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**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL-LITERARY ASPECTS  
OF BERAT DURING THE XIV-XV CENTURIES,  
FROM THE CHRONICLES OF THE MANUSCRIPT CODICES  
FROM LONDON'S BRITISH LIBRARY AND OXFORD'S  
MAGDALEN COLLEGE**

In the Additional Fund of the British Library manuscripts in London, there are a considerable number of handwritten codices (nearly 451) of Epirote origin.<sup>1</sup> At this point, four codices from the British Library have been identified<sup>2</sup> that were written or used in the city of Berat: from the British Library, *Additional 37007* of the XIII-XIV centuries and *Additional 37008* from the year 1413; from Saint Mary Magdalen College in Oxford, *Magdalen College graecus. 9* from the XII century and *Magdalen College graecus 16* from the XIV century.

Aside from the importance of the historical chronicles for the history of the Albanians, these codices, together with others preserved in the Central State Archive in Tirana,<sup>3</sup> prove the presence of handwritten

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<sup>1</sup> Marcel Richard, *Inventaire des manuscrits grecs du British Museum : Fonds Sloane, Additional, Egerton, Cottonian et Stowe*. Paris: Publications de l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, III, 1952. See also *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs de Marcel Richard*, Troisième édition entière mentree fondue par Jean-Marie OLIVIER, Brepols-Turnhout 1995. J.-M. OLIVIER, *Supplément au Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs*, Brepols 2018

<sup>2</sup> Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti a Londra (British Library), ed a Oxford (Magdalen College)", *Codices Manuscripti* 20/21 (1997): 3-59 (3-18) [reprinted in Annaclara Cataldi Palau, *Studies in Greek Manuscripts (Testi, studi, strumenti 24)*, 2 vols, Spoleto, 2008, vol. 2: 443-521 (449-472)].

<sup>3</sup> On the Italian-Byzantine codices that are preserved today in the National State Archive, see Andi Rembeci, "The medieval manuscripts of Albania, cultural bridges between east and west: the case of the Italo-Greek manuscripts", in Andi Rembeci (ed.) *Shqipëria mes Lindjes dhe Perëndimit (Albania between East and West)*, Proceedings of the conference (organized by the Department of History, Faculty of History and Philology, Tirana University, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013). Tiranë, 2015, 14-33; Sokol Çunga, "The manuscripts of Berat no. 14 and 31, and a palimpsest of St. John the Chrysostom at the Central State Archive, Tirana, Albania", in

book culture, which was cultivated in southern Italy, Epirus, and Constantinople during the XIV-XV centuries, even in the Albanian milieu.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper we will present data that deals with the history and the book production culture of Berat prior to and during the time of Skanderbeg based on data found in the above-mentioned codices.

## I.

The codex *Magdalen College gr. 9* (fig. 1) was written on parchment<sup>5</sup> during the second half of the XII century and contains the four Gospels (f. 3r-115v)<sup>6</sup>, the Acts of the Apostles (f. 116r-149r),

*Shqipëria mes Lindjes dhe Perëndimit*, ibidem, 49-61; Andi Rëmbeci, "Italo-Greek Manuscripts from the Byzantine Collection of the Manuscripts in Albania", në Dejan Dželebdžić, Stanoje Bojanin (eds.), *Proceeding of the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies Belgrade, 22 – 27 August 2016*, Belgrade 2016, 123-124.

<sup>4</sup> On the Greek manuscripts of the Southern Italy, see the basic work of Robert Devreesse, *Les Manuscrits grecs de l'Italie méridionale: histoire, classement, paléographie*. Citta del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica Vaticana, 1968. See also the papers of Poul Canart and Julien Leroy "Les manuscrits en style de Reggio. Étude Paléographique et codicologique" in: *La Paléographie grecque et byzantine*. (Paris: 1977), 241-261; André Jacob, "Les écritures de Terra d'Otranto", in: *La Paléographie grecque et byzantine*. (Paris: 1977), 269-281; Paul Canart, Santo Lucà, *Codici greci dell'Italia meridionale, Catalogo della mostra*. Roma: 2000; Αγαμέμνων Τσελίκας, «Παρατηρήσεις σε Πελοποννησιακά χειρόγραφα του 11<sup>ου</sup>, 12<sup>ου</sup> και 13<sup>ου</sup> αιώνας», in: *Πρακτικά Γ' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακών Σπουδών, Καλαμάτα*, 8-15 Σεπτεμβρίου 1985, vol. II. (Αθήνα: 1987-1988), 486-498; For a more exhaustive bibliography see Canart P. *Paleografia e codicologia greca: una rassegna bibliografica*, Littera Antiqua 7, Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica. Città del Vaticano: 1991, 45-48.

<sup>5</sup> For the description content, the author has referred to the digitalized form of the codex by Digital Bodleian: <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/inquire/p/4907e5b4-7b8f-40ad-9759-c417d6169afb>, referred in August, 2019. See also, Henricus O. Coxe, *Catalogus Codicum Mss. qui in Collegiis Aulisque Oxoniensibus hodie adservantur. Catalogus Codicum Mss. Collegii B. Mariae Magdalenaee*, (Oxonii: E Typographeo Academico, 1852), nr. 9, pp. 4-5. Irmgard Hutter, *Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften: Oxford College Libraries*. (Stuttgart, Hiersemann 1997), Vol. V.1: fig. 252-259, 261-276, 278-289, 291, tab. 19; Vol. 5.2: nr. kat. 30, pp. 85-90. For a more palaeographic and codicological detailed description, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti a Londra (British Library), ed a Oxford (Magdalen College)", in: *Studies in Greek Manuscripts (Testi, studi, strumenti 24)*, 2 vols, (Spoleto, 2008), vol. 2: 482-485. Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "The Burdett-Coutts collection of Greek manuscripts: Manuscripts from Epirus", *Codices Manuscripti 54/55* (2006): 31-64. [Reprinted in *Studies in Greek Manuscripts (Testi, studi, strumenti 24)*, 2 vols, (Spoleto, 2008), vol. 2, 523-584].

<sup>6</sup> The Gospel according to Mark begins acephalous and incomplete: f 35r, Inc. ἐκ τ(ῶν) ου(ρα)νῶν· σὺ εἶ ὁ υ(ί)ος μου ὁ ἀγαπητ(ὸς).

various epistles of the Apostles (f. 149v-231r),<sup>7</sup> the Psalms of David (f. 232r-284v), Odes and Prayers (f. 285r-288r) and some blessings (f. 288r-291v). It's a luxury production of Constantinople's scriptoria: the parchment is clean and white, and the ornaments are executed according to the *Blütenblattstil* style<sup>8</sup> on a gold background, with blue dominating the ornaments.<sup>9</sup>

At the beginning of the codex, a bifolio of low-quality parchment has been added from another book of smaller dimensions than the main body of the codex. The characteristics of the parchment, notes found inside, content, and paleographic analyses make us think that the bifolio most likely was written in Berat during the XIV century.<sup>10</sup> Taking into consideration the above, we can assert that this codex could have been brought from Berat to Constantinople, perhaps around the end of the XIV century.

The bifolio contains some notes<sup>11</sup> (fig. 2) among which one is written in a dark brown color in very small letters, which contains

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<sup>7</sup> More specifically: The General Letter of the Apostle Jacob (f. 149v-152v), The First Letter of the Apostle Peter (f. 153r-156r), The Second Letter of the Apostle Peter (f. 156v-158v), The First Letter of the Apostle John (f. 159r-162r), The Second General Letter of the Apostle John (f. 162v-163r), The Third General Letter of the Apostle John (f. 163v-164r), The General Letter of the Apostle Judas (f. 164v-165r), The Letter of the Apostle Paul addressed to the Romans (f. 165v-177r), The First Letter addressed to Corinthians (f. 177v-187r), The Second Letter addressed to Corinthians (f. 188r-195r), The letter addressed to Galatians (f. 196r-199v), The letter addressed to Ephesians (f. 200r-203v), The letter addressed to Philippians (f. 204r-206v), The letter addressed to Colossians (f. 207r-209v), the First letter addressed to Thessalonians (f. 210r-212r), The Second Letter addressed to Thessalonians (f. 213r-214r), The First Letter addressed to Timotheus (f. 215r-217v), The Second Letter addressed to Timotheus (f. 218r-220r), The letter addressed to Titus (f. 220v-221v), The letter addressed to Philemon (f. 222r-v), The letter addressed to the Hebrews (223r-231r).

<sup>8</sup> On the application of the *Blütenblattstil* style in the Byzantine miniature, see Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des IX. und X. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1935 [anastatic edition: Wien 1996 (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, 243; Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Schriftund Buchwesen des Mittelalters, Reihe IV, 2/1)], 22-32.

<sup>9</sup> Coxe, *Catalogus*, 4-5; Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 484-485.

<sup>10</sup> See also Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 484-485.

<sup>11</sup> The first, in the f. 1r, is a prayer note written in the XIII-XIV centuries: «Κ(ύρι)ε ο Θ(εός) μου μη άπορεινής ημας ἰ από του προσοπου σου [...]» ("My God, My Lord, don't turn away your face from us"); the second, written in two columns in another hand, informs us that the codex contains the Tetraevangelion, Letters of the Apostles and the Psalms of David; the third, is written in a dark brown color and in very small letters and contains historical notes on Balsha, as mentioned here. For the notes' transcription, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 483.

historical data about Balsha's II death in 1385 at the battle of Savra, Lushnja, against the Ottoman troops of Hayredin Pasha. The note was published for the first time by Henricus O. Coxe,<sup>12</sup> and later with inaccuracies by Spyridon Lambros,<sup>13</sup> from whom later scholars kept borrowing the text.<sup>14</sup> For this reason, we are presenting here the transcription of the note in the original and in translation:<sup>15</sup>

<p>«+ Εσχωτόθεν· ὁ πανυψηλωτ(ά)του αυθ(έν)τ(ης) ἡμιον πάλσας· ηπο  <sup>2</sup>των αγαρηνῶν· ἔθνων· μην(ι) σεπτ(ε)ρε(μβ)ρ(ι)ου η' ἡμε(ρα) β'  <sup>3</sup>Ἔτους ,ζω'δ' τις ινδηκτηῶνις τόσης»</p>	<p>"Our all-highest Lord Balsha was killed by the Hagarene's on Tuesday, the eighteenth day of the month of September, of the year 6894 (=1385), of that indiction"</p>
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## II.

The second codex, *Magdalen College gr. 16*,<sup>16</sup> dates from the XIV century. It is written on paper and contains the works *Introduction to Logic* and *Introduction to Physics* by the Byzantine scholar, Nicephorus Blemmydes (1197-1272).<sup>17</sup> On the blank pages of the codex, written at different times, are some important historical notes either about the origin of the codex or the local history. For example, in f.284v, at the end of the text there is an historical note<sup>18</sup> written in small letters in a greyish-brown color related to Balsha's II death in 1385:

<p>«ἐτελεύτησεν ο π(αν)υψηλωτ(α)τος αυθ(έν)τ(ης) ε(μ)ων και δοῦξ Δηραχειον Μπαλσα υπο τὸν αθε(ων) και παρμ(ι)β (...)</p>	<p>"Our all-highest Lord and Duke of Durrës, Balsha, was killed by the infidels and...on Tuesday, the eighteenth day of the month of</p>
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<sup>12</sup> Coxe, *Catalogus*, 4-5.

<sup>13</sup>The transcription of Sp. Lambros: "Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐσχωτόθην αὐθέντης ἡμέτερος Πάλσας ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀγαρινῶν ἔθνων μηνός Σεπτεμβρίου ἡ' ἡμέρα β' ἔτους ,ζω'δ'". Σπυρ. Π. Λάμπρος, "Ἐνθυμήσεων ἦτοι χρονικῶν σημειωμάτων συλλογὴ πρώτη", *Νέος Ἑλληνομνημῶν* 7 (1910): nr. 77, p.145.

<sup>14</sup> Pëllumb Xhufi, *Nga Paleologët te Muzakajt. Berati dhe Vlora në shekujt XII-XV*, (Tiranë, 2009), 312-313, reference 1. Pëllumb Xhufi, *Arbërit e Jonit. Vlora, Delvina e Janina në shekujt XV-XVII*, (Tiranë: Onufri, 2017), 218, where the inscription's transcription made by Lampros is faithfully repeated.

<sup>15</sup> For a more recent transcription, see also: Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 486-490.

<sup>16</sup> Coxe, *Catalogus* nr. 16, fq. 7. Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 486-490. Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "The Burdett-Coutts collection", 579.

<sup>17</sup> On Nicephorus Blemmydes and his work, see Steven Runciman. *The Last Byzantine Renaissance*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 54-58.

<sup>18</sup> Σπυρ. Π. Λάμπρος, "Ἐνθυμήσεων", nr. 78, fq. 145; Coxe, *Catalogus* nr. 16, fq. 7.

εν μηνί σεπτρέμβρη των αστου ιη̅ημερα *September, of the year 6894 (=1385), the ninth*  
β'επι ετους ,ζω'ιδ' (i)νδ. θ'»<sup>19</sup>. *year of the indiction”.*

Comparing this with another historic note from the codex *Magdalen College gr. 9* on Balsha's II death, we note, on the one hand, the use of the same terms for Balsha (*Lord, all-highest*), while on the other hand, the note above offers more detail with the additional epithet "*duke of Durrës*". Also, the word "*Hagarenes*" is replaced with the word "*the infidels*".

In folio 113r (fig. 3), there is another chronicle from the year 1480, which tells of the mortal disease of plague, its spread, and the difficult situation caused by it not only in Berat, but "*in Illyricum and all Albania*".<sup>20</sup>

### III.

The codex *Additional 37007*<sup>21</sup> (fig. 4) dates from the XIII-XIV centuries. It is written on parchment and contains the four Gospels with ecphonetic *neumes*.<sup>22</sup> In a bifolio attached to it, there is an inventory that dates from 1399<sup>23</sup> (fig. 5) that contains priceless books and objects,

<sup>19</sup> Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 487.

<sup>20</sup> The inscription's content: "*The servant of God, Lemirosnat, died from sickness in 6998 (= 1480), on February 14, the Monday of Meatfare week, at 9 o'clock in the day. Remember him O Lord, now and always, that he might find mercy on the judgment day. There were so many deaths that the victims of the plague fed the animals the rodents, and the winter in Berat [is causing many victims], [as it is] also in Licinia and Illyricum and in all Albania. But where is it not happening? Thus, the distinguished people are gone and no one mentions them by name*". For the note's transcription, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 487. A similar chronicle can be found in 1455, see Peter Schreiner, *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, vol. 1: Teil Eingitung und Text, (Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975), 666.

<sup>21</sup> Marcel Richard, *Inventaire*, 68-69. *Catalogue of additions to the manuscripts in the British Museum in the years 1900-1905*, (London: The Trustees, 1907), 279.

<sup>22</sup> The examination of the codex has been made by the author through the digitalized form in Digitized Manuscripts-British Library:

[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_37007](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_37007), consulted on August, 2019.

<sup>23</sup> The inventory has been published three times by Anthim Aleksudhi: Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, "Επιγραφαι τής εν Ήπειρω Απολλωνίας", *Ό εν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Έλληνικος Φιλολογικος Σύλλογος. Αρχαιολογική Έπιτροπή*, Παράρτημα του ΙΖ' τόμου (1886): 182-187; Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Δύο σημειώματα εκ χειρογράφων υπό του Άμασειας Άνθιμου Αλεξούδη», *Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρίας της Ελλάδος* 4 (1892): 279-281; Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Κώδικες έπαρχίας Βελεγράδων. Κατάλογος μετά περιγραφής χειρογράφων κωδίκων έκκλησιαστικής ύλης, εύρισκομένων εν Βερατίω και ιδίως εν ταίς ιεραίς

property of the Monastery of Saint Nicholas in Perondi (Pentarchondia) near Berat.<sup>24</sup> In this inventory two historical personalities connected to the city of Berat are mentioned, Theodore III Muzaka, described as "*Lord of Berat*", and Balsha II, who is listed as the donor of the silk curtain for the imperial door. The inventory also contains notes about the tumultuous period in Berat during the XIV(-XV) century due to the Ottoman incursions.

From paleographical and codicological examination, the codex contains all the particularities that characterize the Epirote codices. This means that, most likely, this codex has always been preserved in the place where it was copied. From the inventory, we learn that the codex belonged at that time (in 1399) to the Monastery of Saint Nicholas in Perondi (Pentarchondia), which is situated nearly 12 km north of Berat. The inventory was drafted by Daniel,<sup>25</sup> a hieromonk and abbot of the monastery, who was planning to give some of the priceless objects and codices of the monastery to Theodore Muzaka "*the city's lord*", to preserve them at Berat's castle, from fear of an Ottoman attack. At the time Anthimos Alexoudes published two descriptions of the manuscript in the years 1892 and 1900, the codex was preserved at the Church of St. Mary of Blachernae (Παναγία τῶν Βλαχερνῶν), in the castle of Berat, and was kept by the sons of Ioannes Paulos Oikonomou,

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ἐκκλησίαις τῆς συνοικίας Κάστρου, οἷον τῆς Μητροπόλεως Βελεγράδων τῆς ἐπ' ὀνόματι τῆς Κοιμήσεως τῆς Θεοτόκου τιμωμένης, τῆς Παναγίας Εὐαγγελιστρίας, τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Γεωργίου», *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 21 (1901): [23.02.1901] 71-72. A later edition of this inventory, with some text corrections and of the date of Aleksudhi's publication on 1892, has been made by Sp. Lampros: Σπυρίδων Π. Λάμπρος, «Διορθώσεις εἰς ἔγγραφον ἐκ Βελαγράδων», *Νέος Ἐλληνομνήμων* 7 (31 Δεκεμβρίου 1910, τεύχοςΔ'): 486-487. In the Albanian language the inventory has been published at Koço Bozhori, *Dokumente të periudhës bizantine për historinë e Shqipërisë: (shek. VII-XV)*, (Tiranë: Mihal Duri, 1978), 105. For other editions, with inaccuracies corrections, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 443-521 (449-472). Andi Rëmbeci, Sokol Çunga, "Greek Manuscripts in Albania: Book Circulation and Libraries. Preliminary evaluations from a catalogue in process", paper presented in: *Le livre manuscrit grec : écritures, matériaux, histoire*. IXe Colloque international de Paléographie grecque à la mémoire de Paul Canart, (Lundi 10 septembre – Samedi 15 septembre 2018) (forthcoming).

<sup>24</sup> On Saint Nicholas church, see Aleksandër Meksi, *Arkitektura e kishave të Shqipërisë (shekujt VII-XV)*, (Tiranë, Uegen, 2004), 152-155; Aleksandër Meksi, "Arkitektura dhe restaurimi i kishës së Perondisë", *Monumentet* 5-6 (1973): 19-42.

<sup>25</sup> Erich Trapp, Walther Rainer, Hans-Veit BEYER, *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 1976, nr. 5102.

inhabitants of the castle.<sup>26</sup> Later, the manuscript *Add. 37007* together with *Add. 37008* were owned for a very short time (1900-1904), by a certain Ioannes Eleuteriou in Corfu.<sup>27</sup> In 1904, the codices became part of a collection of twelve Greek manuscripts, *Add. 37001-37012*, possessed by Rev. John Samuel Dawes, vicar of Corfu during the end of the XIX century to the beginning of the XX century. The latter collection was bought in 1904 by the library of the British Museum in London.<sup>28</sup>

As we mentioned above, on folio 1r of the codex there is an inventory<sup>29</sup> of the properties of the Monastery of Saint Nicholas of Pendarchondia. The inventory's content<sup>30</sup> regarding the books of the monastery, is as follows:

«Εγὼ Δανηὴλ ἱερομόναχος καὶ «I, Daniel, hieromonk and abbot of the  
καθηγούμενος) τῆς μονῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Monastery of Saint Nicholas of  
Νικολάου τον Πεντερχοντι)ον ἐξεβαίνω Pentarchondia, went to my Lord Theodor  
με τὸν αὐθ(έντην) [...] Θεόδ(ω)ρ(ον) τὸν Muzaka and took with me a fine ancient

<sup>26</sup> Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Κώδικες ἐπαρχίας Βελεγράδων», [23.02.1901] 71-72.

<sup>27</sup> Caspar René Gregory, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments*, (Leipzig, J. C. Hinrichs, 1900), 428, nr. 459, 461.

<sup>28</sup> Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 446, 450.

<sup>29</sup> The inventory has been published three times by Anthim Aleksudhi: Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, "Ἐπιγραφαὶ τῆς ἐν Ἠπειρῷ Ἀπολλωνίας", *Ὁ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικὸς Φιλολογικὸς Σύλλογος. Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐπιτροπὴ*, Παράρτημα τοῦ ΙΖ' τόμου (1886): 182-187; Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Δύο σημειώματα ἐκ χειρογράφων ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀμασειᾶς Ἀνθίμου Ἀλεξούδη», *Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Εἰσαγωγῆς τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 4 (1892): 279-281; Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Κώδικες ἐπαρχίας Βελεγράδων. Κατάλογος μετὰ περιγραφῆς χειρογράφων κωδίκων ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ὕλης, εὑρισκομένων ἐν Βερατίῳ καὶ ἰδίως ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς συνοικίας Κάστρου, οἷον τῆς Μητροπόλεως Βελεγράδων τῆς ἐπ' ὀνόματι τῆς Κοιμήσεως τῆς Θεοτόκου τιμωμένης, τῆς Παναγίας Εὐαγγελιστρίας, τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Γεωργίου», *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 21 (1901): [23.02.1901] 71-72. A later edition of this inventory, with some text corrections and of the publishing date of Alexoudes on 1892, has been made by Sp. Lambros: Σπυρίδων Π. Λάμπρος, «Διορθώσεις εἰς ἔγγραφον ἐκ Βελαγράδων», *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 7 (31 Δεκεμβρίου 1910, τεύχος Δ'): 486-487. For other editions with additional corrections, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 443-521 (449-472). Andi Rembeci, Sokol Çunga, "Greek Manuscripts in Albania: Book Circulation and Libraries. Preliminary evaluations from a catalogue in process", paper presented in: *Le livre manuscrit grec : écritures, matériaux, histoire*. Ixe Colloque international de Paléographie grecque à la mémoire de Paul Canart, (Lundi 10 septembre – Samedi 15 septembre 2018) (forthcoming).

<sup>30</sup> The previously printed forms of the inventory transcriptions present some slight changes with our transcription, mainly regarding the analysis of the abbreviations and the corrections of some words. Within the arch brackets are put the abbreviations' amplifications, meanwhile within the brackets are declared the letters that are lost due to the damage of the written surface.

Μουζάκ(ον)· καὶ ἐπέρω με τὸν εμαυτὸν  
 ιερο(ν) ἀρχ(αῖον) εὐαγγέλιον εὐλογάδην  
 ἔκοσμησμέ(νον) με στ(αυ)ρὸν  
 ἀργειρόχρυσ(ον) [...] τ[έ]σ[σε]ρας  
 εὐαγγελειστας δευραν(ον)· κ(αι)  
 τετραβαγγελον δευραν(ον)· ἐξἡμερος  
 κομάτια δύο τὸ πρῶτ(ον) κ(αι) το  
 δεύτερ(ον)· κατα Ματθαί(ως)· Θεολόγ(ος)  
 δεύρανο(ς)· Θεολόγ(ος) βαβήκηνο(ς)  
 δηερμηνευμ(έν)ος· Ἀναστάσιο(ς)  
 δεύρανο(ς)· Ζουηροῦν ὄμηνον  
 βαβήκη(ον)· μεκό[κ]ην(ον)· τομάριον·  
 Ἄντιοχο(ς)· βαβήκηνο(ς)· Εὐφραῖμ  
 βαβήκηνο(ς)· Ψαλτ(ή)ρι(ον)· δεύρανο(ν)  
 δηερμηνευμ(έν)ον· προφητία βαβήκη(ν)  
 ἡρμολόγ(ιον) βαβήκη(ν)  
 τὸνησμ(έν)ως· Κατήχησης βαβήκη(ν)  
 Τηπηκὸν δεύρανο Ἱεροσολημητ(ικόν)  
 Σχηματολόγ(ιον) βαβήκη(ν)  
 Μηναίων καθημερινῶν ἐξαμηναίων  
 δεύρανο(ν), ἦγον σεπτέβριος, ὠκτόμβριος,  
 νοέμβριος, δηκέμβριος, ἰαν(ουά)ρ(ιος)  
 καὶ [...]· Εὐχολόγ(ιον) βαβήκη(ν)  
 ὄμοιο κομάτια ἦκοση ...  
 καὶ παραδῆδω ... εἰς τὰς χείρας  
 τοῦ αὐθ(έντου) μου τοῦ Θεοδώρου  
 τοῦ Μουζάκ(η), νάην(εν) εἰς τὸ κελλ(ά)ρ(ι)  
 καὶ νὰ τὰ ἐπηβλέπ(ει) ὀκελλ(α)ρ(ίτης)  
 ὁ Θεοτόκης ἀσφαλὸς... ἐξήβαλα  
 ἐγὼ ὁ Δανηὴλ καθηγοῦμ(εν)ος  
 καὶ ἀμαρτωλὸς ἱερομόναχος  
 διὰτ(ὸν) φόβον τὸν Τουκὸν ἐκ  
 τὴν σε(βασμῖαν) μονὴν τοῦ  
 ἁγίου Νικολάου... ἐγρά(φη)  
 ἐνμη(νὶ) νοεμβρίω εἰς  
 τὰς ὠκτώ... ἐπὶ ἔτους ςʹ  
 3η (6908=1399). »

gospel, decorated with a gold-plated silver cross [...]; the four Gospels on parchment; and [another] four Gospels on parchment; two volumes, the first and second, of the Hexameron, ; [the Gospel] according to Mathew; [the Gospel] according to John the Theologian on parchment; [the Gospel] according to John the Theologian with comments [written] on paper; of Anastasios on parchment; (the Nomocanon of John) Zonaras on paper [bound] with red leather; [book] of Antioch on paper; [book] of Efreem on paper; the Psalterion on parchment with comments; the Prophecies on paper; Hermologion on paper with notes; [the book] of Catechism on paper; the Typicon of Jerusalem on parchment; the Schematologion on paper; the daily Menaion of the six months on parchment, i.e., September, October, November, December, January and February; the Euchologion on paper; all together twenty pieces. ... and I consigned these...into the hands of my Lord Theodore Muzaka to be placed in the cellar and to be safely guarded by the cellar man Theotokis<sup>31</sup>.... I took them from the respected Monastery of Saint Nicholas, I, Daniel a sinner, abbot and hieromonk, for fear of the Turks... Written on the eighth of the month of November... in 6908 (=1399).<sup>32</sup>

The above-mentioned episode in the inventory seems typical of that time. Indeed, Berat was known for its fortified castle, with the Byzantine walls which had been rebuilt by the despot Michael Angelos Komnenos around 1205, when Berat was part of the territories of the Despotate of Epirus.<sup>32</sup> However, the Monastery of Saint Nicholas of Pendarchondia was unprotected outside the castle, "nearly one hour and

<sup>31</sup> Erich Trapp et al., *PLP*, no. 7561.

<sup>32</sup> Aleksandër Meksi, Apollon Baçe, Emin Riza, *Berati, historia dhe arkitektura*, (Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, 2011), 43-81. Gjerak Karaiskaj, *5000 vjet fortifikime në Shqipëri*, (Tiranë: Pegi, 2015), 124-128.



a half" north of Berat.<sup>33</sup> For this reason, hieromonk Daniel was seeking to save the treasures of his monastery by entrusting them to the lord of the city, in order to protect them in the fortified castle. His concern "for fear of the Turks" seems to be fully justified because of the Ottoman incursions which had become more frequent since the end of the XIV century, during which time Berat fell into the hands of the Ottomans.<sup>34</sup>

The manuscripts mentioned in the inventory of the codex *Add 37007* are difficult to identify because of the unclear and very general description.<sup>35</sup> Anyway, we support the view of Annaclara Cataldi Palau, according to whom both codices *Add. 37007* and *37008* were preserved in Berat until the beginning of the XX century, encouraging us to think that other codices could have had the same destiny.<sup>36</sup> During our first effort, we managed to identify five codices of the *Add. 37007* inventory in the description that Alexoudes gave at the beginning of the XX century, as well as with those manuscripts that have survived until today and are preserved at the CSA.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Δύοσημειώματα», 279-280; Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Κώδικες επαρχίας Βελεγράδων», 71.

<sup>34</sup> Aleksandër Meksi, Apollon Baçe, Emin Riza, *Berati*, 38. Pëllumb Xhufi, *Nga Paleologët*, 301-364, 349-352, for the relevant bibliography.

<sup>35</sup> The descriptions of the codices as the Four Gospels, Menaia, Psalterion etc., without any other more specific details, makes it difficult to match them to any other periodically printed catalogues. Codices of these types are found in almost churches, monasteries, and other church institutions' libraries.

<sup>36</sup> Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 467.

<sup>37</sup> On earlier efforts to build a concordance between the data published by Anthim Aleksudhi and the inventory *Add. 37007*, see Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 447, note 14 and 467-468. For a concordance between the codices of the Fond 488 in the AQSH and the manuscripts of the Catalogue Koder-Trapp (Johannes Koder, Erich Trapp, "Katalog der griechischen handschriften im Staatsarchiv zu Tirana", *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 17 (1968): 197-214), see Andi Rembeci, Sokol Çunga, "The Byzantine and Post Byzantine collection of manuscripts at the Central State Archive of Tirana and a concordance between the Kodder-Trapp Catalogue of Tirana Manuscripts and their actual shelf-number" in: *Proceedings of the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, Sofia, 22-27 August 2011, (Sofia: 2011), vol. III, 357. See also: *Greek New Testament manuscripts from Albania*, published in the series: New Testament tools, studies and documents, v. 57, Leiden 2018, where the authors Didier Lafleur and Luc Brogly have published on pages 58-60 and 523-543, as an appendix, a concordance table of Albania's codices, also including that of Koder-Trapp. For another, albeit inaccurate, effort in constructing such a concordance, see also: Sinani, *Kodikët e Shqipërisë në "Kujtesën e Botës"*, (Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, 2011), 66.

N r.	Inventory (Add 37007) <i>1399</i>	A. Alexoudes <i>1898-1900</i>	A. Alexoudes <i>1900/1901/1902</i>	CSA <i>F. 488</i>
1	Daily Menaion of the six months in parchment, i.e., September, October, November, December, January and February.	Codex no. 28	Codex no. 13	
2	Typicon of Jerusalem on parchment.	Codex no. 31	Codex no. 16	Codex of Berat no. 33
3	The Psalter in parchment with comments.	Codex no. 37	Codex no. 23	
4	(The Gospel) according to John the Theologian with commentary, on paper.	Codex no. 39	Codex no. 25	
5	Holy Lectionary, ancient, decorated with gold-plated silver cross.	Codex no. 4	Codex no. 32	Codex of Berat no. 6

#### IV.

The codex *Additional 37008*<sup>38</sup> (fig. 6) is a lectionary copied in 1413 on western paper of Italian provenance produced at the end of the XIV century - beginning of the XV century.<sup>39</sup> The codex is written in baroque style, in black ink, in large size letters. The paper contains

<sup>38</sup> The examination of the codex has been made by the author through the digitalized form in Digitized Manuscripts-British Library:

[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_37008](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_37008), consulted for the last time in August, 2019. For more, the examination data are also compared with the existing bibliography: Marcel Richard, *Inventaire*, 69. *Catalogue of additions*, 279-280. Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἐκκλησιαστικαῖς τῆς συνοικίας Κάστρου, πόλεως Βερατίου τῆς Μητροπόλεως Βελεγράδων εὐρισκομένων ἀρχαίων χειρογράφων», *Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἐταιρίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 5 (1900): 352-369, 357-359. Άνθιμος Αλεξούδης, «Κώδικες ἐπαρχίας Βελεγράδων», *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 20 (1900): [15.12.1900], 545, nr. 39. Caspar René Gregory, *Textkritik*, 428, 1268, 1287. Ioannis Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Illuminated Greek Manuscripts to the Year 1453*, (Byzantina Neerlandica 8), (Leiden 1981), 68, nr. 280. Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 472-482.

<sup>39</sup> Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 476-477.

different watermarks: a bell (f. 1-5, 8-15, 19-28), the capital letter B, a pair of half-unicorns, a half-dog, and a half-horse.

In folio 397r-v of the manuscript a codicographical note is found (fig. 7-8) which says that the codex was copied in the city of Berat by the copyist Georgios Siderokastrites («Γεώργιος Σιδεροκαστρίτης»)<sup>40</sup> at the expense of "the very respected, lord" of the city, Nichephoros Louvrios<sup>41</sup> and his wife, Maria Kyrikalena.<sup>42</sup> Both of these are also mentioned as *ktetors* (founders) of the Monastery of Saint Marina to which, apparently, they donated the codex. Both of the donors of the manuscript, Nichephoros Louvrios and his wife Maria Kyrikalena, together with the copyist Georgios Siderokastrites are known to us only from this codicographical note, and very little is known about them even now.

On folio 1r of the manuscript is another inventory<sup>43</sup> (fig. 9) with 28 handwritten codices, property of the Church of St. Marina in Berat. Even though the inventory was mentioned by A. Alexoudes in his edition of the catalogue of the codices of Berat, it was not published by him. In the beginning, before the inventory, there is a note<sup>44</sup> about the finding of something (codices, maybe) in the Church of Saint Marina and of their donor, or perhaps purchaser since money is mentioned. Following this note is the usual curse against those who would harm or alienate the codices. At the end is the signature of the man who found the codices, «ἀναξίου Στ(α)μ(ά)του τοῦ Καλατ(ι)νου» (*the unworthy*

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<sup>40</sup> Marie Vogel, Viktor Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, (Leipzig O. Harrassowitz, 1900), 84; Ernst Gamillscheg, Dieter Harlfinger, Herbert Hunger, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800-1600*, Brand III/1A: Verzeichnis der Kopisten. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik, (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981), 61, no. 70.

<sup>41</sup> Erich Trapp et al., *PLP*, no. 15053; Marie Vogel, Viktor Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*, 84. Σπυρίδων Λάμπρος, «Ενθυμήσεων», 276-277, no. 560.

<sup>42</sup> Erich Trapp et al., *PLP*, nr. 14007. Marie Vogel, Viktor Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*, 84.

<sup>43</sup> Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Ἐπιγραφαι», 186-187. Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Κατάλογος», 357-359. Ἄνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Κώδικες ἐπαρχίας Βελεγράδων», *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 20 (1900): [15.12.1900] 544-545. The note has been reprinted with corrections by Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 474-475.

<sup>44</sup> The note has been transcribed and published by Annaclara Cataldi Palau, "Manoscritti epiroti", 474-475.

*Stamati from Galata or Kalata*), keeper of the manuscripts.<sup>45</sup> Then following the inventory, written by another hand, but contemporary, with the following content:

<p>« Τα βηλία τῆς ἀγίας Μαρίας·          Παρακλητικος, κομάτι(α) β',          ἔβανγγέλ(ι)ον ενκόσμεσ[μένον],  <sup>2</sup>          Πεντ(η)κοστάριν, Τριόδηγ, Απόστολ(ον),          Μηνίο αὐγουστος καὶ σεπτέβρις· μνην          ὀκτόβρ[ιου]  <sup>3</sup> μνην νεόβριος· μνην          δικέβριος καὶ γενάρης· μνην φεβρουάριος          καὶ μάριος  <sup>4</sup> μνην ἀπρ(ί)λιος καὶ μαίος·          μνην ἰούνιος καὶ ἰούλιος· βιβλίο δέβερνο          λόγ(ων) τῶν ἁγίων,  <sup>5</sup> Πραξαπτό(στ)ο(λος),          μνη(ν) ἰουνηος δέβαρνος· βηλήο          εὐλόγ(α)δη· βηβλίο Ανδρέου τοῦ σαλου·  <sup>6</sup>          Αυτουργ(ία) β', μικρό βηβλήο δεβάρ(νο),          καὶ ἄλο μικρὸ βαβήκιννο, Πανηγυρικὸ          βαβή(κιννο)  <sup>7</sup>, Ὁρολόγ(ιον), Αμπαπυμάρι·          Τριαδικὸν· Ανθολόγ· Θεολόγος·          Ἀκουλουθία τῆς  <sup>8</sup> ομοῦ βηβλία κη' »<sup>46</sup>.</p>	<p>The books of Saint Marina;          Paraclitike, pieces 2; decorated gospel;          Pentecostarion; Triodion; [Acts and          Letters of the] Apostle[s]; Menaion of          August and September; Menaion of          October; Menaion of November;          Menaion of December and January;          Menaion of February and March;          Menaion of April and May; Menaion of          June and July; book in parchment with          words of the saints; Acts of the Apostles;          Menaion of June in parchment; book of          euchologion; the book of Andrea the          Fool (in Christ); two Liturgies; small          book in parchment; and another small          in bombycine; Panegyric in bombycine;          the book of Hours; The book of          Deceased; Triodion; Anthology; (the          book of) Theologian; the books of          Services; all together 28.</p>
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The identification of the 28 codices in this inventory is even more problematic than in the previous one, taking into consideration the extreme uncertainty of every codex description. What can be said for certain is that there are two categories of codices: of parchment and of paper.

Aside from the above-mentioned inventories, information about the existence of these books in the Albanian milieu comes from the well-known note in the “Diptych” of the Monastery of Saint George in the castle of Berat, written in 1356.<sup>47</sup> The note and the description of the 26 preserved codices informs us as follows:<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Our transcription from the original Additional 37008, f. 1r. Compare: Annaclara Cataldi Palau, “Manoscritti epiroti”, 475.

<sup>46</sup> The transcription of Annaclara Cataldi Palau, “Manoscritti epiroti”, 474-475 has small differences with our transcription, on the orthography, use of accents and on analyses of the abbreviations. Within the brackets are put the abbreviations' explication.

<sup>47</sup> The note of Diptych, or the Chronicle of Skuripeki as is differently called, is published for the first time by Pierre Batiffol, «Les manuscrits grecs de Bérat d'Albanie et le Codex

Πατέρες ἅγιοι, οὗτος ὁ Σκουριπέκης ἐχάρισε τῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Μεγάλου Θεολόγου καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Γεωργίου βιβλία κς' τὰ διαλεκτὰ καὶ τὰ κριτώτερα, ὅταν ἐκούρσεψαν οἱ Σέρβοι τὰ Βελάγραδα ἠνέταζαν, ἐκρεμνοῦσαν δεξιὰ καὶ ἀριστερὰ τὰς ρύμνας ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ Κάστρον. Ὁ παπᾶς Θεόδουλος δὲ ἐκεῖνος θαρρῶντας εἰς μικρὰν ἐνόραν ἐπαρακάλεσεν τὸν τοιοῦτον καὶ ἀπήγε τον ἕως τὸν Πύργον εἰς τὴν μεγάλην πόρταν τοῦ Κάστρον καὶ ἀπογλύτωσαν τὰ τοιαῦτα κς' βιβλία καὶ ἐκουβάλησάν τα ἔσω εἰς τὸν Κουλὰν εἰς δ' ἑξ ἑξ ἱερομόναχος ἐκεῖνος εἰς τὸν ὦμον του καὶ εἰς τὰς χεῖρας του ἀπὸ β'. Οἱ σύντροφοί του δὲ ἐκούρσεβαν καὶ ἀδιαφοροῦσαν... ἐν τῷ ,ζωξδ' ἔτει (= 1356) ....

*Holy fathers, this Skuripekis donated to the Monastery of the Great Theologian and [to the Monastery] of Saint George 26 treatises and the most important books. When the Serbs sacked Berat, everything was turned upside down by them; they were hanging people on the left and right of the castle roads, Father Theodoulos, who was watching from a small distance, and summoned him [Skuripekis] and brought him to the tower [that is situated] at the big gate of the castle, and they saved these 26 books by carrying them to the inner part of the tower, the hieromonk and Skuripekis making 4 trips, carrying them on their back, and two books by hand, while his comrades robbed and remained indifferent. The brothers of the hieromonk left, as did all the inhabitants of the castle. ... [This occurred] in 6864 [1356]. [...]*

Subsequently, follows the description of 26 manuscripts:

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Purpureus Φ », *Archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires*, 3e série, Paris, 13 (1887), appendix 2, 437-556, 554-556. Later, is published by Aleksudhi in two of his articles: Ἀλεξούδης, “Δύο σημειώματα”, 275-279 and Ἀνθιμος Ἀλεξούδης, «Κώδικες ἐπαρχίας Βελεγράδων», *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 21 (1901): [21.01.1901] 16. The note is also mentioned in Albanian by Sinani, *Kodikët e Shqipërisë*, 372, where is found the relevant bibliography in Albanian. By mistake, the author unifies (p. 372, note 280) and inaccurately transforms (p. 130, 405) its content with two other notes found in the Codex of Berat nr. 27. See also Pëllumb Xhufi, *Nga Paleologët*, 241-242, where the translation in Albanian is not true to the original.

<sup>48</sup> The note is brought here, with improvements in the Albanian translation, from Ἀλεξούδης, “Δύο σημειώματα”, 275-279.

Εἰσὶ δὲ τὰ βιβλία τὰ ὅποια ἀπελύτωσεν ὁ αὐτὸς Σκπουριπέκης τὸν Τερομόναχον Θεόδουλον ἐν πρώτοις οἱ ἕξαήμεροι οἱ β΄ ... [μηναιᾶ] κομμάτια ζ΄. ἤτοι Σεπτέμβριος, Ὀκτώβριος, Νοέμβριος, Δεκέμβριος, Ἰανουάριος, καὶ ἄλλον κομμάτι Ἀνουάριον καὶ τὸ Καλοκαιρινόν. Συναζάρια βιβλία γ΄. Θεολόγον. Στιχηράριον τὸ διπλοτονισμένον καὶ ἄλλον ἐν παλαιόν. Ἀπόστολος καὶ Πραξαπόστολος. Τριώδιον. Προφήτας. Ὀκτώηχος. Ἀγιογεωργικόν τὸ Ρωμαϊκόν ... Μηναιᾶ κομμάτια ε΄. ἤτοι Αὔγουστος, Σεπτέμβριος, Ὀκτώβριος Ἀνουάριος, Φεβρουάριος τὰ καλλίτερα. Τὸ Ψαλτήριον τοῦ κτήτορος μὲ τὴν χρυσογραμμίαν. Τὸ σεντοκόπουλον μὲ τὰ δικαιώματα εὐρίσκονται ἐσήκωσεν ὁ παπ Θεόδουλος ἐπὶ τοὺς Σέρβους. Τετραενάγγελον Βουλγαρίας. Τετραενάγγελον τὸ οἰκειόχειρον τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου ἀσημόγραφον. Τὸν Πραξαπόστολον τὸν Πολίτικον. Ἀγιογεωργικόν. Ἐξαγόρασεν τὸ μέγαν Εὐαγγέλιον...

*The books, thus, that were saved by Skuripekis and the hieromonk Theodoulos were, firstly, two [books of] the Hexaemeron; six books of the Menaia, i.e., September, October, November, December, January, and another book for January, and the summer book; three books of the Synaxaria; the books of the Theologian [the gospel according to John or the Apocalypse]; a double-noted Sticherarion, and another old one; the book of the [Letters of the] Apostle and the books of the Acts of the Apostles; the book of the Triodion; the book of the Prophets; the book of the Oktoechos; the book of the biography of Saint George in Latin; [undeciphered] five good quality stamped books of the Menaia: August, September, October, January, February; the Psalter of the founder with gold letters; a small wooden chest with legal documents which were found in it, which was carried by father Theodoulos at the time of the Serbs; the four Gospels in Bulgarian; the four Gospels written in silver by the hand of St. John Chrysostom; the Acts of the Apostles from Constantinople; the book of the Biography of St. George; he bought the big Gospel...*

The historic context has been treated several times in the literature, starting with Konstantin Jireček who was the first to use this text to reconstruct the events of this time.<sup>49</sup> Without wanting to underestimate the historical significance of these efforts, we think that the value of the text is even greater for understanding the cultural context of the time. It expresses in direct language the people's concern for intellectual and spiritual assets, demonstrates social engagement during a period of danger, and gives the first evidence for the existence of the purple

<sup>49</sup> Pëllumb Xhufi, *Nga Paleologët*, 242-246, where is also found the respective bibliography.

codex *Beratinus I*, which would have been lost without the courage of the above-mentioned persons.

From these three inventories, we notice that in Berat there were at least three libraries belonging to the monasteries and churches of that area. In this context, the question naturally arises of how significant the number of the books and libraries in Berat were for that time. If we take a look at other libraries in different countries and at different time periods, we would see that their number varies depending on the number of the brotherhood or on the time when the monasteries were founded. Thus, from the data that are given by Prof. Peter Schreiner<sup>50</sup> we note that the Monastery of the Theotokos of Gabalotisa in Vodena (Edesa)<sup>51</sup> possessed a library with 37 liturgical books in 1373. The Panoiktirmon Monastery (Christ the Merciful), founded in Constantinople by Michael Attaleiates about the year 1100, possessed nearly 50 codices, in spite of a limited number of monks.<sup>52</sup> The library of another monastery, that of Saint Peter and Paul in Pani from the XV century, whose location is not very clear, numbered 36 books.<sup>53</sup> The first Russian monastery founded on Mount Athos, the Monastery Xylourgou (today Skiti Bogoroditsa), had a library with 49 books in 1142.<sup>54</sup> In 1299/1300, the library of the Monastery of Grottaferrata, 200 years after its establishment, numbered 61 books.<sup>55</sup> The Monastery of Bachkovo or Petritsonis, south of Bulgaria, possessed a library with 31

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<sup>50</sup> Peter Schreiner, "Sorge um Handschriften. Zwei wenig bekannte Nachrichten zur serbischen Kultur im 14. Jahrhundert," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 41 (2004), 353-360, where is found the relevant bibliography. I wish to thank Prof. Schreiner for making available a copy of his article.

<sup>51</sup> About the foundation and the history of the Monastery of the Theotokos of Gabalotisa, see Paul Lemerle et al. *Archives de l'Athos, Actes de Lavra: III. De 1329 à 1500*, (Paris, 1979), 100-104, nr. 146; 105-107, nr. 147; Ninoslava Rodoiević, Gojko Subotić, "Bogorodica Gavalotisa u Vodenu (La Vierge Gaballiotissa a Edessa)", *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'Etudes Byzantine* 27-28 (1989), 217-263.

<sup>52</sup> Paul Gautier, "La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat", *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981), 5-143, mainly 93-97. Also, Peter Schreiner, "Sorge um Handschriften", 353-360.

<sup>53</sup> Thomas William Allen, "Palaeographica", *Journal of Philology* 19 (1891): 62-68, especially on the books list: 66-67.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Lemerle et al. *Actes de Saint-Pantéléèmon*, Archives de l'Athos, 12. (Paris: P. Lethielleux 1982), 65-76.

<sup>55</sup> Stefano Parenti, "Manoscritti del monastero di Grottaferrata nel typikon dell'egumeno Biagio II", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 95 (2008), 641-672, especially on the books list: 645-669; Peter Schreiner, "Sorge um Handschriften", 353-360.

books at the time of its establishment (1083).<sup>56</sup> The Monastery of Eleousa in Strumitsa owned a library of 68 books in 1449.<sup>57</sup>

The comparative numbers show that the libraries of the three monasteries in Berat, with a total number of 75 books, owned an above average wealth of books for the time. Of course, the number of 75 codices represents only "*the treatises and the most important*" books and not the total number of the books in the possession of Berat's monasterial libraries. On the other hand, in the libraries that were analyzed in this paper, we notice that aside from the manuscripts of evangelical content and religious books, there are also two musical codices, one of legislative content, and another that can be defined as philosophical, although in the religious field: *Introduction to Logic* and *Introduction to Physics* by the Byzantine scholar, Nicephorus Blemmydes (1197-1272).<sup>58</sup> These books are not for daily use and demonstrate a special intellectual inclination.

The discovery of the new codices clearly originating from the Albanian milieu, as is the case of the codices presented in this paper, and the existence today in Albania of the codices that are part of this cultural environment, opens a new window to recognize not only the past creativity and civilization of the Albanian medieval territories, but also the strong evidence for the cultural orientation and the influence of the Albanians during that time.

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<sup>56</sup> This monastery, which still functions, is located in Bulgaria, near modern Bachkovo in the valley of the river Chaya surrounded by the Rodope mountains, south of Plovdiv (Byzantine Philippopolis). For more see, Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis," *Revue des études byzantines* 40 (1982), 5-101, on the Typikon text: 15-95. [Re-edition "Evergetis: Typikon of Timothy for the Monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis", in: John Thomas, Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.) *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 454-506.].

<sup>57</sup> Petar Miljković-Pepek, *Veljusa: manastir Sv. Bogorodica Milostiva vo seloto Veljusa kraj Strumica*. (Skopje: Fakultet za filozofsko-istoriski nauki na univerzitetot "Kiril i Metodij", 1981), 283-309, re-issue with the English translation of the inventory in: "Eleousa Inv.: Inventory of the Monastery of the Mother of God *Eleousa* in Stroumitza", in: John Thomas, Angela Constantinides Hero (eds.) *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 1667-1678.

<sup>58</sup> See above, note 15.



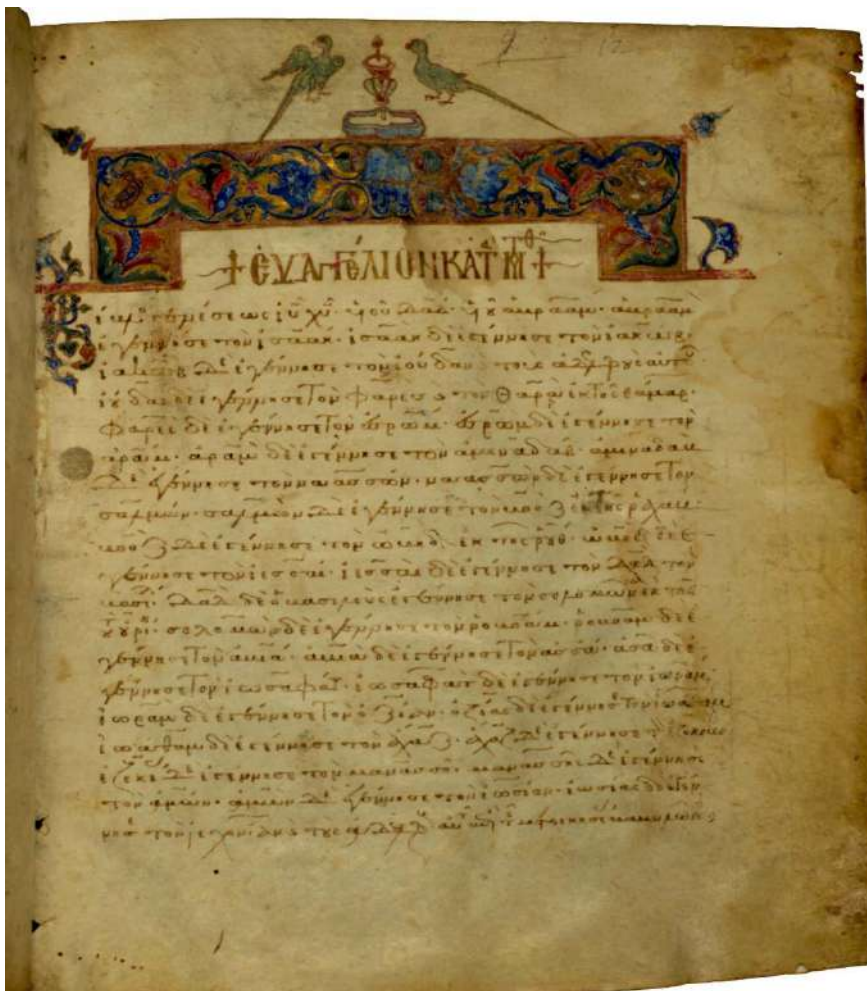


Figure 1. Magdalen College gr. 9, f 3r. The beginning of the Gospel of Matthew

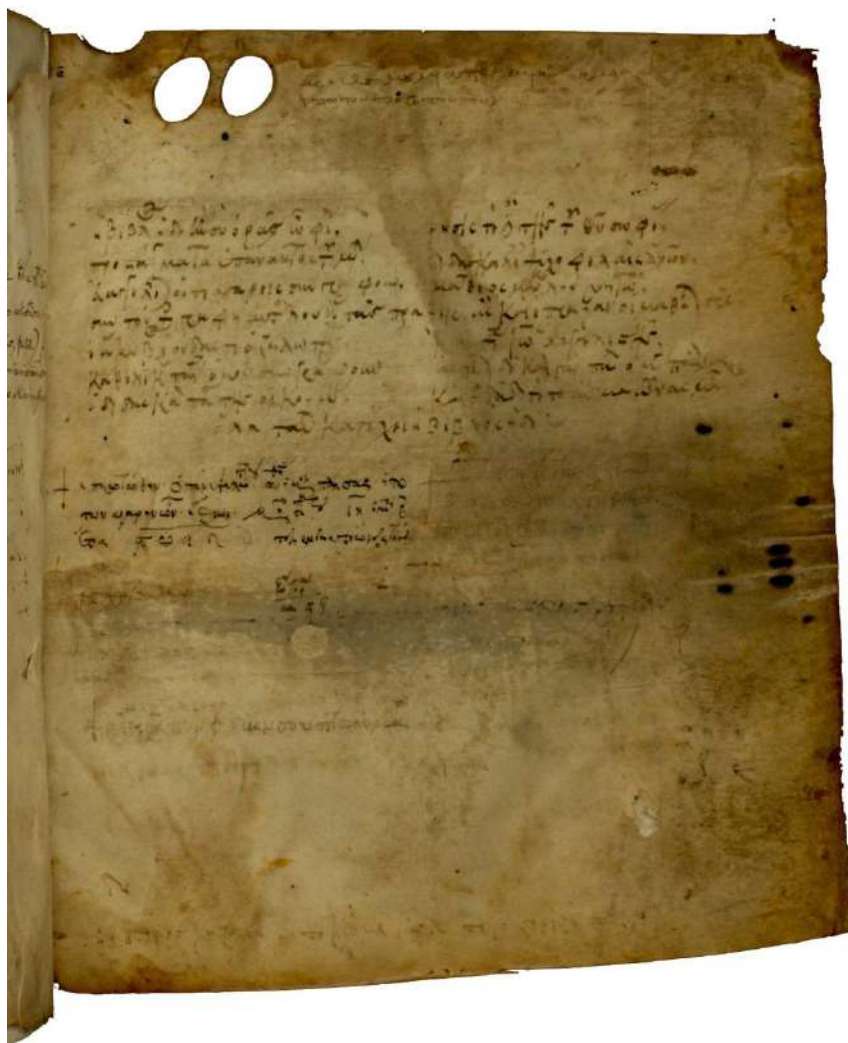


Figure 2. Magdalen College gr. 9, f 1r. Note about Balsha's II death in 1385

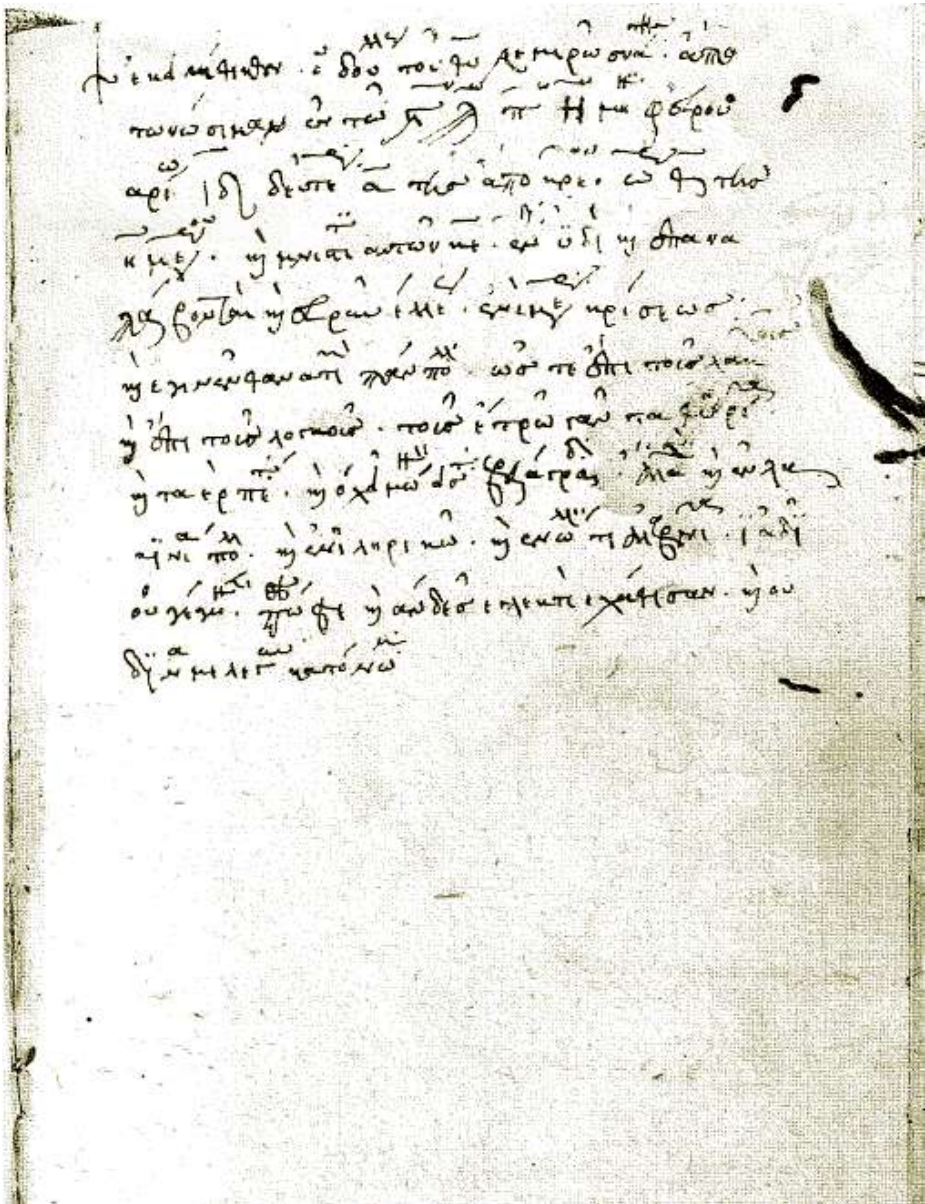


Figure 3. Magdalen College gr. 16, f 113r. Chronicle of the plague.



Figure 4. British Library, Additional 37007. The front cover of the manuscript.

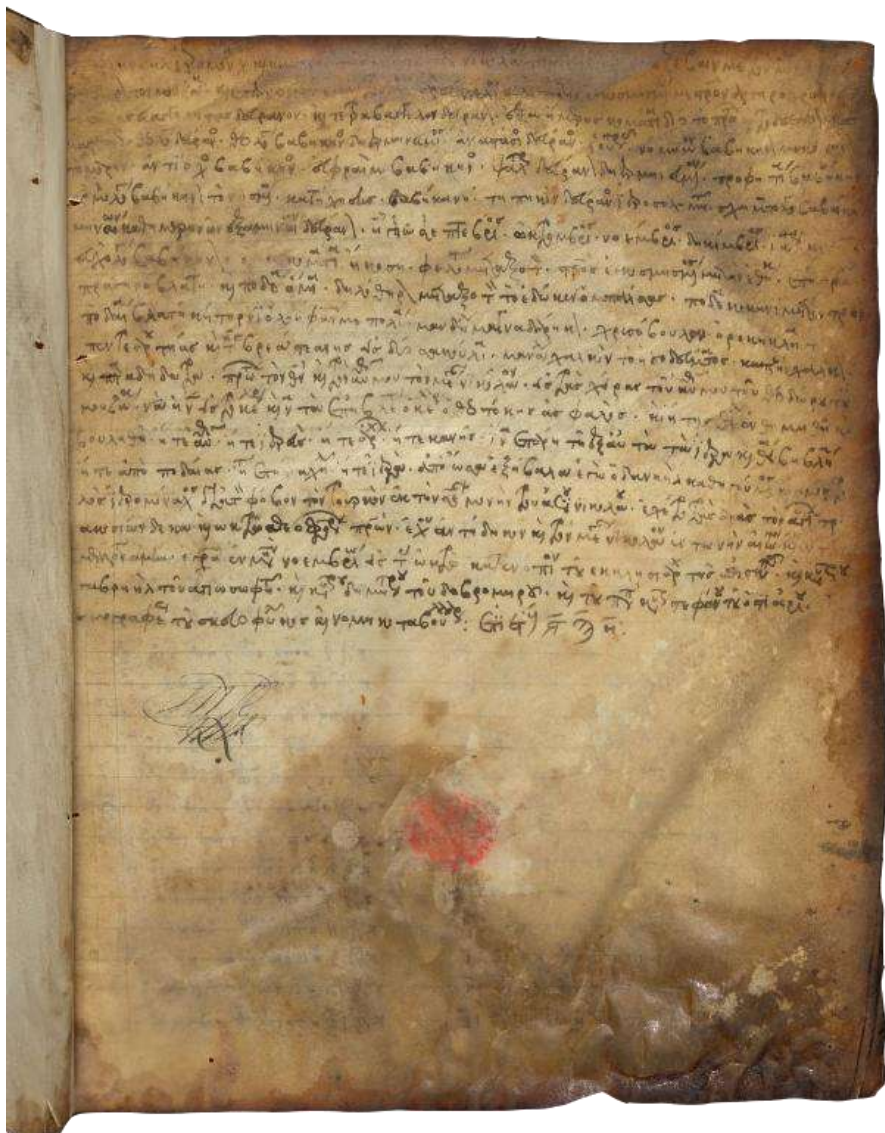
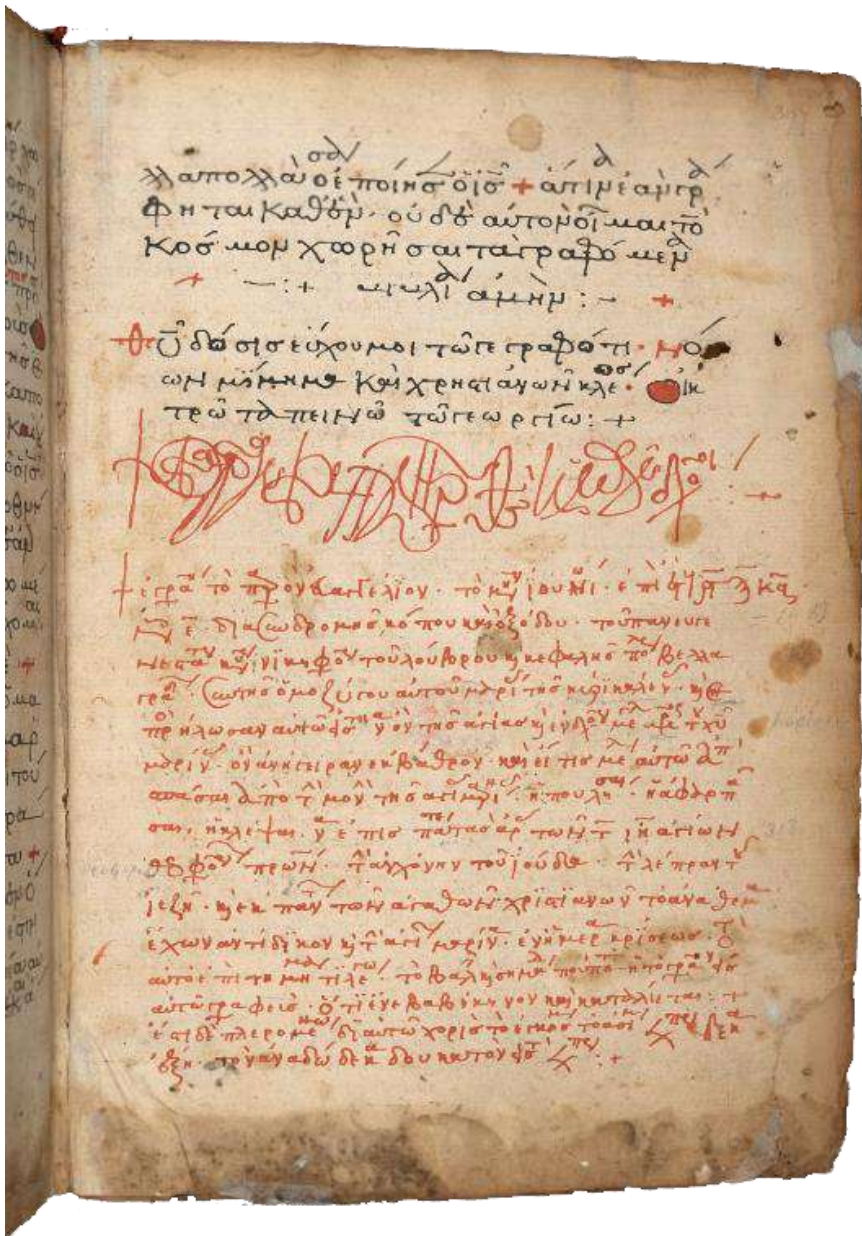
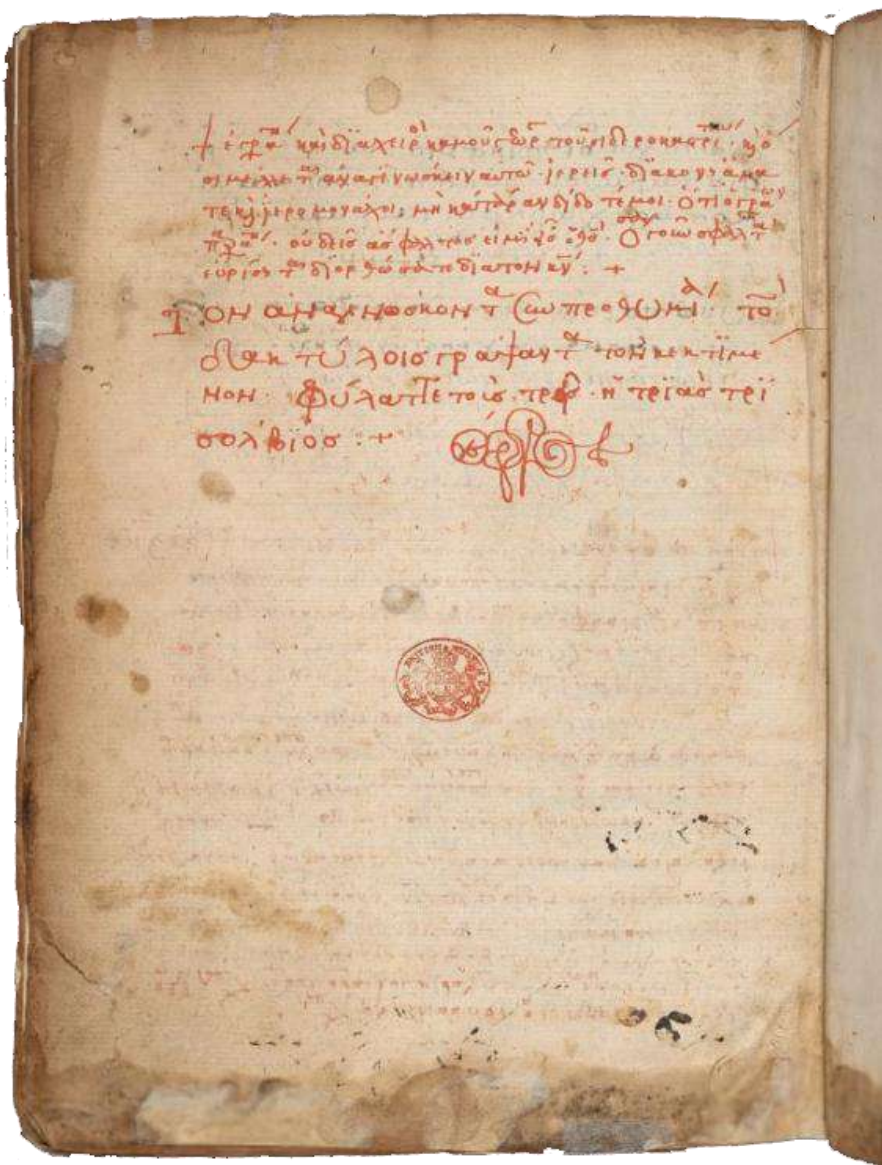


Figure 5. British Library, Additional 37007, f 1r. Inventory of the priceless books and objects of the Monastery of Saint Nicholas in Perondi (Pentarchondia) near Berat.



Figure 6. British Library, Add. 37008, fl 1v-2r. Left: miniature of the Apostle John the Theologian; right: the beginning of the Gospel readings.





Figures 7-8. British Library, Add. 37008, fl. 397r-v. The codicographical note of the manuscript.



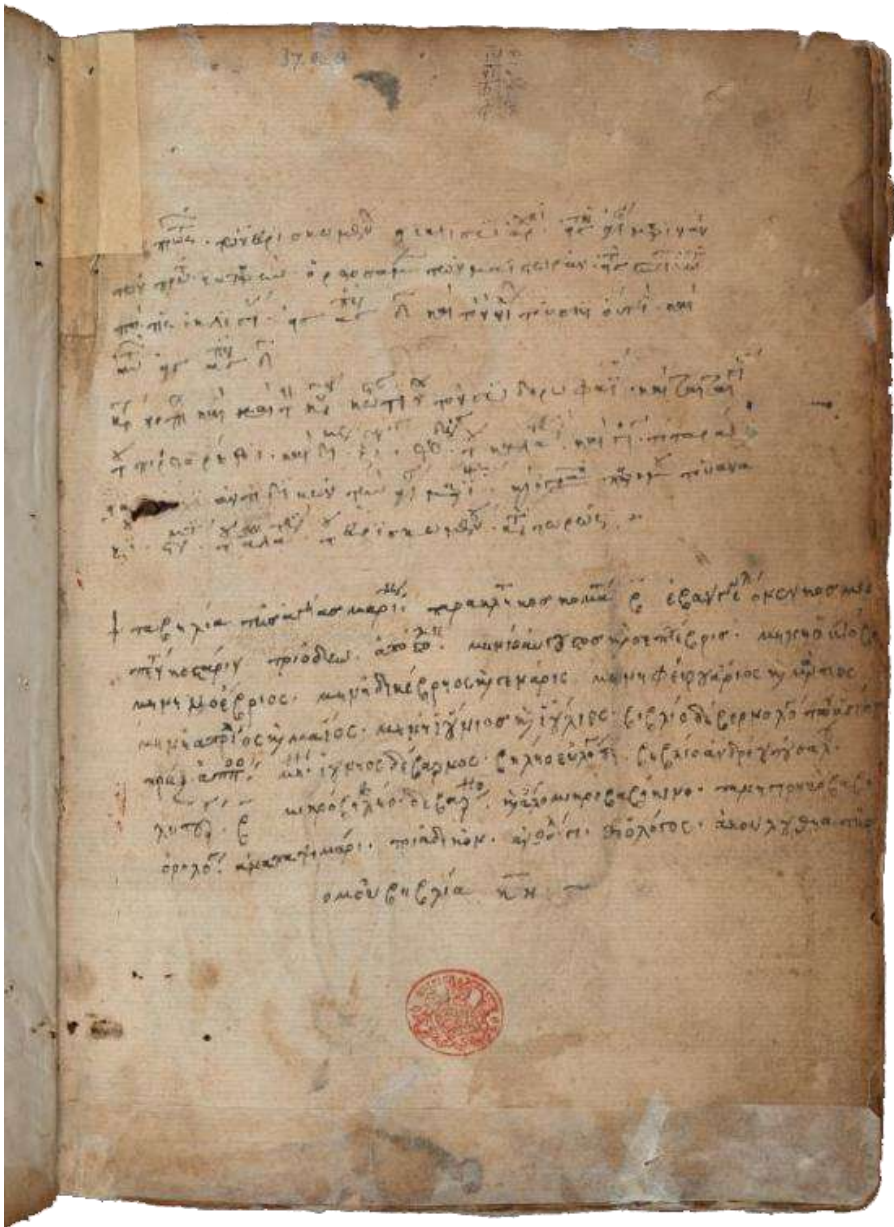


Figure 9. British Library, Add. 37008, fl 1r. Inventory of the Church of St. Marina in Berat.

