



BRILL

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The Thorny Road to Caucasian Albania In Memory of Wolfgang Schulze (1953–2020): *Oya çohoc nowte hil'al bownehē hē-hanayoķe*

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Abstract

The present article resumes the history of the first edition of the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests with a special focus on the contributions by Wolfgang Schulze, without whom nothing that has been achieved would have been achieved. Thematised are the different types of photographs that were used (ultraviolet and multispectral images), with an outlook on the new technology of transmissive light imaging. Added is a revised edition of the beginning of the Gospel of John as preserved in the palimpsest manuscript Sin. georg. N 13, based upon transmissive light images provided by the Sinai Palimpsests Project.

Keywords

Wolfgang Schulze, Caucasian Albanian, Udi, Albanian Gospel of John, Sin. Georg. N 13

On the 13th April 2020, Caucasian Studies lost one of its most outstanding scholars: attacked by a severe pneumonia, Wolfgang Schulze passed away unexpectedly at the age of 67.¹ Everybody who knew him was perplexed receiving the incredible news, and so was I, for whom his death meant the sudden end of a long lasting close cooperation and an extremely cordial friendship.

I first met Wolfgang personally at a conference on accusative, ergative and active systems held by Frans Plank at the University of Hannover in January, 1982.² Wolfgang had just gained his doctorate at the University of

¹ Cf. <<http://schulzewolfgang.de>> for Wolfgang Schulze's *curriculum vitae* and bibliography.

² Akkusativischer, ergativischer und aktivischer Sprachbau, 15.–17. 01. 1982.

Bonn, and his thesis on the language of the Udis in Azerbaijan was about to be published in the same year.³ One of the outcomes of the conference was the plan, commonly developed by Wolfgang, myself, and several other participants, to found a “Circle of Caucasian Studies”, which was implemented in the following two years in the course of two preparatory colloquia at the universities of Hull (organised by George Hewitt; cf. Fig. 1) and Vienna (organised by Sonja Fritz and myself). The official initiation of the *Societas Caucasologica Europaea* took place during a third colloquium that was held by Fridrik Thordarson at the University of Oslo in 1986, with Wolfgang acting as the first Secretary; later on (1992 and 1998), he was twice elected the president of the *Societas*,⁴ and in 2000 (2–5 August), he organised the “Tenth Caucasian Colloquium” in Munich himself.⁵



Fig. 1: Participants of the First Caucasian Colloquium, Hull, 1983 (Wolfgang Schulze first from left).⁶

³ Wolfgang Schulze, *Die Sprache der Uden in Nord-Azerbajdžan. Studien zur Synchronie und Diachronie einer süd-ostkaukasischen Sprache*. Wiesbaden, 1982.

⁴ For details as to the history of the *Societas*, cf. the pages <http://wschulze.userweb.mwn.de/sce_10.htm> and <http://wschulze.userweb.mwn.de/sce_hist.htm#Previous%20venues> (these and all other URLs last accessed: 02. 06. 2020), kindly provided by Wolfgang himself. To the list of proceedings of the colloquia provided on <http://wschulze.userweb.mwn.de/sce_proc.htm>, we may add that a few of the contributions to the first colloquium (Hull 1983) were published (in German) in *Georgica* 7, 1984.

⁵ Cf. <http://wschulze.userweb.mwn.de/short_prog.html> for the program.

⁶ Cf. <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/curric/kaukalt2.jpg>>. The other persons are (from left to right) Marianne Moor, Martin Prior, Stephen Anderson, Donald Rayfield, Dee Ann Holisky, Tine Amse-de Jong, Rieks Smeets, Rémy Viredaz, Catherine Paris, Simon Crisp, Jost Gippert, Sonja Fritz, and George Hewitt.

But of course, our common activities were not confined to the *Societas* and its business.⁷ Since 1999, the main focus of our cooperation was on the Udi language and its presumed ancestor, usually named ‘Caucasian Albanian’. Together with Manana Tandashvili, who sojourned first in Munich and then in Frankfurt as an Alexander von Humboldt fellow from 1999 to 2002, we developed an electronic version of the Udi Gospels that had been published by the brothers Semyon and Mikhail Bezhanov in 1902,⁸ with the aim to provide indexes and concordances for Wolfgang’s new edition.⁹ At the same time, we prepared a common application for a project concerning the documentation of spoken Udi (and other Caucasian languages) to be submitted to the ‘DOBES’ programme of the Volkswagen Foundation; the project, which bore the title ‘Endangered Caucasian Languages in Georgia’ (ECLinG), ran from 2002–2005 and yielded a large amount of audiovisual materials in Udi, Batsbi (Tsova-Tush), and Svan.¹⁰ By far the greatest joint endeavour, however, was on the Caucasian Albanian palimpsests that had been detected among the so-called ‘New Finds’ of St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mt. Sinai in the early 1990s.

In 1999, I launched, with kind support of the Volkswagen Foundation, a project concerning the “Electronic Documentation” of Caucasian languages and cultures (later simply called “ARMAZI” project).¹¹ One of the

⁷ The *Societas Caucasologica Europaea* was practically dissolved in 2005.

⁸ “Gospoda Našego Iisusa Xrista Svjatae Evangelie ot Mattheja, Marka, Luki i Ioanna na ruskom i udinskom jazykax”, *Sbornik Materialov dlja opisanija mestnostej i plemen Kavkaza* 30, 1902. The electronic version has been available on the TITUS server since 10. 08. 1999 (<<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/cauc/udi/udint/udint.htm>>), with a variant in Georgian script on <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etca/cauc/udi/udint/udint.htm>>. Later on, Wolfgang contributed electronic versions of the first Udi primer, *Samji däs* (of 1934) and other published Udi texts to the TITUS text collection (<<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/cauc/udi/sd/sd.htm>> and <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/cauc/udi/cput/cput.htm>>).

⁹ Wolfgang Schulze, *The Udi Gospels*. München (LINCOM - Languages of The World / Text Library, 05), 2001. Wolfgang first told me about his plan in an e-mail of 23. 01. 1997, 17:25h.

¹⁰ Cf. <<http://titus.fkidg1.uni-frankfurt.de/ecling/ecling.htm>> for a survey; the audiovisual materials are also accessible on the server of *The Language Archive* at the Max Planck Institute, Nijmegen (cf. <https://archive.mpi.nl/tla/islandora/object/tla%3A1839_00_0000_0000_0008_24AD_F>).

¹¹ Cf. the description in <<http://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de>>.

cornerstones of the project, which involved several scientific institutions of Georgia, was a subproject devoted to ‘Albanica’: in cooperation with Zaza Aleksidze, then the director of the Korneli Kekelidze Institute of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, we aimed to provide digital images of the palimpsests in order to facilitate a scholarly edition.¹² When Wolfgang received the first ultraviolet photos in May 2001, taken *in situ* by Zaza Aleksidze and his team and processed in Tbilisi (cf. Fig. 2¹³ for an example), he immediately started working on them and soon developed his first ideas as to what Zaza had proposed to read. To give but one example: One of the first passages that Zaza had been able to identify was a lection consisting of II Cor. 11.23–27, contained on ff. 76 and 77 of ms. Sin. georg. N 13. The title of the lection, written in smaller letters, was read by him as *Korint’aufoj Puranin Dipnuxoć Paulosi hebij ajoja ufesun*, i.e., “The Second Letter of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians. To perform Hallelujah”. Wolfgang’s reading was different at a decisive point: for the letter that was taken to be an *f* by Zaza, Wolfgang proposed to read a velar fricative (*ǧ*), thus arriving at a genitive plural form *Korint’auǧoy* “of the Corinthians”, which perfectly matched the Udi formation with a plural suffix *-uǧ-* and a genitive ending *-oy*.¹⁴ Exchanging these ideas with Zaza, we soon agreed to develop a new project with the aim of providing a complete edition of the Albanian palimpsests,¹⁵ applying the new photographic method of “multispectral imaging” that promised to enhance the readability of palimpsested materials to a great extent.¹⁶ Luckily enough, the project was funded by the

¹² Cf. <<http://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/armaz3.htm>> for a description of the subproject.

¹³ The two neighbouring folios contain in their undertext parts of lections from Jac. 1 and Act. 12 (Sin. georg. N 13, f. 57r), and II Cor. 9 and Heb. 13 (f. 56v), resp.; cf. *The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of Mount Sinai*, edited by Jost Gippert, Wolfgang Schulze, Zaza Aleksidze, and Jean-Pierre Mahé, vol. II, Turnhout: Brepols (Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevi, Series Ibero-Caucasica 2/ 2), 2009, VII-84–85 and VII-14–15.

¹⁴ E-mail by Wolfgang Schulze to me of 01. 08. 2001, 14:34h; cf. <<http://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/sinai/2kor.htm>> for the state of the passage arrived at during the “ARMAZI” project runtime.

¹⁵ We were kindly offered by Jean-Pierre Mahé, who joined our group, to publish the edition in the Brepols series *Monumenta Palaeographica Medii Aevi* (MPMA) founded by Hartmut Atsma and Jean Vezin; a special sub-series “Ibero-Caucasica” was launched for this purpose.

¹⁶ Cf. J. Gippert, “The Application of Multispectral Imaging in the Study of Caucasian Palimpsests”, *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences / Sakartvelos mecnier-*

Volkswagen Foundation again, and the subsequent years saw Wolfgang and myself in a steady exchange of e-mails concerning the reading of individual letters, words, or text passages,¹⁷ based upon thousands of multi-spectral images taken on Mt. Sinai in October 2004. The result of this work

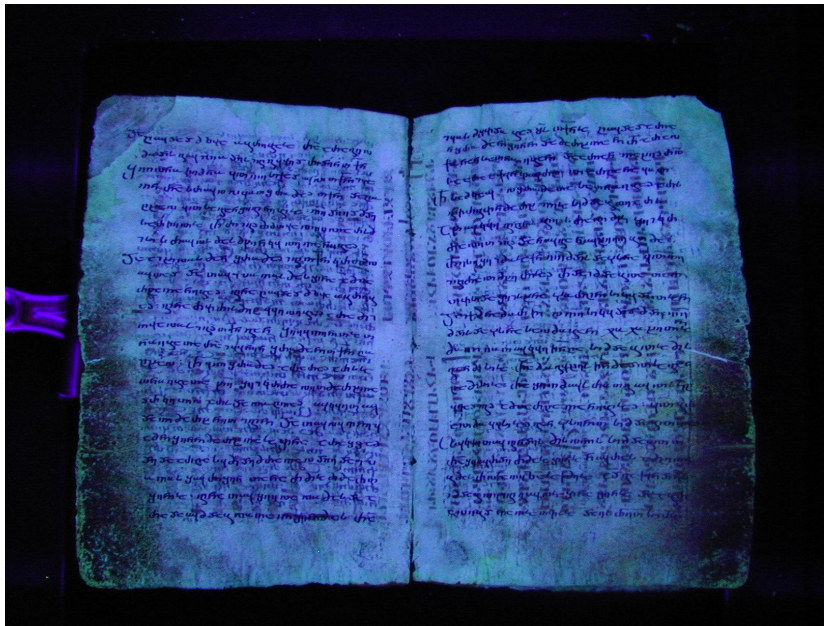


Fig. 2: Ultraviolet photo of Sin. georg. N 13, 56v (left hand) and 57r (right hand), 2001.

was two large volumes with a total of 554 pages, one comprising introductory matter, an analysis of the “Albanian” alphabet, a grammar of the “Albanian” language, an *editio minor*, a lexicon and indices, and the other one, the page-by-page edition of the texts, which had been determined to stem from two different “Albanian” codices, a lectionary and manuscript

bata erovnuli ak'ademiis moambe 175 / 1 (2007): 168–179 (also on <<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/personal/jg/pdf/jg2007b.pdf>>).

¹⁷ All in all, I received more than 1,000 e-mails from Wolfgang concerning the palimpsests between 1999 and 2020, and I sent out more than 750 to him. After all this, the title of the lection of II Corinthians finally reads *korintaŋoj puranin dipnuxoc pawlosi hebiyayoya upesun* “Lecture from the second letter of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians”, and there is no more *alleluia* involved, *hebiyayoya* having been identified by Wolfgang as the genitive of the word *hebiyay-o* “apostle”, *lit.* the referential form of a participle “the sent one” (e-mail by Wolfgang Schulze to me on 08. 03. 2004, 13:55h).

of the Gospel of John; only two of the 121 folios containing an “Albanian” undertext remained unidentified. After many months of proofreading, the two volumes went into the press in December 2008 and saw the light in June 2009.



Fig. 3: Wolfgang Schulze and Jost Gippert, Yerevan, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian-Armenian University, May 2018

But scholarly work never comes to an end, especially if it depends on the further development of technology. When in 2011 a new project on the palimpsests of St. Catherine's Monastery was launched,¹⁸ there was a good chance that it could yield new insights into the “Albanian” palimpsests, especially by the introduction of the new method of “transmissive light imaging”.¹⁹ And indeed, when I had access to the first transmissive images

¹⁸ The “Sinai Palimpsests Project” run by Claudia Rapp and Michael Phelps and funded by Arcadia Foundation; cf. <<http://sinaipalimpsests.org/>>.

¹⁹ Cf. <<http://sinaipalimpsests.org/technologies>> for a description.

in July 2015 in Tbilisi,²⁰ it was clear at once that the new technology would bring about a considerable increase of the readability rate for the Gospel manuscript, which had remained below 30% before (vs. 96% for the lectionary). Wolfgang was enthusiastic when I reported the first amendments to him concerning, among others, the two folios that had remained unidentified (Sin. georg. N 55, ff. 1 and 5) and could now be determined to contain Jo. 20.30–21.15,²¹ even though it meant taking up the whole endeavour again with a view to a revised edition.²² Unfortunately, neither Wolfgang nor myself have been able to afford the necessary time so far – what has been achieved are preparatory editions of only a few passages that have been published separately.²³ Despite several personal meetings (cf., e.g., Fig. 3 for 2018), we were not able to develop a viable working schedule – and now it is too late for this, alas!

Looking back, I may say with utter conviction that I would never have gotten so deep into matters “Albanian” without Wolfgang’s guiding hand. As a last antidoron for his long lasting support and the friendship he granted me, let me here add the revised edition of the very beginning of the Gospel of John in Caucasian Albanian, based upon transmissive light images of ms. Sin. georg. N 13, ff. 40^r and 47^v (cf. Fig. 4 and Fig. 5).²⁴ No words can tell better what I feel remembering Wolfgang than John’s: *oya çohoc nowte hil'al bownehē hē-hanayoqe* – **without him was not any thing made that was made.**

²⁰ I was kindly offered the occasion to work with the “Sinai Palimpsests Project” team during a one-week sojourn at the National Centre of Manuscripts.

²¹ My e-mail to Wolfgang Schulze of 31. 07. 2015, 16:13.

²² Wolfgang Schulze’s reply, e-mail of 31. 07. 2015, 21:53.

²³ For Jo. 21.8–12 cf. Jost Gippert, “When a Person Overcomes Class. The Case of Caucasian Albanian”, *International Journal of Diachronic Linguistics and Linguistic Reconstruction* 15, 2018, 25–43; for Jo. 18.23–28, cf. Jost Gippert, “New Light on the Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of St. Catherine’s Monastery”, to appear in Claudia Rapp (ed.), *New Light on Old Manuscripts: Recent Advances in Palimpsest Studies*.

²⁴ It is clear that even with the new images, many uncertain places persist, due to holes or damages in the parchment. All restitutions remain tentative.



Fig. 4: Sin. georg. N 13, ff. 40^r and 47^v
(colour images, kindly provided by the "Sinai Palimpsests Project")

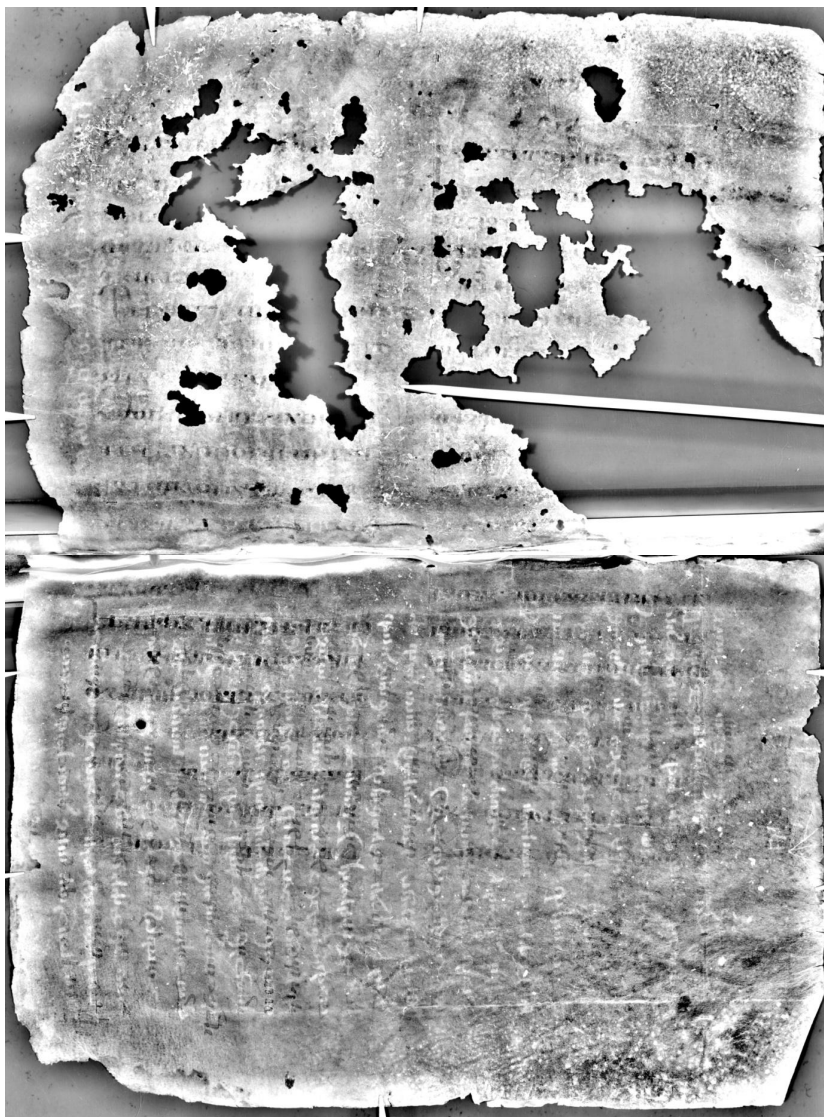


Fig. 5: Sin. georg. N 13, ff. 40^r and 47^v
(transmissive light images, kindly provided by the "Sinai Palimpsests Project")

*Revised Edition of Sin. Georg. N 13, fol. 40^{ra} + 47^{va}*²⁵

Table I: Original Script

[illegible]

²⁵ The present edition follows the principles outlined in *The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of Mount Sinai* vol. I, 1-37-38. In the Roman transcription, rectangular brackets denote hardly readable characters; curly braces, unreadable characters; and angle brackets, characters restored in holes or gaps of the manuscript. In the rendering in the original script, the degrees of readability are represented by different colourings, with a black background indicating text reconstructed in missing parts of the parchment.

Table II: Roman Transcription

1.1	1	[E]{še}[x]os[t]<ay>{h}[ē-ne] <o>{i}-	ga<n>-ahal-anke-va {e} xaš{oc .}	1
	2	[l]o[w '] o {i}<low-a>l b̄'e{x}<oš ²⁶ hē>-	[E xa]<š h>[ē-]<ne> {<%egen xašin>-	2 1.9
	3	[n]<a->[va] ' <b̄'g-al hē-ne o il>[o][w .]	baa-hana<ytenke lowšow i>-	3
1.2	4	o[-al ya]{nke ²⁷ h}<ē-na-va ešex>[os]-	<š>{o}[w he]<gesow>{n-h̄}<ke-va ayzex>	4
	5	ṭay b̄'e<xoš .>	[A]<y>[zex] <hē-na->{va} <ayz-al oow>-	5 1.10
1.3	6	Cex hi{l}-al oow[k]<a ko>[w][<y>{oc}-	<ka k>[ow]{y}<o>{c hē-}[ne ' e ayz]<i>	6
	7	-ne{-hē oya-al} [čoh]oc <now-t>[e] ²⁸	[te-]{n}<e->{č}[alx]{ē o}<owx>	7
	8	h[i]l'-a[l] <bow>-ne-hē <hē-h̄'ke .>	<lčēā~axow ari-na-va ičē>-	8 1.11
1.4	9	Oowk[a] <k>[o]wyo[c e] ḡow<yown>-	-ā~n-al o<owx te-ne-heqay>	9
	10	-ne-hē ' e ḡowyown bow-n[e-]hē	{Sa heq}<ay-hanayā~nke o>-	10 1.12
1.5	11	x[aš ḡowš]owy-ḡ[a]r[i '] <e x>[a]-	{owx daḡē-n}<ā~s kowl-ape>-	11
	12	šin-al ba[e]n[aq e]tiš xaš-	{sown ḡarmow}<x b̄'ē ihesa>	12
	13	-<baa sa e ba e't'a n-aha-hē b>-	<hāya>[-aha-]{ha}<nayā~rke či>-	13
	14	[aḡ]sala ²⁹ [hüwk]{in .}	ya oya : nowt-hanayā~rke pi-	14 1.13
1.6	15	Hē-ne sa išow hebiyay b̄'e-	ya[x]oc' [bix]{ē-n-a~r nowt-al}	15
	16	xo[st]ay či oya yoħa[n]nēs	[b]{ow}[qāownaxoc] {marmin'o}-	16
1.7	17	o a[ri-na-va] powlaygana p̄{w}-	[wn te-]a[l] {bowqāownaxoc iš'y}	17
	18	[l]a{yg}[an]-{ah}[a]l-anke-va [e x]a-	[sa] {b̄}{e}{x}[oštā]{y}	18
	19	[š]i [g]{āen} c{ex-}[a]l h{ā}[y]a-ahal-	O il'o[w]-al marmin h[ē]-n[a-v]{a}	19 1.14
1.8	20	[an]k[e] oowk kowyoc [.] te-n[a]-	ža{x} ³⁰ bow[r]i-na-v[a]	20
	21	-{va-h}[ē] oo {e xaš sa pow}lay-	A[kē]-ža [gāx]{ownown oya gā}-	21

²⁶ The actual case form rendering Gk. πρὸς τὸν θεόν or Arm. *wn. Լսանալ* in Jo. 1.1 and 1.2 is uncertain.

²⁷ *yanke* "thus" is unexpected here but *ya-* seems to be certain.

²⁸ The form *nowte* (instead of usual *nowt*) has not yet been attested but cf. *The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of Mount Sinai* vol. I, IV-32 for the assumption that *nowt* consists of the negative particles *now* + *te*.

²⁹ The expected form of the participle rendering Arm. *Հսում* would be *baqala* but the -s- is certain (influence of the infinitive stem, *baqes*-?).

³⁰ The actual case form rendering Gk. ἐν ἡμῖν or Arm. *h. ԴԽԳ* in Jo. 1.14 is uncertain.