 995; 443, no. 1007). Dawit is also sometimes referred to as “king” (*ark’ay*: Barkhudaryan et al. 2012: 76, no. 127; 116, no. 218); and in one inscription (Barkhudaryan et al. 2012: 246, no. 499), he is referred to as “autocratic king” (*in k’nakal ark’ay*); see also Movsēsian (1927: 233, 239–240, and 244).

38 *որդի Գուրգենայ Հանդերձ եղբարքն իւրով Սմբատաւ ունի գկողմանս Տաշրաց եւ զՎրաց դաշտի. զՇամշուլտեայ մեծ քաղաքանիստ դրեակն նիստ արկունական պատրաստեալ ինքեան*: Manukean (2011: 809); cf. the English translation by Greenwood (2017: 294). Movsēsian’s assertion (1927: 224) that the Taronetsi calls them kings of Albania is incorrect.

39 Toumanoff (1984: 93).

40 Toumanoff (1984: 93).

Elsewhere, Matthew refers to the Kyurikian dynasty as kings of Armenia⁴¹ and to Albania as a province of Armenia, underscoring how slippery these terms were: “It happened in the Armenian era 530 (= 1081), that the archbishop of Shirak, who was in the city of Ani, whose name was Lord Barseł, arose and went to the realm of Armenians, to the province Albania, to the city of Lōrē, to the king of Armenia, Kiwrikē, son of Dawit’, son of Gagik” (again, read: Gurgēn).⁴² Given that Matthew is inconsistent in his titlature related to the Kyurikians and that they themselves do not seem to have asserted either title, his use of the title king of Armenia or of Albania reflects an idealized geography of Caucasian kingship notably devoid of reference to ethnic lineage. One must appreciate the ease with which the Armenian Bagratuni became kings of Albania and the Albanian Aranshahikids became kings of Armenia in Matthew’s text. Similarly, when Samuel Anetsi (12th c.) in his *Chronicle* refers to the journey of Kyurike II of Tashir and George II of Georgia to Malik-Shah, he refers to them as the kings of Armenia and Iberia (*Vrac’*), evoking that same geopolitical ideology.

By contrast, Vardan’s, and subsequently Ayrivanetsi’s, emphasis on Senekerim’s Armenianness clearly foregrounds a different idealization of Caucasian kingship in which ethnic identity was privileged. There is evidence from elsewhere in Vardan’s *Chronicle* that the author underscores ethnic kinship through a common ancestry as the salient component of identity, including his focus on tracing the various genealogical strands of lineage from Hayk at the outset of the work.⁴³ In general, a process of ethnicization of identity is evident among many communities in the region during the 10th–13th centuries.⁴⁴ Indeed, one may argue that, for Vardan, being a king of Armenia meant being an Armenian king.

While Matthew’s employment of the phrase King of Armenia may articulate an idealized royal geography, the title also appears in Senekerim’s endowment documents cited by Orbelian where, in addition, it would ostensibly serve the more practical, political purpose of staking a claim over a much larger territory than Baghk. *Prima facie*, there is no reason to suspect the authenticity of the

41 Matteos (1869: 265–266); cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 145). So, too, does Samuel Anetsi in his *Chronicle*, when he notes that “the kings of Armenia and Georgia, Kiwrikē and Gōrgi, went to the Sultan (Malik-Shah)” (ի սուլտանն գնացին Հայոց եւ Վրաց թագաւորքն՝ Կիւրիկէ եւ Գորգի: Ter-Mikelean 1893: 118). This is the same king Kiwrikē (reg. 1048–1089) mentioned by Matthew, and Giorgi II of Georgia (reg. 1072–1089).

42 եղեւ ի թուականութեանն Հայոց ի յամի ՇԼ, արքեպիսկոպոսն Շիրակայ որ էր ի քաղաքն Անի, որոյ անուն ասէին տէր Բարսեղ, յարուցեալ գնաց յաշխարհն Հայոց ի յԱղուան գաւառի՝ ի Լօռէ քաղաքի առ թագաւորն Հայոց Կուրիկէ՝ որդին Անհողինին Դաւթի, որուոյ Գագկայ: (Matteos 1869: 265–266); cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 145).

43 La Porta (2023).

44 ter Haar Romeny (2012: 200–201).

documents cited by Orbelian. Support for supposing that Senekerim did harbor, or at least was thought to harbor, greater ambitions than being the king of Baghk may possibly be found in the mysterious account of his assassination.

3 Senekerim's death and the city of Ani

Both Vardan Areveltsi and Stepanos Orbelian report how Senekerim's death transpired. According to Vardan:⁴⁵

In 543 [= 1094] P'atlun, emir of Ganjak, sent Vasak Pahlawuni, son of Grigor Magistros, with all the troops of Arran to the impregnable fortresses of Balk' and Kapan. By a treacherous ruse they entered there and killed Senekerim the Armenian king.... When he was killed on P'atlun's orders, the lamp there was extinguished, and the Persians ruled.

This information is repeated with slight differences by Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi.⁴⁶ Vardan, however, immediately follows this story with Alp Arslan's granting of Ani to the Shaddadid emir, Fadlun (*Faḍlūn*), and the latter's bestowing it upon his grandson:⁴⁷

This P'atlun received Ani from Alp'aslan, on giving him gold-covered images of Całkoc'. And he sent as lord of the ruined city Manuč'ë his grandson, a very young man, who when he grew up added to the wall of Ani and its fortifications.

Vardan's account poses some chronological challenges. First of all, the text gives AE 543 [= 1094 CE] for the year of Senekerim's assassination, but the passage occurs in the *History* among other events that occurred around 1072: an earth-

45 Ի հինգհարիւր քառասուն եւ երեղ թուին առաքեաց փատլուն ամիրայն Գանձակայ զՎասակ Պահլաւ՝ որդի Գրիգորոյ Մագիստրոսի, ամենայն զօրօք Առանայ, յանառիկ յամուրսն Բաղաց եւ Լապանին, որ եւ խաբէութեամբ հնարեալ մտին անդր. եւ սպանեալ զՍենեքերիմ արքայն Հայկազնի, ... զոր եւ սպանեալ հրամաւ փատլնոյ՝ շիջաւ ճրագն որ անդ, եւ տիրեցին Պարսք: (Thomson 1991: 103); cf. the English translation in Thomson (1989: 195).

46 փալտուն ամիրայն առաքեաց զՎասակ Պահլաւունին՝ զորդի Գրիգորի Մագիստրոսի բազում զօրօք ի վերայ Բաղաբերդոյ, որք խաբէութեամբ սպանին զՍենեքերիմ արքայն հայկազն եւ առին զերկիրն Սիննեաց: Եւ այն երեւ սկիզբն տիրելոյ Տանձկաց ի վերայ նոցա: (Patkanov 1867: 76) – “The emir P'atlun (sic!) sent Vasak Pahlawuni, son of Grigor Magistros, with many troops against Balaberd, who through a ruse killed Senekerim the Armenian king, and took the land of Syunik'. And that was the beginning of the rule of the Tajiks over them”. Baghaberd is one of the principal fortresses of the region.

47 Այս փատլուն առնու զԱնի յԱլիխասլանայ, տալով նմա ոսկիակուտ նկարս ծաղկոց. եւ առաքէ տէր աւեր քաղաքին զՄանուչէ թոռն իւր յոյժ տղայ, որ իբրեւ զարգացաւ՝ յաւելոյր ի պարիսպն Անույ եւ յամրութիւնս նորա: (Thomson 1991: 103); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 195).

quake that devastated Antioch and Malik-Shah's granting of Ani to the Shaddadids. A date of 1072, however, is clearly far too early for the murder of Senekerim since we have endowments from him recorded in the mid-1080s. On the other hand, Vasak Pahlawuni could not have been the one who betrayed Senekerim in 1094 as Vardan says that he was killed by the Romans in AE 525 [= 1076 CE].⁴⁸ The account of Stepanos Orbelian may be of help here. Instead of Vasak Pahlawuni, Orbelian identifies Grigor Apiratean of Shirak, whom he also calls Grigor Anetsi, as the one who deceived Senekerim.⁴⁹ This Grigor Apiratean is likely to be the same Grigor whom Vardan notes was the son of Vasak and grandson of Apirat, who died victoriously defending the Shaddadid emir of Ani, Manuč'ē (Manuchihr b. Abu'l Aswar), at the battle of Kaghzvan (*Katuzan*).⁵⁰ According to Matthew of Edessa, Grigor, whom he titles Curopalates in the East, was the brother of the Armenian Catholicos Barsegh Anetsi and was killed in an ambush in 1099 on his journey home to Ani from that battle.⁵¹ Grigor and Barsegh were related to the Pahlawuni family through their mother who was the sister of Catholicos Grigor V kayaser.⁵²

Stepanos not only differs from Vardan in naming Grigor as the one who deceived Senekerim, but he also includes a more convoluted story about the ruse itself and the death of Senekerim. Vardan claims that Fadlun sent Vasak Pahlawuni with an army and they managed to take the fortresses of Baghk and Kapan by ruse, presumably capturing Senekerim in the process. Fadlun then ordered him to be killed. Orbelian, however, relates:⁵³

The emir of Partaw and Ran and Gandzak went out with many troops with prince Grigor Apiratean of Shirak and came to fight against Senekerim. Knowing that, Senekerim had also fortified the entire realm with impenetrable fortresses. Then, when the accursed emir

48 Thomson (1991: 104); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 196).

49 Ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 234–235) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 64).

50 Thomson (1991: 109); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 198).

51 Matteos (1869: 328); cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 174).

52 Matteos (1869: 253); cf. the English translation by Dostourian (1993: 140).

53 *Եկեալ ամիրայն Պարտաւայ և Ռանայ և Գանձակայ բազում զօրօք զայն 'ի պատերազմ ընդ Սենեքերիմայ, ընդ որում էր Շիրակայ իշխանն Գրիգոր Ապիրատեան: Իմացեալ զայն Սենեքերիմայ՝ ամրացոյց զամենայն աշխարհն յանառիկ ամուրս. և եկեալ ապա անիծեալ ամիրայն և տեսեալ, զի անհասարկն էր 'ի մարդկանէ՝ յուղարկէր զԳրիգոր իշխանն Անեցի – որ պատճառաւ ինչ կայր առ նմա – առ Սենեքերիմ արքայն և ասէ. «Երդամբ հաւանեցո զնա զալ առ իս և առնեմք ընդ միմեանս սէր և մեծամեծ պարգեւօք արձակեմ զնա. ապա թէ ոչ հաւանեցուցանես՝ և զքոյդ գլուխ աստէն հատանմ»:* Գնացեալ ապա Գրիգորին այն զշար ճանապարհն և մտեալ առ Սենեքերիմ՝ մեծամեծ երդամբ հաւանեցուցանէ զնա զալ առ ամիրայն, որք և եկինն 'ի միասին: Իսկ տեսեալ զնա շարաթոյն զազանին՝ ստեաց ուխտին, և յարձակեալ մումուանօք 'ի վերայ՝ եսպան զթագաւորն. և ինքն անց զնաց յաշխարհ իւր: ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 234–235) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 63–64).

came and saw that it was impossible for men, he sent prince Grigor Anetsi, who for some reason was with him, to king Senekerim, and said: “Convince him with an oath to come to me and we will make peace with each other, and I will shower him with great gifts. If you do not persuade [him], I will cut off your head right here.” So that Grigor followed the evil path and entered before Senekerim and with a very great oath persuaded him to go to the emir; and they went together. But upon seeing him, the venomous wild beast broke his pact and bubbling over with growls, killed the king; and he himself left and went to his own realm.

Orbelian thus identifies the ruse as not pertaining to entering the city with forces, but in Grigor’s convincing Senekerim to go to the emir to make peace. His story also presents Grigor as acting under duress. The wording of the passage, however, is unclear in places and creates even more ambiguity about what happened. Although each instance of opacity can be explained and the meaning understood, the semantic uncertainty inherent in the passage may signal the story’s struggle to make sense of the presence of an Armenian prince of Ani in the company of the emir, rather than with Senekerim. The text must mean that Grigor accompanied the emir, but the clause denoting that – “with whom was prince Grigor Anetsi of Shirak” – is placed immediately after it mentions Senekerim, opening the possibility that Grigor was originally with him. When it says that the emir sent Grigor to Senekerim, the verb “he sent” (*yowlarkēr*) closely resembles the verb “he sought” (*yowzarkēr*); immediately following the phrase “who was for some reason with him” (*or patčaraw inč kayr ar nma*), Senekerim is referred to in what almost looks like an apposition (*ar Senekerim*). The sentence could thus be (mis)understood as: “he sought prince Grigor Anetsi, who for some reason was with him, [i.e.,] with King Senekerim, and said....” Granted that Senekerim is in the wrong case for the phrasing to mean that, but the emir’s seeking out Grigor to speak with him would make more sense than the text as it stands now which suggests he spoke with Grigor after sending him. Finally, the emir’s final threat has a similar temporal distortion. The text suggests that if “you [Grigor] do not persuade” (*oč hawanec’owc’anes*) the king, the emir will kill him”, but then it says that he will kill him “right here” (*astēn*). Again, it would be better if the text read if “you [Grigor] do not agree” (*oč hawanis*) to go and bring the king, the emir would kill him right there and then”. In sum, the passage leaves very unclear whether Grigor was with the emir or with Senekerim; whether he betrayed the king, or faithfully served his emir.

3.1 Who is the emir?

Finally, there is the question of the identity of the emir. Orbelian does not name him or his family, merely referring to him as the emir of Partaw (Barda) and Ran

(Arran) and Gandzak (Ganja). Vardan, by contrast, explicitly calls him P'atlun (Faḍlūn) and equates him with the P'atlun to whom Alp Arslan entrusted Ani and who subsequently granted it to his grandson, Manuč'ē (Manuchihr). Vardan must be confused here as Fadl I b. Muhammad (d. 1031), who was Manuč'ē's grandfather, was long deceased by the time of Shaddadid control of Ani, and Fadl II b. Abu'l Aswar Shawur, who is likely the intended Shaddadid, was Manuč'ē's elder brother. According to the anonymous *Ta'riḫ Bāb al-Abwāb*, preserved in Ahmed b. Lütfullah's *Jāmi' al-duwal*, Fadl II b. Abu'l Aswar Shawur was overthrown by his son, Fadl III b. Fadl II, in 1073, but the latter only remained in power for two years. In 1075, the Seljuk Sultan, who must have been Malik-Shah and not Alp Arslan as the text states, granted Arran and Derbent (*Bāb al-Abwāb*) to his general Sawtigin (Shav Tegin). Fadl III b. Fadl II was unable to fight the Seljuk general and thus "surrendered his capital Ganja (*Ġanza*) and other parts of Arran"; his fate thereafter is unknown.⁵⁴ According to Ibn al-Athir, Malik-Shah had given Fadl II Astarabad after the loss of Arran, but he later revolted. The Sultan sent the emir Buzan to capture him and divided his possessions to a group of emirs. Fadl, he says, died penniless in Baghdad in 1091. Vardan also recalls the emir Buzan's actions against Fadl, but locates the latter specifically in Ganja: "In 537 [= 1088 CE], at the command of Malik-Shah, the emir Puzan took Gandzak from the [people] of P'atlun who are called *Šatatiks* (i.e., Shaddadids)".⁵⁵

If Vardan's involvement of Fadl is correct, Fadl II b. Abu'l Aswar Shawur must have regained control of Ganja at some point between 1075 and 1088; however, if Senekerim was killed in 1094, he (Fadl) could not have been the emir at that time as he died in 1091. A restoration of Fadl II b. Abu'l Aswar Shawur in Ganja in the 1080s is possible. Stepanos Orbelian records an endowment document by one of Senekerim's nobles, prince Hasan, that was confirmed in 1086, granting territory to the monastery of Tatev. In the document, Hasan asserts that "on this day when God granted me success, I took my fortress in Mštak'axt'ēn and grabbed the region of Kovsakan with my blood from the emir P'atlun".⁵⁶ For Fadlun to have contrived Senekerim's death, the assassination must have occurred around 1087, after the confirmation of this endowment, and before Buzan's expedition which deprived him of his territory. However, other endowments preserved by

54 Minorsky (1953b: 25).

55 Ի Հինգհարիւր երեսուն եւ եօթն թուին Պուզան ամիրայն հրամանաւ Մէլիք-շահին առ զԳանձակ ի Փատլնեացն որ Շատտաթիկքն կոչէին: (Thomson 1991: 106); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 197).

56 այս օրս որ Աստուած ինձ յաջողումն երես և ես զիմ բերդն ՚ի Մշտաքախթենէն առի և զԿովսական գաւառ իմ արեամբս յամիրայն Փատլնոյ թափեցի: ch. 61 (Emin 1861: 239) / 60 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 71).

Orbelian that invoke King Senekerim in 1089 and 1091 preclude that possibility. If a Shaddadid were involved in the murder of Senekerim in the mid-1090s, it must have been a Shaddadid of Ani or Dvin,⁵⁷ and not of Arran. Given Grigor Anetsi's close association with Manuchihr, it is possible that the antagonist here was not "P'atlun" but the Shaddadid emir of Ani.

It stands to reason that Manuchihr, along with his brother Abu Nasr in Dvin, and Senekerim in Baghk would come to blows following the death of Malik-Shah, as the northern part of Syunik had passed into possession of the Bagratuni kings of Ani in the 10th–11th centuries.⁵⁸ With the removal of the Bagratuni by the Byzantine Empire, those lands fell into imperial control, and very shortly thereafter into Seljuk possession and possibly parceled out among the Seljuk military elite. The confusion and infighting following the death of Malik-Shah, however, provided an opportunity for both Manuchihr and Senekerim to expand their domains. Although Manuchihr was apparently a loyal subject of Malik-Shah,⁵⁹ he had good grounds upon which to make larger claims on Bagratuni territory in the chaos that followed the sultan's death. He controlled the city of Ani, the former capital of the Bagratuni kingdom, which throughout the 12th century continued to be a site contested by multiple parties in recognition of its ability to bestow legitimacy upon its possessor.⁶⁰ Moreover, Manuchihr was related to the Bagratuni family on his mother's side. Aristakes Lastivertsi refers to Manuchihr's father, Abu'l-Aswar Shawur I b. Fadl I, as the "son-in-law of Ashot, King of Armenia", who should be identified with Ashot IV Bagratuni.⁶¹ Abu'l-Aswar's marriage to Ashot's daughter would explain why he named his second son Ashot and why, as Minorsky pointed out, the poet Qatran praised Abu'l Aswar's eldest son, Fadl II, with the phrase "the lamp of the Bagratid house".⁶² Manuchihr may have also married into the Bagratuni family as Vardan Areweltsi suggests that Fadlun IV's

57 Cf. Minorsky (1953b: 82–83).

58 The principality of Gegharkunik was annexed by king Ashot II Bagratuni (reg. 914–928) in ca. 918 (Martin-Hisard 2000: 403). Stepanos Taronetsi remarks that king Gagik I Bagratuni (reg. 989–1020) "controlled many fortresses and districts along the borders of Vayoc' Jor and Xaç'en and P'arisos, more than his brother" (*տիրեաց նա յոլով բերդից եւ դաւառաց ի սահմանացն Վայոց ձորոյ եւ խաչենոյ եւ Փարխտոսոյ՝ առաւել քան զեղբայր իւր*: Manukean 2011: 808; cf. the English translation by Greenwood 2017: 293). These lands in Syunik were probably acquired by Gagik through his marriage to princess Katranide, daughter of King Vasak of Syunik, upon her father's death as he had no male heirs. On the acquisition of Parisos, see also below.

59 Cf. Minorsky (1953b: 81).

60 La Porta (2008–2009: 131–138).

61 *Կեսայ թագաւորին Հայոց Աշտոյ*: (Yuzbashyan 1963: 96).

62 Minorsky (1953b: 51).

grandmother “Katay of the Bagratuni house was a Christian of royal descent”.⁶³ Manuchihr’s Bagratuni ties and control of Ani would have made him a formidable opponent to the king of Baghk. A recognition of the role the emir of Ani played in a conflict between Ani and Baghk may be why Vardan placed his notice about the death of Senekerim immediately prior to his report on the establishment of Manuchihr in the city, despite the chronological inaccuracy.

3.2 Conflated Senekerims?

The appearance of Fadlun and the emir of Barda, Arran, and Ganja, instead of Manuchihr of Ani, in Vardan and Orbelian may derive from a conflation with events surrounding the death of King Yovhannes-Senekerim of Albania-in-Parisos and that of his brother Grigor at the beginning of the 11th century. Movses Das-khurantsi records the restoration of the kingdom under Yovhannes-Senekerim with glorious expectation:⁶⁴

The right hand of the Most High chose the eldest son of Išxan [= Sewada Išxanik’], Yovhan-nēs, also called Senek’erim, and called him to be king; thus did Almighty God restore the long-extinct kingdom through him. The king of Persia⁶⁵ bestowed many decorations upon him and gave him his father’s crown and his steed. In the same year the Greek magistros called Dawit’⁶⁶ sent a wonderful crown and imperial purple in honor and praise of the man favored by God; and he received consecration as king from the right hand of the patriarch to the glory of Christ.

The kingdom was not destined to survive long and came to an end with Yovhan-nes-Senekerim’s brother, Grigor, who died in 1003. According to Stepanos Taronetsi, “at this time, in 452 of the Era, the princes of P’arisos, who were from the Haykazean line, who had endured until Senek’erim and Grigor, came to a natural

63 Կատայ ի տանէ Բագրատունի՝ քրիստոնեայ էր յազգէ թագաւորաց: (Thomson 1991: 123); cf. the English translation by Thomson (1989: 204).

64 Իսկ զերէց որդին Իշխանանոյ զՅովհաննէս, որ եւ Սենեքերիմ կոչեցաւ, ընտրեաց աջ բարձրելոյն՝ կոչելով ի թագաւորութիւն. զվարնջուց խափանեալ թագաւորութիւնն տէրն ամենակալ ի ձեռն սորա նորոգեաց, զոր թագաւորն Պարսից շքով եւ մեծամեծ զարդուք զարդարեաց զնա. տայ նմա եւ զթագ հօր իւրոյ եւ զնորին երիվարն: Ի նոյն ամի եւ որ Յունացն էր մագիստրոս՝ Դաւիթ կոչեցեալ անունմ թագ զարմանազան եւ ծիրանիս թագաւորական առաքէր ի պատիւ եւ ի գովեստ աստուածալաշող առնն աշնորիկ եւ ի ձեռն հայրապետական աշոյն առնոյր զօծումն թագաւորական ի փառս Քրիստոսի: (Arakelyan 1983: 341); cf. the English translation by Dowsett (1961a: 227).

65 The Buyid emir, ‘Aḍud al-Dawla (reg. 949–983).

66 David (III), the Curopalates of Tao (d. 1000).

end. The king of Armenia, Gagik, and P'atlun, amir of Gandzak, divided their country after a dispute between them".⁶⁷

Yovhannes-Senekerim of Parisos and Senekerim of Baghk could have been easily confused as both were rulers recognized by “a Persian king,” were associated with the title king of Albania, were sons of someone named Sewada, and were succeeded by someone named Grigor. To this list of shared characteristics, we may add that the end of both stories involved a Shaddadid and a member of the ruling elite of Ani.⁶⁸ This confusion may have been further facilitated by Vardan's consideration of Senekerim of Baghk to be Haykazn.

Within the context of competing claims to the territory that had once belonged to the Bagratuni kingdom, whether solely within Syunik or beyond, Senekerim's adoption of the title of “King of Armenia” in his endowment document represents more than a form of political synecdoche that aggrandized its bearer. It was an assertion of authority and legitimacy over disputed lands that directly challenged the emir of Ani who ruled the royal metropolis. Senekerim's attempt to secure his hold over those territories failed with his assassination and, as Stepanos Orbelian comments, “his son Grigor assumed his dominion, and reigned in a diminished and obscure manner”.⁶⁹ Orbelian presents a chronological account of the reduction of the kingdom of Baghk from 1102–1170, but he prefaces this narration with an etiological tale that lays the blame for Baghk's destruction on Senekerim.⁷⁰ According to this story, while Senekerim was being honored by Malik-Shah, the latter's servant named Chortman (Շորտման) was not very free with the wine. Although Senekerim promised him many gifts, he would not relent. Finally, the king offered him his daughter in marriage and Chortman agreed and they sealed the deal. When Chortman achieved the rank of prince, he went to Senekerim to claim his bride, but the king insulted and ridiculed him. Because of the way he was treated, Chortman invaded and destroyed the region. The story contains common narratological elements – the figure of the butler, a broken marriage oath, a banquet scene – that are beyond the scope of this essay to unpack. However, it does nicely encapsulate how relations between the kingdom

67 Յայտմ ժամանակի, ի ՆՅԻ Թուականին իշխանքն Փառխոտոյ, որ ի Հայկազնեայ ազանց՝ բաւեալ մինչև ցլենեքերիմ եւ ցԳրիգոր սպառեցան մահուամբ: Զորոց զաշխարհն բաժանեալ Հակառակութեամբ ի միջի իւրեանց արքայն Հայոց Գագիկ եւ Փատրոն ամիրայն Գանձակայ: (Manukean 2011: 827–828); cf. the English translation by Greenwood (2017: 313).

68 In her excellent study of medieval Syunik, Zaroui Pogossian (forthcoming) suggests that Manuchihr may have made an aspirational claim to being the emir of Barda, Arran, and Ganja and that is why Vardan and Stepanos cite this title.

69 Հառ. գտէրութիւն նորա որդի իւր Գրիգոր՝ նուազ եւ ընդազօտ թագաւորեալ: ch. 58 (Emin 1861: 235) / 59 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 64).

70 Ch. 60 (Emin 1861: 243–247) / 61 (Shahnazareants 1859: II, 76–82).

of Baghik and the Seljuk sultanate, once very close, broke down. In addition, this story once again reveals a tie between Senekerim and Ani. According to Orbelian, he found this information in a letter that Bishop Stepanos III of Syunik (sed. 1168–1216) had composed at the request of Mkhitar Anetsi, claviger of the cathedral of Ani and a historian. Although only an introductory portion of the tripartite history completed in 1193 has survived, Mkhitar presumably included the information provided by Bishop Stepanos in the second part of his history dedicated to the period “from Yovhannēs⁷¹ until the ordination of lord Barsel”.⁷²

4 Conclusion

Senekerim was unsuccessful in actualizing his claims, but how he and his sister promoted themselves in their endowments and how he was remembered in the historiographical record do bring into relief the contextualized deployment of medieval Caucasian identity. In her inscriptions, Shahandukht underscored her royal Albanian heritage to establish herself alongside her husband Grigor, the king of Baghik, and to bolster the union of Baghik and Ktish. Senekerim, on the other hand, chose to accentuate his associations with Armenianness in order to legitimize the expansion of his kingdom beyond Baghik into other regions of Syunik and possibly challenge the claims of the Shaddadid emir of Ani in the power vacuum that emerged following the death of Malik-Shah. The recollections of Senekerim in the historiographical tradition underscore how historical memory further contoured assertions of political authority and ethnicity to assimilate them within ideologies of kingship in the Caucasus.

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⁷¹ I.e., Yovhannes-Smbat III (reg. 1020–1040).

⁷² I.e., Catholicos Barsegh I Anetsi (sed. 1105–1113). – *Ի Յովաննիսէ մինչեւ ի քանահայանայն տեառն Բարսղի: Եւ երրորդն՝ մինչեւ ի գերելն գերուսաղէմ եւ յելս ազգաց Յրանգաց:* (Margarayan 1983: 61).

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Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev

15 Between the Planes and the Mountains: the Albanian-Armenian Marches in the 12th Century and David of Gandzak (c. 1065–1140)


Abstract: This Chapter focuses on the city of Ganja/Gandzak and the basin of the river Kura in its middle course. We shall compare the presence of the Church of Caucasian Albania in the pre-Caspian planes and in the easternmost spurs of the Lesser Caucasus facing the city. Special attention will be devoted to the activity of David of Gandzak (c. 1065–1140), the author of “Admonitory Exhortations” written at the request of a priest from Ganja.

David’s book affords a lens through which to observe cultural interaction in these marchlands between former Caucasian Albania and Armenia during the first decades of the Turkic colonisation of the south-eastern Caucasus. Yet, the “Admonitory Exhortations” have but very seldom been used as a source of this crucial moment in the history of the region because they do not easily fit into any known category of historical documents. They contain, in particular, rare information concerning relationships between the Muslim population of Ganja and other cities and towns in the lowlands of the former Albanian kingdom, and their Christian inhabitants, as well as instances of cultural blending and religious syncretism. Such phenomena have largely determined the history of the south-eastern Caucasus during the subsequent centuries. The analysis of these phenomena thus allows us to gain a deeper understanding of the reciprocal perceptions of the region’s diverse ethnic and religious groups.

1 Ganja/Gandzak and Armenia’s “Eastern Regions”

The medieval city of Ganja (Arm. *Ganjak*, Arab. *Ġanza*) was situated in the valley of the middle course of the river Kura (known as *Kūpoç* to classical authors and

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called *Kowr* in Armenian, *Mt̕kuari* in Georgian, *Kor* in Persian, *Kür* in Azeri and *Kura* in Russian), at the foot of the easternmost spurs of the Lesser Caucasus, which descend to the pre-Caspian planes in the north-easterly and easterly directions.¹ The city lay close to the mouth of the homonymous stream emptying into the Kura, 6–7 km downstream of present-day Gəncə (formerly Elizavetpol, Kirovabad and КƏНЧƏ) in Azerbaijan.

The “Guide through the Country” (*Ašxarhac’oyc’*) of Anania of Shirak (c. 610–680) allows us to conclude that Gandzak lay in what since the Arsacid period – or even since earlier times – had been the land of Utik (*Utik’*, a collective plural of the ethnonym *Uti*, also spelt *Ōti* in Armenian, certainly related to the ethnonym *Udi* on the territory of present-day Azerbaijan). Anania notably indicates that the *Uti* land is situated “between *Arc’ax* and the river *Kowr*”.² After the Arsacid monarchy in Armenia had been suppressed in 428, Utik, together with other principalities and districts of the right bank of the Kura, was attached to Albania.³ This change in Albania’s geography rendered the Armenian linguistic and cultural influence in this country more intense.

When, during the later part of the 5th century, the administrative centre of Albania had shifted to the fortress of Perozapat near the ancient Armenian city of Partaw (later *Barḡa’a* in Islamic sources, near present-day Bərdə in Azerbaijan) in the lowland of Utik – a territory which had still largely (or even predominantly) been inhabited by Armenians and Armenian speakers –, the linguistic and ethnic demarcation between the two countries progressively faded. The name *Aluank’* (which is known to classical authors as *Albania*, but which in Armenian can also render the collective noun *Albanians*, in later Armenian sources sometimes spelt as *Aluvank’* or *Alvank’*) consequently spread not only onto the former

1 Cf. Al’tman (1949: 6, 10–11); Minorsky (1953b: 39); Trever (1959: 266); Minorsky (1963: 29–32, 35–38, 155–156, 191 n. 10).

2 *Ašxarhac’oyc’*, § 77: րնդ վէջ Արցախսոյ եւ Կուր գետոյ (Whiston 1736: 360); see the discussion in Hewsens (1992: 195, 260–61, 294). Here, Anania is consonant with Ptolemy (*Geography* V.13.9 [V.12.4]) who in the second century CE reckoned *Otēnē* amongst the Armenian lands situated between Euphrates, Kyros and Araxes, locating it precisely along the Kyros. See also Garsōian (1989: 498, 445–446). Aleksan Hakobyan (2009: 409) has observed that in early Armenian sources the root *Uti-* in the name of the land is sometimes spelt *Ōtē-* or *Ōti-* (the land of *Ōti-ac’i-k’*, of *Ōtē-ac’i-k’* or the *Ōtiakan* land), which is phonetically closer to the name mentioned by classical authors. As to the language of the *Udi* ethnos and its relation to Caucasian Albanian, cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook.

3 Krymskiy (1934: 295); Trever (1959: 225); Minorsky (1963: 29); Toumanoff (1963: 475–484); Hakobyan (1987: 111–117); Hewsens (1992: 142); Martin-Hisard (2000: 407); Aleksidze and Mahé in Gippert et al. (2008: I, viii).

Armenian provinces, but also onto other Christian, ethnically mixed, lands lying on the right bank of the middle course of the Kura.⁴

In 551–555 or soon afterwards, after the Khazar incursions had rendered the Caspian coast highly insecure, also the see of the Albanian Catholicos was transferred from ancient *Č'oł* (or *Čoray*) near present-day Derbent (*Darband* in Islamic sources) in Dagestan to Partaw. In the first part of the composite *History of the Albanians* (a title which can also be translated as *History of the Country of the Albanians*) written in Armenian between the 8th and the end of the 10th century we find a confirmation that the right bank of the Kura, a broad and deep river, as well as the marshlands frequent along its banks, offered better protection from hostile incursions.⁵ Whilst under Islamic rule ecclesiastical hierarchy and institutions were the only form of autonomy left to the non-Muslims, the settlement of the primate of the Albanian Church in Utik further strengthened the perception of this land (on the part of both the Albanians and the Armenians) as a part of Albania.

These developments notwithstanding, the memory of ancient Armenian geography lingered. The 8th-century Armenian author of the first two books of the *History of the Albanians*, who declares himself to come from Utik,⁶ calls his native land “The Eastern Border[land]s”.⁷ Clearly, at the centre of his mental map is the Ararat valley, i.e. Armenia’s heartland which is situated in the west. The idea of the “East” in Armenian historiography, from its inception, had been associated with Iran, whereas later the “Eastern Regions”⁸ – i.e. the lands occupying the eastern and the north-eastern slopes of the Lesser Caucasus and its “deep ravines”⁹ – were those most closely approaching the Islamic world. As the most important city of the entire eastern Caucasus during David of Gandzak’s time,

4 Adontz (2006: 515); Toumanoff (1963: 477–478, 480–481, n. 189); Eghiazaryan (2010: 72); Hakobyan (1987: 142–149, 244–245).

5 See the *History of the Albanians*, book II, ch. 4 (Gasporean 2010: 163–164); see also the *History of the Armenians* by Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, ch. 63 (Ter-Vardanean 2010: 556). This location also facilitated the Sasanians’ control of Albania; see Krymskiy (1934: 295, 298, n. 3); Barkhutareants’ (1893: 55; 1895: 2).

6 The provenance of the author of books I and II is known from his own declaration; see *History of the Albanians*, book 2, ch. 11 (Gasporean 2010: 184). Furthermore, *Kalankatoyk’* (and, admittedly, also *Dasxuran* [var. *Dasxurēn*]), with which the author of the *History* was associated in later centuries, is also situated in Utik. The aforementioned text – in which the village *Kalankatoyk’* is mentioned – does not imply, however, that the writer stemmed from the same.

7 *Աստիանք Արեւելից*; see the *History of the Albanians* (39, 51, 64, 65, 135, 136, 149, and passim). Cf. Hakobyan (1987: 239, 247–248, 254–255, 268).

8 *Արեւելից Կողմանքն*; Dorfmann-Lazarev (2021: 258–259).

9 Cf. the *History of the Albanians*, book I, ch. 28 (Gasporean 2010: 140); cf. also Stepanos Orbelian’s *History of the Province of Sisakan*, ch. 21 (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 122) / 20 (Emin 1861: 58).

Ganja was a point of contact between the lands possessing a complex Armenian-Albanian Christian identity and various Islamic populations reaching the pre-Caspian planes by successive waves from the south.

The flat land that Ganja overlooks in the south-easterly direction had already largely been Islamicised by the 8th century. That region was suitable for pasturage of large herds, also so in winter, and in the course of the 10th century Kurds, as later Türkomans, Turks and Mongols, made there their settlements.¹⁰ From the middle of the 8th century, the main centres of Islamic power in the South-Eastern Caucasus developed precisely along the right bank of the Kura: first in Bardha'a by the mouth of the river Tartar (Arm. *Tərtu* / *Tart'ar*, the chief right tributary of the middle Kura), then, after the decline of its military and economic importance at the beginning of the 10th century, in Ganja upstream of Bardha'a and, further upstream, in Shamkir (Arm. *Šamk'or*, Arab. *Šamkūr*), thus occupying the main line of communication of the South-Eastern Caucasus, verging on its highlands.¹¹

Via the Kura, Ganja was linked to Tbilisi, Shamakhi and Derbent, whereas over the bridges across the Araxes to Ardabil and Tabriz, also profiting from the navigation on the Caspian sea.¹² Thanks to these lines of communication, the city could develop into a flourishing commercial centre affecting the economic activities of a vast area. Al-Istakhri, a Persian geographer writing in Arabic at the end of the first half of the 10th century – the first to leave us a description of the entire Muslim world – praises the city and the surrounding country in the highest terms.¹³ The list of goods sold on the markets of Ganja and Bardha'a indicates that various Armenian principalities were involved in that trade.¹⁴

1.1 The Albanian Catholicoi's seats and peregrinations

Nowhere else does historical Armenia possess such a clearly defined geographical boundary as that which separates the highlands of the Eastern Regions (encom-

¹⁰ Recently, Andrew Peacock stressed the importance of the adaptability of the terrain and the climatic conditions for nomadic invaders as a factor explaining the advance of the Seljuk conquests (2010: 128–129, 144–163).

¹¹ Zuckerman (2000: 568).

¹² Al'tman (1949: 12); Trever (1959: 266); Bartol'd (1963: 792); Manandian (1965: 139–140, 162–163); Ter-Ghewondyan (1976: 141).

¹³ See the excerpt translated in Laurent and Canard (1980: 513–514).

¹⁴ Cf. also al-Muqaddasi (writing, admittedly, in the 980s), in Laurent and Canard (1980: 539); Al'tman (1949: 12); Manandian (1965: 146–147); Trever (1959: 266).

passing Artsakh and, hence, the Karabagh¹⁵ of the later centuries) from the Kura valley. Numerous Armenian fortresses, forts, monasteries, hermitages and villages of the Eastern Regions were situated in merely a few dozens of kilometres off Ganja. This proximity explains how, notwithstanding the on-going assimilation to the city's Muslim majority, the Christian population of Ganja could continuously be alimented and maintain its cultural and religious identity, whilst the city even remained the seat of an archbishop of the Albanian Church.¹⁶

Under Muslim pressure, however, the Albanian Catholicoi often preferred to settle in the mountainous regions lying east of Ganja. That area was covered by a web of impregnable forts, as well as a number of fortresses, erected on steep crags surrounded by woods, which offered protection to the monasteries built on the slopes beneath. A later historian from Ganja, Kirakos Gandzaketsi (1200/03–1271/2), specifies that the Albanian Catholicoi “did not possess a stable site for their see”.¹⁷ Both the *History of the Albanians* and Kirakos speak of Catholicos Yovhannes (796–821) moving his see (*kat'otikosaran*) from Partaw to Berdak/Berdakur/Berdak'ar on the Tartar upstream, on the right bank of this river.¹⁸

In what follows, we propose succinctly to survey several exemplary cases of Catholicoi's vicissitudes, which pertain to the period spanning from the turn of the 11th/12th to the first third of the 13th century. This will allow us to apprehend some essential features of the interaction between the lowlands and the mountains that characterised the *nachleben* of Caucasian Albania.

Stepanos Orbelian (1250/60–1303) speaks of Catholicos Stephen¹⁹ (1077–1103) retiring at an advanced age to the monastery Vahanavank 6.5 km north-west of Kapan, i.e. beyond the boundaries of the Albanian patriarchate and already on the territory of the metropolitan eparchy of *Siunik'*, as Orbelian specifies.²⁰ This occurred during the lifetime of Shahandukht and Katay, the younger sisters of Senekerim I (c. 1072–1094) who was not only king of *Siunik'* but also titular king

15 For the etymology of this toponym, see Dorfmann-Lazarev (2021: 287–288, n. 175).

16 Ganja for centuries maintained an important Armenian population. The end to the Armenian presence in the middle Kura valley was put by the Azerbaijanis' riots of November 1988 in Kirovabad (today, Gəncə); the city was almost entirely emptied of its Armenian inhabitants before the end of 1989, i.e. c. two years before the demise of the Soviet Union; see Oganezov and Kharatyan (2014).

17 Հաստատուն տեղի աթոռոյ (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 182).

18 *History of the Albanians*, book 3, ch. 24 (Gasparyan 2010: 424); Kirakos, ch. 6 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 198).

19 The name “Stephen” is variously spelt in Armenian sources as *Step'anos* or *Step'annos*.

20 This monastery was built in 911/912 by one Vahan who was a son of Dzagik prince of Kovsakan and Baghk (c. 895–906); see Orbelian's *History*, ch. 45 (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 284–285) / 44 (Emin 1861: 174–175).

of Albania.²¹ In Vahanavank, Catholicos Stephen was also subsequently buried,²² and his gravestone is preserved, bearing a versified epitaph: “I, Lord Step’anos, the Catholicos of Albania (*ahvanic’ kat’olikos*), pressed by Muslims (*tačik*), came to repose in the vaulted narthex (*gawit’*) of the church built by the God-loving queen Shahandukht and by Katay”.²³

Mkhitar Gosh (c. 1135–1213), another writer from Ganja, provides us in his *Chronography* with details concerning the consecration of a Catholicos of Caucasian Albania, which was celebrated on the day of Pentecost in 1139.²⁴ From Kirakos of Gandzak we know that David of Gandzak was involved in the correspondence with the Armenian Catholicos, which preceded the election of Gagik to the throne of Catholicos of the Albanian Church as Grigores (1139–1145). The ceremony took place in the fortress of the king of Lori, Abbas I Bagratuni (c. 1100–1145), in his patrimonial district of Tawush;²⁵ the fortress is situated on the left bank of the stream Dzoraget (*Joroy get* in ancient Armenian sources) emptying into the Kura upstream of Ganja. Built by his grandfather David the Landless (989/991–1046/1048), it is perched atop a wedge-shaped crag formed by the deep bed of the Dzoraget and its left tributary, the Lori (see Fig. 1).²⁶ Abbas Bagratuni could assume such a prominent role in the consecration of an Albanian catholicos because since king Gurgen-Kvirike I (982–989), the kings of Lori had been recognised as titular kings of Albania.²⁷

The Catholicos’s seat was then set in the retreat of the fort known as *Kat’olikosi K’ar*, i.e. “Catholicos’s Crag”. Doubts persist as to its location.²⁸ The height

21 Cf. Toumanoff (1976: 72, 241, 525 [A xviii], 532 [A xxx]); cf. Chapter 14 of this Handbook (La Porta).

22 See Orbelian’s *History*, ch. 45 (Shahnazareants 1859: I, 284–287) / 44 (Emin 1861: 174–176).

23 Barkhudaryan (1960: 139, no. 408); Ulubabayan (1975: 97); Hakobyan (2020: 264).

24 Mkhitar, *Chronography* (Manandyan and Acharyan 2014b: 606); Kirakos, ch. 10 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 199–200).

25 Toumanoff (1976: 112).

26 41°0’9.5” N, 44°25’52.3” E.

27 Cf. Mkhitar Ayrivanetsi’s *Chronographical History* (Patkanean 1867: 75).

28 In the past, *Kat’olikosi K’ar* was often identified with Shikakar and recognised in the ruined fortress not remote from the princely residence of Khokhanaberd (40°3’27” N, 46°31’51” E; both crags situated between the headwaters of the stream Khachen and its right tributary Kolatak), i.e. in the very heart of Artsakh. Lying in the territory of the village Karaglukh situated between the rivers Karkar and Khachen and towering over surrounding heights, the fortress offers a view which once commanded numerous forts in the two valleys (see Figs. 2–4). Together with Khokhanaberd and a few other fortresses, with which it was linked by a system of visual communication via beacons, as well as by paths and tunnels, it provided the principality of Khachen, in Shahan Mkrtchyan’s words, with a “powerful defensive ring”; see Mkrtchyan (1989: 165–167); Sargsyan (2002: 79–80). Archaeological excavations have never been carried out in the region. The fortress covers an area of 20 000 square meters, over which S. Sargsyan has counted at least



Fig. 1: The bed of the river Dzoraget watched from the air.

known under the name of *Kat'olikosac' Sar* (i.e. “Catholicoi’s Mountain”) or under the abridged form of *Kat'ulkasar*, is a short mountainous chain stretching along the right bank of the river Tartar mentioned above, one of the main lines of communication between the Eastern Regions and *Siunik*.²⁹ Recently, the Karabagh ethnographer Slava Sargsyan has proposed to identify *Kat'olikosi K'ar* with the fort nowadays bearing the name of *Sngrateli K'ar* (i.e. the “Rouge Crag”, certainly on account of the characteristic taint of its rock) on the territory of the village Maghavuz situated atop one of the heights of this chain. This is, avows Sargsyan, the only fortification perceptible nowadays in the *Kat'olikosac' Sar*.³⁰ Remains of fortifications on the crag’s slopes indicate, according to the scholar, that *Sngrateli K'ar* and the fortress lying beneath and known as *Mayrak'atak'/Mariamk'atak'* (i.e.

26 constructions from the past centuries. The late medieval church of the Mother of God in the centre of the village reposes on the foundations of a 13th-century basilica. Numerous monuments are also to be found in the surroundings, amongst which Sargsyan has notably identified ten *khachkars* dated to the 12th–13th centuries (in the villages Khanabad and Norshen/Sardarashen), some carrying anthropomorphic representations characteristic of Karabagh, and a chapel in Khanabad, built in 1224 (1993: 80, 83, 85–88, 91, 93–94). Recently, S. Sargsyan has rejected the identification of Shikakar with Karaglukh (oral communication).

29 Cf. Manandyan (1936: 202, 203); Mkrtchyan (1989: 33–34).

30 Oral communication; cf. Fig. 5.



Fig. 2: The ruins of a fortress in Karaglukh, sometimes identified as *Kat'olikosi K'ar*.

“City of the Mother [of God]” or “City of Mary”, in the village Vaghuhas), comprising a church built in 1183, represented in the past a single fortified complex.³¹

Of all the locations inhabited at various moments by the Albanian primates this is the only one to retain their memory in its very name, which indicates its privileged character. Admittedly, also the later Catholicos Step'annos (1155–1195) once resided in *Kat'olikosi K'ar*, because Kirakos preserves for us an account, which will be discussed in more detail below, in which an Emir of Ganja invites the Catholicos to celebrate the sanctification of water in this city. This celebration provokes an unhappy incident after which the Catholicos is constrained to leave for Khachen, i.e. the central part of Artsakh – never again to return to Ganja.³² Admittedly, it is to *Kat'olikosi K'ar*, lying in the heart of the principality of Khachen, that he departs.

Catholicos Yovhannes (1195–1235) first established his see in *Č'arek'* on the left bank of the upper course of the stream Shamkor. Kirakos's *History* allows us furthermore to suppose that Yovhannes was not the first to retire to this location,

³¹ See Mkrtychyan (1989: 48–49).

³² Kirakos, ch. 6 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 181); cf. note 84 below.



Fig. 3: The ruins of a fortress in Karaglukh, with the valley of the river Karkar in the background.



Fig. 4: The ruins of a fortress in Karaglukh.



Fig. 5: Sngrateli K'ar.

because at an earlier point the historian specifies that a cave (probably, earlier a site of hermitage) near the fortress of *Č'arek'* served as a refuge for Albanian primates.³³ Later Yovhannes sought protection further north, by the princes Zakarian of Lori and Somkhiti, Zakare II (1187–1212/1213) and his brother Ivane (†1233), who at the end of the 12th – beginning of the 13th century came to control a vast territory stretching from the Kura to the Araxes.³⁴ Prince Ivane offered Catholicos Yovhannes a residence in the monastery of Khamshi on the left bank of the upper course of the stream Dzegam (*Zakam*) which empties into the Kura upstream of the Shamkor (and downstream of the Dzoraget).³⁵

This fragmentary information does not allow us, of course, to reconstruct the entire map of the Albanian primates' dwellings and peregrinations. Yet we may conclude therefrom that they were often hosted by Armenian and Armenian-Georgian princely families in the upper streams of the middle Kura's right tributaries which densely "rule" the river's right bank between the Khachen in the

³³ Kirakos, ch. 6 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 178, 182).

³⁴ Toumanoff (1976: 291).

³⁵ Kirakos, ch. 6 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 182).

south-east and the Aghstev (*Atstew* in Armenian sources) in the north-west, as well as by princes of *Siunik* further west. Most of these families claimed to the title of Kings of Albania. That neither residence became durable may not be entirely unrelated to the prelates' intentions: deprived of a secure base in the Kura valley, from which they would be able to commute to the narrow wooded ravines of the Eastern Regions, they were constrained to itinerant lifestyle across this extremely rugged area in order to maintain the bonds of friendship with the local Christian princes and to exercise supervision of their flock.

1.2 The Kurds of the Pre-Caspian lowlands

In Mkhitar Gosh's list of the ecclesiastics convened for the consecration of Gagik-Grigores in Tavush in 1139, the prelate of Ganja bears the highest title, that of an archbishop.³⁶ The archbishopric of Ganja remained the most visible sign of enduring ecclesiastical presence in the Albanian lowland. Ganja must intermittingly also have hosted Catholicoi. This is suggested by Kirakos who, in his account of the earthquake that befell Ganja in 1139, specifies that Catholicos Gagik-Grigores survived the disaster.³⁷ This should indicate that the newly elected Catholicos visited the city before parting to Artsakh, most certainly receiving on this occasion the Emir's investiture. As has already been indicated, Kirakos furthermore accounts of Badr al-din, the Emir of Ganja, inviting Catholicos Stephen (1155–1195) with his clergy solemnly to celebrate the rite of the sanctification of water in that city.³⁸ This ecclesiastical presence instilled in the Albanians' and Armenians' minds the perception of Ganja as, in Mkhitar's words, the "capital city of Albania".³⁹

David of Gandzak (*Davit' Ganjakec'i*), whose activity will be discussed in Section 2 below, was born in c. 1065, when Ganja was still the capital city of the Kurdish Shaddadids (970/71–1075) who held sway over a large part of the planes of the south-eastern Caucasus. Kurds had first massively reached the South Caucasus in the first half of the 10th century via the neighbouring Azerbaijan (*Ādarbāy-gān*) lying south of the Araxes, then colonising the middle Araxes valley south-west of Mt Ararat and, eventually, the warm and fertile Mugan plane (*Mowakan*

³⁶ Mkhitar Gosh, *Chronography*: *արհիպիսկոպոս* (Manandyan and Acharyan 2014b: 606b, l. 8).

³⁷ Kirakos, ch. 10 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 200); cf. Chapter 15A of this Handbook (Gippert) for Kirakos's text.

³⁸ Kirakos, ch. 6 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 179–180).

³⁹ Mkhitar Gosh, *Martyrdom of St Khostrov*: *յաշխարհն Աղուանից ի մայրաքաղաքն, որ կոչի Գանձակ* (Manandyan and Acharyan 2014a: 577, ll. 2–3).

in Armenian sources) at the confluence of the Araxes with the Kura, as mercenary soldiers in the service of Arab emirates established in the Kura valley.⁴⁰ From Armenian and Arabic sources we also hear of Kurdish chieftains serving Armenian princes of the Eastern Regions in the second half of the 10th century.⁴¹

By colonising the lowlands, Kurds absorbed numerous Albanians and Armenianised Albanians. Various cases of reciprocal integration of Kurds and Armenians must have been facilitated by the fact that in spite of differences in their social organisation and economy, the Kurds had been living in close proximity to the Armenians south and south-east of Lake Van since the first centuries CE, or even from more remote times, whence at an early date many of them had migrated to the middle Araxes valley.⁴² From Arab sources we are also informed of the spread of Christianity amongst Kurds before the 10th century.⁴³ During David's time the Kurds were yet only superficially Islamicised,⁴⁴ being even apt to assimilate various Christian practices of the colonised populations, which facilitated contacts with Christians. As we shall see below (Section 2), this feature of the Kurdish society of Ganja is reflected in David's book.

With the Shaddadids, the Kurds' language and customs spread over the pre-Caspian lowlands, even becoming dominant in certain areas before the end of the 10th century.⁴⁵ The Kurdish character of the lowlands must have remained preponderant also for a certain time after 1075, when Ganja and its surrounding lands were surrendered to Alp-Arslan's commander Shav Tegin (Sawtigin).⁴⁶ Türkoman and Turkish tribes, which had already been filtering into the South Caucasus and Armenia before the first Turkic incursions into these lands between 1016

40 Ter-Ghewondyan (1976: 110–111).

41 See the text translated by Minorsky (1953b: 12; cf. also 14) and commented by him (1953b: 39–40, 71–72). The author of the text, Ahmad b. Lutfullah, known as *Müneccim Başı* (i.e. “Chief Astronomer”), had access to numerous sources, and notably to the *History of Derbent and Shirvan* (*Ta'riḥ al-Bāb wa Šarwān*) completed towards 1075 by an expert in Islamic law who lived in close neighbourhood to Ganja, to the *History of Arran* written by an author from *Barḍa'a* and to other local chronicles. His work is preserved in an abridged Turkish translation of 1730; cf. Minorsky (1953b: 9, cf. also 3–5, and 1963: 15–19). Cf. Vardan Areweltsi, § 82 (1862: 138); Kirakos, ch. 4 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 162–163); Conrad (2018: 178–179).

42 Minorsky (1953b: 128); Asatryan (1997: 7); James (2007: 101–126).

43 Poladyan (1985: 159).

44 Relying on the data of taxation, Arshak Poladyan estimates that the massive Islamicisation in the midst of the Kurds only began between the 9th and the 10th century; see Poladyan (1985: 159–60, 165, 168; 1987: 70–73); James (2008: 114–115).

45 Minorsky (1953b: 35–39).

46 On the Turkish conquests in *Āḍarbāyḡān* (lying south of the Araxes) and the South Caucasus see Minorsky (1953b: 24–25, 48, 54); Bosworth (1968: 95).

and 1029,⁴⁷ intermingled there with Kurds, adopted the Kurdish tongue and customs and, over time, became absorbed into the Kurdish majority.⁴⁸ This explains why Turks are never mentioned in David's book: the Armenians still looked at the Turkic newcomers through the "prism" of the Kurdish population of the region,⁴⁹ and this in spite of the considerable differences in lifestyle between the Kurds and the Turks, still perceptible in the 12th century, as well as their reciprocal hostility noticed in contemporary sources.⁵⁰

1.3 Interethnic exchanges in the Kura valley

The Armenian cultural presence in the Kura valley, thence also extending further east, is attested by numerous signs of Armenian influence on northern Kurdish dialects (Kurmanji), i.e. the varieties of Kurdish which are mostly spoken, by both Muslims and Yezidis, in the South Caucasus and which have preserved numerous archaic features.⁵¹ Of the 278 Armenian lexical units attested in these dialects, Garnik Asatryan identifies *c.* ten Armenian loanwords – mostly names of wild plants, as well as words relating to agriculture, husbandry and money exchange – which are datable precisely to the 11th–12th centuries. In dating these linguistic encounters, Asatryan relies on both the phonetical evolutions of Armenian and Kurdish and the semantic shifts that occurred in Armenian during the second millennium CE.⁵² These loanwords reflect protracted and close economic exchanges between the two populations in the South Caucasus and indicate that by reaching the region, the Kurds inherited from the local Armenians and Armenianised Albanians various skills especially relating to the cultivation of the land and commerce.

Whilst during the first decades of the Turkic inroads into the South Caucasus the Turks' absorption within the Kurdish majority can be observed, a reverse process will occur with the Turks' increasing flow. Indeed, the Kurdish dialects spoken today in the South Caucasus have more than other regional Kurdish idioms been influenced by Turkish. As already Vladimir Minorsky pointed out, the Kurdish past of numerous settlements on both banks of the middle-low Kura

47 Yuzbashyan (1962: 146–151); Agajanov and Yuzbashyan (1965: 147–151, 155, 158).

48 Gordlevskiy (1941: 46); Ocak (2009: 361).

49 Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 277–321).

50 James (2008: 119–120; 2010: 7–8).

51 MacKenzie (1986: 482–483); Asatryan (1997: 7–8); Haig (2007: 402, 404, 411–412).

52 Asatryan (1997: 9–10; 2001: 62–65; 2009: 39–40).

valley, especially in the flat area of Bardha'a, is also reflected in numerous contemporary Azerbaijani toponyms built upon *kurd*.⁵³

Whilst mentioning Armenians, Georgians and Kurds, David – as well as his contemporaries – does not mention Albanians. By his time Albanian must already have been extinguished as a written and liturgical language. In point of fact, already two centuries earlier, the Armenian Catholicos John of Draskhanakert (c. 848–929), who was personally acquainted with the former Caucasian Albania, specifies that his contemporary Albanian princes recognised themselves as belonging to the same “people” (*žotovurd*) as the Armenians.⁵⁴

The Azerbaijani language and toponymy do not allow us to detect any sign of cultural influence that the remainder of Albanian speakers could have exerted on the newcomers. The exchanges between the Turkophones and the local Armenians were, on the contrary, noticeable, as is witnessed by the Armenian loanwords in Azeri. Such loanwords relate especially to agriculture, various crafts and religion, reflecting the conversion of the newcomers to sedentary life; cf., e.g., *kotan* (Arm. → Az.) ‘plough’, *petak* (Arm.) → *pətək* (Az.) ‘hive’, *tel* (Arm.) ‘thread, string’ → *tel* (Az.) ‘thread, string, hair’, *xac* (Arm.) → *xaç* (Az.) ‘cross’, *çap* (Arm.) ‘measure’ → *çap* (Az.) ‘calibre’, and other words.⁵⁵

Armenian influence on the Turkic newcomers during the first stages of the occupation of Armenia and Asia Minor by the latter has, besides, since long been observed by scholars who studied notarial acts preserved in Islamic charitable trusts (*waqf*) of Anatolia, especially those pertaining to the 13th century.⁵⁶ It is sensible to surmise that in the South Caucasus, the first durable contacts between Armenians and Turks took place precisely in the heterogenous Kurdish milieu of the cities on the Kura, which is reflected in David's book. The syncretic character of that milieu, of which we shall speak in what follows, was propitious for such close contacts.⁵⁷

53 Minorsky (1953b: 32, n.18; 34, n. 1).

54 Yovhannes Draskhanakerttsi's *History*, ch. 44 (Ter-Vardanean 2010: 492).

55 The number of Armenian loanwords in the Turkish of Anatolia is much higher; cf. Dankoff (1995).

56 Turan (1948: 50, 67–71); see also 2.1 below.

57 Cf. Nikitine (1975: 352–53).

2 David of Gandzak

According to Kirakos of Gandzak, David son of Alawik (*Dawit' Alawkay-ordi*), also known as David of Gandzak,⁵⁸ was born in the vicinity of Ganja.⁵⁹ The date of his death may be determined in 1140 by juxtaposing the data contained in the concluding chapter of his book, in Mkhitar Gosh, in Kirakos of Gandzak and in Vardan Areweltsi (another historian coming from the region of Ganja and writing between 1267 and 1271).⁶⁰ In his “Exhortations”, by which he intended to prevent the Christians’ assimilation within the Muslim majority of the former Caucasian Albania, David provides us with numerous details regarding the close contacts entertained by Armenians and Kurds.⁶¹

David’s book has but very seldom been used as a source of history of the South Caucasus because it does not easily fit into any known category of historical documents. In the earliest surviving manuscript, dating to the 12th or the 13th century, it is entitled “Admonitory Exhortations (*xratk' zgušac'uc'ič'k'*) said by Vardapet Dawit', surnamed Alawik’s Son, concerning various questions of confession”.⁶² David’s meticulous consideration of particular situations arising in daily life induces us to conclude that he exercised his activity of confessor in a city with mixed population, most likely in Ganja. According to Kirakos of Gandzak, David’s book was written as a reply to questions posed to the learned *vardapet* by a priest from this city.

The name of David’s father is unknown from Armenian onomastics and most likely derives from the Northern Kurdish word for “flame”, *alav*.⁶³ As for the suffix *-ik*, this is widespread in the formation of Armenian personal names. That the author’s name was retained in this form, uncommon for Armenian onomastics, may point to the memory of his Kurdish ancestry.

Sixteen articles in the collection examine various cases of contact with the people called either “Kurds” (*k'urdk'*) or *aylazgi*. The term “Kurds” could, in fact, encompass diverse populations. Vladimir Minorsky stressed the heterogeneity of Kurdish tribes, whereas Arshak Poladyan more recently observed that in Arabic

58 Section 2 (excepting 2.2) largely relies on the present author’s extensive study, see Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 277–321), whilst expanding on it on a number of points.

59 Kirakos, ch. 1 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 116).

60 The date of David’s death is examined in detail in Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 278–280).

61 Hovsepean (1951: col. 307); Hovhannisean (2012: 675).

62 Ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 5607 (12th c.), fol. 177r; cf. Dowsett (1961b: 1, cf. also ii). Cf. Dashian (1895–1896: 656); Tigranyan (1918: 99, 141–142, 146); Marr (1920: 98); Melikset-Bek (2016: 169–174). Charles Dowsett proposed the title of “Penitential” for his edition of the “Exhortations” accompanied by an English translation (Dowsett 1961b and 1961c).

63 See Chyvet (2003: 3); cf. also Acharyan (1942: 73 s. v. *Alawik*).

sources the term “Kurds” could also designate various cattle-breeding and semi-nomadic populations assimilated to the Kurds on account of their lifestyle.⁶⁴ Since Turks had already been infiltrating the Kurdish majority from the end of the 10th – beginning of the 11th century, the term “Kurds” in David’s book most likely denotes various ethnic groups that at that time participated in the Muslim majority, among others both Islamicised Albanians and Armenians, and Turkic newcomers.⁶⁵

The compound lexeme *aylazgi* etymologically indicates someone of foreign, or different, tribe or race. Relying on its biblical and canonical usages, it can be translated by the compound “outsider”.⁶⁶ From an early Islamic period onwards, this term was adopted in Armenian for designating the Muslims,⁶⁷ later even assuming this meaning as its predominant acceptation. Largely unintelligible to non-Armenians, its employment became widespread as a code-name in religiously mixed environments where it could not arouse suspicion or provoke hostile reactions by Muslims towards Armenians.

We may notice that although the terms “Kurds” and *aylazgi* overlap, they are not identical in David’s book: in one instance we find the expression “*aylazgis* and Kurds”.⁶⁸ This distinction is an echo of the heterogeneity of the non-Christian population present in Ganja: it may especially reflect diverse levels of its Islamicisation, the diversity of the Kurdish tribes of Ganja⁶⁹ or the author’s awareness of the Turks’ diversity vis-à-vis the Kurds.

In his “Exhortations” David endeavours in particular to prevent the sharing of meals with non-Christians, i.e. the most frequent occasions of close socialisation of the two groups. He lists the kinds of food⁷⁰ and beverages⁷¹ which must be excluded from the use by the Armenians, should they have either been tasted or handled by “outsiders”.⁷² He also excludes the sharing of crockery and other vessels.⁷³ The “outsiders” are furthermore excluded from the process of preparing

64 Minorsky (1943: 75–76; 1945: 78–79); Poladyan (1999: 53–54); cf also James (2008: 93–102, 121–123; 2010: 15).

65 Cf. James (2008: 104).

66 The pertaining canonical sources are analysed in Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 290–291).

67 Thomson (2005a: 38–39).

68 “Exhortation 56”: *այլազգայնոյն և քուրդին* (Dowsett 1961b: 50).

69 Poladyan (1987: 11).

70 “Exhortation 10” (Dowsett 1961b: 17, ll. 4–5 / 1961c: 14, ll. 20–21); the list of fruits is expanded in ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 10953 (17th c.), fol. 130r.

71 “Exhortation 10” (Dowsett 1961b: 17, ll. 5–6 / 1961c: 14, 21–22); the list of beverages is expanded in ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 834 (Isfahan, 1621 CE), fol. 9v.

72 “Exhortation 10”: *Վասն այլազգոյ (որ) զկերակուր մեր ըմբռնէ* (Dowsett 1961b: 16).

73 Divergent forms of purification of crockery are stipulated in various recensions of “Exhortation 12” (Dowsett 1961b: 17 / 1961c: 15 and ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 834, fols. 9v–10r).

bread⁷⁴ and wine.⁷⁵ Moreover, David aims to prevent the practice of Armenian women feeding Kurdish children at the breast.⁷⁶ Such detailed prohibitions reveal the extent of the Kurds' involvement in the Armenians' households and in their daily life. Whilst some references suggest that Kurds were clients of Armenians, the other point to the converse: contacts thus took place in both the wealthier and the poorer strata of the population. No article in the "Exhortations" allows us to appraise differences in the lifestyle of the Armenians and the Kurds. This "muteness" of David's book has to reflect the advanced spread of sedentary economy in the social organisation of the Ganja Kurds during the 12th century.⁷⁷

2.1 Religious syncretism amongst Kurds, Turks and Armenians

David's book is revelatory of the syncretic religious world of his contemporary Kurds. He intends to prevent them from entering churches⁷⁸ and to outlaw the "habit" entertained by some priests of baptising the children of "outsiders". It is explained that such outsiders ask for baptism not by accepting the Christian faith but by taking Christian sacraments for propitiatory rites.⁷⁹ David also speaks of outsiders keeping crosses as apotropaic objects in their homes, and of Christians selling crosses to outsiders.⁸⁰

Celebrating sacraments with the participation of Muslims could expose the Christians to the accusation of proselytising. The unforeseeable consequences that Christians could suffer on such occasions are reflected in Kirakos of Gandzak's account (to which we briefly referred in Section 1) pertaining to the end of the 12th century. Badr al-din, the Emir of Ganja, eager to assist at a Christian solemnity, invites Catholicos Stephen (1155–1195) through an envoy to celebrate the rite of the sanctification of water on the feast of the Epiphany in the city:

74 "Exhortation 12" (Dowsett 1961b: 17–18 / 1961c: 15).

75 Divergent contacts of outsiders with grapes in vineyards are envisaged in various recensions of "Exhortation 11" (Dowsett 1961b: 17, ll. 10–11 / 1961c: 14, ll. 27–28 and mss. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 2576 [16th c.], fol. 161r and 2802 [1644 CE], fol. 98v).

76 "Exhortation 20" (Dowsett 1961b: 21 / 1961c: 18).

77 Cf. James (2010: 7–10, 12).

78 Diverse forms of purification of a church are stipulated in various recensions of "Exhortation 13" (Dowsett 1961b: 18, l. 28 / 1961c: 16, l. 4 and ms. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 10953, fol. 130v).

79 "Exhortation 21" (Dowsett 1961b: 21–22 / 1961c: 18–19); cf. Tannous (2010: 469–470, n. 1120) discussing analogous situations arising in the 7th century in Upper Mesopotamia.

80 "Exhortation 93" (Dowsett 1961b: 77 / 1961c: 65).

I have heard that the Christians exult greatly when they bless water. Behold, your feast is now approaching; call your Catholicos with his clergy, as is your custom, and bless the water in the city, so that we may also rejoice together with you.⁸¹

Numerous Muslim inhabitants of the city next assist at the rite celebrated with the participation of bishops and *vardapets* accompanying the Catholicos. When it comes to dipping chrism in the water,⁸² some participants stir up the Muslim crowd by exclaiming:

Behold, this Emir has made all of us Christians! For what else do the Christians do if not baptising and anointing? And we all, drinking of this water and washing in it, all indeed have as a consequence become unfaithful and apostates.⁸³

Apparently, the preposterous conjecture of the Emir's Christian proselytising did not convince all, for Kirakos also cites another guilt that was imputed to him. According to the delators, Muslims found themselves constrained by Christian clergy to transgress their law because the chrism was not of vegetable origin: "This Emir has dispossessed us all of our faith, for he let the head of the Christians cast pork fat into our waters (*i jurs mer*)". As a result, the Catholicos is arrested to ransom, whereby, stripped of his various treasures, "he went to the country of Khachen and never again dared enter within the boundaries of Gandzak".⁸⁴ This story confirms that in the 12th century, Kurds of Ganja could be eager to assist at Christian ceremonies and that such shared participation was fraught with dangers for the Christians.

The lack of centres of Islamic learning in the South Caucasus favoured various forms of cultural blending and religious syncretism.⁸⁵ These may be gleaned

⁸¹ Kirakos, ch. 6: *Լուեալ է իմ, թէ քրիստոնեայք մեծապէս խնդութիւն առնեն, յորժամ օրհնեն զջուրն: Արդ՝ աասիկ սօսն ձեր մերձեալ է, կոչեա՛ զկաթողիկոսն ձեր իւրովք պաշտօնէիւք, որպէս սովորութիւն է ձեր, և օրհնեցէք զջուր ի քաղաքիս, զի և մեք բերկրեցուք ընդ ձեզ* (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 179, ll. 7–10).

⁸² According to the "Canon of Blessing the Water on the Day of the Epiphany", as attested in the earliest preserved recensions (10th and 11th cc.) of the *maštoc'* books, i.e. the Armenian euchologia (Ter-Vardanean 2012a: 342b–360a; Conybeare 1905: 165–178), at the very end of the ceremony the celebrant "makes the sign of the Lord with the cross and the chrism" upon the water, whereas a 12th–13th-century recension of the *maštoc'* directs him precisely "to pour out the chrism into the water" (Ter-Vardanean 2012a: 360a; Conybeare 1905: 178, n. b).

⁸³ Kirakos, ch. 6: *Աասիկ զամենեսեան քրիստոնեայ արար ամիրայս, զի զի՞նչ աւելի առնեն քրիստոնեայքն, բայց թէ մկրտեն և օծանեն: Եւ մեք ամենեքեան ըմպեմք ի ջրոյս յայտմանէ եւ լուանամք ի սմանէ, ամենեքեան մեք անհաստք եմք յայտմհետէ և դեռակորոյսք* (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 180, ll. 8–12).

⁸⁴ Kirakos, ch. 6: *չողաւ ի կողմանս խաչնոյ, և այլ ոչ իչխէր մտանել ի սահմանս Գանձակայ* (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 181, ll. 5–6).

⁸⁵ Bertel's (1962: 27).

from David's younger Muslim contemporary from Ganja, Neẓām ad-Din Abu'l-'Alā' Ganjavī (c. 1101–1160), a court poet of the Shahs of Shirvan. However, while acknowledging Jewish and Christian writings – both canonical and apocryphal, such as Abraham's scrolls, as well as their heroes –,⁸⁶ Abu'l-'Alā specifies that he abstains from visiting Christian shrines. In this way he indirectly admits that his Muslim contemporaries did visit them.⁸⁷

Syncretic practices, and even the partial adoption of Christianity (or, in the light of the earlier spread of Christianity amongst Kurds, here we may in fact sometimes deal with a *return* to the Christianity of their grandparents or forefathers), also occurred later amongst Kurds and Turks across Anatolia. It is mainly from Southern Armenia, Asia Minor and Northern Mesopotamia, however, and not from the South Caucasus, that most of the available sources regarding the intermingling between Christians and Muslims, as well as syncretism in their midst, reach us. Various baptismal rites performed on Muslims or their children, mainly with therapeutical intentions, are documented in Greek and Syriac sources from the 12th century, as well as by later Western travellers to the East.⁸⁸ A West Syriac synod convened in 1153 in the monastery of Mar Hananya outside Mardin speaks of a baptismal rite different from an ordinary Christian baptism, which was probably aimed at those Kurds and Turks who had not yet been profoundly Islamicised.⁸⁹ It must reflect the period of change marked by institutional indeterminacy in the region, which followed the Seljuk conquests. In that new political situation the Islamic authorities were not yet in the position to control the strict application of legal norms.⁹⁰

Valuable data regarding the contacts between Christians and such populations can be gleaned from notarial acts preserved in Islamic charitable trusts (*waqf*). Scholars have suggested that during the initial stages of the occupation of Armenia and Asia Minor by Turkic tribes, a superficial conversion to Christianity was frequent amongst them. Importantly, such a conversion also occurred on the territories where a Turkish, nominally Muslim, administration had already

⁸⁶ Bertel's (1962: 40).

⁸⁷ Bertel's (1962: 41). On the veneration of Armenian churches and Gospel codices by Zaza Kurds of the Qizilbash obedience in the area of Dersim at the second half of the 19th century, as well as on the presence of Biblical and Evangelical figures in their spiritual world, see Sruandzteants (1885: 144–146). On the syncretism amongst Turks see also Smirnov (1899: 150–157). Cf. also the description of a site south of Quba, in Reineggs (1796: 142, 168).

⁸⁸ Cf. the commentary on Canon 84 of the Quinisext council (Rhalles and Potles 1852: 498; Taylor 2015: 438–440; Dorfmann-Lazarev 2022: 299–301).

⁸⁹ Taylor (2015: 438–440, 444–447); cf. Poladyan (1987: 54–55, 68).

⁹⁰ Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 296–299).

been set up.⁹¹ The lists of the inhabitants of several villages in the area between Caesarea (Kayseri) and Albastha (Elbistan), from which taxes were levied in the first half of the 13th century, show that amongst the *dhimmi*, i.e. the population which paid higher taxes, Armenian names are borne surprisingly by children of parents bearing distinctly Turkish names.⁹²

Importantly, the receptivity of Muslims to various practices of Christians must have affected the Christians' perception not only of their Muslims neighbours, but also of their religion. Those Muslims who visited churches, paying homage to Christian saints and venerating Christian symbols, were not perceived by Christians as professing utterly foreign and hostile beliefs. Hence Armenians could even choose godparents for their children from amongst such "outsiders" – another practice condemned by David.⁹³

2.2 Instances of mutual imitation in the arts

Numismatic finds reflect cultural blending at the Shaddadid court of Ganja, which may, besides, be indicative of the dynasty's political ambitions. Aleksandr Akopyan has most recently compared a coin struck by Emir Abu'l Aswar Shawur I b. Fadl (Duin/Dvin, 1022–49; Ganja, 1049–67)⁹⁴ with two other contemporary coins from the region: a 10th-century coin of the Shahs of Shirvan from Bardha'a and a coin struck in 1031–39 by King Kvirike III of Kakheti and Hereti (Kvirike the Great, belonging to another Bagratid branch claiming a titular kingship over Albania). Akopyan has shown that the rider on a galloping horse, with his right hand raised and a spear behind his back, which may be discerned on the Shaddadid coin, resembles not the Muslim sample from Shirvan, nor indeed any other known Muslim model, but precisely the representation of St George found on the Georgian sample.⁹⁵

The witnesses of cultural blending and religious syncretism in the south-east of the Caucasus and the neighbouring regions reveal the appearance in this area, between the 11th and the 14th century, of an environment in which Christians and Muslims were inclined to imitate each other more eagerly than this had occurred before. In architecture this may be observed, as was long ago pointed out by

⁹¹ Turan (1948: 50, 67–71).

⁹² Turan (1948: 67–68).

⁹³ "Exhortation 21" (Dowsett 1961b: 22 / 1961c: 18). Cf. also the case of swearing, referred to in "Exhortation 45" and commented in Dorfmann-Lazarev (2022: 303).

⁹⁴ On this emir see also Chapter 15A of this Handbook (Gippert).

⁹⁵ Akopyan (2021b: 61–64).

Nikolay Marr, already from the end of the 11th century, especially in Ani.⁹⁶ Scholars of architecture have since long suggested that the affinities between South Caucasian architecture and early Seljuk buildings, i.e. those pertaining to the end of the 12th – beginning of the 13th century, in the conception of architectural forms, principles of construction, masonry and decorative motifs, reveal that either the same craftsmen took part in the building of both Christian and Muslim buildings or that Armenian models were carefully reproduced by Muslim architects and masons.⁹⁷

The environment most favourable for cultural borrowings and cultural blending was afforded by large multinational cities like Ani or Ganja. Already Iosif Orbeli stressed that only in such cities there existed stationary workshops disposing of a wide range of equipment; and only such workshops could provide the Seljuks with necessary conditions for learning and adopting, in the elaboration of stone and metal, construction techniques and decorative designs of the South-Caucasian art and architecture.⁹⁸

The proclivity to imitate the other was during a considerable period of time mutual. Various stylistic and decorative elements characteristic of the Iranian and Turkish architecture may be discerned in a series of Armenian monuments from the end of the 12th to the 14th century. Amongst these, an unusual group of three churches built in proximity to Ganja stand out: at Srvegh on the right bank of the upper course of the stream Aghstev mentioned above, as well as at Kirants and Berdavank situated slightly farther north-west.⁹⁹

Furthermore, also the decorative element resembling stalactites – *muqarnas*, widespread in Persia, Mesopotamia and Central Asia since the 11th century – enters the Armenian and the Seljukid architecture almost contemporaneously at the end of the 12th century. Yet, while it would soon occupy a key position in the religious art of Islam, in the Armenian churches *muqarnas* tellingly remained on the margins of religious buildings. Being, certainly, perceived as a religiously loaded motif, it only seldom penetrated into the liturgical space. A little later, trefoil pendants, another motif widely used in Islamic architecture, would also be introduced into the decoration of Armenian churches, these elements as well usually occupying in Armenia an accessory role.¹⁰⁰

Finally, the disposition to adopt in Armenia structural and decorative elements widely used in Islamic arts may, in particular, be observed on a series of

⁹⁶ Marr (1934: 35–38).

⁹⁷ Hillenbrand (1994: 307–308); Blessing (2016: 55, 58); McClary (2017: 31–34, 51–52); Donabédian (2020: 80, 83–97 with Figures 11–18).

⁹⁸ Orbeli (1963: 363–367); see also Gordlevskiy (1941: 135).

⁹⁹ Cuneo (1988: 336); Donabédian (2020: 75).

¹⁰⁰ Donabédian (2020: 97–99); McClary (2017: 32, 39; fig. 2.2).

khachkars (stone stelæ with engraved crosses) dated to the end of the 12th century. Set outside churches, such *khachkars* did not interfere directly with liturgical celebrations, thus affording space for blending heterogenous motifs.¹⁰¹

2.3 Assimilation and its perils

The “imprint” left by Christianity, and especially by Albania’s Christians, on the Kurds can explain why these were not at all times perceived by David’s contemporary Armenians as foreigners and why close contacts between the two societies were frequent. Mixed marriages largely contributed to the porosity of communitarian boundaries, also creating fruitful ground for mutual cultural borrowings. David examines various instances of couples, durable and not, formed by Armenians and Kurds. Apart from the Armenians converted to Islam, he considers Christian women living with Kurds.¹⁰² Some of these, whilst remaining Muslims’ wives, upheld their faith, which was usually tolerated by Islamic law.¹⁰³ According to David’s regulations, however, such women had to be completely severed from the Christian community. Indeed, a union with a Muslim (defined as a “heathen”, *het’anos*) had even been defined as worse than fornication or adultery by the Armenian council of 768 convened in Partaw.¹⁰⁴

David mentions priests who, circumventing ecclesiastical canons, received such women into communion and administered sacraments: hearing their confessions, baptising their children, giving them communion on their deathbed and celebrating expiatory masses after their death. This detailed list allows us to posit that Kurdish consorts were often privy to their wives’ enduring Christian practice, some even allowing their children to be introduced to the Christian religion. That the children born of mixed unions could in some way be introduced to Christianity implies that within their new family, and their new community, the Christian wives maintained a notable status and that the social environment of the city was not overtly hostile to the maintenance of Christianity within Muslim families.

An indirect confirmation of this is found in the work of the 11th-century Armenian historian Aristakes of Lastiver (c. 1000–1085) who knows of the marriage of the sister of king David the Landless (989/91–1046/8), the second of the Bagratids of Lori to be recognised as titular kings of Albania, with the Emir of

¹⁰¹ Petrosyan (2008: 128–131, fig. 158).

¹⁰² “Exhortations 16–18” (Dowsett 1961b: 19–20 / 1961c: 16–17).

¹⁰³ Sahner (2018: 59–61).

¹⁰⁴ See Canon 11 in the Armenian *Book of Canons 2* (Hakobyan 1971: 10).

Ganja, Abu'l-Aswar I, whom we have already encountered (see 2.2 above).¹⁰⁵ Abu'l Aswar's second son received the Armenian name of Ashot, which confirms David of Gandzak's information that at least within the ruling elite, after the marriage with a Kurd, the mother's Armenian cultural identity could be transmitted to children.¹⁰⁶

David specifies that no endowment should be received by the Church from women living with Kurds: “[Let no priest] accept her gifts”.¹⁰⁷ Three manuscripts specify that no gift should be received from such women either during their life or after their death.¹⁰⁸ This specification indicates that the will of a Christian woman living severed from her community could be executed by her relations, either Armenians or, admittedly, her new family which was nominally Muslim.

Intermarriages have been recognised in scholarship as one of the main factors in the Islamicisation of Anatolia and the South Caucasus.¹⁰⁹ Although they sometimes created conditions for the conversion of Muslim “outsiders” to Christianity, the cases of enduring adoption of the Christian religion must have been rare.¹¹⁰ Under the rule of Islam, it was the conversions in the opposite direction which occurred most often. The shared veneration of holy places, holy men and sacred objects, as well as apocryphal legends telling of shared prophets, populated the religion of the newcomers with familiar figures, symbols, rites and sacred spaces, thus rendering it accessible to Christians and, consequently, facilitating the Islamicisation of the region.¹¹¹ Over centuries, various forms of cultural blending have, no doubt, contributed to the intricacy of reciprocal perceptions of the Armenians and their Muslim neighbours. Consequently, these perceptions have often (but by no means always) assumed highly conflictual character.¹¹²

In the eyes of an Armenian cleric like David, life shared with Muslims was also fraught with a more immediate threat, for it exposed Armenians to two suspicions: not only the celebration of sacraments, as in Kirakos's account cited above, but any form of companionship or association between Christians and

105 Aristakes Lastivertsi's *History*, chapters 10 and 17 (Yuzbashyan 1963: 63, l. 18, and 96, ll. 10–11).

106 Cf. Minorsky (1953b: 50).

107 “Exhortation 16”: *մի առցէ սուրս ընծայից նորա* (Dowsett 1961b: 20).

108 Divergent forms of transferral of gifts are envisaged in various recensions of “Exhortation 16” (Dowsett 1961b: 20 / 1961c: 18 and mss. Yerevan, Matenadaran, 2576, fol. 161v, 10953, fol. 131v, and 2802, fol. 99v).

109 Ter-Ghewondyan (1976: 147–163); Wood (2015: 23–50, 45–46); Sahner (2018: 67).

110 See Sahner (2018: 33–34).

111 Barkan (1942: 304, n. 31).

112 A counter-example may be found in an interesting case of Christian and Jewish fellowship of a Muslim holy man in Baku in the middle of the 20th century; see Darieva (2018: 19–45).

Muslims, either joint professional activities or involvement in each other's household and family life, could afford a ground for the accusation of the Christian party of proselytising. Secondly, shared life opened the door to suspecting the Christian party's earlier conversion to Islam, followed by relapsing into Christianity. Both Christian proselytising and apostasy from Islam were punished in Islamic courts by death.¹¹³

In the mixed environment of large cities like Ganja, which were submitted to the direct rule of Emirs and Muslim judges, all disputes involving Muslims ought to be adjudicated in Islamic courts, at which the Armenians found themselves in a disadvantageous position, being deprived of the right, only reserved to the Muslims, to produce witnesses.¹¹⁴ Medieval Armenian hagiographic accounts show how close acquaintances between Christians and Muslims in daily life could create unexpected occasions for false accusations of Christians and how such Christians could then be offered the chance of saving their life by declaring publicly their adherence to Islam. The instances of Armenians publicly abjuring Christianity produced demoralising effects on their communities, even endangering their survival. David preserves an echo of such situations by mentioning in his final exhortation, entitled "Concerning Evil Primates and Priests",¹¹⁵ amongst other deplorable consequences of the pastors' neglect, "numerous [cases of] summoning before judges and courts".¹¹⁶

How a close acquaintance of an Armenian and a "Persian" (a name by which either a Kurd or a Turk could be designated) in the town of Arkhanashen near Ganja, in which the Christians and the Muslims "lived friendly", could give origin to the Christian's accusation before the court and his subsequent condemnation to death is described by Mkhitar Gosh in the "Martyrdom of St Khostrov", an event that occurred in 1167 AD.¹¹⁷

Loose matrimonial practices must have been one of David's primary concerns, and they are again condemned in his concluding exhortation cited above which, however, is absent from the earliest manuscript of his book. Such practices are cited amongst other evils occasioned by those primates and priests "with

113 The sources are analysed by Fattal (1958: 119–126, 360–365); Sahner (2016: 269; n. 16); Dorfmann-Lazarev (2010: 576–581).

114 Mahé and Mahé (2012: 212); Mahé (2000: 683–705).

115 "Exhortation 97": Վասն չար առաջնորդաց և քահանայից (Dowsett 1961b: 84, l. 1).

116 "Exhortation 97": Ի դատաւորս եւ յատեանս բազում քաջումն (Dowsett 1961b: 86; ll. 18–19).

117 Mkhitar Gosh, *Martyrdom* (Manandyan and Acharyan 2014a: 578–580, 582). Christian C. Sahner discusses the role of social promiscuity in the incidence of the accusations of apostasy from Islam (2018: 45–59).

which they have filled this country of Albania / of the Albanians”.¹¹⁸ This is the only time that Albania is mentioned in the book.

Clearly, David’s *Exhortations* were written with the aim of preventing such situations. His book was composed in view of the concerns and apprehensions arising in Ganja and its environments. It must be regarded as an attempt to face the threat of assimilation that life in a large city ruled by Islam presented to Armenians.

3 Conclusion

The *Exhortations* of David son of Alawik reflect a learned cleric’s reaction to the assimilation of the Armenians of Ganja and other cities of the middle Kura valley within a Muslim majority in the first half of the 12th century. Being the centre of the Muslim power in the region, Ganja possessed insufficient ecclesiastical institutions. The data preserved in the *History of the Albanians*, by Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos of Gandzak and Stepanos Orbelian, as well as in epigraphic sources, about Albanian primates’ frequently changing locations induce us to surmise that the Albanian catholicoi and bishops eschewed from paying too frequent visits to this city.

The erosion of the local Armenians’ cultural and religious identity, which prompted David’s *Exhortations*, owed much to the weakness of the Church of Caucasian Albania. In his concluding chapter David denounces the “evil primates and priests” who were felt to have led the country into a critical situation.¹¹⁹

Nominally Muslim, the Kurdish population of the Kura valley had only superficially been Islamicised, maintaining syncretic religious practices. From the Albanians and Albanian Armenians, whom they had absorbed into their midst since the beginning of the 10th century, the Kurds inherited rudiments of Christian rites, pious practices and superstitions. This largely facilitated the intermingling of Armenians and Kurds in various spheres.

From David we also gather that Kurds, as later also Turks, occasionally attended churches, attempting to participate in Christian sacraments as propitiatory rites and to possess Christian sacramental symbols as apotropaic objects. In this light, the perspective of adherence to Islam and the ensuing acquisition of an advantageous social status should not appear in the Armenians’ eyes as a

¹¹⁸ “Exhortation 97”: *գաշխարհս Արուանից* (Dowsett 1961b: 84, l. 27).

¹¹⁹ “Exhortation 97” (Dowsett 1961b: 84, ll. 26–27; 86, ll. 24–25; 87, l. 12 – 88, l. 1 / 1961c: 71, ll. 18–19; 73, ll. 1–2; 73, ll. 17–34).

drastic change of lifestyle. It did not imply severance from their families, nor even from Christianity. It is against such a gradual dissolution of the Armenian society of Ganja that David intended to react.

The close association between Armenians and Kurds in various social spheres, accompanied by the assimilation of each other's religious practices and even by intermarriages and instances of superficial conversion in both directions, were also fraught with direct dangers for the Christian parties involved: these could be accused of proselytising or suspected of relapsing into Christianity after their presumed conversion to Islam. David must have been aware of various perils which sprang precisely from neighbours not profoundly Islamicised, in whom traces of Albania's Christianity had not yet vanished completely,¹²⁰ and thus exerted himself to buttress the Armenians' communitarian boundaries.

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¹²⁰ Cf. Ocak (2009: 43).

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Picture credits

- Figure 1: Photograph Andranik Keshishyan.
 Figure 2: Photograph Slava Sargsyan.
 Figure 3: Photograph Slava Sargsyan.
 Figure 4: Photograph Hamlet Petrosyan.
 Figure 5: Photograph Slava Sargsyan.

Jost Gippert

15A The Gate of Ganja

The earthquake that befell Ganja/Gandzak in 1139 (cf. Chapter 15 of this Handbook, 1.2 above) affected not only the buildings of the city but also the defence preparedness of its inhabitants and its rulers. As a result, the city was captured soon afterwards by the contemporary king of Georgia, Demetrius (r. 1125–54 and 1155–56), who took with him as a trophy the iron gate of the city.¹ This fact is clearly mentioned in the report of the local historiographer, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, who writes:²

In those days, there suddenly was mist and fog, and mountain and plain were covered all over, and there was a terrible earthquake, and the capital, Gandzak, was destroyed. And by the grace of God, the newly ordained Catholicos survived, but the great teacher Grigor died in the earthquake, along with many other men, women and children, of uncountable number, who were killed by buildings falling on them. And the king of the Georgians, Demetrius, came and pillaged everything, and he took the gate of the city to his country.

The iron gate that Demetrius removed to Georgia still exists today.³ It is attached to the inner wall of a small barbican that belongs to the monastery complex of Gelati near Kutaisi in Imereti (see Figures 1 and 2). That this is the gate of Ganja and not, as popular belief used to assume, a gate from Derbent brought to Gelati by Demetrius' father, king David the Builder (r. 1089–1125),⁴

1 For a preliminary account of these events cf. Gippert and Tandashvili (2002).

2 Kirakos, ch. 10 (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 200, ll. 12–20): *Ընդ առլորսն ընդ այնոսիկ եղև յանկարծակի մէգ և մառախուղ, և լցալ առհասարակ լեառն և դաշտ, և եղև շարժ ահագին, և կործանեցալ մայրաքաղաքն Գանձակ: Եւ շնորհօքն աստուծոյ պարեալ եղև նորրնծայ կաթողիկոսն, բայց մեռաւ ի շարժմանէն մեծ վարդապետն Գրիգոր՝ հանդերձ այլ բազմութեամբ արանց և կանանց և մանկտոց, որոց ոչ գոյ թիւ, զոր սպանին շինասածքն՝ անկեալ ի վերայ: Եւ եկն թագաւորն Վրաց Դեմետրէ և աւար էառ զամենայն ինչսն, տարաւ և գդրունս քաղաքին յիւր աշխարհն: The same event is first mentioned in the initial chapter of Kirakos' *History* under the year 588 (ՇՁԸ); here, Demetrius (I) is correctly styled the father of David (V) and George (III): *Դեմետրէ՝ հայրն Դավիթի և Գիորգեայ:* (Melik-Ohanjanyan 1961: 117, ll. 4–8). In the account of the earthquake in Mkhitar Gosh's *Chronicle* (Manandyan and Acharyan 2014b: 607; cf. Dowsett 1958: 481–483), the gate is not mentioned.*

3 Or, at least, one of its two wings; for the question of the lost second wing cf. Frähn (1836: 534).

4 This belief is clearly expressed in the *Description of Egrisi, or Abkhazia, or Imereti* by Prince Vakhushti Bagrationi, part of his *Geographic Description of Georgia*, which was completed by 1750; he writes: “A wall gate hangs in its portal, of iron, brought by the Builder from Derbent” (Հայտնայն Ֆեդուլիս յարմ ծքցեսա միսես, Երփոնես, աղմաթնեղեղիս մոլճանիւղ զարդանդուցամ; Qaukhchishvili 1973: 754, ll. 2–3). It spread further via – among others – the travel reports by Jean François Gamba (1826: 273–274), Bernard Rottiers (1829: 118), and Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux (1839: 176–177),



Fig. 1: The barbican of Gelati Monastery.

is clearly proven by the Arabic inscription it bears, which states that it was commissioned by Emir Shawur b. al-Fadl⁵ in the year 455 AH (~ 1063 CE); it reads:⁶

who wrote: “David III, le réparateur par excellence, l’avait fait construire pour y placer, comme trophée de ses victoires, les fameuses portes de fer, dites de Derbend”.

⁵ On Emir Abu’l Aswar Shawur I b. Fadl (Duin/Dvin, 1022–49; Ganja, 1049–67) see Chapter 15 of this Handbook (Dorfmann-Lazarev), 2.2.

⁶ The first reliable account of the inscription was provided, together with the correct identification of the Emir (“Emir von Towin”), in 1835 by Christian Martin Frähn (1836: 538–543) who relied upon a historiographer named Shahri Zade (متن التاريخ لابن عبد العليم محمد سعيد الشهير) (شهري زاده). Accordingly, Frähn was also the first to call the provenance from Derbent

In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate! This gate was ordered to be produced by our lord, the commander (and) most splendid master Šawur b. al-Faḍl – may God prolong his suzerainty – by the hand of the administrator Abī al-Farāğ Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh – may God grant him longlasting fortune. It was manufactured by Ibrāhīm b. ‘Uṭmān b. Mal-lākūn, the blacksmith, in the year 455.

The floor of the same barbican is partly covered by a large stone slab with a much worn inscription in Old Georgian (*asomtavruli*) characters (see Fig. 3); it reads:⁷

Christ! This is my resting place for eternity. It pleases me; here I shall dwell.

The content of the inscription, which is a rendering of Psalm 131.14 [132.14],⁸ clearly suggests that this is the epitaph of a person that was buried underneath. According to popular belief again, this was King David the Builder himself, during whose reign the monastery was founded.⁹ This belief, too, was already widespread in the 19th century.¹⁰ The most detailed information available on the association of the slab with king David is Mikhail Sabinin’s note of 1882 according to which the relics of the king were removed from beneath the slab, being “unearthed with

into question, thus correcting a previous treatment of his own (Frähn 1828: 20–23); instead, he proposed hesitatingly, “sollte man vielleicht an Berdaa, die alte Hauptstadt von Arran und Karabagh, zu denken haben...? Sie war im Besitze unseres Emirs gewesen und wurde hundert Jahre hernach von König David erobert” (1836: 545). Hesitatingly as well, Dubois de Montpéreux proposed Ani as the place of origin: “Ces portes de fer ne seraient-elles point celles d’Ani, dont David I^{er} fit la conquête en 1124?” (1839: 181). – Cf. <https://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/gelati/dmsas/dmarabz.htm#dmarab6> for a visualisation of the three sections of the inscription.

7 Cf. <https://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/gelati/dmsas/dmsas.htm#dmsas> for a visualisation of the inscription. A large image of the inscription can be found in Derlemenko and Gigilashvili (1982: pl. 21), a scholarly edition in Silogava (1980: 130–140, no. 162 with pl. 130).

8 The biblical content was correctly identified by Dubois de Montpéreux (1839: 182: “tirée de la Sainte-Ecriture”), who translated: “C’est ici le lieu de mon repos; il me plaît; j’y demeurerai”.

9 The foundation is dealt with at large in the king’s Vita as contained in the Georgian chronicle *Kartlis Tskhovreba* (Qaukhchishvili 1955: 329–331; cf. also Shanidze 1992: 174–176 and Metreveli 2008: 312–314). Interestingly enough, the name of the monastery is mentioned in only one of the manuscripts of the Vita (ms. “C”, i.e. the so-called Chalashvili manuscript of the 16th century, today ms. Q 207 of the K. Kekelidze National Centre for Manuscripts, Tbilisi). As the variants *g(a)enati* and *g(a)enatli* occurring in other contexts show, *gelati* reflects Greek γενέθλιος ‘belonging to the birth’, in reference to the Nativity of the Virgin to which the Cathedral in Gelati is devoted.

10 It is expressed in, among other sources, the accounts of Rottiers (“le tombeau de David Ier (Bagration), enterré à côté de la porte de fer de Derbent”; 1828: 118) and Marie Félicité Brosset (“celle qui passe pour renfermer les restes de David-le-Réparateur, est couverte d’une pierre de grande dimension, où est tracée en grandes lettres cette phrase...”; 1851: 39).



Fig. 2: The Gate of Ganja in the barbican.

great respect and deposited under the table of the convent church of Gaenati when the holy church had canonised king David and had appointed 26 January as his holy day”.¹¹ Sabinin’s information remains doubtful, however, if we consider

¹¹ ოდეს წმიდა ეკკლესიამ შერიცხა დავით მეფე წმიდათა შორის და დააწესა დღესასწაული კვ. იანვარსა, დიდის მოწიწებით იქმნა აღმოსუცნებულ წმიდა ნაწილნი მისნი და დაკრძალულ გაენათის საკრებო ეკკლესიის ტრაპეზსა ქუცზე (Sabinin 1882: 512 n. 1).



Fig. 3: The Georgian epitaph in the barbican.

the quaint “reading” of the inscription he provides, restoring it as a “quatrain in khutsuri letters which has been erased by people walking over it without care”.¹²

We must further note that according to the Georgian tradition, there were also other royals buried in Gelati. This is indicated, among others, by Prince Vakhushti Bagrationi who in his *Description of Egrisi, or Abkhazia, or Imereti* of 1750 lists, besides the Builder, his grandson King George (III, r. 1156–1184), Queen Tamar (r. 1184–1213), King Lasha (Giorgi IV, r. 1213–1223), Queen Rusudan (1223–1245), King David (VI Narin, r. 1245–1293), and his eponymous cousin (King David VII Ulu, r. 1247–1270).¹³ Given that there is no indication whatsoever in David the Builder’s *Vita* or any other reliable source relating to him which might be taken as a proof that he was buried in Gelati and that the present epitaph is his,¹⁴ including the so-called “Testament” of the king which is unlikely to be authentic,¹⁵ the case of an independent “oral tradition” on David being buried under the slab that would have persisted since the 12th century is rather weak.

In view of all this, it seems more likely that the stone slab covers the grave of Demetrius, the son of David the Builder and conqueror of Ganja. Several observations speak in favour of this assumption. First, the barbican contains, as we have seen, the iron gate of Ganja which Demetrius brought to Georgia.¹⁶ Second, it was Demetrius, not David, under whose reign the construction of the church was accomplished and the monastery was consecrated in 1130 CE; should David

12 The quatrain reads: “When I hosted the seven kings in Naçarmagevi, I routed Turks, Persians, Arabs out of the boundaries of my kingdom. I poured the fish over from the rivers of this side to the rivers of the other side (this means rulership extending between both seas). Having accomplished all this, I (now) cross my hands over my heart” (ოღესჲე ნაჭარმაგევეს შუდთა მეფეთა მასხინძელ ვექჲენ, თურქნი, სპარსნი, არაბნი საზღუართაგან სამეფოსა ჩემისაგან ვაოტე. გადავასხე თევზნი მდინარეთაგან ამერიისათა, მდინარეთა იმერიისათა (რომელიც ნიშნავს ორთა ზღვსა მფლობელბასა). ყოველი ესე აღუასრულე გულ ხელ ვიკრიფე აღმსრულებელ; Sabinin 1882: 512 n. 1). Cf. Megreliḏzé (1967: 125–128) as to the provenance of this text.

13 ამას შინა დაფლულ არიან აღმაშენებელი, ვიორგი, თამარ, ლაშა, რუსუდან, დავით, დავით და სხუანიცა (Qaukhchishvili 1973: 574, ll. 5–7). Accordingly, in his report of a visit to Gelati on 13 August 1772, Johann Anton Güldenstädt primarily mentions Queen Tamar as being buried there: “Hier soll die Zaarin Taman [sic!] und verschiedene Zaaren begraben liegen” (1787: 303). – The two cousins named David ruled simultaneously over West and East Georgia.

14 Cf. Gabidzashvili (1968: 271–284) for a survey of the hagiographical sources available on King David.

15 Cf. Enukidze, Silogava and Shoshiashvili (1984: 60–61) on this document which is only attested in a few 19th-century copies and probably a late forgery.

16 When M. F. Brosset visited the site in 1848, there were still remnants of a wall inscription in Georgian visible in the barbican, which he made out as “Le roi Dimitri a saccagé l’Aran et cette porte, en l’année 13^e de son règne, ..4. depuis le commencement du monde” (Brosset 1851: 254). The date after creation may have been indicated there in both the Byzantine (*annus mundi*) and the Georgian style, 1139 CE yielding 6647 and 6743, resp. The inscription is lost today.

the Builder (*1125) have been buried there before the consecration? Third, the chronicle of the time of King Lasha (George IV), part of the Georgian chronicle *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, preserves the information that Demetrius was transported to Gelati and buried there after having died at another place:¹⁷

King Demet're passed away in the stronghold of Belt'i¹⁸ and was brought to Gelati, to the new monastery he himself had consecrated. The chronicon was 374 (i.e. 1154 CE).

In this light, the fact that Vakhushti Bagrationi omits just Demetrius in his list of royals that were buried in Gelati is all the more noteworthy. If this was not by mere accident, it may point to Demetrius being regarded less important by the prince than the other rulers mentioned. The association of the epitaph with king David may lastly have been supported by the fact that the inscription it bears is modelled on a psalm, given that psalms are usually named *davitni* (quasi 'Davids') in Old Georgian.¹⁹

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¹⁷ დემეტრე მეფე ბელტის ციხეს მიიცვალა და გელათს წარიყვანეს მისგან-ვე კურთხეულს ახალს მონასტერსა, ქრინიკონი იყო სამას სამოცდაოთხმეტი (Qaukhchishvili 1955: 367, ll. 5–6). The fact that the information regarding Demetrius is missing in one of the manuscripts containing the chronicle (the Chalashvili manuscript, see n. 9 above) cannot disprove its authenticity.

¹⁸ *Belt'i s'ixe*, usually identified with the ruined fortress *Bebris cixe* (41°51'19" N, 44°43'21" E), ca. 1.5 km north of Mtskheta.

¹⁹ Cf. Megrélidzé (1967: 127) for this suggestion.

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Hratch Tchilingirian

16 Reverse Engineering: A State-Created “Albanian Apostolic Church”

Abstract: This Chapter provides a brief historical overview of Christianity in Nagorno-Karabakh in the wider context of the modern Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict and disputed territories. It then focuses on how the Azerbaijani state is constructing an “Albanian Apostolic Church” – variously called “Udi Church” or “Udi Orthodox Church” – as part of a new narrative that connects modern-day Azerbaijanis to ancient peoples, cultures and early Christianity in the Caucasus. The common features of this state-“engineered” narrative are denial of facts, erasure of evidence and reinvention of history, which goes back to Soviet times.

1 Introduction

At the height of the second Karabakh war, the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences published an interview, in October 2020, with the chairman of the small Udi community in Azerbaijan, Robert Mobili. A geologist by profession, Mobili expressed hope that “after the complete liberation of Karabakh from occupation”, Azerbaijan will be able to “show the world” how Armenians had “falsified” monuments which “historically belonged to Azerbaijan”. More significant, he declared that upon Azerbaijan’s victory, “the restoration of the Albanian Apostolic Church will be the final blow to Armenia”.¹ Indeed, in February 2022, Azerbaijan’s Cultural Minister Anar Karimov announced: “A working group of specialists in Albanian history and architecture has been set up to remove the fictitious traces written by Armenians on Albanian religious temples”.²

In September 2020, Azerbaijan attacked the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh to “liberate” it from the control of the self-declared Republic of Artsakh. The war was portrayed as Azerbaijani government’s last resort response to decades-long Armenian intransigence to negotiate a settlement. By the end of a 44-day devastating war, Karabakh Armenians not only lost control of significant parts of territory, but also a security buffer zone of seven regions around Kara-

1 Mobili *apud* Hacıyeva (2020): interview prepared by Gülnar Hacıyeva, Deputy Head of the Press and Information Department of the Presidium of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, 13 October 2020.

2 Karimov *apud* Report (2022).

bakh, which they had controlled since the first Karabakh war in the early 1990s as a bargaining chip in the negotiations process for final political status. A ceasefire agreement was signed on 9 November 2020 with Russian mediation and deployment of Russian peacekeepers.

Presidents Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey celebrated the “historic victory” at a joint military parade in Baku on 10 December. Mr Aliyev proclaimed that “there is no Nagorno-Karabakh conflict anymore”. The conflict was resolved militarily. Nevertheless, the absence of a final peace agreement keeps this oldest conflict in the former Soviet Union simmering for some time to come. Nagorno-Karabakh – a 4,400 sq. km enclave within the internationally recognised boundaries of Azerbaijan – was an Autonomous Region in then Soviet Azerbaijan, with a population of about 150,000. Starting in the early 20th century, the core of the conflict has been Azerbaijan’s territorial boundaries and integrity and the Karabakh Armenians right of self-determination.

Since November 2020, the status, condition and utilisation of places of worship in the territories that have changed hands are uncertain and increasingly endangered. A significant number of Armenian churches, monasteries and religious monuments have come under Azerbaijani control, among them the 13th century Dadivank monastery in Kalbajar, which is one of the few places of worship that is being protected by the Russian peacekeeping forces.

Within months after the war, while visiting a church building in the newly renamed village of Hünərli (Khojavend district) – which was called Tsakuri until 25 November 2020 – an angry and determined President Ilham Aliyev, dressed in army fatigue along with his wife, vowed to “renovate this ancient Albanian church”. Talking into the camera following him, he said:

This is an ancient Albanian temple, an Albanian church, it is located in the village of Hünərli. The Armenians wanted to Armenianise this church too, made inscriptions here in Armenian, but could not achieve this.... This is our ancient historical monument, the temple of our Udi brothers.... All these inscriptions are fake, they were made later. They have created a falsified history for themselves on our ancient lands. But we exposed them. The fact that this church – an Albanian temple – is in such a state once again demonstrates the falsifications of the Armenians. If it had been an Armenian church, they would have repaired it.³

The battle has moved to the spheres of history, religion and culture. This Chapter shall discuss as to how, especially following the second Karabakh war, religion

3 “Это – древний албанский храм, албанская церковь, она расположена в селе Хунерли. Армяне хотели арменизировать и эту церковь, сделали здесь надписи на армянском языке, но не смогли добиться этого. Если бы это была армянская церковь, неужели они оставили ее в таком состоянии? Она похожа на хлеб, словно хлеб, мусорная свалка. Это – наш

and cultural heritage is instrumentalised for political interests, territorial claims and to re-writing history of the region. While historical revisionism is not new and goes back to the Soviet era, what is new is how the Azerbaijani *state* is constructing an “Albanian Apostolic Church” – variously called “Udi Church” – as part of a new narrative that connects modern-day Azerbaijanis to ancient peoples, cultures and early Christianity in the Caucasus. Even as Azerbaijan instrumentalises the country’s Moslem credentials in its foreign relations, especially to mobilise support in the Islamic world, the state is aggressively engaged in branding and presenting *all* Armenian Christian monuments on its territory as “Caucasian Albanian” and the Udis as the descendants of “Azeri Christians”. According to this construct, the Albanians are ostensibly the “Christian ancestors” of the *Azerbaijani people* – even in the absence of ethnic, religious or linguistic connection.

2 The official narrative

For context, a brief discussion of the “scholarly basis” of the Azerbaijani narrative is in order. Farida Mamedova, Azerbaijan’s preeminent “Albanologist” and a leading proponent of the Caucasian Albanian theory – like her mentor Ziya Buniyatov and colleagues Igrar Aliyev, Davud Akhundov, Rashid Geyushev and Kamil Mamadzade⁴ – articulates the fundamental basis of the Azerbaijani ethnogenesis and culture in the preface of her 500-page book *Caucasian Albania and Albanians*:⁵

The people of Azerbaijan are comprised of three primary ethnocultural layers: Caucasian-speaking (Albanians), Persian-speaking (Medes, Kurds, Talysh, Tats), and Turkic-speaking. The Azerbaijanis and peoples of Dagestan are descendants of the Albanians, heirs of a vast ethnocultural layer and rich Albanian culture manifested in material, spiritual culture stretching back to antiquity, the early and late Middle Ages, and modern times. I am not

древний исторический памятник, храм наших удинских братьев. Они приедут и сюда. Армяне осквернили албанский храм так же, как осквернили наши мечети. Но мы восстановим. Все эти надписи – фальшивые, они были сделаны впоследствии. Они создали для себя на наших древних землях сфальсифицированную историю. Но не смогли добиться этого, мы их разоблачили. Тот факт, что эта церковь – албанский храм — находится в таком состоянии, еще раз демонстрирует фальсификации армян. Если бы это была армянская церковь, то они бы ее отремонтировали”: Aliyev *apud* Minval (2021); cf. also *Report* (2021).

4 Cf. Buniyatov (1965), Aliyev (1989b), Akhundov (1986), Geyushev (1984), and Mamadzade and Salamzade (1987).

5 Mamedova (2021: 3).

just referring to the cultural heritage of the 1000-year-old Albanian state but also that of the Albanians of later history, the five Albanian melikdoms [i.e. Karabakh; H.T.] and the remainder of Albanians.

After establishing the linguistic ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijanis, Mamedova explains the “multicultural”, “multi-religious” historical environment of contemporary Azerbaijani culture and ethnic identity, where “Albanian culture” stands out:

Although the Albanian culture and the ethnos were transformed with the adoption of Islam, we are the bearers of the rich culture created as a result of the succession of the religious systems of mankind. In other words, our culture originates in the Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim environment. It is the invaluable wealth and uniqueness of Albanian culture.

These theories are the fundamental “historical” and “scientific” background upon which the Azerbaijani state and authorities construct their narrative and policies. Mamedova’s book is published by the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre. Established in 2014 by the decree of President Aliyev, the Centre “ensures the preservation of tolerance, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in accordance with the ideology of Azerbaijanism, as well as represents Azerbaijan as the centre of multiculturalism in the world, explores and promotes existing multicultural models”.⁶

Wolfgang Schulze, an eminent German linguist and a leading scholar of the Udi language “and its presumed ancestor, usually named ‘Caucasian Albanian’”,⁷ argues that “it is far from being self-evident to assume the existence of an ethnic unit because of a distinct language, just as a distinct language does not necessarily hint at a distinct ethnic unit”.⁸ He further explains that in Classical times the “language” aspect “generally played a minor role when attributing ‘ethnic’ features to a group of people”. Schulze agrees with Jonathan Hall that “language cannot be used as an objective definition of ethnic identity”.⁹

While historical information about the Albanian statehood is provided mainly by medieval Armenian sources (5th to 11th century),¹⁰ Schulze poses the question

⁶ Baku International Multiculturalism Centre (2019).

⁷ Gippert (2020b: 289).

⁸ Schulze (2018: 275).

⁹ Schulze (2018: 281).

¹⁰ Such as Movses Kalankatuatsi’s *History of the Country of the Albanians* (edition Arakelyan 1983, English translation Dowsett 1961a); Koryun’s *Life of Mashtots* (edition Abeghyan 1941; English translation Norehad 1985); Anania Shirakatsi’s *Guide to the Country* (edition Abrahamyan 1944; English translation Hewsens 1992); Movses Khorenatsi’s *History of the Armenians* (edition Abeghyan and Yarutyunyan 1913 [1995]; English translation Thomson 1978). Cf. Chapter 2 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut and Gippert) for details.

“whether we can relate this statehood to a particular ethnic unit termed ‘Caucasian Albanians’”.

Even as the ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijanis continues to be a matter of academic debate, most scholars agree that Azerbaijan, as a national entity, emerged after 1918, with the declaration of the first Republic of Azerbaijan after World War I.¹¹ The debate as to how to name the Azerbaijanis goes back to the late 19th century. The population of Azerbaijan, formerly known as “Türk” or “Transcaucasian Tatar” was formally re-identified as “Azerbaijani” in 1937.¹² Indeed, the founder of the first Republic of Azerbaijan, Mohammad Amin Rasulzadeh, “admitted that naming the new republic *Azerbaijan* had been a mistake”.¹³ On the political level, a prominent advisor to the President of Azerbaijan had affirmed that “the very concept ‘Azerbaijani’” is an anachronism from the Soviet period. “Our language is Turkish, and by nationality we are Turks”, Vafa Guluzade had explained in 2000.¹⁴ In the Middle Ages, the territory of what is Azerbaijan today was inhabited by indigenous Caucasian peoples, which included the Caucasian Albanian Christian kingdom. The territory of today’s Azerbaijan came under numerous imperial jurisdictions, “among them ‘Turkic’, sometimes Persian (with whom present day Azerbaijanis share Shia Islam and not Sunni Islam which is that of the Turks [in Turkey, H.T.]”.¹⁵

According to the official Azerbaijani narrative, the Armenians in the Caucasus are “newcomers”. They plotted, with the Russian Tsarist government in the 19th century, “to de-ethnicise the Albanians, to which end a well-thought-out and, perhaps, centuries-old plan of the Armenian Church was created”, according to Mamedova:¹⁶

The first and decisive step on the path of de-ethnicisation was the relocation of Armenians from Iran and Turkey and settlement of them on the lands of the Azerbaijani khanates. The next step was the Regulations of the Tsar’s Government of 1836, approved by Emperor

11 Cf. Swietochowski (1990: 45); Atabaki (1993: 25); Hunter (1993: 230); Gachechiladze (1996); Kazemzadeh (1951); Smith *et al.* (1998: 50–53). For a discussion of Azerbaijani ethnogenesis and formation of the Azerbaijani nation, see Altstadt (1992). Altstadt provides an exhaustive history of Azerbaijan up to the present time, based, as the book indicates, “almost exclusively [on] Russian sources”. Cf. also Chapter 12 of this Handbook (Hakobyan).

12 As explained by prominent Azerbaijani historian Suleiman Aliyarov who argued in 1988 that the “full history of ethnonymic changes undergone by the Azerbaijanis should become public knowledge and no longer hidden” (cited in Saroyan 1997: 161 n. 5).

13 Atabaki (1993: 25).

14 Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (2000).

15 Dragadze (1989: 68).

16 Mamedova (2021: 80–81).

Nicholas I, according to which the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church was abolished and subordinated as a diocese to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin.

The “Albanian connection” has become a politicised issue of irredentism, especially in the context of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in the last three decades. By establishing a connection between present Azerbaijanis and Caucasian Albanians, Azerbaijani historians provide a common *national history*, by promoting the idea of ethnic continuity and presence in Karabakh, and “proving” that Karabakh Armenians are relatively recent immigrants to the region. Therefore, Armenians are “non-indigenous” people living on ancient Azerbaijani lands. Indeed, modern Azerbaijani authors omit references to Armenians who inhabited Karabakh before the Turkic invasions of the region.¹⁷ For example, in the new Azeri edition of the 19th century chronicler Mirza Jamal Javanshir’s *Tarikh-e Qarabagh* – written in Persian – the statements that “in ancient times [Qarabagh] was populated by Armenians and other non-Muslims” and most other references to the Armenian presence in Karabakh are deleted.¹⁸ In the version of history promoted by academia and state officials in Azerbaijan, Albania is presented as the social, cultural and territorial predecessor of contemporary Azerbaijan; thus, refuting Armenian claims to Karabakh and even to the current Republic of Armenia. In a book by Aziz Alakbarli, published by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2007 – and no less edited by Academician Budag Badagov, Prof. Vali Aliyev and Dr. Jafar Giyassi of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences – the entire territory of the current Republic of Armenia is presented as Western Azerbaijan. *The Monuments of Western Azerbaijan*, reprinted several times in recent years and in different languages, opens with “The map [of] the Ancient Turkish-Oghuz land – Western Azerbaijan (present day the Republic of Armenia)” [sic!]. According to this “study”, endorsed by the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, *all* monuments in Armenia are of “Turkic”, “Turkish” or “Arman-Turkish” origin, including the first-century Roman Temple of Garni, “referring to

¹⁷ See, for example, Zeynaloglu (1989); Aliyev (1989a); Mamedova (1986); Buniyatov (1965); Aliyev (1974).

¹⁸ See Farzaliyev (1989: 108, 111, 112) and others, cited in Bournoutian (1994: 37 n.). Bournoutian (1992–1993: 185–186) reports that in “the 1950s and early 1960s, during the Soviet period, a number of Persian primary sources dealing with Karabakh, which were located in the Baku archives, were accurately translated into Azeri and Russian by scholars of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan. All of these early translations were issued in limited editions and are now out of print”. However, in the 1980s and 1990s, in the background of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, “many new editions of these earlier translations have been published by the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, or by other state-sponsored publishers, in which most references to Armenia and Armenians have been altered or deleted”.

ancient Gargar Turks” [sic!], and the Cathedral of the Holy See of the Armenian Apostolic Church as a 7th-century “Arman-Turkish Christian temple Uchkilsa/Echmiadzin”.¹⁹

This kind of re-writing of “history” is based solely on sources produced by Azerbaijani authors, notably prominent academician and national figure Ziya Buniyatov, whom President Heydar Aliyev described as “the constructor of our identity and self-consciousness”.²⁰ This constructed narrative is echoed in the political discourse of President Aliyev and is woven into state policies, diplomacy, public relations, identity construction and, critically, in the construction of extreme anti-Armenianism in Azerbaijan. A representative example of this is a statement by President Aliyev in a speech of 2005, where he said: “The propagation of false scientific information and the distortion of history and the use of disinformation were used by the Armenians to concentrate world opinion to the myth of the Armenian point of view”.²¹ Such “talking points” are aggressively and extensively reproduced, embellished and disseminated on the internet and social media through thousands of fake accounts and trolls.²² One such page on Facebook is called “Monuments in Western Azerbaijan”, which states:²³

Territory of Western Azerbaijan is one of the historical parts of United Azerbaijan. Today, the Republic of Armenia is located on these ancestral lands of Azerbaijani Turks. Countless examples of material culture – the ruins of ancient settlements, necropolises, burial mounds, cemeteries, fortresses, bridges, temples, caravansarays, baths, sacred places testify to the historical past of the Turks in these territories. Both the written sources and similar monuments located throughout the territory of Azerbaijan testify to the belonging of these monuments to Turkic culture. Many of the monuments remaining on the territory of Armenia were destroyed or appropriated by the Armenians, who mainly appeared in the region at the beginning of the 19th century.

For decades, long before the start of the armed conflict in Karabakh, the “authentication” of the history of the region has been the scholarly battleground of historians, political scientists, archaeologists, researchers and bureaucrats. The consequences of Soviet scholarship – particularly in the process of construction of histories – have been disastrous and continue to have a negative impact on how conflicting parties in this region view “the other”. The roots of this historiography go back to the policy of “nativisation” (*коренизация*) in the Soviet Union, where by the construction of “national histories” in the Soviet republics was part of the

¹⁹ Alakbarli (2007: 7, 33, 61).

²⁰ Aliyev (2002: 21–25), quoted in Crombach (2019: 184).

²¹ Alakbarli (2007: 6).

²² See, for example, Alonzo (2020).

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/westernazerbaijan> (accessed 12 February 2023).

official state teaching: that national identity is inseparable from the given territory of a national republic. The “nativisation” policy was intended to promote, for instance, national cultures, higher education and increase the number of natives in the Communist Party structures in a given republic. In line with this policy, the “official history” of the majority ethnic populations and that of their republics became virtually interchangeable. The Soviet state’s political operational code was “one republic, one culture”. Thus, “Azerbaijani historians produced histories of ‘Azerbaijan’ in the medieval period based not on the historical facts of a prior national state but on the assumption that the genealogy of the present-day Azerbaijani republic could be traced in terms of putative ethnic-territorial continuity”.²⁴ Hence, the once prosperous Armenian community in Baku and Armenian culture in Karabakh are not covered in the official history of Azerbaijan.²⁵ In turn, the history of Azerbaijanis and Moslems who lived in Armenia as the majority population at the turn of the 20th century of what is Armenia today is not part of the official history of Armenia.²⁶

2.1 Selective multiculturalism and controlled religious tolerance

The Azerbaijani state’s aggressive branding of the country as a hub of multiculturalism and religious tolerance intensified after the “Karabakh victory”. In an address to the nation on 25 November 2020, President Aliyev boasted that “Azerbaijan’s policy on multiculturalism and inter-religious relations is praised by the whole world and world leaders”.²⁷ Yet, this extensive and sustained campaign comes at a high cost to the very ethnic and religious communities, which are ostensibly promoted and protected by the state. For instance, the State Committee for Work with Religious Organisations “already oversees all Muslim educational establishments, censors religious literature of all faiths and approves or bans the building or renovation of any place of worship”. Recent amendments to the Law

²⁴ Saroyan (1997: 141).

²⁵ For example, Baku’s Armenian architects are “assimilated” into the broader Russian and European architectural categories and Armenian architectural monuments in Baku are not discussed at all, nor are the Armenians’ key business and industrial positions in Baku at the turn of the 20th century; see Fatullaev (1986), cited in Saroyan (1997: 162 n. 15). In a more recent presentation of cultural life in Shusha (Shushi) there is no mention of Armenian cultural institutions (Alibeyli 1998: 52–54).

²⁶ Tchilingirian (2003: 20–21)..

²⁷ Aliyev (2020).

on Religion introduced to the Parliament “hand[s] responsibility for naming prayer leaders in all mosques from the Caucasian Muslim Board to the State Committee”.²⁸ Back in 2018, in a report on Azerbaijan, *Forum 18*, a Norwegian-Danish-Swedish NGO for freedom of thought, conscience and religion, expressed concern about the continued utilisation of religion in state affairs:

The regime [in Azerbaijan], foreign apologists, and religious leaders coerced or co-opted by the [authorities], use claims of what the regime calls “tolerance”, “dialogue”, “multiculturalism” and similar terms to deny the reality of the regime’s serious human rights violations. For instance, delegations of religious leaders are used for propaganda when the regime seeks international trade agreements.²⁹

The Azerbaijani state, like the Republic of Turkey, controls the functioning of Islam and other religions through strict laws and regulations. The construction, control and dissemination of the narrative about the Udi connection to Albanian Christianity follows this pattern, the ultimate goal of which is serving the state interests – not necessarily the perturbed communities who have no choice but to follow the government’s line. A tweet by a diplomat, Nasimi Aghayev, Consul General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles, summarises the state narrative:

On this #Christmas day [25 December 2021], let’s enjoy these beautiful images of ancient Azerbaijani Christian heritage [showing Gandzasar and *Dadivank* monasteries]. #Christianity arrived in #Azerbaijan in 1st century, becoming state religion in 313. Today hundreds of thousands of Christians live peacefully and practice freely in Azerbaijan.³⁰

Historical details or references to Armenian Christianity are left out or modified in the official narrative about Christianity “being a state religion in Azerbaijan”. Wolfgang Schulze explains that “King Urñayr of Albania was baptized by Gregory the Illuminator at about 314 AD” – the patron saint of the Armenians – “and he subsequently declared Christianity as the official religion in Albania (lasting until the 8th century). From that time on, the history of the regions of Albania was dominated by two factors: (a) by the political relations to Armenia and the Sassanid empire, (b) by the local Church history”.³¹ Such features of the “Caucasian Albanian Christianity” are absent in the Azerbaijani narrative. Interestingly, in *The Monuments of Western Azerbaijan* cited above, one reads that “Gregori Enlightener (he was ethnically Turkman Anak’s son) [sic!], started “by destroying... former temples in the country during the spreading of Christianity”, beginning

²⁸ *Forum 18* (2022).

²⁹ *Forum 18* (2018).

³⁰ Aghayev (2021).

³¹ Schulze (2018: 283).

with “the famous fire worshipping temple, located in the capital of the country Vagharshabad... in the territory of the Western Azerbaijan”.³² Yet, in another government-endorsed Azerbaijani publication, a book entitled *Christianity in Azerbaijan: From Past to Present*, Anar Alizade writes that “after receiving religious education in the Anatolian city of Caesarea, Gregory the Illuminator came to the Caucasus and began to preach there”. Alizade adds that according to “famous Albanian historian Moses of Kalankatuk” [i.e. Movses Kalankatuatsi], the Albanians had asked for his young grandson Grigoris to be their catholicos. “For our king Urnayr”, Alizade continues, “had asked St. Gregory to consecrate him bishop of his country... Grigoris was appointed as the bishop of Albania and Iberia. Some Albanian nobles who were in favor of Christianity, called Grigoris to their land. Thus, Grigoris became the Catholicos of Albania”.³³ While this kind of muddled “historical narrative” is intended to construct an ethnic connection between Albanians and Azerbaijanis, Schulze suggests that even though “religion can surely serve as an important marker of societal identity, it can hardly be related to ethnicity as such”.³⁴

2.2 Enter the Udis

Why would a state – where 96 percent of its 10 million population is Muslim, at least nominally, and where the government instrumentalises Islam in international relations – nurture and spend large resources on a Christian community of about 3000 Udis? In the official discourse, this is presented as part of Azerbaijan’s state policy of multiculturalism and government generosity towards non-Moslem minorities. Indeed, the Department of Interethnic Relations, Multiculturalism and Religious Issues of the Presidential Administration is tasked, among other things, “to ensure protection of the religious values of Christians living in the country within regulation of religious diversity”. The Udi community is a significant element in the official narrative, where Azerbaijan is presented as “the motherland of the Ancient Eastern Church – Albanian Apostolic Church, being one of the most ancient churches in the world. Ancient Albanian Christian temples dating to the present day clearly show how Christianity has ancient roots in the region”.³⁵

Yet, the underlying expected effect is to “response to the unfounded accusations of Armenians in relation to Caucasian Albania” and to expose “Armenian

³² Alakbarli (2007: 12).

³³ Alizade (2016: 25, 27–28).

³⁴ Schulze (2018: 307).

³⁵ Alizade (2016: 5, 4).

lies and falsifications”. In the preface of Alizade’s book – “intended for historians, religious scholars, representatives of the press who are interested in Christianity, as well as for a wide audience of readers” – Professor Etibar Najafov, Head of the Department of Interethnic Relations, Multiculturalism and Religious Issues of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Mubariz Gurbanli, Chairman of the State Committee on Work with Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, write:³⁶

As we know, Armenians are trying to falsify the history of the Caucasian Albania, attempting to assimilate the Christian heritage of this ancient Azerbaijani state. The purpose of the Armenian fraud is clear. According to academician Ramiz Mehdiyev, during the destruction of Albanian church archives and other rich samples of materials reflecting the history and culture of Albanians, Armenians tried to prove that there was neither Albanian state nor Albanian Apostolic Church in history. And the Albanians’ lands historically belonged to Armenians. However, the historical truth is that the only heir of this heritage is the Azerbaijani people. ... The author reveals Armenian lies and falsifications and proves that the ancient Christian Albanian temples located both in Karabakh and in other parts of Azerbaijan, belong to the Azerbaijani people.

The author of the book, Anar Alizade, underlines that “the restoration of the Albanian Church is very important for our country, because Armenian aggressors making territorial claims against our country have been trying to appropriate ancient Christian Albanian temples, to reduce the influence of the Albanian Church, and to take possession of its rich heritage”. He goes on to explain the connection and importance of the Udis in Azerbaijan to the Albanian Church. Alizade says, “reviving the Albanian Church is both redressing a historical injustice, and answering false claims from an occupying force [i.e. Armenians] from a religious and historical perspective”.³⁷

As already stated, the reconstruction and restoration of “the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church” is an official state policy of Azerbaijan. For about a thousand years the Albanian Church had followed the Armenian Apostolic brand of Christianity, but this is denied, erased or re-branded in the Azerbaijani narrative. The process of relaunch of the “Albanian Church” today has become a critical element in the consolidation of Azerbaijani identity. As Farida Mamedova explains:³⁸

The Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church gave guidance to and cared for the Albanian ethnos from the fourth century until 1836 without fail. Initially, from the fourth to the

³⁶ Alizade (2016: 7).

³⁷ Alizade (2016: 45).

³⁸ Mamedova (2021: 380).

eighth century, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church was the single church of the entire Albanian kingdom, and after the collapse of the Albanian state, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church served the Albanian ethnos in the revived Albanian kingdoms: Artsakh, Utik, Shaki, and Aran. The Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, unlike the Armenian Church, had never left its domain, its Albanian kingdoms, principalities, its Albanian ethnos, just as the Albanian ethnos, with some exceptions (emigration), remained on its historical homeland. Only the tsarist policy could suppress its activity and liquidate it. The primary sources testify to the aspiration of the Armenian clergy and the Armenian secular nobility to establish relations with the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church.

Since de facto an “Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church” does not exist, in order to remake this “ancient Eastern Church”, the state is engaged in a process of what could best be described as “reverse engineering” of a church. Large resources are provided and political, financial, diplomatic tools are utilised to acquire all the defining elements that would make the invention of such an “Eastern Christian Church” possible. The Udi community is the “living base” from where this state project starts.

The Udis were not always the darling of the Azerbaijani state and were looked at suspiciously in the early post-Soviet period. They “did not easily fit into the Turkic-dominated identity that the newly independent Azerbaijan promoted”.³⁹ Indeed, until the early 2000s, the Udis were not allowed to serve in the Azerbaijani army. They were perceived to have “Armenian connection” and “as a result of the policy of Armenianisation” by Armenians, ostensibly the Udis “were once forced to adopt the *-yan* surname ending (surnames have changed since and now Udi surnames end in *-ri*)”.⁴⁰

The government had even changed the name of their main city, Vartashen (‘town of roses’ in Armenian), to Oğuz, “honoring a famous Turkic tribe with no connection to the Udis or the area”.⁴¹ Today, the village of Nij is the main locality of the Udi community. According to Schulze, “Nij is divided into sixteen ‘family-based’ quarters (*şaq’q’a* or *mähällä*), two of which are mainly inhabited by Azerbaijanis (Yalgaşlı, Abdallı)”.⁴² During Soviet times, Vartashen had a population of

39 Agha (2021).

40 “Başqa bir maraqlı fakt: erməniləşdirmə siyasəti nəticəsində vaxtilə udilər “yan” soyad sonluğu qəbul etməyə məcbur ediləblər. Nəticədə Azərbaycanın müstəqilliyinin ilk illərində – 90-cı illərin əvvəllərində udilər hərbi xidmətə aparılmır. Hazırda isə onların soyadları daha çox “rı” sonluğu ilə bitir” (Astanbəyli 2019).

41 Agha (2021).

42 The Chotari quarter, which hosts the church of St Elisaeus in Nij (cf. 2.3 below), appears under the name of Chotanyan (Чотанян) in E. Lalayan’s archeological account (1919: 38), thus providing an example for the replacement of the suffix of surnames thematised above (cf. n. 40).

about 5,000 people, “roughly 40 % Armenians, 15 % Jewish Tats, and 30 % Udis”. In the late 1980s, Vartashen was “a more or less compact group of ethnic Udis, too, located some 20 km northwest of Nij”. However, as Schulze explains:⁴³

Together with the local Armenians, most of the Udis from Vartashen were forced to leave the village in 1990 due to the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and thus moved to various places of the former USSR. The village of Zinobiani (named “Okt’omberi” from 1938–2000) in Eastern Georgia had been founded by emigrants from Vartashen in 1922 in the context of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict 1918–1920.

Nothing of this history is mentioned in contemporary Azerbaijani literature on the Udis. The main point of value that is often emphasised is their connection to the Caucasian Albanians. As Rafi Gurbanov writes: “The Udis are the successor of the 26 tribes within Caucasian Albania that played an important role in the history of multicultural Azerbaijan. Today, they managed to protect their language, culture, traditions and belief, as well preserve the moral legacy of Caucasian Albania in their ethnic identity”.⁴⁴

There are only about 3,000 Udis in Azerbaijan today. But what is critical to our discussion is the fact that the Azerbaijani authorities, not the Udis themselves, have determined that only the Udis are the descendants and followers of the Caucasian Albanians. This is part of a state-constructed narrative that has been especially promoted internationally during the reign of President Ilham Aliyev since 2003. Some believe the Udis are “hostages” of the state because the sole purpose of their protection by the Azerbaijani government is to use them as a political tool against Armenia and the Armenians and “strengthen its claims to Karabakh”.⁴⁵

As part of the process of the strategy to utilise the Udi legacy for state purposes, soon after President Aliyev came to power, the Udis were given official recognition as a community and organised under the umbrella of the Albanian-Udi Christian Religious Community, which acts as the formal representative of the Udis in Azerbaijan.

As historically the Albanian Church was absorbed into the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church from about the 11th century and on, there is no separate or “autocephalous” Albanian Apostolic Church, with its own liturgy, rites, doctrines, hierarchy, clergy, etc. In the 1990s, fragments of what is regarded as Caucasian

⁴³ Schulze (2018: 289–290); cf. Chapter 5 of this Handbook (Schulze and Gippert), 2.1 for more details.

⁴⁴ Gurbanov (2019: 30).

⁴⁵ Kharatyan (2020); Ostrovsky (2005).



Fig. 1: The Chotari church before its reconstruction (1979).

Albanian language were discovered by scholars at St Catherine’s monastery in Sinai. It has been proven to be related to the Udi language.⁴⁶ The Udis are considered to be the closest descendants of the Albanians. As such, the small Udi minority community in Azerbaijan has been enlisted by the government to recreate the Albanian Church – as an important political asset in the process of rejecting and erasing Armenian presence in these territories.

President Aliyev’s determination to physically “de-Armenianise” all religious and cultural heritage had started nearly two decades ago. A well reported case is the renovation of the church in Nij in 2005. Nij is a predominantly Udi village, where, as visiting Simon Ostrovsky wrote at the time, “although they call themselves Christian, there is little that Christians from other parts of the world would find in common with them”. Indeed, in the absence of any Christian church hierarchy or liturgical tradition, the Udis “celebrate[d] Islamic holidays together with their Muslim neighbors”.⁴⁷

The project of the renovation of the church came to the attention of the international public when the Norwegian Humanitarian Enterprise (NHE), the sponsoring Norwegian state-financed NGO, discovered that the Armenian inscriptions of the church had been removed or obliterated. As reported at the time: “To the Udi, who used Armenian script when their church was built, toeing the official Azeri line [had] become more of a priority than historical accuracy”. The centuries-old, white-stone church had not been tempered with until the reconstruction undertaken by the Udis under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan with Norwegian financing (see Figures 1–3 illustrating the state of the church before, during and after its reconstruction, and Figure 4 showing one

⁴⁶ Cf. Chapters 3–5 of the present Handbook (Gippert and Schulze) for details.

⁴⁷ Ostrovsky (2005).



Fig. 2: The Chotari church during its reconstruction (May 2004).



Fig. 3: The Chotari church after its reconstruction (August 2011).

of the deleted Armenian inscriptions).⁴⁸ “This is an act of vandalism and Norway in no way wants to be associated with it”, lamented Norway’s Ambassador to Azerbaijan Steinar Gil. Alf Henry Rasmussen, the director of the NHE in Azerbai-

⁴⁸ The inscription reads *ԿԱՌՈՒՑԵԱԼ Է ՅԱՅՍ Ե՛ | ԿԵՂԵՅԻ ԱՆՈՒՄԱՐ ՍՐԲՈ[Յ] | ԵՂԻՇԻԻ ՀԱՎԱԼ ԱՐԴԵՄԱՐԻ | ԵՆԳԻԲԱՐԻ · ՈՐ(ԴԻ) · Տ(Է)Ր Ա(ստուա)ԾԱՏՈՒԻՐ · ՈՐ Է ՅՕՀԱՆ.ՋԱՆ|Ն ԻՒՆՈՆ* – “Erected was this church with the name of St Elisaeus, by pure fruits, (by) the son of Engibar, Tēr Astowacatowr, who is his Yöhanjan”; cf. Karapetyan (1997: 42 no. 219).



Fig. 4: Armenian inscription of the Chotari church (2004), now annihilated.

jan, said, “Luckily enough there are good pictures of all these writings. They are well documented. And it is my hope that when years have passed and the tensions between the two countries [Armenia and Azerbaijan] have eased, it will be possible to reinstall the original writings”.⁴⁹ A visit to the church by Norway’s prime minister was cancelled and no one from the Norwegian embassy attended the opening.

2.3 The Albanian Church

The Albanian Church, like that of Iberia (until 608), having been established by Armenian missionaries, pledged canonical allegiance to the Armenian Church. At the wake of the controversy over the “dyophysite” Christology of the Council of Chalcedon, the three churches jointly convened the Council of Dvin in the 6th century and rejected the decision of Chalcedon. In 552, the seat of the head of the Albanian Church was moved from Derbent to Barda and an Albanian Catholicosate was established. The patriarch of the Albanian Church was given the title

⁴⁹ Maghakyan (2006).

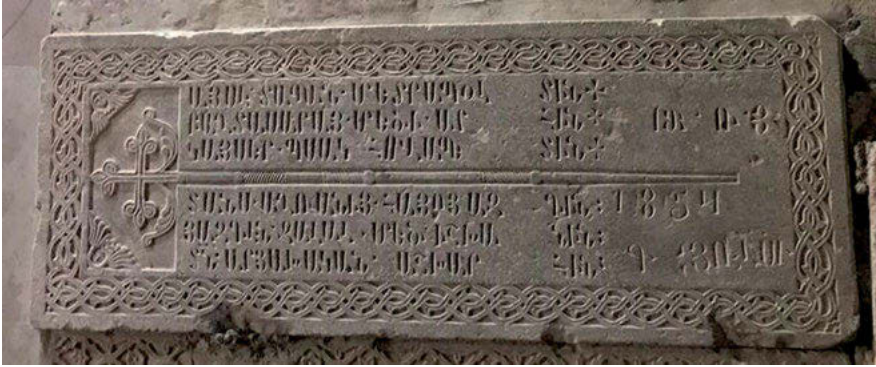


Fig. 5: Epitaph of Baghdasar (1854).

Catholicos of Aduank (Artsakh and Utik) and received his ordination and canonical authority from the Catholicos of Armenia.⁵⁰

From the 11th to the 13th century, more than forty monasteries and major religious centres were built in Karabakh through the patronage and efforts of the “Armenian princes of Artsakh”.⁵¹ One of the most famous clans to have contributed to the revival of the Church and piety in Artsakh is the Hasan-Jalalyan princely family who, besides building the famous monastery of Gandzasar, have given several Catholicoses and bishops. The epitaph of Metropolitan Baghdasar, the last clergyman in the Jalal clan, who is buried in the courtyard of the monastery of Gandzasar, reads: “This is the tombstone of Metropolitan Baghdasar, an Armenian Albanian, from the family of Jalal, the great Prince of the land of Artsakh, dated 3 July 1854” (see Fig. 5).⁵² Prince Hasan-Jalal was also buried in the same monastery in 1261.⁵³ Starting in the 15th century, the monastery of Gandzasar became the seat of the native Catholicos of the Albanian Church. The existence of a separate Catholicosate in Karabakh, with its own autonomous religious institutions, attests to the importance of the region as a religious centre.

In the 19th century, the status of the native Catholicosate was drastically reduced. When Tsarist Russia liberated Karabakh from Persian domination, Catholi-

50 Ulubabyan (1981: 201–204); cf. Chapter 7 of this Handbook (Dum-Tragut) for details.

51 Barkhutareants (1902: 194).

52 Այս է տապան Մետրապոլիտին | Բաղդասարայ մեծի արհին | Կալսեր պսակ հովապետին | տանս Աղուանից Հայոց ազգին | յգզգէն Ջալալ մեծ իշխանին | տեառն Արցախական աշխարհին; cf. Barkhudaryan (1982: 65, no. 177). The tombstone and the inscription are still visible to visitors to the Monastery of Gandzasar, situated in the village of Vank in the Martuni region. I transcribed the rhyming inscription during my visit there on 28 August 1995.

53 Cf. Barkhudaryan (1982: 40, no. 84).

cos Sargis of Albania (*Atuank*'), upon his return from exile, was demoted to the rank of Metropolitan by a decision of the imperial authorities in 1815. Metropolitan Sargis headed the See until his death in 1828. After his death, upon the request of the Meliks (princes), Catholicos Yeprem of Ejmiatsin, in 1830, ordained Baghdasar, a nephew of Sargis, Primate of the Diocese of Karabakh. He was ordained in the Cathedral of Ejmiatsin.⁵⁴ Thus, the Catholicosate located in Karabakh was reduced, first to a Metropolitan seat and then to a diocese of the Armenian Church under Ejmiatsin.

In the Azerbaijani narrative, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church had existed from ancient times until the 19th century, when the Armenians and Tsarist Russia conspired, as Mamedova asserts, to “de-ethnicise” the Albanian Church, “Armenianise” it and claim its historic heritage. She explains:⁵⁵

After the abolition of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church by the Russian tsarist government in 1836 and its subordination to Etchmiadzin Cathedral, the Armenian clergy started publishing Albanian literature in Armenian, having translated it into Armenian and edited with a deeply thought-out Armenian concept. And the Albanian originals were seized and possibly destroyed (this did not happen in 705 by the decree of the caliph, as opposed to what was believed in the literature, but much later). In this way, traces of the centuries-old, rich authentic Albanian literature were hidden.

This view is widely shared in Azerbaijan and frequently referred to in state and public relations discourse – at times, the Armenians are singled out as the culprits; in other times the Tsarist Russians, and sometimes both. President Aliyev, in a national address on television a few days after the second Karabakh war, referred to this period. He said: “Suffice it to look at history and anyone can see that in the 1830s, Tsarist Russia abolished the Albanian Church, gave all the property of the Albanian Church to the Armenian Gregorian Church, and Armenian priests and their patrons began to appropriate these churches”.⁵⁶ This is a common talking point, which fits President Aliyev’s “strategy of victory”, as it is called, whereby, he says: “We must not defend, but attack politically, from a propaganda point of view”.⁵⁷ For instance, Rafi Gurbanov affirms – in a state-financed publication – that the “historical mission of the [Gandzasar] monastery complex as headquarter [of the Albanian Catholicosate] was eliminated by the Armenians in 1837”.⁵⁸ More interestingly, it is reproduced in the narrative and public discourse

54 Ter Danielyan (1948: 62–67).

55 Mamedova (2021: 9).

56 Aliyev (2020).

57 Azertac (n. d.).

58 Gurbanov (2018: 14) with reference to Aslanova (2017). Gurbanov’s book was “Published by the financial support of Moral Values Promotion Foundation under the State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Baku, Azerbaijan”.

of the Udi Albanian Christian community leaders themselves. According to community chairman Robert Mobili: “After the occupation of the Caucasus by Tsarist Russia, the church was directly subordinated to the Armenian Church”. He says, after Azerbaijan’s independence, “conditions were created” for the Udi Christian community to restore the Albanian Apostolic Church.⁵⁹ His deputy, Rafik Danakari, in an interview given to a Turkish newspaper, said, “Armenians wanted to destroy us. They stole everything, especially our religion, for centuries”. He repeats the main talking points and explains:⁶⁰

As a result of “Tsarist Russian colonial policy... the historical Albanian monument, the Saint Elisaeus (Chotari) Church, built in 1723 in the village of Nij in Gabala province, was attached to the Armenian Gregorian Church in 1836 with a special decision of the Russian Holy Synod. But the Udis did not go to church in protest and started worshipping in their homes from that date on”.

2.4 A state-sponsored and led “restoration” of the Albanian Apostolic Church

The Azerbaijani state seems to be endeavouring to re-root the origins of the Albanian Church and deny and erase its historical, theological, ecclesial, hierarchical, liturgical or linguistic connections with the Armenian Apostolic Church. However, severing or erasing that connection is like hollowing the content and ending up with mere church buildings. A Christian church is not just a building (or “hardware”). Its content, essence – the “software”, as it were – is made of a system of teachings, dogmas, canons, liturgical practices, sacraments, hierarchy, religious functionaries, so on. Therefore, having re-written and invented the “history” of the Albanian Church over the decades, now the Azerbaijani state is engaging in acquiring the “content” of the Albanian Church. By erasing the Armenian dimension in the narrative, the Udi community in particular and the Azerbaijani state in general are faced with the issue of the “apostolicity” of the Albanian Church – the apostolic succession, which is a critical aspect in Eastern Christianity especially. The newly fashioned “Albanian Apostolic Church” as of yet is not recognised

⁵⁹ Mobili *apud* Hacieva (2020).

⁶⁰ “Ermeniler bizi yok etmek istediler. Başta dinimiz olmak üzere asırlarca her şeyimizi çaldılar ... Rusyası'nın Kafkasya bölgesindeki sömürge politikasının... Gabala ilinin Nic köyündeki 1723 yılında inşa edilen tarihi Alban anıtı – Kutsal Elysee (Çotari) Kilisesi, 1836 yılında Rus Kutsal Sinod'un özel bir kararıyla Ermeni Gregoryen Kilisesi'ne bağlandı. Fakat Udiler protesto ederek kiliseye gitmediler ve o tarihten itibaren evlerinde ibadete başladılar” (Danakari *apud* Kutlu 2021).

as an “autocephalous” church by any other established Christian Church or Patriarchate. Therefore, the Azerbaijani government “has sought help from other Orthodox churches in Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Israel, and Ukraine for support in bolstering its claims”.⁶¹ Udi community chairman Mobili acknowledged that “for the restoration of the Albanian Apostolic Church, everyone from ordinary Azerbaijani citizens to non-governmental organizations, the Caucasian Muslims Office and other organizations have supported us. In particular, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan annually provides us with financial assistance”.⁶²

What needs to be underlined, again, is the fact that a Moslem-majority state is seeking recognition for a “national” Christian church it is creating – through its diplomatic relations and entire state resources. This is an endeavour that is much larger in scope than the needs of the mere 3000-strong Udi community in Azerbaijan. It helps that since 2012 the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, led by First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, “has donated undisclosed sums to finance restoration work at the Vatican, including repairs to the Sistine Chapel”. As one commentator put it, given the Vatican’s influence in the Christian world, “there is more than a bit of realpolitik, and by helping the Vatican with restoration, the leadership of Muslim Azerbaijan hopes for support... from the pope’s side”.⁶³

Most critically for any church, the named Udi Albanian Christian Church does not have ordained clergymen. The two leaders who represent the Udi community under the auspices of the government are not ordained priests or clergy, even as they appear in public in clerical cassocks and headgear, interestingly resembling the garbs of Russian Orthodox priests. In the Christian tradition, priests are ordained by a church hierarchy that gives them legitimacy to conduct religious services or performance rituals. Virtually nothing is known about the liturgical services or religious practices of this Udi Albanian Christian Church today. For instance, a photo at the website of the Church in Nij shows an open Russian language Bible and, strangely, an “I love Türkiye” bottle opener as decoration on top of the lectern – apparently a souvenir that shows Istanbul’s skyline.⁶⁴ The icons in the church are in Russian (Byzantine) style, including a large reproduction of medieval iconographer Andrei Rublev’s famous “The Holy Trinity” icon, on the left side of the main altar.⁶⁵ At least the visuals in the church seem to reflect the

⁶¹ Agha (2021).

⁶² “Alban Apostol kilsəsinin bərpası üçün də sırası Azərbaycan vətəndaşlarından tutmuş, qeyri-hökumət təşkilatları, Qafqaz Müsəlmanları İdarəsi və digər qurumlara qədər hər biri öz növbəsində dəstəyini əsrgəməyib. Əsasən də Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti tərəfindən hər il bizə maliyyə yardımı ayrılır” (Mobili *apud* Hacıeva 2020).

⁶³ Owen (2016).

⁶⁴ *Azerbaijan Travel* (n. d.: gallery-1).

⁶⁵ *Azerbaijan Travel* (n. d.: gallery-5).

Chalcedonian tradition, which contradicts the official description of the Albanian Autocephalous Church. In the description endorsed by the government, it is said that the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church “belongs to the branch of Ancient Eastern churches (a group of churches which recognize only the decisions of the first three Ecumenical Councils)... Thus, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church became monophysite”.⁶⁶

Recently attempts have been made by the Udi Albanian Christian Church to seek the patronage of the Syriac Orthodox Church. An opening to the Syrian Church seems to be through the Metropolitan of Mardin (Turkey), Archbishop Saliba Özmen, who has attended a number of government-organised conferences in the last few years, especially the much-highlighted and publicised conference on “Azerbaijan’s Albanian Christian heritage” in January 2021.⁶⁷ Reportedly, the two leaders of the Udi community pay regular visits to the Monastery of Mor Hananyo (“Saffron Monastery”) in the historic Tur Abdin region near Mardin to get religious training. For now, it appears that the Udi leaders’ connection is personally with Archbishop Saliba Özmen, rather than formally with the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. The Syriac Church is a member of the family of the Non-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox Churches, which includes the Armenian Apostolic Church.⁶⁸

Alizade reports, without details, that “several members of Albanian-Udi religious community are studying in religious educational institutions abroad in order to acquire religious titles”.⁶⁹ Ironically, in Mardin, archbishop Özmen’s Syriac Orthodox Church is caught in a maze of legal battles in recent years and is perpetually under state pressure. In 2017 alone, “the administration of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan [had] taken control of at least 50 Syriac churches, monasteries and cemeteries in Mardin province and declared them as state property”.⁷⁰ It remains to be seen whether there is a connection between the Syriac Orthodox archbishop’s good will towards the Udi Albanian Christian Church and the state of affairs in Turkey.

Since the end of the war, Mobili and Danakari often visit the churches that are claimed as Albanian in the territories that Azerbaijan retook during the war – mostly accompanied by TV cameras, journalists and scholars who provide on camera commentary on how Armenians have altered the Albanian sites. Interestingly, despite lack of a congregation, Danakari was appointed by Azerbaijani au-

⁶⁶ Alizade (2016: 24, 36).

⁶⁷ Azertac (2021).

⁶⁸ Agha (2021).

⁶⁹ Alizade (2016: 44).

⁷⁰ Malado (2017).

thorities as Udi “preacher” at Dadivank, even as Armenian monks have been living there since the ceasefire under the protection of the Russian peacekeepers.⁷¹

One might ask, how did Mobili and Danakari become “religious” leaders of the Udi Albanian Christian Church or what process led them to conduct “religious services”? Anar Alizade, who handled non-Muslim religious communities at the State Committee for Work with Religious Organisations, provides the answer in his government-endorsed book. Repeating the narrative that the “autocephaly” of the Albanian Church “was broken” in the 19th century under Tsarist rule, he explains:⁷²

Besides [state] registration [as a religious organisation], some measures related to Christian traditions have been taken to restoration the Albanian Church [sic!]... The restoration of this tradition required the blessing of the ancient Eastern church. *And in 2008, several members of the Albanian-Udi religious community received a blessing from the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and were baptized in the Jordan river. Thus was restored the independence of the Albanian-Udi religious organization* [emphasis added H.T.].

It is still unknown what kind of liturgical books, sacraments, prayer services, and liturgies the leaders of this “independent” church use. Most of the literature produced in Azerbaijan about the Udi church is about its “history” and the Albanian connection, but there is virtually no discussion about the religious practices, theological teachings, congregations, structure, etc. For all appearances, it is a church run by the government and mostly for government purposes. In 2013, for instance, it was the State Committee for Work with Religious Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan that organised and financed the 10th anniversary celebrations of “the revival of the Albanian-Udi church and the 1700th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity as the official religion in Caucasian Albania”.⁷³ The clergy and representatives of the Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Jewish and Moslem communities attended the formal ceremonies held at Nij. President Aliyev has even expressed enthusiasm to restore the Albanian alphabet “for the modern Udi language (which currently uses the Latin alphabet in Azerbaijan, and the Cyrillic alphabet in other countries)”.⁷⁴

The two leaders of the Udi community, with the full support of the government, are actively seeking recognition and legitimacy. At least Mobili realises that this is a long road that will take a long time:⁷⁵

71 Cf. Xalq qəzeti (2020) and Trend (2020).

72 Alizade (2016: 43).

73 Alizade (2016: 44).

74 Agha (2021).

75 “Onlar bu gün Şərqi Apostol kilsələrini bərpa etməyə hazırdırlar. Onlarla keçirilən görüşlər zamanı bu rəsmi dəstəyi biz hiss etmişik. Bildiyimiz kimi, kilsənin öz qanunları var və bu qanun-

Today they [“the Christian world”] are ready to restore the Apostolic Churches of the East. We have felt this official support during our meetings with them. As we know, the Church has its own laws, and we need time to follow them... To be spiritual, we must know the Eastern cultural heritage, we must know the laws of the Eastern cultural heritage. Hopefully, after the complete liberation of Karabakh from occupation, we will face many falsifications in the restoration of monuments and show the international community that all these monuments have historically belonged to Azerbaijan. I can say that the Eastern Churches are ready to bless us and support us.... This cultural heritage has been falsified so much that it is difficult to tear it from them. But despite all this, today there is a strong Azerbaijani state, the country has ample opportunities to restore its cultural heritage. We will restore the Church, but we must do it step by step in order to be blessed by following the laws of the Church. We have the support of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church.

3 Conclusion

The invention of a “national” Christian Church engineered by a majority-Moslem state is a spectacular phenomenon in the 21st century. Yet, as President Aliyev put it, “from a propaganda point of view” Azerbaijan does not need to “defend” or explain its intentions. Denial of facts, erasure of historical and physical evidence, and the rewriting of history are all part of the state’s “political attack” strategy.⁷⁶ The main objective of this endeavour and strategy is to consolidate Azerbaijani identity and “nation-building” efforts of the state. This is primarily accomplished by (a) propagating that the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people have millennia deep roots in the Caucasus – through purpose-produced “scientific research”, creation of state-planned and financed institutions dedicated to “culture”, “multiculturalism”, “religious tolerance”, etc.; and (b) by debasing and demonising the Armenians as the “enemy” – “fascists”, “hateful” and “despicable” people⁷⁷ that for centuries had stolen this “national heritage” of Azerbaijan.

lara tam riayət edə bilmək üçün bizə vaxt lazımdır. İnşallah Qarabağı tamamən işğaldan azad edəndən sonra biz abidələri bərpa edərkən nə qədər saxtalaşdırmalarla qarşılaşacağıq və beynəlxalq ictimaiyyətə də nümayiş etdirəcəyik ki, bütün bu abidələr tarixən Azərbaycana məxsus olub. Mən onu deyə bilərəm ki, Şərq kilsələri bizə xeyir-dua verməyə hazırdırlar, bizi dəstəkləyirlər. Çünki onlar bilirlər ki, bu tarixdir. Siz dediyiniz kimi də, bizə İslam dünyası qədər xristian dünyası da dəstək olmalıdır. Bu mədəni irsi o qədər saxtalaşdırıblar ki, onu onlardan qoparmaq çətindir. Amma bütün bunlara baxmayaraq bu gün güclü Azərbaycan dövləti var, mədəni irsini bərpa etmək üçün ölkənin geniş imkanları var. Kilsəni bərpa edəcəyik amma kilsə qanunlarına riayət edərək xeyir-dua almaq üçün addım-addım bunu həyata keçirməliyik. Rus Provaslav kilsəsi və Katolik kilsəsindən bizə dəstək var” (Mobili *apud* Hacıyeva 2020).

⁷⁶ Azertac (n. d.).

⁷⁷ See, e.g., *Letters* (2016), Karagan (2016), Rzaev (2016).

In the process of state engineering of the Udi Albanian Christian Church – also called Albanian Apostolic Church – the religious and cultural heritage of the Udi people is expropriated, re-rooted, rearranged and reinterpreted by the state and national institutions in order to “prove” that the Azerbaijani people living in the Republic of Azerbaijan today are the descendants of “the Albanians” from the early centuries of Christianity. Viewed with suspicion in the early years of post-Soviet Azerbaijan, the small Udi community today is treated like the “apple of the eye” of the Azerbaijani state. The Udis are a crucial link to Albania and the Albanians; they are the “proof” of the purported theory of ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijanis – and, by extension, their territorial claims.

Within weeks of the signing of the ceasefire in November 2020, the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan announced the establishment of a “Scientific Center for Albanian Studies”. As reported by Javid Agha, well-known historian and opposition leader Jamil Hasanli considered this a step towards “degradation of the quality research that had been done into Caucasian Albania in Soviet Azerbaijan”. Writing on his Facebook page, Hasanli, who served for two terms in Parliament, said: “the ignorance that intensified after the collapse of the Soviet Union created a lot of undesirable tendencies in scholarship into pre-Islamic culture and Christianity in Azerbaijan. All this has led to very unfortunate results, the neglect of the [true] historical, cultural and political heritage of Caucasian Albania”.⁷⁸

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- Figure 1: Photograph Wolfgang Schulze, 1979.
- Figure 2: Photograph Nikolaus von Twickel, May 2004.
- Figure 3: Photograph Jost Gippert, August 2011.
- Figure 4: Photograph Nikolaus von Twickel, May 2004.
- Figure 5: Photograph courtesy of the Diocese of Artsakh of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

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abazak ‘robber’ 215
abel ‘Abel’ 181
abraham ‘Abraham’ 118
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açam-owkesown ‘eat unleavened bread’ 192
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aci-bâhesown ‘go down, descend’ 202
aci-bičhesown ‘be swallowed, drowned’ 202
**aci-faxesown* ‘be covered, hidden’ 202
aci-heqesown ‘take down’ 202
aci-pesown ‘stoop, bend down’ 202, 250
aci-sak-pesown ‘cast down’ 202
açpë ‘false’ 212
fafesown ‘temptation’ 185, 198, 220
afre-pesown ‘praise, bless’ 215, 224
faqâown ‘rejection’ 221
agj ‘this/that’ (dem.pron.f.) 113, 181, 187, 251
**agjro-y* ‘their’ (f.) 187
aha ‘look!, behold!’ 109, 113, 204, 206
-aha- ‘be(come)’ (pres.) 178, 194, 195, 197, 253
-ahal- ‘be(come)’ (subj.) 196
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Armina ‘Armenia’ (OPers.) 34
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**āsām* ‘peace’ (Mīran.) 216
āsān ‘peace’ (MPers.) 216
**asparēs* ‘stadion’ (Mīran.) 110, 216
**āwāzak* ‘robber’ (Mīran.) 215
**āwāzan* ‘pond’ (Mīran.) 215
**bāmḡēn* ‘splendid’ (Mīran.) 216
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barzīdan ‘sow’ (NPers.) 217
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brinj ‘bronze, copper’ (NPers.) 218
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**gitak* ‘testament’ (Mīran.) 216
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tabank ‘crucible, mould’ (NPers.) 217
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**tapan* ‘coffin, chest’ (Mīran.) 216
tapang ‘chest’ (MPers.) 216
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taxtag ‘tablet’ (MPers.) 215

tp'n, tpn 'chest' (Sogd.) 216
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**wardapet* 'teacher' (MĪran.) 215
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**warz* 'labour, gain' (MĪran.) 217
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6.9 Turkic languages

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