

History of Romanian Book

Controversy regarding the printing of the first book in the Romanian space The Liturgy Book (1508)

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Abstract

The publication of the first printed book in the Romanian space has generated numerous controversies, most of them because of neglecting the place of printing for the edited copies. *They* were circulating in time, *by* both printing centers outside the Romanian space, with tradition in this technique (Venice, Cetinje, Cracow) and *by* centers from the Romanian territory (Bistrița Oltenian Bistrita, Snagov, Govora, Targoviste). We believe that Macarie printed **Liturgy Book** in Wallachia could not find a better context than in Targoviste, the capital of Wallachia and the place where directives based on the reorganization of modern Romanian Orthodox Church had started. The printing of this **Liturgy Book** consists in the fact that it is the first time when this kind of cult book *has been* printed which was essential to *perform* church service, a proof that it had circulated throughout the South East European Space.

Keywords: *Liturgy Book*, Macarie, Târgoviște, Bistrița, Snagov, Venice

In the context of the European Cyrillic print, the printing activity in Wallachia occupies an important place, reflecting the degree of cultural development reached by Romanian principalities (1) and at the same time constituting itself as an integral part of a European phenomenon. It is known that between the Romanian culture and the culture of the South-Slavic peoples there was a strong connection, since the publishing, the Macarie first printed books from Targoviste (1508–1512) spread in the Slavic world, being used as a model for the books printed here. The relations of the Romanian written culture with the other cultures in South-eastern Europe manifested on several plans: the printing activity was in a constant evolution, printers, proofreaders, engravers or bookbinders coming to work in the Romanian principalities, the same way as the Romanian craftsmen produced manuscripts and books for the Balkan communities or even traveled to remote places to set up printing workshops.(2)

N. Iorga said: "The printing of Slavic books could not find a shelter in the Balkans, by the end of the fifteenth century, when the last remains of Christian domination were drowning under the Turkish heap. The handicraftsmen were forced to seek support, a protector, on this side of the Danube, where they kept the old forms of state. This orientation toward us was all the more assessed, as Venice didn't want to deal with any printing work for the Slavs... "(3), and N. Cartoian explained the founding of the printing press by Radu the Great in this way: "The printing of the books which were necessary for divine worship corresponded at the time in the Slave countries in the Balkans to a deeply felt necessity."(4)

The founding of the printing house in Wallachia was made at the initiative of the church and of the local officials for their own cultural use, but also for those countries which used the Slavic language in the church. When Radu the Great decided to set up a printing press in Walachia, the printing art had already existed for over half a century in Western Europe while, south of the River Danube the times were those when the conquering Islam did not allow anyone to build up a church over which a mounted Turk could not see. All the more so the ruler wanted to raise here, at Dealu, the most grandiose church which had ever been built up to that time in Wallachia. Therefore, it is not just a coincidence that during the reign of Radu the Great the printing press was founded and also that during his reign a new form of organization was given to the church of Wallachia.

Macarie the monk, who accompanied the young Montenegro Prince George Cernoievici to Italy, is mentioned in 1483 overseeing at Venice the printing of a Slavic Liturgy Book.(5)

A few years later, the same George Cernoievici would bring the printing press from Venice and install it in Cetinje, in the monastery founded by his father. Here, Macarie would print: an **Orthodox Prayer Book** (1496), an Octoich (Hymn Book) (1493–1494), and in 1495 a Psalter. The invasion of the Ottomans of the territory of Montenegro would determine the printing press to stop work, after only two years; at this time Macarie the monk together with his protectors would take refuge to Venice. After a while, he would go to Walachia brought back by the Serbian metropolitan bishop Maxim, but there is no written evidence to testify to this. (6)

About Radu the Great it is said that he was a "wise, peaceful and honest ruler" who "did not wage wars, wanted peace, and was particularly concerned with religious and cultural problems" (7), and setting up the printing press at Targoviste was closely linked to his name, since he had been concerned with bringing to his court in Targoviste around 1507 of some Serbian dignitaries, of which we would like to mention Maxim, the son of Stephen Brancovici the Blind, the last independent despot of Serbia, of Macarie the typographer and of others. Their arrival in Wallachia was a positive act for the Romanian culture, because they militated in favor of printing religious books.

Ensuring the autonomy of Wallachia in the Ottoman Empire created a favorable climate for cultural development (8), so that the printing activity would have favorable conditions for further development. Radu the Great was especially concerned with strengthening the prestige of the Church and with its endowment with "clear sources of education".(9) His initiative to give printed church service book, instead of the manuscripts which circulated by that time, corresponds to the general measures taken to organize the state and the Wallachian Church. In order to achieve this aim he would bring the former patriarch of Constantinople, Nifon, to his principality to which he said: "I will reign, and you have to guide us in the law of God. Be our spiritual shepherd and our messenger to God." Nifon, the Patriarch, redeemed by the prince and brought to Wallachia for accomplish these reforms, describes the situation of the church in the early years of the sixteenth century: "And the saint found his herd unyielding and disobedient and the church rebel and unwise, with bad habits. And he invited all hegumens from all Wallachian monasteries and all of the church clergy and did a great council gathering the

prince and all noblemen, the priests and the lay people and uttered uninterruptedly springs of clear teachings." (10) Nifon appointed two bishops "to improve the entire country starting with the bishops" and to finish this work books were required, and the prince felt indebted to assist and strengthen the church, which was becoming a spiritual instrument of centralized domination. The founding of the printing press in Wallachia no longer appears to be such a fortuitous work, but falls within the frame of the social and cultural history of the country.

Among other teachings and orders given by Nifon, there was also the performing of religious services. Thus, the Liturgy Book from 1508, the Octoich from 1510 and the Gospel Book from 1512 implemented, in printed form, the leading class and church desire to give the largest and most essential part of religious services a unitary form.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Targoviste was an important cultural centre and the bringing of the printing press here was made at a time when the need for religious books was very urgent, and its role was to strengthen the new instrument of the new centralized government. As in the West, the first printed books in Wallachia have sought to replace manuscripts, (11) but nevertheless, the printing of books at the beginning of the sixteenth century was very difficult to achieve. (12)

As regards Macarie's printing press from Targoviste, there were - and there still are - two issues, which are still perceived as being controversial: the origin and the printing place of these three works.

The problem concerning the origin of Macarie's printing press has been discussed both by Romanian and foreign researchers. Some historians, like D. Sp. Radojicic and Dejan Medakovic, (13) have insisted on the affiliation of these books to the Cetinje centre. But the printing material used by Macarie to print these three books is different from that used by him in the printing house from Cetinje. Macarie's printing works from Cetinje have the features of books published under conditions of a high quality level of printing, and clichés of ornamented letters from Venetian printings are used together with Latin letters as ornamentation elements. Thus, we can see Latin ornamented initials, with Cyrillic value, such as the Latin "**B**" for the Cyrillic "**V**", the Latin "**P**" for the letter "**R**" (P). This shows that the Venetian printers used the stencils of some Latin letters for casting similar Cyrillic letters in form, methods which have not been seen in any Romanian printings.

V. Jagic, a specialist in Slavic languages, has stated that there is no resemblance between the printing house in Cetinje and that in Wallachia, the

letter of the Montenegro print being thin and small, while the one used in Wallachia is thick and tall. Likewise, it has been pointed out that the ornaments in the books printed in Wallachia are influenced by the manuscripts existent under Stephen the Great, whereas the Montenegro ornaments belong to the Italian Renaissance classical style. As for the language of the two types of printed works this is the Church Slavic of Serbian writing in Montenegro and of Medio-Bulgarian writing in Wallachia. (14)

On studying the same issue, Nicolae Iorga has shown that "*Macarie made his apprenticeship in Venice*" and after he was forced to flee to Montenegro because of the invasion of the Ottomans, he "*came to Wallachia*", bringing with him a small bag with nicely cut stencils, of ornamented initials and of title pages skillfully interwoven, signs of Venetian influence. (15) In his turn, Sextil Pușcariu claimed that "*it was natural for Macarie to look to Wallachia as the safest field of work*" and that "*he would have come here carrying with him the small bag with stencils*". (16) The same idea on the identity of Macarie, the typographer from Târgoviște, to the one from Cetinje, is to be found in other scientific works written by specialists such as L. Demény, (17) D. Simonescu and V. Petrescu, (18) N. Cortojan. (19)

Mircea Păcurariu (20) has asserted that Macarie would have come to Wallachia bringing with him his own molded stencils or that Radu the Great may have bought a new printing machine from Venice with the help of Macarie, while Alexandru Odobescu has concluded in his research that, within this period, no Cyrillic printing press would have existed in Wallachia and that Macarie's printed works, carrying the Wallachian coat of arms were actually Venetian prints commissioned by Romanian rulers: "*This book printed in such nice and distinct letters in 1508 under the reign of Mihnea Voda I, is a genuine oddity.*" (21)

In his turn, Virgil Molin has categorically stated that: "*Macarie's books, the first necessary to Wallachia, have been edited and printed in Venice*". (22) Moreover, V. Molin has tried to identify the printing press in Târgoviște to Aldus Manutius's and Torresani's in Venice stating that: "The printing was made under the press house of a typography in Venice, most probably Torresani's. In other words, Macarie played only a binding role with the orthodox world of the Balkans". This assumption relies on the following reasons: the characters of the letters in Macarie's books (1508–1512) are typically Venetian; the printing press is in two colors, an exclusively Venetian technique; the paper used is of Venetian origin; the

binding is identical to the Venetian ones existent around year 1500. According to V. Molin, all the Cyrillic printed works issued up to the third decade of the sixteenth century within the South-eastern European space belong to only one typographical centre: Venice.

But this hypothesis of printing the Wallachian books of Macarie in Torresani's printing house does not hold true due to the following reasons: since the letters in the Liturgy Books are thick, imitating the semiuncial script, they differ from the character of the Slavic letters of Venice, as well as from the thin Slavic letters, similar to the Latin alphabet, of Venetian origin, from Cernoievici's printing house in Cetinje; the ornaments of Macarie's printed works are not of Venetian origin themselves, but imitate the ones from the Moldavian manuscripts existent by the end of the reign of Stephan the Great; the two-color printing was made in Macarie's books using a rudimentary technique, by firstly taking out the sheets of paper from under the printing press, then by printing them again in red ink to cover the blank spots, which causes the dissimilarity in line; as for the lack of information in the epilogues of the three books about the place where they had been printed, we may assume that the coat of arms indicates the place, and if these books had appeared in Venice, the printing workers would have specified the year and place of publication; the two-year span of time between the publication of the three books at Targoviste indicates that printing was made in a less equipped printing house, fitted with little material, and that this is not the case of a typographic order commissioned from a large typographic centre such as Venice; since the proofreading of the text, printed in the second copy book, where there had been some mistakes which distorted the meaning of the text, was made only for the second circulation, this proves that the printing was made inside a small printing room which had only started operating; if the printing of the Liturgy Book had been made in Venice, the proofreading would have been made for all of the copies; (23) the bindings of Macarie's books were made in the monasteries and workshops existent in the country and they are different from the ones made in Venetian workshops. Since the Octoich was printed in 1510, it could not have been executed in Torresani's printing house because it was closed at the time. (24)

Another theory regarding the origin of Macarie's printing press relates to Sweipolt Fiol's Cyrillic printing house in Krakow. In 1916, A. P. Sobolevski affirmed that the printed works from Krakow made in 1491 are "*founded on texts of Romanian origin*", (25) i.e. on Slavic manuscripts which applied the spelling used in Wallachia in the sixteenth

century. The Russian researcher believed that Sweipolt Fiol's Cyrillic books were made in response to a commission order placed from Wallachia or Moldavia, while P. P. Panaitescu even maintained that the letters from Sweipolt Fiol's books resembled those in Slavo-Romanian manuscripts.

L. Demény deemed that the Cyrillic books from Krakow, compiled under the basis of the Slavic texts from the East, exhibit printing features which do not allow either identification or close association with Macarie's printed works in Wallachia (26) because the Cyrillic books from Krakow have very special title pages.

Also, letter **M** has been studied too. There are two types of character: an "aligned **M**", which fits perfectly between the two levels of the line and is characteristic to the Cyrillic printing press in Venice, to the South-Slavic and to the one in Prague in the 15th-16th centuries, and a special shape of character which we have named "lapped **M**", because the middle of the letter exceeds by 1-3 mm beyond the bottom level of the line. The same "lapped **M**" is to be found in the Cyrillic printing in Krakow, with a huge difference: in Macarie's printed works, the middle of the letter, which exceeds below the level of the line, it is rounded, whereas in Sweipolt Fiol's, it has a pointed form. The conclusion we may draw is that the two printers took their inspiration from different sources: Sweipolt Fiol used East Slavic manuscripts, his character being engraved after them, whereas Macarie made use of Moldavian manuscripts. (27) Another difference is noticeable in the letter **G** which, in the case of Sweipolt Fiol, consists of two semicircles touching each other in the lower part, whereas, in the case of Macarie, the two halves (each having pointed tips on their lower part) are unified. This brief comparison clearly shows that Macarie's printing house did not come into contact with the Cyrillic printing house in Krakow.

Among the typographic centers in existence on the territory of the Romanian Principalities which have been said to represent the place where the three books had been published, we mention Bistrița, Snagov, Govora and the monastery of Dealul. As regards Bistrița, the first to approach this aspect was N. Iorga: "*At Dealul, or, better, because here the adorning work was made under the reign of Neagoe, at Bistrița Craioveștilor, where some say that Maximiam himself celebrated the wedding of Milița, this noble work of art was made*". (28) Among the supporters of this theory there were historians such as P. P. Panaitescu, Barbu Theodorescu, (29) Ștefan Ștefănescu, Virgil Câdea, Sextil Pușcariu, (39) V. Micle (31) who argued that it was here that the seven copies of this book were found by Alexandru Odobescu, that between the scholars from Bistrița and those South of the

River Danube there were strong family ties; during the publication of the Liturgy Book, the city of Târgoviște was not the only administrative and cultural centre of the principality: “the throne of Wallachia was both at Bucharest and at Târgoviște.” (32)

It is known that the monastery had been completely destroyed by **Mihnea Vodă** in **1509**; a document circulating in the age recorded that “*and their monastery (of the Craiovești), which they had been built on the river Bistrița, was scattered out of its joints*”. It was rebuilt under the reign of **Neagoe Basarab** during **1515–1519** again by the Craiovești, and this tells us that the existence of a printing house inside an unfitted space would have been impossible. Nevertheless, if we assume that Macarie had printed his Liturgy Book in Bistrița, the question which arises is where the other two books were printed considering that at Bistrița it was impossible to do that anymore, since it was destroyed in 1509. Also, the question is why had D. Liubavici chosen to print the book at Târgoviște and not at Bistrița, if there had been a tradition in this direction. What is more, it is well known that the works which had been printed in those times were bound inside the monasteries and this aspect may account for the existence of a large number of Liturgy Books at the monastery of Bistrița, where they had been probably taken for binding; besides, it also proves that the aim of printing this work was to let it circulate and to ensure a unitary practice in performing the divine service.

Snagov was another typographic centre where some believed that the first books from the entire Romanian territory had been printed; Alexandru Grecu holds a similar opinion when he states that “the monastery of Snagov may be the printing place for the first three of Macarie’s books”, (33) and asserts that Neagoe Basarab must have taken great care of this monastery.

The first documented attestation under the name of Snagov dated from 1408, when this appeared in a document of Mircea the Elder; however, there are other who believe that there had already existed a religious place in this location dating back to Vladislav I (1364–1379). Only from the year 1517 were the rebuilding works started under Neagoe Basarab and it is difficult to believe that a printing press may have been installed inside an improvised space.

Moreover, it is well known that only in 1694, after the transferring from the royal printing house in Bucharest of some of the printing equipment to Snagov, Antim Ivireanul laid the foundation of a large printing house, working independently from the one in Bucharest, and having the necessary means of printing texts in many languages.

Govora is also included among the hypotheses regarding the printing place of the three books and Al Odobescu is the one who first made this supposition by arguing that, at Govora, Matei Basarab installed a printing press starting from the year 1637, a fact that would lead one to conclude that a tradition in this direction had already existed once a printing house was operating here: "*even some fragments of old printing utensils*" (34) have been found. Following the same idea, A. Sacerdoțeanu affirmed: "*Among the old typographic centre in the country, Vâlcea occupied an important place even if we leave aside the debate over the printing place of Macarie's famous Liturgy Book from 1508, which some believed it to be either Bistrița or Govora. It is doubtless that at Govora there were a printing house dating from the reign of Matei Basarab*" (35) From what has been said above we infer that we have no proof to believe that in 1507, when the printing of the Liturgy Book was commenced, any typographical activity had already existed.

We personally believe that the **Liturgy Book** was not printed in either of the above mentioned centers, but at the monastery of Dealul, near Târgoviște, a place where all the feudal, political, cultural and clerical reforms found their origin, a fact which had been previously mentioned through the attempt of the Romanian rulers to centralize the powers of the state into their own hands. Thus, the setting up of the printing laboratory in Wallachia must be strongly connected to the subordination of the feudal church to the centralized authority of the lay ruler, accompanied by an increase in the princely revenue which allowed for the founding of cultural establishments such as the monastery of Dealul. It is more probable that the installing of the printing press was made within the enclosed space of a monastery because in here there were workshops for refined crafts and scholar monks who could help in the proofreading of texts, including religious books.

Even some of the ornaments of the title pages of Macarie's printed works are close in style to the "Armenian" (36) ornaments from the monastery of Dealul (ornaments which make up circles and squares knit from the creeping stalks of stylized plants). Moreover, we believe that some of the ornaments have been inherited from Macarie and have been used in the works to come; it is possible that some of them had been found at Târgoviște, since Liubavici continues to print here, (37) and there are several similarities between the works of the two printing craftsmen, especially as far as title pages are concerned.

The beginnings of Macarie's printing activity are not known, the biographical information being extremely scarce. (38) Most of his

biographers (I. Karataev, L. Tomic, L. Stoianovici, V. Jagic etc.) believe that Macarie learnt the art and technology of book-printing in Venice, in Torresani's printing house.(39) In the period 1493–1496 he activated in Cetinje, Montenegro, where he printed several books under the patronage of Gheorghe Cernoievici, (40) the hospodar of the country. The latter would reign between 1492–1496 and, as he was married to a noble Venetian woman, Elisabeta Erizzo, the policy of his state would rely on the support given by Venice; in this way the cultural relations between Montenegro and Venice and the installation of the printing press there become easy to understand.

In Macarie's printing house several books written in the Church Slavic of Serbian writing have been printed, necessary to the orthodox cult i.e. the first part of the Octoich, the first four hymns. The preface which indicates the beginning of the work is dated 7001 (1493), while the afterworld indicates the date of accomplishment i.e. January 4, 7002 (1494). The second part of the Octoich, of which only a few copies are known to be complete, is dated 1494. The Psalter, printed in 1495, contains in its annexes the prayers for the dead, the sermons for the saints of the water, the breviary, a homily of St. John Chrysostom and other things. The Prayer Book, of which only a fragment is known, cannot be precisely dated, but according to the type of character used, it originated from the same printing laboratory. These books indicate that they have been printed under Gheorghe Cernoievici and the metropolitan bishop Vavila commission and they were made "*out of the toil and from the hands of the humble hieromonk Macarie from Cerna Gora*" (Montenegro). The afterworld of the first part of the Octoich indicates the year and all the other chronological elements: the phase of the sun, of the moon, the foundation, the golden number. Of all books, only the Psalter indicates the printing place: "*at Cetinje*".

Most of the researchers admit that the printing press from Cetinje had been brought from Venice, having been bought from Andreea Torresani, and that Macarie, the printer, was his apprentice. The facts which led to this conclusion were the following: Torresani's Slavic printing house ceased its activity in 1493 (the year when the printing house in Montenegro started operating); the outline of the letters and ornaments from Macarie's printing house in Cetinje is of Italian origin, the iconography of his printed works from Cetinje highlights its Venetian origin, with attributes of Renaissance design: mascarons, cupids, cornucopia, garlands, little birds etc. (41)

From Cetinje, Macarie arrived in Wallachia in answer to the invitation of Radu the Great to set up a printing house. The books printed in

Wallachia are the usual church texts which were translated long ago from Greek into Slavonic and copied in manuscripts for the use of the Romanians who had adopted the Slavonic rite. In the printing house from Dealu, Macarie printed: a Liturgy Book (1508), an Octoich (1510) and a Gospel Book (1512).

The significance of Macarie's Liturgy Book is double-folded: it is the first Romanian printed book and it is the first edition of a book of cult written in Slavonic (it seems that the translation into Slavonic had been made by Metropolitan Nifon, during his stay in Wallachia). (42)

The printing of the Liturgy Book began as early as the year 1507 "*as ordained by Io Radu Voivod for evermore be his remembrance*". (43) The printing was made with the financial and moral support of the new ruler, "Io Mihnea great hospodar of all Ungro-Wallachia's land and of Podunavia, son of great Io Vlad hospodar, in his first year of reign, straining himself also the humble monk and priest Macarie. In the year 7016, the phase of the Sun (44) 16, of the fifth month, indiction (45) 11, November 10 days", a fact which results from the epilogue of the book. (46)

These title indications prove the tutelage both of the lay ruler and of the church over printing. P.P. Panaitescu has noticed that in none of the documents issued by the chancellorship of the Wallachian rulers Radu the Great (1495–1508), Mihnea (1508–1510), Neagoe Basarab (1512–1521), is Podunavia mentioned in relation to the reign of Mircea the Elder in Dobrogea and at Chilia, a title which has been repeated in all three of Macarie's printed books and which dates from the first half of the 15th century. This title appears in an order given to the Tismana Monastery on November 23, 1406 and reappears in a similar form in a document issued between 1404–1406: "I, Io Mircea, great hospodar and prince ruling the entire country of Ungro-Wallachia and of the regions over the mountains, and even near the Tartar regions, of Hertzeg of Almaş and Făgăraş and king of Banat, Severin and of the both sides of Podunavia, to the Great Sea and the only master of the fortress of Dârstor. "

The reason why Macarie printed this title in his book may be that, since he was working in a monastery, he probably found it in an old document which mentioned it. The same P. P. Panaitescu has noticed that the appeal made to those who would read, copy (write) and sing from this book to mend their ways, an appeal which reappears both in the Octoich and in the Four Gospels' Book, is missing. It was assumed that, after the Liturgy Book was printed, several mistakes and omissions have been noticed, which led to the presence of the appeal.

As for the dating of the **Liturgy Book**, a few problems have occurred here too, as it is strange that, inside the epilogue, the style from the 1st of January is used, whereas in all the Wallachian princely and private documents from that age, the Byzantine style is used starting with the 1st of September. Thus, the epilogue appears to be a personal contribution of the typographer which disregards the rules and custom of the realm. The year starting with the 1st of January was used in Moldavia but it looks as Macarie had not been influenced by Moldavia but by the West, by Venice, because inside the books he printed at Cetinje, inside the epilogues, the date of the year is calculated according to the 1st of January style, and other less frequently used elements of chronology such as the phase of the sun and moon appear as well.

The less frequently used elements of chronology: the phases of the sun, the indiction is also to be found on the rotive in the monastery porch from Dealul. (47) It is possible that even Macarie himself has initiated its engraving as he was accustomed to using the cycles of the sun and moon, knowing that it was not mandatory that the rotive in the church porch to be engraved in the year of the monastery's completion (1502).

More than a few copies have survived of Macarie's Liturgy Book and they exhibit two variants of the printed text. This is due to the fact that, in the second book of the Liturgy Book, several mistakes have been found which altered the meaning of the text and, as a consequence, the book was reprinted and the copies which had already been sent could not be corrected.

According to the Old Romanian Bibliography, the Liturgy Book of 1508 has 128 leaves (256 p.) and is numbered by books. The first four leaves are not numbered; they are followed by 15 books of eight leaves each which are numbered with Cyrillic figures. The last book contains only 4 leaves. Among the contents of the introductory leaves it stands written: "*To that among the saints, our father archbishop of Caesarea Cappadocia, Basil the Great, instruction to the priest about divine sermon and about the sacrament*".

Inside the Liturgy Book, at the end of the masses, the following orders are printed down: St. Basil's the Great advice to priests; the rite of the Anaphora (section of the Mass in which the priest prepares the bread and wine for communion); the Liturgy Books of Saint John Chrysostom (this title is missing from the table of contents where it is reunited by mistake under one single title with the previous chapter), of Saint Basil the Great and of the sacraments before they are consecrated and a few other ordinary rites: the rite of blessing the alms, the evening service prayers, the Matins

prayers etc. Also, we must mention the rite of the litany (this title is missing from the table of contents, where another prayer is indicated under the heading *Morning prayer recited on Sundays, after the Canon of the Trinity*) or the prayer for the defence of the country.

We may conclude that Macarie's Liturgy Book of 1508 represents a rare form of the Slavic Liturgy Book, due to the presence of the Teaching of Basil the Great to priests, which appears only in manuscript 651 from Matei Basarab. Moreover, some of the prayers shown in the end are very rare and to be found only in the Slavonic text of a seventeenth century manuscript from the Monastery of Bistrița.

In the Romanian Principalities, only three Slavonic Liturgy Books printed in the sixteenth century are known; with a few slight exceptions (the order of the rites, an additional prayer) all of them seem to be republications of Macarie's Liturgy Book: Coresi's Slavonic Liturgy Book (Brașov, 1568–1570) (48); the undated Slujebnic-Liturgy Book, probably another Coresi's book (49); Șerban Coresi's printed Liturgy Book from 1588 (50).

The first of these Slavonic Missals differs from Macarie's Liturgy Book of 1508 by the fact that the Teaching of Basil the Great to priests does not appear at the beginning of the book, but the text, the layout of the work and its contents are similar in both editions. In between the prayers Coresi's Liturgy Book includes the prayer for the blessing of the bread too, the bishop's prayer for the absolution of sins and the "prayer for blessing offers, whenever necessary". The last page of Coresi's Liturgy Book, which should have included the epilogue, is missing. In conclusion, we may assert that this is a republication of Macarie's Liturgy Book.

Coresi's Slujebnic-Liturgy Book begins with the Teaching of Basil the Great to priests, the same way Macarie's Liturgy Book does, but the 'Prayer' section differs because it is larger in Coresi's book, including the Gospels which are read during Easter sermons, and the Apostle read on holy days. However, the "prayer for blessing offers, whenever necessary" is missing.

The Slavonic Liturgy Book printed by Șerban Coresi in 1588 begins with "the order of the sermon", without the Teaching of Basil the Great, and from among the concluding prayers, both the prayer for the blessing of the bread is missing and the "prayer for blessing offers, whenever necessary".

By studying the exterior aspect of Macarie's Liturgy Book, at first, we may consider it a luxury book, but, on a thorough analysis, we discover that it is rather a negligent piece of work with numerous printing mistakes and text-omissions, which testifies to the fact that the printing press in

Wallachia was not highly developed because it had no technical tradition to support it. Even throughout the book there are several mistakes such as the title of the ritual and of the Liturgy of John Chrysostom, a mistake which had been corrected in the text. We may assume that these mistakes have drawn the attention of the Church Institutions in Wallachia, which have been forced to order the republication of a section of the book, a fact which explains the existence of two variants of one of the Books of the Missal, as we have already mentioned.

As far as the ornamentation of the Book is concerned, Macarie was a creator of local tradition by defining the specific features of the Romanian Cyrillic printing press within the context of the entire Cyrillic printing circulating in Europe in the sixteenth century. In the Monastery of the Muşatini, a new completely different style emerges in the art of the manuscript books – *the Moldavian old manuscript*. Its characteristics refer to the exceptional beauty of the letter's ductus, the geometric ornamentation of exquisite elegance, the chromatic harmony, the matchless miniatures which, as Nicolae Iorga himself observed, would deserve to be granted a place in the history of the major Arts. A comparison made between these ornaments, especially of the title pages, has revealed that in the Slavonic manuscript of Jeremiah's prophecies, written at Neamţ in 1475 (51) there are several almost identical title pages in terms of their drawing: they exhibit the same rectangular shape of the title page, the same knit and stylized creeping stalks which make up intersecting circles, and the same twigs arranged on both sides of the rectangle, with no crowns (in case of the manuscript), while the initials of the chapters are richly adorned with knit creeping stalks and delicate ornaments.

The transposition of the ornamental elements of the local manuscript book onto the printed book seems natural because the Liturgy Book is the church service book which was first printed in the entire European Cyrillic characters by Macarie, in Wallachia. (52) For this reason, Macarie could not rely on a printed model, he was forced to resort to the manuscript book and create ornamentation adequate to the text.

In the **Liturgy Book**, there are three title pages with knit ornaments, one of them is reproduced three times, another one only two times and the third exhibits the coat of arms of Wallachia. One of them is rectangular in shape and is made of creeping stalks and wattle which form intersecting circles. Two ornaments which end with the representation of two princely crowns start from the extremities of the two inferior corners. The second title page is oval in shape and observes the same ornamentation technique as

the first one, whereas the third type shows the illustration of the Wallachia coat of arms framed inside a square, the represented bird depicting both an eagle and a falcon.(53) The bird's feathers are accurately indicated, wings spread out, carrying in its beak a cross with three-cusped arms in the extremities, accompanied in the lower part and on the sides by a twig with flowers and leaves. In the upper register of the heraldic composition, there is a sun with eight rays (left) and a turned half-moon (right). (54)

As regards the capital ornamented initials, we will have to underline that they were not been engraved by Macarie himself, in a new style, unknown to the Cyrillic printing by the time, but they took the shape of wickerwork, because the paragraphs of the text implied a long row of new initials. Thus, Macarie created ornamental initial letters by knitting creeping stalks of flowers and plants, as well as another black series which imitated the Gothic uncial letter.

We must raise for discussion not only the influences which inspired Macarie, but the most significant influence exercised by Macarie's printing press in Wallachia over the entire South-eastern European Cyrillic printing press – Romanian and South-Slavic – in that century, as well. (55) Hence, in 1519 in Hertegovina, in the city of Gorajde, a new Cyrillic printing house was founded; Fjodor Ljubavici would print three books here: the Liturgy Book (1519), the Psalter (1521) and the Prayer Book (around the year 1523). At this printing house from Gorajde we discover elements of book ornamentation in case of a group of initials and a vignette, which undoubtedly reflect the influence of Macarie's printing press in Wallachia. On examining the vignette which appeared for the first time in the European Cyrillic alphabet in the Liturgy Book of 1508, we notice the resemblance to the Psalter of 1521 from Gorazde. Ljubavici of Gorajde must have copied the image from Macarie's printed book, then he cast it in wood and cut a new stereotyped plate, from which he printed the said vignette in his book. Differences are very small, and this shows that the assumption which states that both typographers might have used the same Serbian manuscript as their source of inspiration is out of the question. Similar resemblances are to be found in the case of the initials from Fjodor Liubavic's Psalter.

As regards the copies of Macarie's Liturgy Book which have been preserved on the territory of Romania, we would like to mention that in the collections of the Romanian Academy Library in Bucharest there are three copies of the Slavonic Liturgy Book printed by Macarie in 1508:

- One of the copies has [128]p.; most of the leaves are worn-out at corners, the binding is made of leather, cold-printed, adorned

with floral and geometric ornaments, and, for the notes, we mention: "Pomenii g(ospod)i raba Bojie Stoicu i Marko" (sec. XVI), Cyrillic *alphabet*, Slavonic *language* [leaf 13]. Source: donation (formerly belonged to the Central Library in Bucharest, the Monastery of Bistrița)

- The second copy has [127] p., it is well preserved, the binding is also made of leather, cold-printed, adorned with floral and geometric ornaments (sixteenth century), and, for the notes, we mention: "This Liturgy Book belongs to the monastery of Bistrița", Romanian *language* [f.I]; "Sia liturghia zovemii glagoliemi manastirea Bistrița anatema Gaa iznesti iz manastirea" (seventeenth century), Cyrillic *alphabet*, Slavonic *language* [back flyleaf]. Source: donation (formerly belonged to the Monastery of Bistrița; smoke seal of the Monastery of Bistrița).
- The third copy has [72]p. (p.[1-47]-ms), it is well preserved, the binding is made of leather, with gilded borders and religious insets (seventeenth century); Notes: "formerly belonged to the Church of Bălgrad [Alba-Iulia]", Romanian *language* [pp.1–5]. Source: donation (formerly belonged to the Church of Bălgrad [Alba-Iulia])

At the Library of the Orthodox Metropolitan Seat in Sibiu there is a copy which exhibits the following characteristics:

- It has [126] p., two leaves at the end of the book are missing, it has wooden covers wrapped up in ornamented leather, the copy is part of the first printed books and it is not proofread. It has an Ex-libris (bookplate): "Priest (Te)odosie from Vlașcoi Zemlii" (1630) [inferior flyleaf], alphabet: Cyrillic. Notes: "This ritual book written in Slavonic language was donated to the Archiepiscopal Library of Sibiu on Novembre 8 v. 1898 from the Church at Alun. Alun on Novem. 8, 898 v. Iosif Suciu vicar gr. or. rom." / Iosif Suciu (08.11.1898), Latin *alphabet*, Romanian *language* [on a leaf on the upper flyleaf]; "Year 1671 when I was ordained a priest" / (seventeenth century), Romanian *language* [inferior flyleaf]

Another copy is kept in the Romanian National Library under the quote CR/16/II/2/2:

- It has [128]p., book 1 of 4 leaves bound at the end of the book, the back and the corners of the book are deteriorated, the body of the book is deckled, the first 2 leaves are detached, the binding is

made of brown leather on wood adorned with geometric and floral ornaments; it exhibits hand-made ornaments: the coat of arms of Wallachia framed in frontispiece, red and black characters, an Ex-libris (bookplate): The Library of the Cultural Establishment "Nicolae Bălcescu" [cover 1 verso]. Source: inheritance

The notes made on these printed works, irrespective of the funds which preserve them, show us that the books circulated not only in Wallachia, which was a natural thing to happen, but that they were used beyond the boundaries of the country.

In conclusion, the books printed by Macarie at Targoviste, between 1508–1512, place the Romanian printing press above that of the other Eastern European countries, coming to help the Romanian priests who celebrated the divine service using manuscripts, but also owing to the fact that it circulated in all the three Romanian principalities and beyond their boundaries as well, in those countries where the religious service was celebrated in the Ancient Slavic language, allowing thus for a unification of religious practice.

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- (44) The phase of the sun – is a chronological period of 28 years which, once completed, the days of the week fall on the same date of the month.
- (45) The church celebrates the Indiction (for the Romanians, the "Indiction" means command and epiphany) on the 1st of September also because it was on that day that Jesus Christ entered the synagogue of the Jews. Moreover, tradition claims that the Jewish people had entered the Promised Land in this month of September.
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