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**Caucasian and Semitic Influences in the Early Medieval Bulgarian
“Runic Inscriptions”**

Abstract: The present article is focused on the similarities existing between some of the characters of the Caucasian Albanian script and some of the graphemes of the so called “runic inscriptions” from the 10th century Bulgarian rock monasteries from Murfatlar and Krepcha. The similarities in question do not only concern the shape of some of the “runic graphemes”. Obvious parallels between the designations of the Caucasian Albanian characters and the “ordinal numerals” from the Proto-Bulgarian calendar are discussed, too. After analyzing these similarities and making a critical discussion on the different attempts at etymologizations of “the ordinal numerals” of the calendar on the ground of the Turkic *-r/-l* languages, I conclude that the numerals reflect designations of letters from an unknown writing system created for some of the clan languages of the Proto-Bulgarians and partly or entirely based on Caucasian and Semitic written traditions.

Keywords: Early medieval Bulgarian inscriptions; Semitic and Caucasian influences

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