Ioana Feodorov

Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands

Early Arabic Printing in the East

Edited by
Ioana Feodorov

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Arabic Printing for the Christians in Ottoman Lands

The East-European Connection

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Preface

Before the dramatic events that have led, starting in the first decade of this century, to a continuous flow of migration from the Middle East[1] to Europe, which included a multitude of Arab Christians, juxtaposing the words 'Arab' and 'Christian' more often than not surprised the wide public, which was (and still is) overwhelmed by the tendency of all media to vaguely identify 'Arabs' with 'Muslims'. Many Europeans are still surprised to find out that both Arab Muslims and Arab Christians address, in their prayers, *'Allāh* ('God the One', in Arabic), while a significant number of the 'Most beautiful names of 'Allāh' (99, in Islamic theology) have common forms in both religions.[2] Starting with the exodus of the Christians from Syria and Lebanon, where they were caught between two fires in a war that is not theirs, the migratory waves of the past decade have brought to the attention of the press and its worldwide audience the life and beliefs of many confessional communities living in the region known as 'the Levant'. They became more interesting especially for the Europeans, who are increasingly worried by this unexpected transfer of populations.[3]

1 The expression 'Middle East' refers, here and below, to the lands of Western Asia and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, including Asia Minor and Egypt. The continental Middle East encompasses Eastern Syria, Southern Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia/Iran, while the Mediterranean East includes the Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Asia Minor coasts. Daniel Stolzenberg recently argued that what is generally called 'Moyen-Orient' (Middle East) coincided, in the 17th century, with the domain of the *linguae orientale*, i.e., primarily: Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Syriac, and Ethiopian; see Daniel Stolzenberg, "Les 'langues orientales' et les racines de l'orientalisme académique: une enquête préliminaire", *Dix-septième siècle*, 67, 2015, 3 (268), p. 409–426. The parallel expression 'Near East' ('Proche-Orient'), generally used by French authors to designate the territories subjected to the Ottoman Empire, received so many definitions in the European historiography that it has become useless. We prefer the older term 'Levant' (borrowed from French) to refer to the countries along the Eastern Mediterranean coast.

2 One example is the insertion of some of the 'Most Beautiful Names' attributed by the Muslims to 'Allāh in the Arabic version of Dimitrie Cantemir's *Divan* prepared by the Antiochian metropolitan (and patriarch) Athanasios Dabbās in 1704–1705; see Ioana Feodorov (with Yulia Petrova), *Dimitrie Cantemir, Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*, Arabic manuscript edition, English translation and notes, Leiden, 2016, p. 95–96.

3 The increasing number of books, articles, exhibitions, and media events that focus on the Eastern Christians is proof enough. As far as book production goes, I mention only a few of the recent titles that concern them: Marie-Hélène Blanchet and Frédéric Gabriel (eds.), *Réduire le schisme? Ecclésiologies et politiques de l'Union entre Orient et Occident (XIIIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, Leuven and Paris, 2013; Henri de Saint-Bon, *Le Christianisme oriental dans tous ses états*, Lagord and Mesnil-Saint-Loup (Aube), 2014; Hasan Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East: Relations between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Patriarchates of Antioch*,

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Arabs acknowledged the message of Christ in the early days of His preaching. In one of the most famous passages of the New Testament, the Arabs are mentioned among the ethnic groups who heard the Apostles at Pentecost speaking in their language: "...Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2: 11). The Holy Apostle Paul relates his sojourn in the Roman Provincia Arabia or Arabia Petraea (southern Jordan) among the Nabateans who were to join the first Christians:

> But when God, who had set me apart right from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.[4]

Spreading in the 2nd century to the nomadic tribes in the Roman province of Arabia and later to the large cities (al-Ḥīra, Petra, Palmyra), Christianity had reached, at the dawn of Islam, the region of Yemen: archaeological traces prove the existence of a church in its capital, Sanʿā. The Yemeni city of Naǧrān, a Christian center since the 4th century, is mentioned in the Muslims' holy scripture, following the discussions about Christ's teachings that took place between its messengers and the Prophet Muḥammad. Muslim poets of the 9th–12th centuries retained in their verses their impressions of monasteries they had visited in Iraq, North Arabia, and Egypt. [5]

In the 17th century, in the large monasteries of the Kesruwān region (in modern-day Lebanon), several languages were taught. The old convent of Balamand, named Belmont by the Cistercian monks who founded it (as well as by the Crusaders), opened an excellent school of Byzantine-style icon painting. Just as the Muslims had composed Arabic grammars based on Qur'ānic texts, in the first half of the 18th century the Maronite monk Gabriel (Ǧibrā'īl) Farḥāt composed

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Jerusalem and Alexandria, Ankara, 2015; Constantin A. Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans 1516–1831*, English translation by Brittany Pheiffer Noble and Samuel Noble, Jordanville and New York, 2016; "Saint-Siège, puissances occidentales, états nationaux et minorités chrétiennes au Proche-Orient (XIXe-XXe siècles)", *Relations internationales*, Special issue, 173, 2018; Bernard Heyberger and Lucette Valensi (eds.), "De la mosaïque confessionnelle à la disparition des minorités religieuses dans l'Islam méditerranéen (XIXe-XXIe siècles)", *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 2022, 105.

4 *Galatians* 1: 15-17.

5 Gérard Troupeau, "Les couvents chrétiens dans la littérature arabe", *La Nouvelle Revue du Caire*, 1975, 1, p. 265–279; Al-Shābushtī, *The Book of Monasteries*, edited and translated by Hilary Kilpatrick, New York, 2023.

an Arabic grammar, *Baḥṭ al-maṭālib*, that contains examples and exercises based on excerpts from the New Testament, for the benefit of the Arabic-speaking Christians.[6]

Two major dimensions define the Christian churches of the Middle East: on the one hand, their theological dimension, which relies on their agreement or disagreement with the acts of the Council of Chalcedon (451) concerning the two natures of Christ and their hypostatic union; on the other hand, their cultural and linguistic dimension – Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Syro-Malabar, etc.[7]

Of the Arabic-speaking Christians, those attached to the Church of Antioch and All the East were the ones that Romanians were connected to most closely in the 16th–18th centuries, i.e., before and after 1724, the year that a Greek Catholic community separated from the church's main body – the modern-day Melkite Greek Catholic Church of Antioch and All the East. Having gradually adopted the Byzantine rite since the late 10th century,[8] the Church of Antioch dates, like the other four with which it shares this ancient glory – Jerusalem, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome[9] –, from Apostolic times, as it was founded by the Holy Apostle Paul during his first journey in Syria. In Antioch, the word *masīḥī* ('Christian') was uttered for the first time, as a nickname for those who followed Christ, God's Anointed Son. Numerous references to this city appear in several Books of the New Testament. Antioch and the Northern Syrian lands were also visited by the Holy Apostles Peter, Barnabas, and Paul.[10] Because of their attachment to the Byzantine rite, the Antiochian believers are often named in the Arabic literature *Rūm* (as in *Romeioi*, sometimes read as 'Greek').[11] Among other explanations, the term is connected to *al-Rūm*, the Arabic name of Byzantium, the 'Second Rome'.

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6 This book was printed in Malta in 1836.

7 Samir Khalil Samir, "Le christianisme du Proche-Orient, modèle d'une diversité conviviale?" in Blandine Chélini-Pont and Raphaël Liogier (ed.), *Géopolitique du christianisme*, Paris, 2003, p. 135–146.

8 Syrian Christians had followed the rite of their own Church, known in theological literature as the 'Antiochian rite'.

9 In addition to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Greek Orthodox Eastern Patriarchates are Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. In this book I do not include in the concept of 'Eastern Churches' the Greek Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe, as is often the case with Western European encyclopedias.

10 *Galatians* 2: 11ff.; *Acts of the Apostles* 11: 22 and 11: 25.

11 See Samir Khalil Samir, S. J., "Quelques notes sur les termes RŪM et RŪMĪ dans la tradition arabe. Étude de sémantique historique", in *La nozione di 'romano' tra cittadinanza e universalità*, Rome, 1984, p. 461–478.

Today, the medieval model of living together shared by both the Arab Christians and the Muslim majority population of the Eastern Mediterranean coast is a renewed topic of interest for experts in geo-political history. Long before its promotion by the Latin missionaries sent from Rome, the Christian – Muslim dialogue was effectually lived, on a daily basis, within the multi-confessional society of the Middle East.[12] Christians proved to be helpful for the Muslim authorities during the rule of the Umayyad and the Abbasid caliphs, as well as later for the Ottoman Sultans and governors. At the same time, the European kings and princes who fostered dreams of expansion considered them 'ambassadors' of the Western interests, consequently luring them into their strategies focused on the conquest of Eastern lands and markets. Rational, educated, and culturally refined, the Arab Christians formed the elite of the imperial *divan*s: they were the viziers, treasurers, doctors, astronomers, writers and poets, interpreters or scribes of many languages. They were in the vanguard of the translation movement that allowed Greek philosophy, Indian science, and Persian poetry to reach Western European scholarly circles.

The Ottoman Sultan Selim I (1512–1522), who was fearful of the Šī'īs' activity within his vast empire, launched in 1514 a *blitz-krieg* against Shah Ismail of Persia, occupying the south of Anatolia, Armenia, Diyarbakır, Mardin, Kurdistan, and northern Mesopotamia, including the city of Mosul. After a rapid shaping of Ottoman government in the newly occupied territories, Selim proceeded to attack the Mamluks of Egypt, who ruled over vast lands from northern Syria to southern Palestine and a wide stretch of land encompassing the holy cities of Islam, Mecca and Medina, which had encouraged the Mamluk ruler to take the title of 'Guardian of the Holy Places'. On August 24, 1516, Selim I defeated the Mamluk armies at Marǧ Dābiq and occupied the territories of present-day Syria and Lebanon, while in November 1516 he occupied Gaza and the whole of Palestine.[13] In 1660, in order to better control the Maronite upper clergy and the Druze emirs of the Ma'n family who governed Mount Lebanon with a desire for autonomy,[14] the Sublime Porte

12 Mostly encouraged by the Greek Orthodox, according to Anton Wessels, in *Arab and Christian? Christians in the Middle East*, Kampen, 1995, p. 5.

13 He would subsequently conquer Cairo, on 22 January 1517, thus ending the Mamluk rule of Egypt. From the ashes of the Mamluk caliphate rose, in 1517, the next caliphate, governed again by non-Arabs: the Ottoman Turks.

14 On the Ma'n emirs who ruled Mount Lebanon, see Massoud Daher, "The Lebanese Leadership at the Beginning of the Ottoman Period: A Case Study of the Ma'n emirs" (transl. by W. Matt Malczycki), in Peter Sluglett with Stefan Weber (eds.), *Syria and* Bilad al-Sham *under Ottoman Rule. Essays in Honour of Abdul-Karim Rafeq*, Leiden and Boston, 2010, p. 323–345.

established a new *eyalet*, with Sidon as capital. This became the main entry point for missionaries sent by the Latin Church to the Levant.

Organized on clearly defined legal foundations designed to protect the Muslim majority and limit the rights of the other religious communities, the Ottoman administration formulated the general regulations of social life without requiring a change in the rulers of the numerous provinces that were recently conquered. By choosing to rule the non-Muslim communities based on the system of *millet*s, communities defined by their confessional attachment,[15] the Sublime Porte followed a "supple and realist" policy where local powers enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy.[16] In recent years, there has been a shift in the mainstream opinion that the Ottomans persecuted, as a rule, the minorities of their vast empire, and especially the Christians. As noted by André Raymond,

> For a long period, Ottoman historiography was distorted by stereotypes hostile to the 'Turkish' administration, described as irksome and authoritarian particularly towards minorities: it has now become altogether hackneyed to note that it was characterized by what was, all in all, a very liberal treatment of minority communities. In doing so the Ottomans were probably moved by a concern for convenience (the relative autonomy granted to the communities/millet, allowed for an easier administration) and efficiency (the Christians were active economic actors), more than by principles (although the Ottomans considered the Christian communities with great understanding for those times).[17]

That being said, it is a fact that in a vast majority, the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Middle East have lived, since the 7th century and up to this day, in territories under Muslim rule, i.e., inside the borders of *Dār al-'islām*, the 'House of Islam'. For the Christian populations, unsettled times followed the Ottoman conquest of the Levant in the early 16th century. The governors that the Sublime Porte appointed sometimes conducted persecutions in the lands inhabited by the faithful of the Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, which the empire had engulfed. Christians found themselves living in dedicated neighborhoods of the great cities (in Aleppo, Damascus, and Mosul),[18] or they were driven out to Mount

15 A system applied before the Ottoman conquest, as Benjamin Braude argues in his introduction to *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: Abridged Edition*, Boulder, CO, 2014, p. 15. See also "Foundation Myths of the Millet System", in ibid., p. 65–86 (a reedited article first published in 1982).

16 Sami Kuri, S. J., *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, I. *Palestine – Liban – Syrie – Mésopotamie (1523–1583)*, Rome, 1989, p. 43.

17 André Raymond, *Arab Cities in the Ottoman Period. Cairo, Syria and the Maghreb*, Abingdon and New York, NY, 2002, p. 89.

18 Here is how Albert Hourani describes the situation: "Thus in the district around Alexandretta and Antioch, eight distinct communities lived side by side, each in its own village or quarters of

Lebanon and the Kurdistan Mountains. Among other things, church-building was forbidden, repairing them was only possible with the governor's approval, at great cost. Visiting the Holy Land in 1726, Vassili Grigorovitch-Barski found this situation in Jaffa:

> [...] je me rendis dans une autre église située à un croisement, en dehors de la ville [...]. Or, entends bien, bon lecteur, je te le dis en vérité : nulle part ailleurs je n'ai vu une église aussi pauvre, misérable et indigente que celle-là. Je ne parle pas du fait qu'elle n'avait aucune décoration à l'intérieur : ni icône ni encensoir, rien ; le plus affligeant est qu'elle n'avait ni toit, ni porte ni fenêtre. Que lui restait-il donc ? Rien que trois murs de pierre, et encore, ils n'étaient pas entiers. [...] À l'intérieur, un mur de pierre aussi ancien que l'église tenait lieu d'iconostase. En un mot, elle ressemble à une grotte vide dans laquelle on vient célébrer la sainte liturgie [...]. Je demandai pourquoi les chrétiens ne la restaurent pas ou n'en construisent pas de nouvelle. On me répondit que les musulmans qui dominaient ici ne le permettraient pas, dût-on leur adresser des prières par milliers, avec des dons en or et en argent. Je fus rempli de compassion pour leur asservissement et je louai en pensée la fermeté de leur foi dans une telle adversité.[19]

Under Muslim rule, the Eastern Christian communities lived in the dire circumstances proper to minorities subjected to a discriminatory legal system and overwhelming fiscal regulations.[20] Arabic-speaking Christians were faced with various obstacles in their social and spiritual progress and the preservation of their cultural identity.

In the meantime, in Europe, a major revolution had occurred in mentalities as well as in social life: Johannes Gutenberg's printing press led to a rapid transition from a type of culture that was based on oral and manuscript transmission to one relying on the printed book.[21] According to Francis Robinson, "it is hardly surprising that Francis Bacon named printing, along with gunpowder and the

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the town. In such districts, the members of different groups often achieved a social and economic symbiosis which lasted for generations, and reduced to a minimum the tension of difference". See Albert Hourani, *A Vision of History. Near Eastern and Other Essays*, Beirut, 1961, p. 78.

19 Vassili Grigorovitch-Barski, *Pérégrinations (1723-1747)*, translated from Russian by Myriam Odaysky, Geneva, 2019, p. 190–191.

20 For a reminder of Volney's list of the "discriminatory measures that the *dhimmi* were traditionally subjected to in Muslim countries", see Raymond, *Arab Cities in the Ottoman Period*, p. 90–91.

21 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*, t. II, Cambridge, 1979, p. 459.

compass, as one of the three things that had changed 'the appearance and state of the whole world'."[22]

It is worth mentioning that Gutenberg's effort to produce a functional press with everything that was necessary to operate it was not foreign to financial and commercial concerns. His was a time when manuscript copyists were a guild, if not a caste indeed. As Harold A. Innis explains:

> The monopoly built up by guilds of copyists and others concerned with the making of manuscripts had its effects in high prices which in turn invited attempts to produce at lower costs. It was significant that these attempts were made in territory marginal to France in which copyists' guilds held a strong monopoly, and that they were concerned with the production of an imitation of manuscripts such as Bibles, i.e., Latin Vulgate, which commanded, partly as a result of size, very high prices. in 1470 it was estimated in Paris that a printed Bible cost about one-fifth that of a manuscript Bible. The size of the scriptures had an important effect in hastening the introduction of the parchment codex and in turn the introduction of printing. The feudal divisions of Germany provided an escape from the more rigid central control in France.[23]

For the Muslim populations of the Middle East, this new perspective in the communication of secular sciences and theological knowledge required a longer period of time, since in education and culture the spoken word had more credibility and reliability than the written one, which, moreover, could become distorted if recopied *ad infinitum*, version after version.[24] As Francis Robinson remarked: "The problem was that printing attacked the very heart of Islamic systems for the transmission of knowledge; it attacked what was understood to make knowledge trustworthy, what gave it value, what gave it authority."[25]

In the Middle East, adopting printing had even more serious effects than in Europe, where machines were more common. In 1997, Dagmar Glass notes that no study is available yet of "Arabic printing as a factor of change",[26] which would

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22 Francis Bacon, Aphorism 129 in *Novum Organum*, cited by Francis Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print", *Modern Asian Studies*, 27, 1993, 1, p. 231.

23 Harold A. Innis, *Empire and Communications*, Lanham and Boulder, 2007, p. 164.

24 For comments on this topic, classical and modern, see Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*, Toronto, 1962; George Steiner, *Language and Silence*, London, 1967; Stephan Füssel, *Gutenberg and the Impact of Printing*, translated from German by Douglas Martin, London and New York, 2005.

25 Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change", p. 236–237. The author examines the transmission of knowledge in the Islamic society from its beginnings to the 20th century, granting more space to the Koranic message.

26 Dagmar Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut Again. Eli Smith, the American Syria Mission and the Spread of Arabic Typography*, Beirut, 1998, p. 3.

clarify the fundamental role that printing played in the onset and progress of the Arab Renaissance (*Nahḍa*).[27] In the meantime, Hala Auji dedicated an excellent – even if brief – commentary on "Arabic Printing and the *naḥda*" in the introduction to her book published in 2016,[28] where she focused on the activities of the American press in Beirut in the 19th-century.

Any discussion about printing in Arabic type needs to proceed from the fact that in the 11th century the Turks adopted the Arabic script that was considered by many at the time, just as today, a sacred script, able to reflect in a form accessible to the faithful the words of God (*'Allāh*) as revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad and contained in the holy book of the Qur'ān.[29] A branch of this population founded a state entity with an exceptionally long lifespan, the Ottoman Empire (ca. 1299–1923).[30] The capacity to reproduce on a large scale the foundational texts of Islam – and other theological and spiritual works – created in Ottoman society a long-term discord that was officially resolved only in 1727, two and a half centuries after Gutenberg had developed the first printing press. Moreover, the history of Turkish book-printing went through two stages, relying on the alphabet that books were printed in: the Arabic alphabet from 1727 to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's reform, which went into effect on January 1, 1929, and, since that date – the Latin alphabet, in a version adapted to the phonetic system of Turkish.[31]

The need for access to the revolutionary technology of printing was one of the first reasons that led the leaders of Eastern Churches to head for the West, more

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27 A social and cultural revival movement born in the 1820's in the Levant (modern-day Syria and Lebanon), as an outcome of the increasingly frequent and eventful contacts of the local populations with the cultures of Western Europe. Protestant missions made a major contribution to its development: the English Church Missionary Society of London, the London Missionary Society, the American Presbyterians, etc. See Part 1: "What Is the Renaissance?", in El-Ariss (ed.), Edwards and Ziajka Stanton (assist. eds.), *The Arab Renaissance: A Bilingual Anthology of the* Nahda, p. 1–67.

28 Hala Auji, *Printing Arab Modernity. Book Culture and the American Press in Nineteenth-Century Beirut*, Leiden and Boston, 2016, p. 3–6.

29 Jacques Berque, "The Koranic Text: from Revelation to Compilation", in Georges N. Atiyeh (ed.), *The Book in the Islamic World. The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, Albany, NY, 1995, p. 17–29; Sinan Kuneralp, "Les livres et l'imprimerie à Istanbul au XVIII[e] siècle", in *Turquie: Livres d'hier, livres d'aujourd'hui*, texts collected by Paul Dumont, Strasbourg and Istanbul, 1992, p. 1.

30 The Empire was founded around 1299 by Osman I (1258–1326), chieftain of the Oghuz Turks. The word 'Ottoman' comes from this Sultan's Turkish name: عثمان بن أرطغرل, ʿOṯmān (with variants recorded in the European chronicles: Otman, Otoman) bin Ertuğrul.

31 Christoph K. Neumann, "Book and newspaper printing in Turkish, 18th–20th century", in Eva Hanebutt-Benz, Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution. A Cross-Cultural Encounter*, Westhofen, 2002, p. 227.

frequently starting in the beginning of the 16th century. Christians in present-day Syria and Lebanon endeavored to open printing workshops where they would publish Arabic books for the clergy altar servants and the public, irrespective of their confession: they were Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronites, and others. The inspiring words of the erudite Greek Catholic scholar Joseph Nasrallah, an expert in the history of the Christian Near East, reflect with clarity the spirit that drove these long-lasting efforts.

> L'introduction de la typographie a répondu au besoin d'un peuple de pouvoir chanter plus facilement les louanges de son Dieu, de renouveler les sources de ses aspirations religieuses et d'apprendre aisément les éléments des connaissances humaines. Une fois établie dans le pays, l'Imprimerie a facilité l'usage du Livre: elle l'a diffusé et par la même a été une source du Renouveau intellectuel. Cercle vicieux, circuit fermé! L'aurore de la renaissance au Liban appelle l'introduction de l'Imprimerie, et celle-ci devient un facteur puissant dans l'épanouissement de la renaissance.

It is worth noting that Nasrallah writes several words with a capital letter: *Imprimerie* ('printing'), *Livre* ('book'), and *Renouveau intellectuel* ('intellectual renewal').

Arabic printing was initiated in Eastern Europe and the Middle East with the joint work of Antim the Iberian, a great scholar and prodigious printer, future metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, with Athanasios III Dabbās, at the time metropolitan of Aleppo, in between two periods of patriarchal office. Two Greek and Arabic books were printed in 1701 (Snagov) and 1702 (Bucharest) at the request of Dabbās, this being the first step towards the accomplishment of an age-long aspiration of the upper clergy of the Church of Antioch: putting in the hands of the Arabic-speaking priests of their parishes ecclesiastical books in Arabic printed from versions that had been prepared or revised by great scholars of their churches, especially the deacon ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl and the bishop Meletios Karma.

The task of pursuing this project was assumed by Athanasios Dabbās, who received as a gift from the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, upon his departure from Bucharest in 1704, the printing implements and Arabic type created by Antim the Iberian. He resumed in Aleppo, at a press that he founded at the metropolitan residence, the work he had begun in Wallachia. Dabbās secured the help of the patriarch of the time, Cyril V, to whom he had relinquished the throne temporarily to avoid a division in the Church of Antioch, where the European schism had not occurred. After 1711, the year the Aleppo workshop stopped, for unclear reasons, part of the type and tools used in Dabbās's workshop were apparently transferred to the Greek Catholic Monastery of Saint John the Baptist (Mār Yūḥannā) in the village of Ḫinšāra, near the town of Ḍūr al-Šuwayr (Matn district, Mount Lebanon), mostly named 'the Ḫinšāra (or Khenchara) press'.

The next episode recorded in the history of Romanian – Arab relations through printing was the activity of the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch in Iași, when sojourning in Moldavia after 1735. Following the same path as his illustrious predecessor Athanasios Dabbās, Sylvester appealed after 1730 to the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia whose families originated in the Phanar quarter of Istanbul (Tk. *Fener*), especially Ioan and Constantin Mavrocordat.[32] The Syrian patriarch printed in Iași, at the Monastery of the Three Hierarchs, several books in Arabic, with Arabic type. As before in Wallachia, the printed books of the Moldavian capital were achieved with Romanian workmanship and mastery. After he received the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest as a metochion of the Patriarchate of Antioch, with all its assets, in 1746, the Patriarch Sylvester took residence there, pursuing the activities he had started in Iași by having Syrian disciples cut and cast Arabic type in their new monastic home in Bucharest.

Beside the Ḫinšāra press at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḍūr al-Šuwayr, the activity of the Arab printers in Iași and Bucharest contributed to the founding of the first Orthodox press of Lebanon, in Beirut, at the monastery of Saint George, under the supervision of Yūsuf Mark of Tripoli (Lebanon), one of the most diligent disciples of Patriarch Sylvester, who worked alongside the patriarch in Bucharest.[33] Transferred to Beirut in 1750, the Arabic type prepared at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest continued its adventure in the welcoming milieu of the Arabic-speaking Greek Orthodox. Thus, the Orthodox books printed there, several reprinted from previous editions of Aleppo, can be considered an offspring of the joint work of Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās half a century earlier, in 1701–1702. This connection between Iași, Bucharest, and Beirut, hypothetical but never verified, is documented by the recent access that I have had to the letters exchanged by the Patriarch Sylvester's secretary Mūsā Ṭrābulsī during the patriarch's journeys to the Romanian Principalities, which are preserved in a manuscript at the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate of Damascus. This is a big step towards a deeper understanding of the progress of printing in Syria and Lebanon and its historical ties with the Romanian presses.

32 Ioan N. Mavrocordat, prince of Moldavia (June 1743 – May 1747); Constantin Mavrocordat, his brother, prince of Wallachia (September 1730 – October 1730; October 1731 – April 1733; November 1735 – September 1741; July 1744 – April 1748) and Moldavia (April 1733 – November 1735; September 1741 – June 1743; April 1748 – August 1749).

33 On the literary works of Yūsuf Mark, see Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 148; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216.

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The present volume is the first in a series dedicated to presenting the outcomes of the research under way within the TYPARABIC project that I am conducting at the Institute for Southeast European Studies of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest. This project has received an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (ERC) for the period 2021–2026. The Core Team consists of seventeen researchers – myself included – whose work focuses on the export of printing expertise and technology from Eastern Europe, more precisely from Wallachia and Moldavia, to the Arabic-speaking communities of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. We are surveying a corpus of Arabic books produced by this transfer, with major consequences for the progress of modernity and the freedom fight in provinces where these presses were founded.

Having studied the Arabic books printed with help from Eastern Europe for more than two decades, I published preliminary lists and descriptions in several academic reviews, along with the history of these books and the salient scholars who contributed to their printing. Some of these articles were the result of conferences that I contributed to, on topics connected to the history of book-printing.[34] Noticing that there existed no complete and detailed record of the books

34 Ioana Feodorov, "The Romanian Contribution to Arabic Printing", in *Impact de l'imprimerie et rayonnement intellectuel des Pays Roumains*, Bucharest, 2009, p. 41–61; Ioana Feodorov, "Notes sur les livres et l'imprimerie chez Paul d'Alep, *Voyage du Patriarche Macaire III d'Antioche aux Pays Roumains, au 'Pays des Cosaques' et en Russie*", in *Actes du Symposium International "Le Livre. La Roumanie. L'Europe", Bibliothèque Métropolitaine de Bucarest, 4e. édition, 20–23 septembre 2011*, t. III, Bucharest, 2012, p. 200–209; Ioana Feodorov, "Tipărituri pentru ortodocșii arabi sub patronajul lui Constantin Brâncoveanu. Noi considerații", paper presented at the International Colloquium *Epoca lui Constantin Brâncoveanu în context sud-est european: Biserică, societate, geopolitică* at the 'Andrei Șaguna' Faculty of Theology, 'Lucian Blaga' University, Sibiu, June 12–13, 2014, published in *Epoca lui Constantin Brâncoveanu în context sud-est european: biserică, societate, geopolitică*, Sibiu, 2014, p. 251–272; Ioana Feodorov, "Beginnings of Arabic Printing in Ottoman Syria (1706–1711). The Rumanians' Part in Athanasius Dabbās's Achievements", paper presented at the International Conference of the ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies, The Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, July 15–17, 2013, published in *ARAM*, 25 (2013), 2016, 1 & 2, p. 231–260; Ioana Feodorov, *Primele cărți arabe tipărite la Beirut și legăturile lor cu tiparnițele românești*, in Costin Croitoru (ed.), *Miscellanea historica et archaeologica in honorem Professoris Ionel Cândea septuagenarii*, Brăila, 2019, p. 179–211. In *RESEE*, I published two articles on these topics in recent years: "New Data on the Early Arabic Printing in the Levant and Its Connections to the Romanian Presses", *RESEE*, 56, 2018, 1–4, p. 197–233, and "Recent Findings Regarding the Early Arabic Printing in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces", *RESEE*, 58, 2020, 1–4, p. 91–105. My latest contribution about printing in an academic journal is "The Arabic

that Athanasios Dabbās printed in Aleppo, I published a list that was practically the first record of the Aleppo workshop production.[35]

To draw up this preliminary catalogue, I consulted all the Arabic books printed in Snagov, Bucharest, and Aleppo that the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest[36] holds. I also had access to photocopies or sections from other books held in several European and US libraries, in Russia, Lebanon, and Syria. I have strived to correct, augment, and improve the information that was provided in the sources that I am discussing below. I collected and organized the scattered data that historians of Arabic (or, generally, Oriental) book-printing included in their catalogues since the onset of the 19th century.

In 2016, when the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided to celebrate nationwide the church printers and their rich harvest of ecclesiastical books, I authored a book in Romanian where the outcomes of my research were presented to a Romanian readership: *Tipar pentru creștinii arabi. Antim Ivireanul, Atanasie Dabbās și Silvestru al Antiohiei* (*Printing for the Arab Christians. Antim the Iberian, Athanasios Dabbās, and Sylvester of Antioch*).[37]

The research that I present in this book is focused on the 18th-century Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities and the Middle East. The developments of Arabic printing after 1800, and especially after 1900,[38] are not discussed here, unless marginally and in connection with the focus of my survey. The overview of the beginnings of printing with Arabic type in Western

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Book of the Divine Liturgies Printed in 1745 in Iași by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch", *Scrinium*, 2020, 16, p. 1–19.

35 Ioana Feodorov, *Texte arabe creștine tipărite cu ajutor din Țările Române în secolul al XVIII-lea – Repertoriu comentat / Christian Arabic texts printed with help from the Romanian Principalities in the 18th century – An annotated record*, "Istros", XX. *In honorem professoris Ionel Cândea*, Brăila, 2014, p. 651–729. I later published a French version of this record, with comments: "Livres arabes chrétiens imprimés par l'aide des Principautés Roumaines au début du XVIIIe siècle. Répertoire commenté", *Chronos*, 2016, 34, p. 7–49.

36 Below, B.A.R. Bucharest.

37 Ioana Feodorov, *Tipar pentru creștinii arabi. Antim Ivireanul, Atanasie Dabbās și Silvestru al Antiohiei*, foreword by HE Dr Casian Crăciun, Archbishop of the Lower Danube, introduction by Dr Doru Bădără, Brăila, 2016 (356 pp. of text and 43 pp. of illustrations).

38 Such as the Saint Paul Press of Ḥarīṣā (*Imprimerie Saint Paul*), the longest active printing press of Lebanon, endowed with a binding workshop soon after its foundation on May 8, 1910. Very soon, on June 1 of the same year, the first issue of the journal *Al-Masarra* was published. In 1947, when Joseph Nasrallah published his book *L'imprimerie au Liban* (Beirut, 1948), the press was thriving. See this work, p. 85, 88, 90, 96, 104, 110, 114 (with a record of the press sections and endowments on this last page). For a more recent and comprehensive source, see Ǧūrǧ Bālīkī al-Būlusī, "Al-Maṭbaʿa al-Būlusiyya wa-maǧallat 'Al-Masarra'. Al-Maktaba al-Būlusiyya. Miʾat ʿām fī ḫidmat al-kalima (1910–2010)", *Al-Masarra*, 96, 2010, 906, p. 892–970.

and Central Europe is only meant as a historical background and an inventory of issues that challenged the first printers of such material, not an in-depth study of this topic, which has been discussed in countless books and articles over the past two centuries.

Over the past decade, academic institutions and scholars who study the Christian Arabic culture, especially in the West, have turned their attention more often and with more interest to topics connected to printing. Since 2016, large-scale national research projects,[39] new books,[40] conferences,[41] and exhibitions[42] have complemented the previously published information, motivating me to add to and improve, in the present book, the outcomes and conclusions of my research. Moreover, disseminating the results of my studies in English will undeniably expand their outreach and allow for a larger academic readership to benefit from the information included here, in order to advance their own projects in the field of Arabic book-printing.[43]

39 Such as the Priority Program *TransOttomanica. Eastern European – Ottoman – Persian Mobility Dynamics* funded by the DFG (German Research Foundation), which started in 2017 and brings together, in its second phase (2021–2023), contributors from ten universities and research institutions in Germany, and the ANR French research program *Des Indes linguistiques. Réceptions européennes des langues extra-européennes, élaboration et circulations des savoirs linguistiques (XVI^{e}–XIX^{e} siècle)*. The outcomes of this project have produced academic books and articles that enrich the knowledge of printing history and intellectual communication, such as the collective work edited by Evelin Dierauff, Dennis Dierks, Barbara Henning et al., *Knowledge on the Move in a TransOttoman Perspective. Dynamics of Intellectual Exchange from the Fifteenth to the Early Twentieth Century*, Göttingen, 2021.

40 The latest being Aurélien Girard, Vassa Kontouma and Bernard Heyberger (eds.), *Livres et confessions chrétiennes orientales. Une histoire connectée entre l'Empire Ottoman, le monde slave et l'Occident (XVI^{e}–XVIII^{e} siècles)*, Turnhout, 2023.

41 On October 24–27, 2022, a 'Trilaterale Forschungskonferenzen' of the DFG focused on *Chrétiens orientaux et République des Lettres aux 16^{e}–18^{e} siècles: correspondances, voyages, controverses (III): Écritures saintes et dévotions*, with a couple of contributions mentioning printing in the Arabic language or type.

42 In Paris, BULAC organized in 2015, between June 15 and August 7, the exhibition TYPOGRAPHIAe ARABICAe. Open to a wide public, it proposed "une historie de la typographie arabe", showcasing their collection of Arabic printed books.

43 Hopefully, the 6-volume series of books resulting from the TYPARABIC project research (by 2026) will open new paths for the study of the "rôle joué par le livre dans la construction des cultures confessionnelles dans les Orients chrétiens des Temps modernes", as the Brepols online announcement states in connection with the forthcoming book *Livres et confessions chrétiennes orientales. Une histoire connectée entre l'Empire Ottoman, le monde slave et l'Occident (XVI^{e}–XVIII^{e} siècles)*.

I have found it appropriate to include the biographies of great figures who contributed to the transfer of the printing technology from Eastern Europe to the Middle East and details of the historical circumstances which allowed or aided this transfer. A few legends and improbable explanations given in previously published catalogues and bibliographies have been clarified through the access to Arabic sources, something few authors have previously provided. Additionally, the historical context that I have outlined in my work presented here is a canvas on which the topics assumed by the TYPARABIC project team members, each according to their own competencies, will be revealed.

This book contains, in the closing chapter, a preliminary record of the books that I have studied over a twenty-years period, for the most part prior to the launching of the TYPARABIC project. The outcomes of the teamwork conducted within the European project in progress in Bucharest are programmed to be published in a descriptive record authored by most of the team members together, based on a larger corpus of Arabic printed books.

The reader will learn from this book how much the Christian Arabic-speaking scholars of the 18th century aspired to print and widely distribute books in their communities. It was a time when the benefits of printing were widely acknowledged, even if this came later than in the West. This intellectual awakening and painstaking struggle for levelling the cultural balance with Western European cultures, assisted by educated partners in Eastern Europe, deserves our consideration, at least as a sign of the timeless attraction of the printed page, a vehicle of civilization. The TYPARABIC project and the innovative research that it generates are meant to celebrate the endeavors of a small number of visionary clerics and scholars who saw in the technology of printing a chance for social and spiritual progress for the Christian communities striving to survive in an unfavorable environment. Being able to print and to disseminate knowledge, religious or secular, was an aspiration of all the enlightened minds of the Middle East, often in contact with Europeans for whom these activities had long been common practice. Institutional and private education suffer in the absence of the printed book – a concept that is valid even in our times, when the printed page tends to be sent into oblivion by other knowledge-dissemination media.

Finally, in considering the field of printing for the Arabic-speaking Christians, we need to bear in mind the victims of the appalling earthquake of February 6, 2023, which turned into ruins entire cities and villages across Syria and Turkey. For years to come, 'Antakya' (Antioch) and 'Aleppo' will bring to mind the devastation that this terrible event meant for the lives of uncountable people. To preserve the memory of those who built civilizations past by shedding light on their efforts to conserve and advance the culture of their peoples and their churches becomes, today, even more necessary. While keeping in mind that this book is not

only about liturgical texts printed in Arabic, I wish to evoke a remarkable passage in Jean Hani's book *La Divine Liturgie* (Paris, 1981), where he was explaining his approach to the Divine Liturgy as particular to the various Eastern Churches.

> Ce sera aussi pour nous une occasion de faire connaitre ces liturgies, tellement ignorées en Occident, et de rendre hommage, bien modestement, à nos chrétientés orientales, chrétientés vénérables, les plus anciennes, remontant à l'âge apostolique, et chrétientés trop souvent martyres au cours de l'histoire, et aujourd'hui même, tragiquement dans l'indifférence officielle totale des grandes nations et l'indifférence presque totale des chrétiens d'Occident.[44]

As all human endeavor, this book is surely not devoid of imperfections. May all who read it, enthusiasts or critics, find something useful inside. To echo the elegant motto that Pierre Deschamps placed on the title page of his famous *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne à l'usage du libraire et de l'amateur de livres* (Paris, 1870): "*Indulgentia dignus est labor arduus*."[45] For perfection, I count on those who will continue my quest for a clearer picture of the early development of Arabic printing in the Middle East.

I dedicate my research to the memory of the patriarchs of the Church of Antioch in the first half of the 18th century, who witnessed – and had to deal with – the dramatic escalation of disharmony in this Apostolic Church and endeavored to keep it together: Athanasios Dabbās and Sylvester especially, but also the many bishops, priests, monks, and lay scholars whose work was a long-fought battle for Christian togetherness. This work is a tribute to the promoters of Arabic printing who relentlessly worked towards the accomplishment of a visionary project: that of placing in the hands of Arabic-speaking Christians in the Ottoman provinces books printed closer to home and in a spirit nearer to their traditional theological culture. May they be gratefully remembered, from Snagov and Bucharest to Iași, and from Aleppo to Ḫinšāra and Beirut.

44 Jean Hani, *La Divine Liturgie*, Paris, 1981, p. 14.

45 Un bibliophile [Pierre Deschamps], *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne à l'usage du libraire et de l'amateur de livres*, Paris, 1870 (reprinted Berlin, 1922), p. 1.

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Before embarking on a journey across Eastern Europe and the Middle East, to document and explain their connections through printing in Arabic, I feel bound to express my gratitude to those who helped me on my path, sharing with me their knowledge and their time.

My father, Virgil Cândea (d. 2008), collected in his enormous library essential sources for the academic work that I have embarked upon after graduating from the Arabic section of the University of Bucharest. The research paths that he opened to me, his encouragement and advice are with me always.

The late Dr Doru Bădără (d. 2022), an expert in early printing and book art, clarified for me many aspects of the manufacture of typographic implements and printing and directed me to helpful sources in this specialized field.

Archimandrite Polycarp Chițulescu, director of the Library of the Holy Synod in Bucharest, shared with me of his extensive knowledge of the early printed books in Romania, Greek, and Slavonic.

Professor Andrei Pippidi read the entire book and helped me apply the necessary corrections to the historical data.

Dr Geoffrey Roper read the section on printing in Western Europe and suggested to me indispensable improvements and sources that significantly enriched my book.

Most of my colleagues on the TYPARABIC project team assisted me with information, sources, and guidance, according to their expertise (Oana Iacubovschi, Yulia Petrova, Fr Charbel Nassif, Nicholas Bishara, David Neagu, Orlin Sabev, Hasan Çolak, Fr Rami Wakim). Several team members had a preview of the entire book and helped me with advice and suggestions on additional sources. My thanks go especially to Vera Tchentsova, Mihai Țipău and Radu Dipratu, who were there for me all along the way, checking information connected to the Slavic, Byzantine, and Ottoman civilizations.

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I am immensely grateful to my family – my husband Valentin, my son Tudor, my daughter Cristina, and their spouses – for putting up with my long work hours and recurrent absence from their midst.

1 Preliminaries

1.1 Printing in Arabic before 1700: the Western European Presses

As a commodity, paper reached Europe in the 12th century through the Arab merchants who traversed North Africa.[1] Like parchment, this early paper was very fragile, as it was made with plant-based resins that gave it little sturdiness. Over the following two centuries, manufacturing technologies and paper workshops appeared in Europe, where animal-based glues and more evolved tools were used in paper production. The gradual replacement of wool with flax brought greater strength to the final product and allowed paper to last longer. One of the centers of paper manufacture was Genoa, where many printing presses were then set up, owing to the availability of paper.

As a marking technique, stamping was developed quite early in human history. On the Mediterranean coasts, the process of applying engraved brass plates to tanned animal skins, to obtain ornamental motifs, was transferred to making covers for manuscript codices.[2] In the 14th century, Europe saw the coming of imprinted cloths from East Asia, made by pressing colored inks onto the textiles with wood or metal tools.[3] Towards the middle of the 14th century, Middle Eastern and subsequently European printing technology had reached the phase of xylographs or block prints: wooden plates engraved with sacred words, biblical scenes, images of saints, or brief moralizing texts, were inked, sometimes in color, and then pressed on to paper or pieces of cloth.[4] Block-prints are also preserved that comprise texts in Arabic script, not dated but, in some cases, datable approximately to the 11th or even the 10th century by archeological or radio-carbon

1 For the history of paper production and the import from the Far East (China) to Europe via Transoxiana and Baghdad, see Beatrice Gruendler, *The Rise of the Arabic Book*, Cambridge, MA and London, 2020, p. 103–104.

2 In ancient Egypt, the imprinting procedure generated the art of the tattoo, also using wooden matrices, some preserved to this day in museums around the world.

3 On the emerging knowledge of the 'typographic principle' in the West as early as the 13th century, because of the commercial connections between Eastern Asia and Europe, see Olivier Deloignon, "L'invention d'imprimer par poinçons et caractères", in Nathalie Coilly and Caroline Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, Paris, 2023, p. 23ff.

4 For a thorough study on this topic, see Sabine Mertens et al., *Blockbücher des Mittelalters: Bilderfolgen als Lektüre*, Mainz, 1991. See also the examples of pre-Gutenberg imprinted objects – coins, insignia, textiles, woodblocks, and copper plates – in Coilly and Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, p. 34–45.

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methods. They include amulets, charms, and brief prayers.[5] As late as the 18th century, hand-carved woodblocks were used for printing brief strings of script in the Ottoman world.[6] This process, first used in China was in some ways the ancestor of the art of printing. William M. Ivins notes that:

> This exact repetition of pictorial statements has had incalculable effects upon knowledge and thought, upon sciences and technology, of every kind. It is hardly too much to say that since the invention of writing there has been no more important invention than that of the exactly repeatable pictorial statement.[7]

Beginning in the 13th century, engravers and goldsmiths employed metal dies with a carved relief point, using various shapes. The earliest case of movable type printing is attested in Korea, where a Buddhist text was printed with movable cast-metal type in 1377. This is the *Jikji* (or *Jikji Simche Yojeol*), containing the essential teachings of Zen Buddhism, printed in two volumes at the Heungdeoksa Temple of Cheongju.[8]

This technique was first used in European printing in 1445–1455, in Mainz, by the goldsmith Johannes Gutenberg (assisted by Johann Fust). After printing a few brief texts,[9] Gutenberg developed the technology of movable type printing to

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5 See Richard W. Bulliet, "Medieval Arabic *ṬARSH*: A Forgotten Chapter in the History of Printing", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1987, 107, p. 418–438.

6 A German Antiquariat recently presented for sale a hand-carved Arabic-script wood-printing block, described in their online catalog as: "Woodblock in Ottoman Turkish for a Hebrew publication of the Song of Solomon, probably produced in the Ottoman regions of the Levant for a rural printing press. A rare survival of a printing tool, and an important witness to cross-cultural printing for minority audiences in the Ottoman world. Includes a print of the text reading *Safr Nishd al-Nishad li-Suleyman wa'ighal ba-l'Abraniyat Sir Hashirim*, printed on a piece of 18th-century paper pasted to a cutting from a Croatian printed book (*Pasha Duhovna*, on Spirituality and the Passover)", 165 x 105 mm.

7 William M. Ivins, *Prints and Visual Communication*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1953, p. 2–3.

8 The first volume is missing. Bibliothèque nationale de France holds the second volume, sized 24.5 x 17 cm, with 39 folios (Imprimé Coréen 109: *Päk un hoa sañ č'orok pulčo č'ikč'i simč'e yočōl*). In 2001, the *Jikji* was added to UNESCO's *Memory of the World Register*. In the online presentation of the *Silk Roads Programme* developed by UNESCO, the contribution of Eastern Asian early printing to the development of typographic technology in Europe is thus evoked: "There are some indications that the development of the printing press in Europe may have been influenced by various sporadic accounts of movable type technology carried back to the region by returning merchants and missionaries from China" (Did You Know? The Invention and Transfusion of Printing Technology in East Asia and its Implications for Knowledge Transfer | Silk Roads Programme [unesco.org]).

9 The first printed texts – a few letters of absolution, a papal bull directed against the Ottomans, the Muslim calendar, etc. – were requested by the Holy See with the intention of promoting the

produce his famous *Biblia latina*, an in-folio of 643 pages containing the text of the Vulgate, in two parts (bound in four volumes).[10]

At first, printers imitated in their work the appearance of the manuscript page to enable the acceptance of the new means of knowledge dissemination and obtain a larger readership, which meant securing more revenue from the sales.[11] The general purpose was to recover their investment in printing books, with a profit. Miniature painters, whose trade was originally disregarded by printers, were again sought after, as they were able to decorate the pages that came off the presses with initials and floral letters.[12]

Initially, Gutenberg's invention was met by the European churches with a certain mistrust and hostility. After some hesitation, printing was adopted in France, Italy, Spain, and eventually England, spreading rapidly after 1470. In Rome, the papal authorities accepted the new technology after two decades of consultations among the upper clergy.

In the era of incunabula, presses were also opened in Central and Southeastern Europe, mostly with tools brought from Italy. In Montenegro, at the Monastery of Cetinje, the first printing press of the Balkans was active in 1493–1496, while in Kraków the Catholic goldsmith Schweipolt Fiol printed in Slavonic beginning in 1491. For the Ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople (as for the one of Moscow, later),[13] printing decrees addressed to the clergy and faithful as flyers was soon

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policies of the Latin Church. The "earliest precisely datable piece of European printing that we know" is a 31-line Indulgence, "a vellum broadside of roughly 550 words or 3,500 pieces of type", printed in Gutenberg's press in Mainz on October 22, 1454, which ended up in Erfurt; cf. Paul Needham, "Copy-Specifics in the Printing Shop", in Bettina Wagner and Marcia Reed (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects. Proceedings of the Conference Organized by the IFLA Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, Munich, 19–21 August 2009*, Berlin and New York, 2010, p. 11.

10 For a description of the technology devised by Gutenberg and the various typographic items that he manufactured, see Yann Sordet, "Les laboratoires de l'innovation typographique", in Coilly and Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, p. 73ff.

11 Celeste Gianni and Michele Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawāʿī*: protagonisti, vicende ed ipotesi attorno al primo libro arabo stampato con caratteri mobile", *Culture del Testo e del Documento*, 13, 2012, 38, p. 152.

12 Camille Aboussouan, "*À Grenade et à Gênes, au XVI*e siècle, les premiers pas de l'imprimerie arabe", in Camille Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, Paris, 1982, p. 112.

13 The Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo witnessed this situation in 1657, while residing at the court of Moscow, as reported on f. 256r of his *Journal* preserved in MS Arabe 6016 at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. See p. 297, *Book XIV*, *Ch. VIII*, in F. C. Belfour, *The Travels of Macarius*, t. II, London, 1836.

considered more efficient than distributing manuscript version bearing the patriarchal seal.[14]

In Venice, several presses were active at the end of the 15th century, mostly printing in Latin and Greek type.[15] As for the 'exotic' alphabets, in 1511, the monk Hakob printed in the workshop of the Monastery of San Lazzaro degli Armeni[16] the first Armenian-type book, *The Holy Book of Friday* (*Anown groc's ē owrbat'agirk'*). This is a collection of spiritual texts that includes passages from the Gospel, the *Life of Saint Hrip'simē*, one of the first saints in the Armenian Church, a prayer against natural disasters, another for the health of suffering people, a treatise on snakes' bites, incantations, etc.[17] Hakob then printed, in 1512–1513, four other books: *Book of the Horoscope and Astronomy*, *Calendar for the Interpretation of Dreams*, a *Book of the Divine Liturgies*, and the *Book of Hymns*, a collection of religious poems. In the incunabula era, 139 books were also printed in Italy in Hebrew type from the 1470s on: Old Testament editions and comments, rabbinic literature, ritual texts, books on philosophy, medicine, mathematics, etc.

The delay in adopting printing was also explained by the efficiency and speed of production that the large centers of religious books copying had achieved. Triantaphyllos E. Sklavenitis notes that in the 15th century all the churches of Greece owned copies of the most needed liturgical texts, while in monasteries manuscripts more than a century old were still being used. They preserve valuable marginal notes that confirm the continuity of the scribal profession. The author also notes that a manuscript copy was easier to obtain:

14 Cf. Triantaphyllos E. Sclavenitis, "Méfiance vis-a-vis du livre imprimé et emploi parallèle du manuscrit", *Études balkaniques*, 21, 1985, 1, p. 128.

15 Geōrgios S. Ploumidēs, *To venetikon typografeion tou Dēmitriou kai tou Panou Theodosiou (1755–1824)*, Athens, 1969 (reprinted, Athens, 2019).

16 The press, whose (still undeciphered) Latin-type logo was 'D.I.Z.A.', was located on the island of San Lazzaro near Venice, inhabited since 1717 by the Mekhitarist Brethren, members of an independent Armenian monastic community which follows the order of the Eastern Catholic Church. The island was conceded to the order by the governors of Venice because there was a ban on such monastic orders residing inside the city canal network. The monk Mekhitar, founder of the order (also known as 'the Comforter', 1676–1749), fled the Ottomans, from Istanbul to Modone in the Peloponnesus and then to Venice, where the Armenian community had been flourishing since the 13th century. Incidentally, Modone is one of the cities cited as a possible source for Arabic type at the beginning of the 18th century, as I shall discuss later.

17 See Simonetta Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia. Testi sacri ebraici, cristiani, islamici dal Quattrocento al Settecento*, Padua, 2000, p. 146, n. 69; John A. Lane, *The Diaspora of Armenian Printing 1512-2012: Amsterdam and Yerevan*, Amsterdam, 2012, p. 22–27.

> Le livre manuscrit, qu' il fût ancien, usagé, qu'il fût nouvelle commande passée au copiste de l'époque, n'était pas moins cher que l'imprimé: on l'acquérait cependant sans qu'il fût besoin de fonctionnement de marché, suivant des modes absolument adaptés aux conditions de l'économie rurale et d'artisanat domestique et en aucune manière commerciale et monétaire.[18]

Moreover, during the first centuries of Ottoman rule, the ecclesiastical courts in the lands inhabited by Greeks based their rulings on manuscript copies of the *Legal Codices* (*Nomocanons*). Once the printed ones became available, it happened sometimes in territories under Venetian rule that the accused contested the validity of manuscript codices, claiming that only the printed ones could be invoked in an act of justice.[19]

In France, the Catholic clergy refused at first to acknowledge the benefits of the new technology of text reproduction, proclaiming that the mass distribution of the Bible would lead to it becoming a secular book. The copyists of religious texts, whose *raison d'être* as a craft and a trade was endangered, protested vehemently.[20] Despite all the dissatisfaction, King Louis XI (1461–1483) grasped the advantages of the printing press for disseminating written culture across his kingdom and decided to protect the German printer Johann Fust, who had taken over Gutenberg's workshop and transferred it to Paris in 1466.[21] Soon, the Church grew aware of the benefits of printing and became an active and generous supporter of the new craft: a great many presses were founded in Western Europe with the financial help of clerical authorities.[22]

In Europe, the spread of printing was directly connected to the economic situation in the various countries where it was first adopted. Seen as a means of pro-

18 Sclavenitis, "Méfiance vis-à-vis du livre imprimé et emploi parallèle du manuscrit", p. 118.

19 Ibid., p. 119, n. 6, citing Aristeides G. Dimopoulos, *He dikē diazygiou kata tēn vyzantinēn periodon*, Athens, 1964, p. 37 and *Annex*, p. 85–86.

20 On the criticism against printing expressed by French professional copyists and intellectuals, see Frédéric Barbier, "La Renaissance critique l'imprimerie", in Coilly and Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, p. 223–226.

21 Fust, who had worked at Mainz in Germany, created the first press mark in the world, which he applied, as a woodcut letter, in the Psalter that he printed together with Peter Schöffer in 1457, and again in the 1462 Bible. The mark was meant to obstruct the pirating of printed books and confirm the quality of the materials printed at the press of Fust & Schöffer. See Mayumi Ikeda, "The First Experiments in Book Decoration at the Fust-Schöffer Press", in Wagner and Reed (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*, p. 39–49.

22 One of the earliest contributions on the beginnings of printing in France, still worth reading, is Auguste Bernard, *Notice historique sur l'imprimerie nationale*, Paris, 1848. Among his other works are: *De l'origine des débuts de l'imprimerie en Europe*, 2 vols., Paris, 1853, and *Histoire de l'Imprimerie Royale du Louvre*, Paris, 1867.

moting culture and civilization, it was also beneficial for merchants and bankers. Considered an essential element of modernity and progress towards a capitalist society, printing was rapidly adopted in Western and Central European countries, where social and political circumstances were quite different from those in the Ottoman-ruled East. One of the first printers to make a profit from his production was Josse Bade, who personally sold all his books after 1517, which allowed him to secure a printing privilege as soon as 1520.[23] His editorial program, almost entirely in Latin, included theological treatises, grammar books and dictionaries, as well as classical and humanist literature.

If the first typefaces created by Johannes Gutenberg and other German printers were mostly based on a semi-cursive Gothic script, the first non-Latin script used in printing was the Greek alphabet. In 1465, Peter Schöffer, one of Gutenberg's associates, created the first Greek type set. According to Victor Scholderer, the first attempt was "very crude, some of his letters conveying but a distant suggestion of their originals, and others being approximations made up of Roman sorts."[24]

Three decades later, the scholar and printer Aldo Manuzio (Aldus Pius Manutius, 1449–1515), founder of the Aldine press and a long tradition of Greek printing, cast Greek type of the utmost elegance and artistry.[25] His attempt in 1499 to insert Arabic type text when printing the book of Francesco Colonna *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (*The Dream of Polyphyly*) was not very successful. According to Geoffrey Roper, "when the same master-typographer came to print Arabic words, in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of 1499, he did not, as we have seen, raise sights above crude and inaccurate woodcuts".[26]

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23 See Annie Parent-Charon, "La pratique des privilèges chez Josse Bade (1510–1535), in *Bibliologia 21, Printers and Readers in the Sixteenth Century*, Turnhout, 2005, especially p. 15–22.

24 Victor Scholderer, *Greek Printing Types 1465–1927*, London, 1927, p. 1, cited by Geoffrey Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, p. 140–141.

25 On the Bible that he printed in Greek (The Old Testament and the Psalms), see the record in Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 120, no. 20. On Greek printing in Venice, see Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des Grecs aux XV^e^ et XVI^e^ siècles*, t. I, Paris, 1885; Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des Grecs au dix-septième siècle*, t. I, Paris, 1894; Evry Layton, *The Sixteenth Century Greek Book. Printers and Publishers for the Greek World*, Venice, 1994; Marino Zorzi, "Il libro religioso nella storia della stampa veneziana", in Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 17–28.

26 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 141. See also Giorgio Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", in Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 54–57, and the description of this book on p. 164–165, no. 104.

The first illustrated incunabula were printed in Bamberg beginning in 1461, by Albrecht Pfister, who probably knew Gutenberg and his work. Pfister's illustrated Bibles initiated a tradition of the illustrated book in the Southern German provinces (Augsburg, Ulm, and Nüremberg in the first place).[27]

The great physician and philosopher Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) had the privilege of being the first Arab author whose books were printed in Western Europe, although not in Arabic. Book V of his most famous work, the *Canon of Medicine (alQanūn fī alṭibb)*, translated into Latin in the 12th century by Gerard of Cremona, was printed in Latin in Fano near Venice in 1473 (completed on September 12, according to the closing page).

The first page in Arabic type, an alphabet, was produced using a woodcut in 1486, when the Dominican monk Martin Roth printed in Mainz, on the press of Erhard Reuwich (ca. 1455 – ca. 1490), the memoirs of Bernard von Breydenbach, *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*, the first ever printed and illustrated travel journal.[28] Reuwich inserted in the book a table named *Sarraceni lingua et littera utuntur Arabica hic inferius subimpressa*, which presented the Arabic letters in their isolated form, their pronunciation in Latin script, and examples of their usage in a word.[29] However, this page was not printed with movable type.

In Spain, after the *Reconquista* of 1492, the humanist scholar Pedro de Alcalà of Granada received the order to print in Arabic the books that were required by Catholic missionaries sent to the new diocese of Andalusia to bring the king's subjects back to the Catholic Church after the long period of Muslim rule. In 1505, de Alcalà printed two Arabic-type books at Granada. They contained basic elements of Arabic, an Arabic-Spanish lexicon, Catholic prayers in Arabic, the service of the Mass, and instructions concerning confession, in Arabic and Spanish. In the foreword, the editor mentions that the Arabic language of the manual is the one spoken by the people, while in some places the Classical Arabic variant (the "high register") is also provided.

These first attempts at printing in Arabic set the pace for the production of Arabic books in the 16th–18th centuries. Remarking that "the great majority of the

27 Coilly and Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, p. 93–95.

28 The title, as given in the work itself, is *Travel and Pilgrimage beyond the Sea, to the Holy Sepulcher in the Holy City of Jerusalem*. A complete PDF version is freely downloadable here: https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2016rosen0148/?st=gallery (a Library of Congress item). See also the copy in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York accessible here: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/338300.

29 See Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", and the description of the book in Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 168–169, no. 112; Gianni and Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawā'ī*, p. 132.

texts were intended for the use of Arab Christians, both Orthodox and Catholic", Geoffrey Roper divided the output of the European presses in this period into three main categories, thus:

> *Firstly*, doctrinal and evangelical works written and published to instruct local clergy and laymen and to influence them in favour of the "true" religion, whether that be Catholicism, Protestantism or Orthodoxy; *secondly*, the foundation texts of all branches of Christianity, that is the Bible, or parts thereof; and *thirdly*, books for them to use in the practice of their religion, primarily liturgical books for use in church worship. These last two categories were much the most important in the period under consideration – 16th to 18th centuries – because they were more widely seen and read.[30]

Several printing presses were active at the end of the 15th century on the Western coast of the Adriatic Sea, at Fano, Rimini, Ancona, etc. The Venetian family Grigorio de Forli, which in 1480 owned a workshop in Venice, was also present in Fano in the first decade of the following century. Beginning in 1484, printing was done in this city in Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Italian. Of the Oriental scripts, Hebrew was the first to be addressed by printers: the first Hebrew books were printed in Rome ca. 1469–1473, followed by more Hebrew printing achieved in Spain and Portugal by printers of the Jewish communities there.[31]

Italy was the first country where printers, encouraged by the Roman Church, endeavored to solve the complex issues of creating a functional Arabic press. After the Fifth Lateran Council, convened by Pope Julius II in 1512, when one of the points discussed was the situation of the Eastern Churches, the idea arose to assist the efforts of the missionaries sent to the Eastern Mediterranean lands with books printed in Arabic for the Levantine Christians.

Thus, the first book printed with Arabic movable type was produced in Venice (mentioning 'Fano' as the press)[32] and completed on September 12, 1514:

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30 Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe in the 16th–18th centuries", in *Lucrările Simpozionului Internațional* Cartea. România. Europa*, ediția a II-a, 20–24 septembrie 2009*, Bucharest, 2010, p. 175.

31 See Coilly and Vrand (eds.), *Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg, 1450–1520*, p. 88, where only Greek and Hebrew are discussed in the brief section on "Typographies non latines".

32 Vercellin convincingly argues that this book was not printed in Fano. See Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", p. 54, and his description of the book in the same volume, on p. 165, no. 105. Commenting on the copy of this book at in the Thysiana library (Scaliger Institute) in Leiden, Arnoud Vrolijk (curator of Oriental Manuscripts and Rare Books with the Leiden University Library) states that "it is quite likely that the book was actually printed in Venice itself and that the name of Fano, a town within the jurisdiction of the pope, was chosen to avoid problems with the Venetian authorities"; see A. Vrolijk, "The Oldest Printed

Kitāb ṣalāt al-sawāʿī, a Book of the Hours, or Horologion, indisputably the most necessary book for church services.[33] Thirteen copies of this book are known to survive in collections around the world.[34] This is a small-size volume of 120 pp., with text in black and red ink, 5 x 11 cm, 12 lines per page, and vowels inserted to help with reading. The text of the first run was entirely printed in Arabic. Three years later, a front page with the title *Diurnale Graecorum Arabum* was added to the remaining printed blocks of paper, as well as a Latin foreword containing a dedication from the printer to Pope Leo X. This version included the indication 'Venice 1517'.[35] At the end of the book, in the shape of a colophon on the back of the last page, a phrase states: "If anyone finds a mistake, let him make it right, and God will forgive his sins by the intercession of our Lord [Jesus Christ], Amen." The design of the book is "generally regarded as clumsy and ill-balanced."[36] The Arabic types, in various sizes, are uneven and unstylish, and the diacritics are often placed in the wrong position.[37] The presence of three forms of type in the volume raises the question: were there steel punches made for three sets of types, or just for one, while the two other type sets were made with woodcut text matrices? Also named 'block printing', this process of placing woodcut characters or word pieces in the composing stick was a forerunner of mobile Arabic-type printing used between 1486 and 1505 in the production of several books.[38] Beginning with the title page, all sections start with the Christian *basmala*: "In the name of

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Book in Arabic: the 1514 Melkite Horologion in the Scaliger Collection", *Omslag. Bulletin van de Universiteitsbibliothek Leiden en het Scaliger Institut*, 3, 2009, p. 4.

33 Giovanni Galbiati, "La prima stampa in arabo", in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, t. 6, Vatican City, 1946, p. 409–413; Miroslav Krek, "The Enigma of the First Arabic Book Printed from Movable Type", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 38, 1979, 3, p. 203–212. See Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. XV, for more classical sources on this book. For the most detailed exploration of this book, see Gianni and Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawāʿī*", p. 131–185. A facsimile edition is under way in Lebanon, supported by the Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarchate and prefaced by Fr Charbel Nassif.

34 Gianni and Tagliabracci have located thirteen copies of this book and two other that they declared untraceable. See ibid., p. 133, n. 9. Fr Charbel Nassif has located eighteen.

35 Gianni and Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawāʿī*", p. 139–141.

36 Vrolijk, "The Oldest Printed Book in Arabic: the 1514 Melkite Horologion in the Scaliger Collection", p. 4.

37 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 131; Gianni and Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawāʿī*", p. 154.

38 Ibid., p. 129–131. For its illustrations, see Marie-Geneviève Guesdon and Annie Vernay-Nouri (eds.), *L'Art du livre arabe. Du manuscrit au livre d'artiste*, Paris, 2001, cat. no. 124, p. 164; Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, p. 480–481 and illustration, cat. no. *66.

God the Living, the Eternal".[39] When reprinted, it was indicated that the book was meant to be sold to the Arab Christians of the Levant.

This book was not commissioned by Pope Leo X:[40] it had been prepared before his election to the Pontifical See. Mentioned at the end of the book, the printer was Gregorio de' Gregorii (1450? – post 1529), offspring of an ancient Venetian family. He asks forgiveness for the mistakes that might have crept into the book unintentionally. De' Gregorii also worked in Venice, in the family printing press, and manufactured his own steel punches and woodcuts. The reason he preferred to print this Horologion in Fano, when he had his own printing workshop in Venice, remains unknown.

Recent research has been dedicated to answering a few unanswered questions.[41] Still, the typographer who manufactured the Arabic type for this book remains unknown. It is not clear why this particular text was chosen for printing, as it was useful especially to Byzantine-rite Christians. One explanation pointed to the pressure of the Greek colonies on the Western coast of the Adriatic Sea, established there after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, which were trying to preserve the age-old ties between the Greek Orthodox Churches of the East after Islam had settled in the former capital of the Byzantine Empire.[42] Ever since the movable-type technology was invented, Greek books were printed in Venice, and later this production spread to many European cities: Paris, Vienna,[43] Leipzig, Trieste, Moscow, Istanbul, Corfu, etc. Quite often, Greek books were of a commercial nature and their authors were dissatisfied, protesting against the lacunae, mistakes, and even deletion of sections of their works simply for

39 The Christian Arabic *basmala* is the abbreviated version of an expression placed at the beginning of a text where God's name is invoked. This expression, with numerous variants, was in use from the 8th century by Arabic-speaking Christian authors living in a Muslim milieu to assert their attachment to the One and Only God, at a time when Muslim theologians accused the Christians of polytheism for worshiping the Holy Trinity. See details in Stéphane Robin (Albo Cicade), "La 'Basmala' coranique comme formule chrétienne: un usage méconnu", 2015, accessible online at https://www.academia.edu.

40 Born Giovanni de Medici, the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Leo X was elected pope in March 1513.

41 Especially Gianni and Tagliabracci in their essay "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawā'ī*: protagonisti, vicende ed ipotesi attorno al primo libro arabo stampato con caratteri mobile".

42 Josée Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident (XVI^e^, XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles)*, Paris, 1984, p. 20.

43 For books printed in Vienna in Oriental languages and type (Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Turkish), see Geoffrey Roper, "The Habsburg Empire and printing in languages of the Ottoman Empire, 16th–19th Centuries", in *Actes du Symposium International* Le Livre. La Roumanie. L'Europe, *4^e^ edition, 20 – 23 Septembre 2011*, t. III, Bucharest, 2012, p. 330–345.

economic or marketing reasons.[44] The fact that Arabic printing for the Eastern Christians was not available as early as it was for the Greeks was tied to the absence, in Central and Western Europe, of Arabic-speaking communities capable of covering the costs for the opening of an Arabic-language press.[45]

Another query of the book historians involves the fate of the printing tools and typographic material used there. No one knows what happened to the metal punches, the type, and the woodcut boards, since no other book was printed in Arabic in Fano. Having become a rare item, this book was described by Christian F. von Schnurrer in his catalogue,[46] a source for many subsequent historians who repeated his opinions.[47]

The second book printed with movable Arabic types was a polyglot Psalter produced in 1516 in Genoa at the press of Pietro Paolo Porro, where an Arabic version was included for the first time: *Psalterium, Hebraeum, Graecum, Arabicum & Chaldaeum* […] / *Mazāmīr ʿIbrānī Yūnānī ʿArabī wa-Qaṣdānī*. Described by Josée Balagna as "ecumenical",[48] this Psalter was the only polyglot edition printed in Italy during the 16th century. Psalms are printed in Syriac, Greek, Arabic, and Hebrew, with translations and comments in Latin. Four different alphabets were used. The Arabic text is presented on 246 pp. in two columns, 41 lines each, decorated with floral initials. The Arabic characters show an influence of the *maġribī* script, perhaps because Genoa had strong commercial relations with North Africa. However, the book is of a low quality both in printing technique and in the language of the text. The type that was used for this book never resurfaced. The printer, the Dominican monk Agostino Giustiniani (1470–1536), asserts in his memoirs that he printed the Psalms in 2,000 copies on regular paper and 50 copies on vellum (as gifts for Christian and Muslim princes), but only a quarter of them sold, which dashed his dream of continuing with printing a polyglot Bible.

44 See Sclavenitis, "Méfiance vis-à-vis du livre imprimé et emploi parallèle du manuscrit", p. 69, referring to Pachomios Roussanos, Kaisários Dapontes, Athanasios of Paros (Athanasios Parios), etc.

45 Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 485.

46 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, Halle, 1811, p. 231–234. Christian Friedrich von Schnurrer (1742–1822), a theologian, philologist, and Oriental-books bibliographer, was chancellor of the University of Tübingen.

47 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites (Alexandrie, Antioche, Jérusalem) depuis le schisme monophysite du sixième siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, t. III. *Les Institutions. Liturgie, hiérarchie, statistique, organisation, listes épiscopales*, Rome and Paris, fasc. I-II, 1909–1911, p. 103; Graf, *GCAL* I, p. 636; Philip Hitti, "The First Book Printed in Arabic", *The Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 4, 1942, 1, p. 5–9.

48 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 23.

Giustiniani dedicated the Psalter to Pope Leo X, who had recently appointed him to the see of Nebbio.

In 1524, Giovanni Antonio Tagliente (ca. 1465 – ca. 1528) printed in Venice an Arabic alphabet in his work *Lo presente libro insegna la vera arte de lo excellente scrivere de diverse varie sorti di litere*... Another master engraver interested in the Arabic type in the early days was Geoffroy Tory (ca. 1480–1533), printer of the King of France François I. In his book *Le Champ fleury ou l'Art et science de la vraie proportion des lettres attiques ou antiques dites romaines, selon le corps et le visage humain*, printed in 1529, he included a table named *Lettres Persiennes, Arabiques, Aphricaines, Turques, & Tartariennes*, where an alphabet of the Arabic language is given in a somewhat inelegant type.[49]

The first academic book that included Arabic text is Robert Wakefield's *Oratio de laudibus & utilitate trium linguarum Arabicae Chaldaicae & Hebraicae*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde (d. 1535) in London in 1527 or 1528 (though the title page indicates 1524). The Arabic characters, printed with woodblocks, have a rudimentary appearance.[50]

The first Arabic Qur'ān was printed in Venice, in the workshop of the brothers Paganino and Alessandro Paganini, between August 9, 1537, and August 9, 1538 (464 pp.). Preparation for its printing required a whole year.[51]

Other Arabic-text books could not benefit from adequate printing implements due to the absence of skilled engravers. Thus, in 1538, Guillaume Postel's *Arabic Grammar* was printed in Paris: *Linguarum duodecim characteribus differentium alphabetum introductio* [...]. Born in 1510, Postel became an erudite, an expert in Greek, Syriac, Hebrew, and Arabic, professor at the Royal College of Paris, a traveler in the East, and a major figure of Arabic culture and Oriental mysticism.[52] As no craftsman capable of cutting punches for Arabic type was found,

49 Geoffroy Tory, *Champfleury*, *Livre III*, Paris, 1526–1529, f. XXVIb. See the splendidly illustrated catalogue of the latest exhibition of this great printer's works at Musée National de la Renaissance, Paris, April 6 – July 4, 2011: *Geoffroy Tory, imprimeur de François I^er^, graphiste avant la lettre*. The earliest book dedicated to Tory remains a most useful resource: Auguste Bernard, *Geofroy Tory, peintre et graveur, premier imprimeur royal, réformateur de l'orthographe et de la typographie sous François I^er^*, Paris, 1857.

50 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 133.

51 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 367. This book was discussed at length in Angela Nuovo, "A Lost Arabic Koran Rediscovered", *The Library*, Sixth Series, 1990, 12, p. 273–292, and id., "La scoperta del Corano arabo, ventisei anni dopo: un riesame", *Nuovi Annali della Scuola Speciale per Archivisti e Bibliotecari*, 2013, 27, p. 9–22. See also Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi"p. 28–33, and its description in Pelusi (ed.), *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 162, no. 100.

52 He is also known for a version of the New Testament in Syriac that he worked on in 1537–1550.

the Arabic text included in the volume as *Alphabetum arabicum vel punicum* was printed with woodcuts ('block printing'), with modest aesthetic outcomes.[53] For the *Grammatica arabica*, the Arabic language treatise that Postel published in Paris in 1539–1543, he succeeded in securing from unknown sources (perhaps from Constantinople, where he had traveled) an Arabic type font that looked quite rudimentary and was never used again.[54]

After 1550, Christophe Plantin established a flourishing printing press in Antwerp, where he was supported by the church and the monarch. He completed a Polyglot Bible in 1658[55] and became most famous for combining, for the first time, typography and engraving in producing illustrated scientific, especially botanical, works. In 1583, he moved to Leiden, where the University had become a Protestant center of learning under the patronage of William of Orange. His contribution to the expansion and evolution of printing in the Netherlands was decisive. Soon, a type-founding industry developed there, capable of producing a great variety of types.[56]

In German lands, in the second half of the 16th century, two brief texts were printed in Arabic using the woodblock technique: an Arabic alphabet in 1582, in Neustadt, and the Arabic translation of Saint Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians* in 1583, in Heidelberg. The translator, Ruthger Spey, deploring the ignorance of the Muslims of Asia and Africa who had no access to Christ's teachings, wished to print for them a Protestant version of the New Testament.[57]

He later contributed to the printing of the first Syriac Gospel edited by the Syriac Orthodox priest Moses of Mardin. See Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 24–27; J. F. Coakley, "Printing in Syriac, 1539–1985", in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, especially p. 96; R. J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism, Aramaic and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation. The First Printing of the Syriac New Testament*, Leiden, 2007.

53 See the description of this book in *Le civiltà del Libro e la stampa a Venezia*, p. 168, no. 111.

54 For the cosmopolitan environment in which Postel worked in Paris, see Elizabeth Armstrong, "Paris Printers in the Sixteenth Century: An International Society?", in Christian Coppens (ed.), *Bibliologia 21. Printers and Readers in the Sixteenth Century, including the proceedings from the colloquium organized by the Centre for European Culture, 9 June 2000*, Brussels and Turnhout, 2005, p. 3–13.

55 Printed in 1568–1573 in eight volumes, the 'Plantin Polyglot' was also known as the 'Antwerp Polyglot', the *Biblia Regia*, or 'the King's Bible', in reference to King Phillip II of Spain, for whom it was produced as proof of Christoper Plantin's Catholic convictions. Thirteen printing presses were required for this work to be completed.

56 See Innis, *Empire and Communications*, p. 170.

57 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 32; Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 175–176.

In the same period, a renewed interest in printing liturgical books for the Arabic-speaking Christians was visible in Rome, but only *Catholic* texts intended for the faithful of churches that followed the Latin rite.[58] If in Central and Eastern Europe the Counter-Reformation was flourishing especially in the Polish lands, in the Middle East this battle was waged in particular in the present-day territories of Lebanon and Syria.[59]

In the press of the Roman College of the Jesuit Order, *Tipografia del Collegio Romano dei Gesuiti*, opened in 1556, a book was published in 1566 under the supervision of Pope Pius IV and Fr Giovani Bruno, a small Arabic catechism, with Arabic types, comprising 33 pp.: *Fidei orthodoxae brevis et explicata confessio / Iʿtiqād al-ʾamāna al-urṯūḏūksiyya* [...].[60] The title is significant for the attitude towards the order of the Eastern Churches that were not united with Rome: *Confession of the Orthodox Faith Decreed by the Church of Rome, Inventory and Rejection of the Errors of the Oriental Churches, the Way to Attain Communion with the Catholic Truth, and Submission to Pontifical Rome*.[61] The catechism had been translated into Arabic, at the request of Pope Pius IV, by the Jesuit monk Giambattista Eliano, an erudite scholar of Oriental studies who was born in Egypt of Jewish parents. In addition to Egyptian Arabic, he also mastered the art of printing, which he had learned in Germany, at Isny.[62] Eliano procured the necessary Arabic type of a simple, but elegant line, nicer than any other used before. After two editions of the Arabic catechism, the type was also used for two other books, at a time when no other European press possessed such printing implements. The third edition was printed in Rome by master Francesco Zannetti and it included illustrations. The last edition, printed between 1570 and 1578, with used Arabic type, is preserved in a few copies.

At the Jesuits' printing press there was also printed before 1583 an anonymous work containing an anti-Muslim polemic text, the first of its kind, composed in the style of a spiritual dialogue (*muṣāḥaba rūḥaniyya*) between two Muslim scholars upon their return from a pilgrimage to Mecca. The pamphlet-like

58 The reasons and means used in printing Arabic books for the Catholics of the Middle East and those who inclined towards the Union with Rome are detailed in the correspondence published by Sami Kuri, S. J., in *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 1–455 (Section Two).

59 Gérald Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 265. See also Cirillo Korolevskij, "L'Uniatisme. Définition. Causes. Effets. Étendue. Dangers. Remèdes", *Irénikon – Collection*, 1927, 5–6, p. 129–190.

60 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 134.

61 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 236–237; Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 119.

62 See Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 44–46, for Eliano's activity in Lebanon, and his biography on p. 458.

tone and absence of correct information on Islam suggest a Western author with little knowledge of Islamic theology and the controversies between Christian and Muslim theologians. This work enjoyed vivid attention from Western scholars: it was translated into English and published by William Bedwell in 1616 and then reedited by Gilbert Gaulmin during the reign of Louis XIV, supplemented with many Latin and Arabic notes, including excerpts from the Qur'ān.[63]

Ever since he occupied the Holy See in 1572, Pope Gregory XIII tried to open a press that would print in Oriental type – Arabic, Armenian, Syriac –, as well as in Cyrillic.[64] He was supported in his intentions by several great literati and clergymen: Ferdinand de Medici, Leonardo Abel, cardinal Giulio Antonio, cardinal Santoro,[65] and the Jesuit monk Giambattista Eliano. The Vatican wished firstly to secure Syriac type to print the books required for the missionary activity in the territories of present-day Lebanon.

In 1578, Robert Granjon (1513? – 1590) arrived in Rome.[66] He had worked in several cities where he became famous: Lyon, Antwerp, Frankfurt, and Paris.[67] He had contributed to the printing of Christophe Plantin's Polyglot Bible in Antwerp by cutting the Syriac type. Later, he would make possible the activity of the *Stamperia Medicea Orientale* (ca. 1590–1614). Here is how Vervliet describes his artistic talent:

> If, in the history of roman typographic characters, Garamont's represent the sober, static, immutable beauty of the Renaissance, Granjon's for their part display the exuberance, ostentation, magnificent assurance and technical perfection of the Baroque. [...] Granjon's virtuosity revitalized gothic characters, left moribund since the beginning of the sixteenth century by the italianizing wave which swept Europe. [...]. Finally, as a cutter of exotic types, he not only made possible the *Polyglot* of Platin (1568–1572) and the *Stamperia Medicea orientale* (ca. 1590–1614). If one surveys the typography of the sixteenth century, these two

63 See one of the rare comments on this little-known printed book in Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 31–32.

64 Hendrik D. L. Vervliet, *Cyrilllic & Oriental Typography in Rome at the End of the Sixteenth Century: An Inquiry into the Later Work of Robert Granjon (1578–90)*, Berkeley, 1981, preface and ill. 24.

65 Ibid., p. 17.

66 For his biography, see ibid., p. 5–11.

67 See "Granjon, Robert", in Jean-Dominique Mellot, Élisabeth Queval, Nathalie Aguirre et al., *Répertoire d'imprimeurs/libraires (vers 1470 – vers 1830)*, Paris, 2019, p. 670–671.

exploits constitute, along with the *Thesaurus linguæ latinæ* of Robert Estienne (1531),[68] the highest expression of European humanistic erudition.[69]

Hired by the Pope to manufacture Syriac and Arabic type, Granjon worked in Rome in 1578–1590, producing five sets of Arabic type of various sizes, perfectly readable and elegant, the main ones being *Arabica Grande* and *Arabica Piccolina*.[70] Granjon's first Arabic type dates to 1580 and the intention for creating it was, presumably, to replace that of the Jesuits.[71] These sets of type became famous and precious, under the name of 'Granjon', so much so that Pope Gregory XIII ordered that they, and the cut punches that were used in manufacturing them, never leave Rome.[72] Cardinal Bandini named Granjon *il migliore intagliatore che fosse mai stato*, "the best engraver that ever lived".[73] With the *Garshuni* (*karšūnī*)[74] types that Granjon manufactured, the first Syriac book was printed in Rome under the supervision of Domenico Basa: a catechism, probably dating to the end of May 1580.[75] The same year, the Catholic *Confession of the Faith* composed by Giambattista Eliano, already printed in Arabic and Latin in 1566, was published with the same Granjon type. Leaving for his mission to the lands of Lebanon in 1578 together with Toma Raggio[76] and Mario Amato,[77] Fr Eliano brought with

68 Robert Estienne directed a famous press in Paris, where he printed in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French from 1528 to 1560. In 1528, he produced the first Latin Bible in France that secured a privilege. See Max Engammare, "Robert Estienne et sa première Bible latine de 1528. Du privilège et des index de l'éditeur", in Edith Karagiannis-Mazeaud (ed.), *Bibliologia 44. Strasbourg, ville de l'imprimerie. L'édition* princeps *aux XVe et XVie siècles (textes et images)*, Turnhout, 2017, p. 141–159.

69 Vervliet, *Cyrilllic & Oriental Typography in Rome*, p. 1–2.

70 Ibid., p. 23–31.

71 Ibid., p. 29.

72 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 34.

73 Ibid., p. 37–38.

74 About this type of script, see Joseph Moukarzel, "Le garshuni. Remarques sur son histoire et son évolution", in Johannes Den Heijer, Andrea Schmidt and Tamara Pataridze (eds.), *Scripts Beyond Borders. A Survey of Allographic Traditions in the Euro-Mediterranean World*, Leuven, 2014, p. 107–137.

75 Vervliet, *Cyrilllic & Oriental Typography in Rome*, p. 1–2, 17ff.; Moukarzel, "Le garshuni. Remarques sur son histoire et son évolution", p. 131–132. The series of books printed in *Garshuni* type continued with the Gregorian Calendar of 1583 and a book of Maronite prayers in 1584. The first liturgical text in Syriac, the service for the dead according to the Maronite rite, was printed there in 1585. For the first books printed in *Garshuni* type, see Joseph Moukarzel, "Maronite Garshuni Texts: On Their Evolution, Characteristics, and Function", *Hugoye*, 17, 2014, 2, p. 237–262.

76 For his biography, see Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 463–464.

77 This was the first Jesuit delegation fifty-five years after Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder and first Superior General of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit Order), made his pilgrimage to

him, as a gift for the local upper clergy, this catechism in, most probably, two type versions – *Garshuni* and Arabic. He presented to the participants to the 1580 Maronite Synod of Qannūbīn, in Lebanon, the version printed in *Garshuni*.[78]

In 1585, the first Arabic secular text was printed: a *Cosmography* edited by Robert Granjon and Domenico Basa, *Kitāb al-bustān fī ʿağā'ib al-'arḍ wa-l-buldān* (*Book of the Garden of Wonders of the World and Countries*) by Salāmīš ibn al-Kunduġdī al-Ṣāliḥ (early 16th century). The book was revised by Gimbattista Raimondi.[79] After disseminating Christians texts, the printers evidently wished to print a text from a secular Muslim source.[80] The book was meant to be sold in the Middle East, which would have hopefully turned the Italian presses into a profitable venture.

The types that Granjon had created were used on a large scale in the second greatest Arabic printing press, Typographia Medicea Linguarum Externarum or Stamperia Medicea Orientale, founded in 1584, with the Pope's encouragement, by Cardinal Ferdinand de Medici, future Duke of Tuscany. The first book to be printed there was, naturally, the Gospel. Under the supervision of Giambattista Raimondi, the Typographia Medicea was the first press that systematically produced many books with Arabic type, on various topics, with the aim of selling them across the Ottoman Empire.

The Medici press printed the New Testament in Arabic in 1,500 copies, with an Arabic and Latin title.[81] The print date is confusing: 1590 on the first page, 1591 on the last one. A second edition was made in 1595. In the meantime, a bilingual version of the Gospel was printed in 1591 in 3,500 copies, with the Latin translation placed under the lines of Arabic text. Edited by Raimondi, these volumes were printed with the *Arabica Grande* type created by Robert Granjon. They include 149 splendid engravings printed from woodcuts by Antonio Tempesta (1555–1630), many copied from Albrecht Dürer's works.[82] Josée Balagna expressed her opinion that these books did not sell well, as she discovered copies

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Jerusalem. He asserted that Christian monks had a duty to reside in the Holy Land and serve the Church there. See Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 61.

78 Vervliet, *Cyrilllic & Oriental Typography in Rome*, p. 17; Joseph Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaque-garchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610. Enjeux historiques et présentation du livre", *MUSJ*, 2010–2011, 63, p. 516.

79 This is a truly rare book: Balagna notes that she only knew of three copies, in Venice, Florence, and Oxford; cf. Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 35.

80 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 135, 138.

81 Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 176.

82 See Richard S. Field, *Antonio Tempesta's Blocks and Woodcuts for the Medicean 1591 Arabic Gospels*, Paris and Chicago: Les Enluminures, 2011.

where the forewords had been composed much later (1619, 1774) and inserted at the beginning of volumes placed on the market again, in an attempt to get rid of the stocks.[83] As for the circulation span of this book, Jules Leroy found that a richly illuminated Gospel dated to the period of the Gondar rule over Ethiopia replicated "step by step" (*cette illustration suit pas à pas*) the engravings of the 1591 Gospel printed at the Medici press.[84] The illustrated Gospel preserved on an island on Lake Tana holds more than 50 illustrations that depict Jesus Christ's entire life among humankind. The way the Medici Gospel reached Ethiopia remains unknown. According to Leroy, the Ethiopian artist followed the model of the illustration in the Gospel of Rome, but reinterpreted it in his own style, according to local artistic tastes. "Five or six copies" of the Ethiopian illustrated Gospel were known to exist when Leroy wrote about it.

Several scientific books were then printed in Arabic type at the Medici press, which were exported to the East. First, in 1592, two grammars of the Arabic language, a handbook of syntax, and a map collection, a planisphere, *Roger's Book* (*Kitāb Rūğārī*), composed by Roger II, the Norman king of Sicily, and enriched with geographical stories composed by the famous traveler ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad al-Idrīsī. Second, in 1593, Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine* (*Kitāb al-qānūn fī al-ṭibb*), in three volumes and 1,700 copies. Then, in 1594, Euclid's manual *The Elements of Geometry* (*Elementorum geometricorum libri tredecim*), translated from Greek into Arabic in Bagdad in the middle of the 13th century by the Persian mathematician and astrologer Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, was printed in 3,000 copies.[85] All these books were revised and edited by Yaʿqūb bin Hilāl, or Jacob Luna (b. 1568), one of the early graduates from the Maronite College in Rome, who worked in the Medici printing press starting 1589.[86]

To secure the good prospects of their business, the Medici press published in 1594 the decree issued by Sultan Murad III (1574–1595) to grant the Italian merchants Antonio and Orazio Bandini the right to import into the Ottoman Empire books printed in 'Arabic, Persian, and Turkish type'.[87] The text was printed in the Turkish language, in "Turkish" script (i.e., Arabic), and was placed

83 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 36.

84 Jules Leroy, *L'Éthiopie. Archéologie et culture*, Paris, 1973, p. 241.

85 See the description of these books in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 246ff., and Sara Fani and Margherita Farina (eds.), *Le vie delle lettere: la Tipografia Medicea tra Roma e l'Oriente*, Florence, 2012, passim.

86 Pr. Pierre Raphael, *Le Rôle du Collège Maronite Romain dans l'Orientalisme aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, Beirut, 1950; Nasser Gemayel, "Les imprimeries libanaises de Rome", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 191–192.

87 Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", p. 20.

at the end of the Arabic edition of Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*, one of the most requested items on the Eastern book markets. European printers effectively considered this decree as an import license for books printed in Arabic type, the so-called *Orientalia*, in territories under Ottoman rule. Commerce in goods not approved by the Sublime Porte within the empire could prove dangerous for several reasons. According to Marie-Renée Morin, head of the Acquisitions Department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, who wrote the foreword to Josée Balagna's book,

> Du temps, de l'argent, mais aussi le goût du risque sont indispensables, tout du moins jusqu'au milieu du XVII[e] siècle. Nos savants affrontent, pour acquérir et répandre leurs connaissances, naufrages, prisons, voleurs de grands chemins, pirates, traîtres.[88]

After 1595, the Typographia Medicea was only active intermittently until 1614, when it closed down.[89] Although the Medicean printed books were not as successful as expected on the Middle Eastern markets,[90] they remained much-appreciated in the West, where they were sought after by collectors of rare books, even those not proficient in the Arabic language.[91]

The punches manufactured by Robert Granjon for the three sets of Arabic types are preserved since 1811 in the Types Department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. They include 283 metal punches for the *Arabe de petit Canon* set used in printing Euclid's work, 356 of the *Grand Arabe* type used for the Gospel, and 353 of the *Petit Arabe* type used in printing Avicenna's work.

Pope Gregory XIII founded three colleges in Rome: the first, for baptized Jews, in 1577, the second, for Greek studies, in 1582, and the third, for the Maronites of Mount Lebanon, by the Papal Bull *Humana sic ferunt* issued on July 5, 1584. The Maronite Church was the only Eastern Church to have maintained its attachment to the Holy See ever since their Patriarch Mūsā al-ʿAkkārī lead it, early in

88 Marie-Renée Morin, "Préface", in Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 9.

89 In the note on *Maṭbaʿa* in *EI-2*, the authors suggest that the bankruptcy of this press was due to a lack of marketing skills of the manager, Giambattista Raimondi. See also A. Tinto, *La Tipografia Medicea orientale*, Lucca, 1987, p. 121.

90 Titus Nemeth presented this failure as one of the reasons for a later adoption of printing in the Ottoman Empire: "[...] Ottoman authorities, as well as potential local entrepreneurs, would have seen the commercial failure of European Arabic typography, making it an improbable role model to follow. If its products had no market in the region, why would one adopt it?"; cf. Titus Nemeth, "Overlooked: The Role of Craft in the Adoption of Typography in the Muslim Middle East", in Scott Reese (ed.), *Manuscript and Print in the Islamic Tradition*, Berlin and Boston, 2022, p. 27.

91 On the various aspects of the 'profitability' of Arabic printed books in the West and the East, see Sabev, *Waiting for Müteferrika*, p. 38 and 72.

the 16th century.[92] A Maronite community of scholars soon congregated in Rome, large enough to secure the necessary assistance for the Pope's translation and printing projects.[93] These strong ties allowed the Latin Church to send missionaries to Mount Lebanon starting with the second half of the 16th century. Back in Rome, the Jesuit fathers Giambattista Eliano and Girolamo Dandini brought with them manuscripts of the Arabic Horologion, attempting to obtain a unified text that would have been printed and distributed to the Maronite churches of present-day Lebanon and Syria. They had collected from the Maronite monasteries old copies that they found flawed by mistakes and heresies as compared to the Latin canonical text, and especially the Vulgate.[94]

Having occupied the Pontifical throne in 1585, Pope Sixt V founded the Vatican press in 1587, aiming to pursue the missionary activities of his predecessor. Between 1592 and 1594, a Book of the Divine Liturgies was printed there, which resulted from the "revision" of several tens of Arabic manuscripts and one written in *Garshuni* script, all collected by Fr Girolamo Dandini from the Ottoman provinces. The Medici press was waiting to print this book after the revision was completed. Controversies erupted as to the conformity of the Arabic text with those adopted by the Roman Catholic Church. To print the book, the intervention of a protector of the Maronites, Cardinal Jacques Davy du Perron, was deemed necessary. He even wrote a preface in which he upheld the theological correctness of the text.

After the book was distributed in the East, Maronites expressed their discontent as to the interventions of the editors in Rome, after they noticed that the printed version often strayed from the manuscript copies that had been known and used in the Maronite Church for several centuries. Nevertheless, the book started to be used after many persuasive efforts by Girolamo Dandini, who

92 See Sam Kennerley, *Rome and the Maronites in the Renaissance and Reformation. The Formation of Religious Identity in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, London and New York, 2022, especially p. 24–56.

93 On the colleges opened in Rome for Levantine students and their activities after graduating, see Gemayel, "Les imprimeries libanaises de Rome", p. 190–192; Bernard Heyberger, "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 10–15.

94 On Fr Eliano's attempts, in 1579–1582, to secure a unitary Arabic version of the Bible based on a revision according to the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew texts, but necessarily observing the Latin doctrine, so he could print it in the Propaganda Fide press of Rome, see Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 122–124. The manuscript of the best version that he had obtained in Lebanon, which still contained inconsistencies with the Vulgate, was presented to the Maronite College of Rome and is now in the collections of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

had been sent by the Holy See to the Middle East to follow in the footsteps of Giambattista Eliano.

After 1585, a Dutch printer of Leiden, Frans von Ravelingen (Franciscus Raphelengius the Elder, 1539–1597) entered the relay. He was an expert in Oriental studies who mastered Greek, Latin, Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, Persian, and Arabic. His first 'Oriental' work was a table of the Arabic alphabet printed in 1595, *Specimen characterum arabicorum*, accompanied by a sample of its usage in printing the Psalm of David dedicated to God's mercy: *Irḥam-nī yā Allāh ka-ʿaẓīm raḥmati-kā…* ("Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy…").[95] This was just a show of the sort of Arabic type that he would use in printing books at the University of Leiden. Founded in 1575, this establishment would be foremost in European printing between 1600 and 1625. The press where this alphabet was printed belonged to Christophe Plantin of Antwerp (1520–1589), who had brought it from Leiden in 1583. Raphelengius, who was Plantin's son-in-law and took over the press in 1585, was already cutting punches for Arabic type in 1591.[96]

As far as Arabic printing is concerned, the 17th century opened with a German master, Peter Kirsten, born in 1577 in Breslau, a Polish city since the 10th century (present-day Wroclaw), one of the Habsburg family's domains at the time. On October 6, 1608, Kirsten secured from the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II the privilege to print.[97] He thereupon printed the same year, and dedicated to the emperor, the first part of a *Grammatices arabicae* (*Liber I*) containing the orthography and prosody of Arabic, preceded by a brief description of this 'language of civilization'. The book ends in a sample of the Arabic type and an excerpt of the *Gospel according to John* in Latin and Arabic, a Psalm, and *al-Fātiḥa*, the first *ṣūra* of the Qur'ān. In 1609, Kirsten further improved his type and printed a *Schema characterum arabicorum* (*Table of Arabic Signs*) where, alongside the Arabic consonants, vowels, and additional orthographic signs, he placed stylized flowers and other ornamental elements copied from Arabic manuscripts. The punches were manufactured by Peter von Selow and Peter Kirsten, copying the model of Granjon. With the resulting type, considered at the time among the most elegant in Europe, Kirsten printed in 1609 the *Second Book of the Canon of Medicine* by Avicenna, with the Arabic text, a Latin translation, and comments, followed in 1610 by two other volumes of the *Arabic Grammar*. Persuaded that Arabic was

95 Psalm 51: 1.

96 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 43; Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 142ff.

97 On the system of privileges for printing in the early history of the press, see Elisabeth Armstrong, *Before Copyright. The French Book-Privilege System, 1498–1526*, Cambridge, 1990.

a sacred Semitic language capable of helping people grasp the harmony of creation, Kirsten printed in 1611 several books of the New Testament in Arabic and Latin, with comments.[98] The chancellor Axel Oxenstiern, counsellor to King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden, convinced him to move to Prussia. Kirsten later moved to the court of Queen Christina. Thus, his printing implements reached the collections of the Academy of Uppsala and were never used again. In Uppsala, another famous private press was founded later, in 1686, by Olof Rudbeck Sr., the rector of the university of this city. Known as the *Typographia Rudbeckiana*, it published scientific works that were well received in academic circles.[99]

In the meantime, a new master of Arabic printing was in the making: François Savary, Seigneur de Brèves, Marquis de Maulévrier, Baron de Semur et Artois, universally known as François Savary de Brèves.[100] He travelled to Istanbul for the first time in 1585 and, having found the city interesting, was appointed ambassador of France to the Sublime Porte in 1593. He remained there until 1605, promoting the policies of King Henri IV ("Le bon roi Henri"), who aimed to support the Christian communities of the Middle East without disturbing the political relations between France and the Ottoman court, especially as they were endangered by the refusal of the court of Spain to collaborate with the Muslims in any way. Due to the activity of his diplomatic envoys, Henry IV was able to obtain a renewal of the capitulations granted by Sultan Ahmed I (1603–1617), which was printed by de Brèves.[101]

After his mission in Istanbul was completed, de Brèves first travelled to Jerusalem, where he became acquainted with the local Christian communities, then to Alexandria and Memphis in Egypt, and further on to Tripoli in Libya and Algiers. His Levantine travels took him far and wide in the lands inhabited by Arabic-speaking Christians: wishing to see the world-famous cedar forests of Lebanon, he reached Qannūbīn, in the Holy Valley of Qādīšā,[102] where he made

98 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 52.

99 On the printers of Uppsala, see Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne*, cols. 1286–1287.

100 See Alastair Hamilton, "François Savary de Brèves", in *CMR 9*, p. 415–422.

101 *Relations des voyages de Monsieur de Brèves, tant en Grèce, Terre-Saincte et Ægypte, qu'aux Royaumes de Tunis & Arger. Ensemble, un Traicté faict l'an 1604 entre le Roy Henry le Grand & l'Empereur des Turcs et Trois Discours dudit Sieur*, Paris, 1628. In an earlier speech before the French court, Savary de Brèves underlined the benefits of this treaty, which had generated an uproar: *Discours sur l'alliance qu'a le Roy, avec le Grand Seigneur, et de l'utilité qu'elle apporte à la Chrestienté*, Paris, [c. 1615]; for a slightly different version see MS Carpentras, Bibliothèque Inguimbertine, 1777; cf. Hamilton, "François Savary de Brèves", p. 422.

102 The Qādīšā, 'valley of holiness', or 'of the saints', is situated in Lebanon, in the district

the acquaintance of Maronite monks residing in monasteries and hermitages[103] and noted their attachment to the Latin Church.[104]

Back in Paris in 1607, he was sent to Rome after one year, as ambassador of the French court. De Brèves spent twenty-two years in the East and printing in Arabic was only one of the many skills that he mastered when back in Paris. While in Istanbul, he collected more than a hundred Oriental manuscripts, including a *Qāmūs*, an Arabic dictionary in two volumes. His connections there generated the story that he ordered local craftsmen to create Arabic type based on the Arabic script of Ottoman manuscripts.[105] The more credible theory is that de Brèves obtained them while ambassador of France in Rome, after 1607, an opinion held by Gérald Duverdier, a librarian at the Collège de France and expert in Oriental printing.[106]

The source of the Arabic type first used by de Brèves could also have something to do with a character who accompanied him to Rome in 1608, a Muslim man from Buda who is only known as Huseyn. This man spoke Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Latin, German, and Hungarian. In Paris, while working in de Brèves's press, he learned French, and in Rome he would very quickly become familiar with Italian, revealing a real talent for languages.

Undeniably, the press that came to be known as the Typographia Savariana of Rome was the dearest project of Savary de Brèves. Between 1608 and the end of 1614, while he resided in Rome, the Medici press prepared a Polyglot Bible in which an Arabic version was supposed to be included. In 1613, Étienne Paulin

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of Bšarre, also known as Ǧibbat Bšarrī or Bšarāy. It consists of two low plain areas where the monasteries of Qozhaya and Qannūbīn are located, along with other monastic dwellings. The Qādisā River springs at an altitude of 2,000 meters in the traditionally Christian region of the Cedars, in a location covered by snow all year round, and flows into the Mediterranean near the city of Tripoli.

103 Among these, the Cave of Saint Marina was so much venerated by the Maronite patriarchs, and their flock, that they decided to place the patriarchal necropolis there. See Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 57, and Guita G. Hourani, "The *Vita* of Saint Marina in the Maronite Tradition", in Sr. Clémence Hélou (ed.), *Sainte Marina, Moniale déguisée en habit de moine dans la tradition maronite*, Kaslik, 2013, p. 28–39.

104 Gérald Duverdier, "Du livre religieux à l'orientalisme. Ǧibrā'īl aṣ-Ṣaḥyūnī et François Savary de Brèves", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 159.

105 This information came from Vitré, cf. Gérald Duverdier, "De la recherche à l'étude des manuscrits", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 211 (cat. nr. 79). See also Kuneralp, "Les livres et l'imprimerie à Istanbul au XVIII[e] siècle", p. 2.

106 Duverdier, "Du livre religieux à l'orientalisme", p. 159–160; Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 144–145. See also Gérald Duverdier, "Savary de Brèves et İbrahim Müteferrika: deux drogmans culturels à l'origine de l'imprimerie turque", *Bulletin du Bibliophile*, 3, 1987, p. 322–359.

printed at the Typographia Savariana an Arabic catechism, a translation of *De Doctrina Christiana*, ordered by the Pope Paul V for the benefit of the Middle Eastern Christians. Two sets of type were used for this book, which had never been seen before. The author of the original Latin book, Cardinal Roberto Bellarmine (1542–1621), supported papal primacy and the legitimacy of the pope's authority over all Catholic kings. The Arabic translation was made by Victorius Scialac Accurensis (Šalaq al-ʿĀqūrī) and Gabriel Sionita (Ǧibrāʾīl al-Ṣaḥyūnī),[107] students of the Maronite College, who had come to Rome from Mount Lebanon. Printed in two versions, one in Arabic (with vowels) and Latin, the other only in Arabic (without vowels), the book was meant to assist the work of the Catholic missionaries in the Levant. A large part of the print run was sent to the French consul in Egypt, with whom de Brèves had held discussions while in Alexandria. The Vatican, therefore, intended to attract the Copts towards the Latin Church, not to preach to the Muslims.

Pope Paul V, who in 1610 had added the study of Arabic to the curriculum of the Pontifical College, requested the printing of an Arabic language manual. This was printed only in 1620, as *Institutiones linguae arabicae*, authored by Fr Francesco Martelotti, based on Qur'ānic excerpts and pre-Islamic poems, with carefully placed vowels.

Back in Paris in 1614, de Brèves had in mind to open a college for Oriental languages – Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Syriac – where he would also set up a press for these languages. This would be used for printing scientific books, handbooks, dictionaries, and secular literature. He brought to Paris both the Arabic printing tools and the Maronites with whom he had worked in Rome: Gabriel Sionita, Victor Scialac, and John Hesronita.[108] He was also accompanied to Paris by Huseyn of Buda, who was going to teach Turkish and Persian, and his master printer in Rome, Stefano Paolino. His hope, which he would abandon around 1620, was to print in Paris the Polyglot Bible that the Medici press was supposed to print in Rome. Clearly, that was a long-held dream of Western European Oriental scholars.

After Savary de Brèves left Rome, the Maronite College produced at their own press bilingual books from 1620 to 1625. Their books had a clear purpose – to be used by the students of the college in Rome, not to be sent to Lebanon.[109]

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107 See Joseph Moukarzel, "Gabriel Sionita", in *CMR 9*, p. 722–742.

108 See Joseph Moukarzel, "John Hesronita", in *CMR 9*, p. 689–694.

109 Wahid Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie: Évolution de l'environnement culturel (1706–1787)*, Tunis, 1985, p. 45; Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 177.

In France, after Guillaume Postel's early start in the first half of the 16th century, Arabic typography resumed with the first book produced by Savary de Brèves, who founded an 'Oriental-languages press' (*Imprimerie des langues orientales*) at the Collège des Lombards.[110] He edited there in 1614, alongside his disciples, a Psalter destined both for Middle Eastern Christians and European Oriental scholars who wished to learn Arabic and study this version of the Psalms. The *imprimatur* issued for this book by Cardinal Bellarmine confirms that "dans cette version des Psaumes de la langue arabe traduits en latin il n'y a rien qui aille contre la vérité de notre Vulgate ou contre le texte hébreu ou grec".[111] In 1618, compelled to defend himself from the denigrations of his political enemies, de Brèves claimed in a discourse pronounced before King Louis XIII that he had brought from Jerusalem the manuscript of the Arabic Psalter, probably, to give it more authenticity and authority. Another version of this story says that the manuscript had been sent to Rome by the patriarch of the Maronite Church from the Monastery of the Our Lady in Qannūbīn, the residence and refuge of the Maronite patriarchs from 1445 to around 1820.[112]

De Brèves also printed one of the first texts in Turkish, in 1615: the treaty signed in 1604 by France and the Sublime Porte, in a bilingual edition, Turkish and French. Gabriel Sionita and John Hesronita then composed an Arabic handbook, *Grammatica arabica Maronitarum*, and printed the first volume in 1616 with three sizes of type, the smallest – cast in Paris. In 1625, the press in Rome also used Persian and Syriac type.

Undoubtedly, the early start of Arabic printing in France allowed typographers active there to become highly skilled by the end of the 18th century, when Napoleon Bonaparte arrived in Egypt accompanied by scholars and craftsmen of all sorts, including some capable of installing and operating the country's first

110 Established in 1348 in Rue des Carmes, this college was open at first to Italians seeking education in Paris. Meant for the deprived youth who wished to pursue an education abroad, it was called 'Maison des pauvres écoliers italiens de la bienheureuse Marie'. It hosted Italian students on a grant secured from several French and Italian benefactors.

111 Gérald Duverdier, "L'apport des Libanais à l'étude des langues arabe et syriaque en Europe", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 200.

112 Maronite historians place the transfer of their Patriarchate to Qannūbīn in 1440, with the installation here of the residence of Patriarch Yūḥannā al-Ǧāǧī, who was elected in Mayfūq, the residence of the Patriarchate since 1404. In 1863, the Patriarchate moved to Bkerke. See Wissam Halawi and Élise Voguet, "La propriété foncière du monastère de Qannūbīn: un témoignage sur le paysage agraire du nord du Jabal Lubnān (fin XVIe–mi XVIe siècle)", in Mathilde Boudier, Audrey Caire, Eva Collet and Noëmie Lucas (eds.), *Autour de la Syrie médiévale. Études offertes à Anne-Marie Eddé*, Leuven and Paris, 2022, p. 137.

Arabic-type press.[113] In 1798, the first printing presses and fonts of Arabic type arrived in Alexandria, to be used until 1801.[114] The aim was to distribute widely proclamations and instructions to the Egyptian people, in the form of printed posters. The first such leaf that has survived is dated July 2, 1798. The same year, an alphabet book containing an inventory of typefaces was produced for the benefit of French people who wished to learn Arabic.[115]

Since the Royal College in Paris had two Chairs of Arabic (created in 1587 and 1600), Gabriel Sionita was hired as a professor of Arabic and Syriac in order to allow him to pursue his translation and editorial work for Arabic, Turkish, and Syriac texts. Very quickly, however, it became clear that the readership of Arabic texts published with a Latin translation was too limited to justify large print runs. In the best of cases, the academic public that acquired such books was interested in translations of Arabic texts.

At the same time, Thomas van Erpe, more widely known as Erpenius, an outstanding scholar, librarian of Henry IV, professor at the University of Leiden, and interpreter of Arabic for the government, was active in Arabic studies in the Netherlands. He was the author of the first Arabic grammar with a parallel Latin text, easy to use for Europeans. The first edition was produced in 1613 at the Plantin and Rapheleng press (130 pp.), while others followed, printed in various forms. Erpenius then published a collection of Arabic proverbs in 1614, with vowels carefully placed in the text. He installed a press at home and manufactured punches himself, making new sets of Arabic type. He used them to print in 1615 the *Fables of Luqmān* and other edifying stories, with Latin comments. The consonants he had newly created were lower in shape, they allowed for a better page-setting, and were supplemented with vowels in 1616.

From 1615 on, Erpenius translated and printed in Leiden, at his own press (Typographia Erpeniana Linguarum Orientalium), the *Epistles of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans* and the *Epistles to the Galatians*, in a small format, to facilitate their circulation in the East. After several sections of the Arabic and Latin New Testament, in 1616 he printed the whole New Testament: *al-ʿAhd al-Ǧadīd*

113 Geoffrey Roper, "Printed Matter in Egypt before the Būlāq Press", in Ahmed Mansour (ed.), *Memory of Printing and Publishing in the Middle East*, Alexandria, 2018, p. 10–11.

114 Gianni and Tagliabracci, "*Kitāb [Ṣ]alāt al-sawāʿī*, p. 131–132.

115 The role of the French intellectuals in printing in Egypt is revealed by the excellent guide addressed by Albert Geiss to the Oriental scholars, to help them prepare their manuscripts: *De l'établissement des manuscrits destinés à l'impression. Conseils pratiques*, Cairo, 1906. Geiss was appointed technical director of the printing press attached to the 'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire' in 1903. His guide (24 pp. and Annexes) is still useful today for printing in Oriental languages.

li-Rabbinā Yasūʿ al-Masīḥ: Novum D. N. Iesu Christi Testamentum Arabice. The same year, he printed the *Story of Joseph* excerpted from the Qur'ān (*Ṣūra XII*), the second ever printed passage of the Qur'ān (apart from the block-printed fragments printed in Egypt in the 10th or 11th centuries).[116] Then followed a second edition of the *Arabic Grammar*, with vowels, and a basic treatise of Arabic syntax composed in the 11th century by al-Ǧurǧānī, a grammarian of the School of Baṣra. While visiting Paris in 1619, Erpenius befriended Gabriel Sionita and John Hesronita, learning from them about the printing projects of the French orientalists.

In 1620, *Rudimenta linguae arabicae*, one of the most famous grammars of the Arabic language ever printed in Europe, came out of Erpenius's press. Two years later, Erpenius printed in Arabic the *Book of Exodus*, which he had transferred in Arabic script from a manuscript in the collections of the University of Leiden, composed in the Arabic language but written in Hebrew script.[117] Also in 1622, his books were presented as precious gifts to the king of Morocco by the Dutch diplomatic mission to Marrakesh. In 1624, aged 40, already famous and courted by several kings and princes, Erpenius sadly died, probably of the plague that was devastating Europe. The type he had manufactured reached the great press of Bonaventura and Abraham Elsevier in Leiden, where several books were published after 1629, written or edited by Jakob Golius (d. 1667). Among them was a beautiful and carefully composed Arabic-Latin dictionary of 2,925 pp., published in 1653.

After 1618, when the great French scholar and printer Savary de Brèves fell into disgrace with the royal court, the press closed and his Oriental type remained idle. In 1632, the press implements came into the possession of Antoine Vitré, the court printer (d. 1674),[118] who bought them from the heirs for the royal press by secret order of Cardinal Richelieu. The latter had decided to prevent the sale of de Brèves's printing tools to "foreign Huguenots", as on a first attempted sale, buyers from England and the Netherlands had shown their interest. Once in control of this typographic material, they would have spread Luther's and Calvin's ideas among the Arabic-speaking Christians, in nicely printed versions. Vitré's inventory after the acquisition indicated 1,606 cut punches, an impressive lot of printing items.[119]

116 Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 174.

117 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 61.

118 See "Vitré, Antoine", in Mellot et al., *Répertoire d'imprimeurs/libraires*, p. 1469.

119 Savary de Brèves declared that their manufacture had cost him over 200 écus. See Duverdier, "Du livre religieux à l'orientalisme", p. 160.

Although it was a clever move on the part of Cardinal Richelieu, instead of producing a long series of high-quality Oriental books, the acquisition of de Brèves's printing tools caused a lot of trouble for Antoine Vitré. A year later, as he was still indebted to the printer's heirs, he wrote the following to King Louis XIII.

> Monseigneur le cardinal duc de Richelieu, ayant été adverty que les poinçons et les matrices arabes, syriaques et persannes, que le feu sieur de Brèves, autrefois ambassadeur en Levant pour Vostre Majesté, avoit fait faire pour l'honneur de la France et advancement de la religion, avec les manuscrits qu'il avoit apportez, estoient prests d'estre enlevez par les huguenots estrangers qui s'en vouloient servir pour jetter en la langue de ces peuples des bibles et autres livres concernans la foy, et introduire par ce moyen en ce païs, aussi-tost que le christianisme, la religion de Calvin, que votre Majesté a extirpée en ses États avec tant de veilles et de soins, par les conseils du même seigneur cardinal, qui auroit commandé, de la part de V. M. audit Vitré, imprimeur à cause qu'il l'est de V. M. en ces langues, de s'en rendre adjudicataire en son nom.[120]

Relations between the Netherlands and the Ottoman Empire reached a new level of cooperation after commercial privileges were granted in 1612. In Istanbul, England and the Netherlands were the political and commercial rivals of France, who considered herself the protector of Middle Eastern Catholics.[121] Naturally, the works printed in the Netherlands by Protestant scholars and theologians reflected their vision, different from that of the Latin Church, which became increasingly worried about the spread of Protestant ideas in the East. Several books sent from the Netherlands to the capital of the Ottoman Empire and disseminated by the Patriarch Cyril Lukaris (1572–1638) in the Eastern Christian communities generated disquiet among the Catholic missionaries.[122]

Cyril Lukaris, who was Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople from 1620, after having been Greek Orthodox patriarch of Alexandria between 1601 and 1620, was known as an opponent of the Latin missions that were active both in

120 Antoine Vitré, *Histoire du procez qu'on renouvelle de temps en temps à Antoine Vitré*, Paris, 1656, p. 3, cited by Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 266. See Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 231–232, for details on Antoine Vitré's report, preserved in a 28-pages manuscript at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (with a second abridged version), and the lawsuits he was involved in as a consequence of the acquisition of printing tools and Oriental manuscripts for the Royal press.

121 See Alexander H. de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic. A History of the Earliest Diplomatic Relations, 1610–1630*, Leiden, 1978.

122 Lukaris received from the Dutch ambassador a large quantity of biblical texts printed by Erpenius and distributed them to the local clergy for free. See Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 178.

Egypt and in the Eastern European countries.[123] At the behest of the patriarch of Alexandria Meletios Pigas,[124] Lukaris had travelled in 1596 to Poland to oppose the nion of Brest-Litovsk, where some of the Christians of the Cossack lands were persuaded to embrace the Latin creed.[125] He knew these lands well, as he had overseen for several years the colleges of the L'viv Brotherhood and that of Vilna (present-day Vilnius), while living in Catholic and Protestant environments. After his election as a patriarch of Constantinople, the Holy See became concerned with the undesired influence he might have had on some of the Eastern-rite churches in the Ottoman Empire. His intention to open a college[126] and a printing press and to disseminate books to the Orthodox clergy sounded disturbing to the Latin missionaries. The Catholic envoys who slandered him before the Ottoman officials based their case on Lukaris's long sojourns in Germany and other Central-European countries and the probability that he brought to Istanbul 'heretical ideas' that he wished to spread among the Christian communities of the Empire. As noted by Gérald Duverdier, in 1632, in Constantinople, Cyril Lukaris still occupied the patriarchal see. He would have received from the Netherlands books printed with the beautiful type of Savary de Brèves, had Cardinal Richelieu not intervened at the appropriate time.[127] Aware of the value of the printing implements and type, Antoine Vitré had wished to acquire them all. To convince Richelieu, he had made the point that Lukaris, who was "the fiercest enemy of the poor Catholics", had distributed in the Levant Calvinist books "that poisoned the spirit [of these Christians], especially as they were printed in a language familiar to them."[128]

Cyril Lukaris's attempt to set up a Greek press in Istanbul in 1627 would be met with suspicion and animosity. Bringing over from Western Europe typo-

123 On Cyril Lukaris's pastoral works, doctrinal options, and accusations against, during his term as Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, see Klaus-Peter Todt, "Kyrillos Lukaris", in Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello and Vassa Conticello (eds.), *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, II. *(XIII^{e}–XIX^{e} s.)*, Turnhout, 2002, p. 617–651; Viviana Nosilia and Marco Prandoni (eds.), *Trame controluce/Blacklighting Plots*: *Il patriarca* '*protestante*' *Cirillo Loukaris*/*The* '*Protestant*' *Patriarch Cyril Loukaris*, Florence, 2015; Ovidiu-Victor Olar, *La boutique de Théophile. Les relations du Patriarche de Constantinople Kyrillos Loukaris (1570–1638) avec la Réforme*, Paris, 2019.

124 Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 52–57.

125 Ibid., p. 57–63.

126 Bernard Heyberger remarks that Meletios Karma in Aleppo, Cyril Lukaris in Constantinople, and Petru Movilă in Kyiv were all planning in the same period to open colleges for language and theological studies. See Heyberger, "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity", p. 16–17.

127 Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 265–266.

128 Ibid., p. 267.

graphic tools and hiring a good printer did not amount to anything, as the enterprise faced a strong resistance from several entities. I shall return to this unsuccessful project later.

It is worth mentioning here the attempt of the Catholic missionaries active in the Ottoman capital to secure from the Sublime Porte a decisive action to close the Greek press that Dositheos II Notaras, the patriarch of Jerusalem (1641–1707), had opened in 1682 in Iași, the capital of Moldavia, due to the generosity and financial help of the prince Gheorghe Duca. If in Constantinople, where the Jesuit intrigues assisted by Western diplomatic envoys were more forceful and the Christians' situation was more constrained, it was possible for the press founded by the Patriarch Cyril Lukaris to be closed down, in Iași this was not possible. Therefore, Patriarch Dositheos was able to print at will, in 1682–1683, several books of anti-Catholic polemics in Greek.[129]

In Italy, the printing activity in support of the missionary efforts flourished again after the foundation of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide by Pope Urban VIII in 1622. In 1624, a college was founded by the new institution.[130] In 1627, as part of the great project of the Counter-Reformation, Pope Urban VIII founded a press of the Propaganda Fide that he endowed with typographic material for non-Latin languages, including Greek, Georgian, and Arabic types. One of the Arabic fonts, transferred from the Medicean press, was modified and supplemented, while others were newly cut and cast.[131] To be able to publish in several languages and alphabets, the press absorbed the expertise and printing installations and tools of smaller presses that were active at the time, such as those of Domenico Basa, Giambattista Raimondi, and Jacob Luna. After 1620, books were printed in Rome with type different from that used at the Medici and Savary de Brèves presses. The master engraver was, most of the time, Stefano Paolino.

In Rome, the project of an Arabic Bible was launched when the Propaganda Fide was founded in 1622. The project had been devised by Sarkīs al-Rizzī, the Maronite bishop of Damascus and vicar of the patriarch (1600–1638). He was the

129 Dumitru Stăniloae, *Viața și activitatea patriarhului Dosofteiu al Ierusalimului și legăturile lui cu Țările Românești. Teză de doctorat în Teologie*, Cernăuți, 1929, p. 22–27.

130 See Giovanni Pizzorusso, "Les écoles de langue arabe et le milieu orientaliste autour de la congrégation De Propaganda Fide au temps d'Abraham Ecchellensis", in Bernard Heyberger (ed.), *Orientalisme, science et controverse: Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664)*, Turnhout, 2010, p. 59–80.

131 Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", p. 62, n. 24; Emanuela Conidi, *Arabic Types in Europe and the Middle East, 1514–1924: Challenges in the Adaptation of the Arabic Script from Written to Printed Form*, unpublished PhD thesis, online at 16021166_Conidi_redacted.pdf (reading.ac.uk), p. 429–437.

nephew of the Patriarch Mīhā'īl al-Rizzī (1567–1581), who had received with great honors at his residence the Jesuit monks Giambattista Eliano and Toma Raggio when they arrived on their first mission to Lebanon in 1578.[132] In spite of the close, longstanding relationship of the Maronites with the Latin Church, Eliano found dogmatic errors and even schismatic ideas in the liturgical texts that circulated in the churches of Lebanon. He believed that they were due to contamination from texts used by the faithful of other confessions.[133] Therefore, he decided to collect from the Maronite monasteries, during the first year of his mission, as many Arabic manuscripts as possible, with the declared intention of burning them.

As I mentioned before, when returning to Rome in 1579, Eliano brought with him a manuscript of an Arabic version of the Bible. In the Vatican, a council consisting of eleven cardinals and twenty-two scholars of Arabic and Latin convened to survey and select the Arabic texts brought from the East. The Council of Trento, completed in 1563, had decided that the only canonical text of the Bible, to which other translations were required to conform, was the Vulgate. Consequently, the text of the Arabic Bible that was finally printed in 1673 in four volumes was a translation of the Vulgate, a text established after a thorough revision and examination of its dogmatic accuracy from a Catholic perspective. The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide wished for this version to be widely disseminated and for the old Arabic manuscripts to disappear, as they presented significant variances with the Vulgate. Thus, a closer connection to the Latin creed could be achieved, as well as greater uniformity of the liturgical rites of the Middle Eastern communities attached to the Roman Catholic Church.[134] For it was also decided at the Council of Trento that permanent ties were to be maintained with the Eastern Churches, to counter the increasingly active Protestant propaganda and compensate for the movement of certain Arabic-speaking communities towards anti-Catholic confessions.

Rome is also the place where the first book on logic in Arabic (and Latin) was printed, in 1625: *Introduction in the Science of Logic* by the Franciscan monk Tomaso Obicini. It contains comments on philosophical elements of the Islamic doctrine, focusing on the points in common with the Christian teachings.

132 Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 61, 71, ff.

133 Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 265.

134 On the clear definition of the "Eastern rites" under Pope Benedict XIV (1740–1758) and the definitive ban issued at that time for Catholics in the Levant to associate with "heretics" or "schismatics" (*communication in sacris*), see Heyberger, "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity", p. 9–10.

Towards 1625, the Arabic-printing technology was already an established business. New forms of type were not sought after anymore. Instead, punches were cut with clear and simple, easy-to-read forms, which less experienced engravers could later copy. In Rome, several presses were active for the benefit of the missionary activities in the Middle East, which belonged to the Vatican, the Apostolic Chamber, the Roman College of the Jesuit Order, the Maronite College, and the Medici family.

The competition between printers of the Propaganda Fide in Rome and the Protestant ones in the Netherlands, England, and Germany generated a continuous struggle to improve the quantity and quality of the Arabic printing done in Western presses.[135] In 1628, the secretary of the Propaganda Fide asked the French ambassador to the Sublime Porte, Philippe de Harlay, Count de Césy, to send him models of Arabic and Turkish calligraphy so that the Roman press of the Propaganda Fide would be able to produce beautiful books. Thus, in 1663, the workshop printed the *Alphabetum Arabicum*, a specimen of the Arabic type available with them.

In 1630–1660, Western printing in Arabic type was dominated by the Dutch, French, and Italian printers, with the most productive being the press of the Propaganda Fide in Rome.[136] Several works were printed at that time, which became classics: in language studies, Jean-Baptiste Duval, *The Latin-Arabic Dictionary*, Paris, 1632, and Dominicus Germanus, *Fabrica linguae arabicae cum interpretation Latina et italica*, Rome, 1639 (1,082 pp.); in theological studies, Cardinal Richelieu, *Kitāb al-taʿlīm al-masīḥī* (*Book of the Christian Teaching*), Paris, 1640 (415 pp.); in historical texts, Ibn Arabšah, *The Life of Timur-Lenk* edited by Jacob Golius, 1636. In 1632, in Milan, the *Thesaurus linguae arabicae* of Antonio Giggeo was printed in four volumes at the press of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, founded by Cardinal Borromeo in 1609. Important theological, grammatical, and literary works were reedited: *Doctrina christiana*, Paris, 1635, with a preface by Cardinal Richelieu; *Gramatica arabica* and the *Fables of Luqmān* edited by Erpenius were reprinted in 1636 at Leiden; Golius reprinted his Arabic grammar book in 1656, adding to it Qur'ānic *ṣūra*s, fables, poems by al-Ḥarīrī, etc. A polemic work in 1,165 pp. by Fr Filippo Guadalogni – a dialogue between a supporter of the Catholic doctrine and a Muslim, with a commentary by the author, who amplified the

135 Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 146–147.

136 Bernard Heyberger gives a table of the books in stock in 1660 in the Propaganda Fide press storage: they amounted at 12,586 books in Arabic and Syriac. See Heyberger, "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens", "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens (Syrie, Liban) XVII^{e}–XVIII^{e} siècles", *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerrané*, 1999, 87–88, p. 211–212.

pro-Catholic statement – was printed in 1637 by the Propaganda Fide in Rome. In 1663, the Carmelite monk Celestin de Sancta Lidwina (1603/1604–1672)[137] published at the same press an Arabic translation from the original Latin of the famous work of Thomas à Kempis *Imitatio Christi* (562 pp.), which he had elaborated in 1638, while he was on a mission to Aleppo, according to his own statement in the Latin and Arabic printed forewords.[138] Alongside the Arabic Psalter, this book was to become the most frequently used teaching text in the Christian schools of the Middle East.[139]

While discussing Ibn al-Faḍl's Arabic versions of the book of Psalms, Alexandre Roberts notes:

> The Psalter was a fundamental text for Byzantine primary education. Just as early memorization of the Qur'ān was a standard marker of a Muslim boy's precocious talent (the historian al-Ṭabarī says that he managed the feat by age seven), getting the Psalter by heart was an early sign of a Christian child's brilliance. [...] The Psalter also played a public role in the Christian liturgy.[140]

Although commonly credited to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, this Arabic version resulted from a rather light revision of the original 8th–9th century Melkite Psalter. Alexander Roberts has recently commented on the Arabic translations of the Psalter from the earliest text known to us, shedding more light on Ibn al-Faḍl's contribution to the widespread of the Arabic text that circulated in manuscripts in Dabbās's time:

> Ibn al-Faḍl produced Arabic versions of the book of Psalms, most accompanied with extracts from patristic commentaries; [...] The Psalms had already been translated into Arabic long before Ibn al-Faḍl produced his Arabic version. The famous parchment fragment known as the Violet fragment, found in 1900 in a sealed storage space (the *qubbat al-khazna*) at the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus and probably dating, on paleographical grounds, to the late

137 Born Pieter van Gool, the brother of the great Oriental scholar Jakob Golius, he founded in 1643 the Order of the Carmelite monks in Lebanon, in the Qādīšā Valley, at the Monastery of Saint Elisius (Mār Elīšā).

138 The book was unanimously acclaimed by the scholars and the general public of the time. A second edition was printed in Rome in 1734, and other editions followed. See Graf, *GCAL* IV, p. 244, and Fr Samir Khalil Samir, S. J., "Le P. Célestin de Sainte Lydwina, alias Peter Van Gool (1604–1676)", *La Splendeur du Carmel*, 1995, 7, p. 1–84 (accessible at http://www.kobayat.org/data/mardoumit/history/fondateur_ocd_liban.htm).

139 Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du ProcheOrient au temps de la Réforme catholique (Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVI^e^XVIII^e^ siècle)*, Rome, 1994, p. 559.

140 Alexandre M. Roberts, *Reason and Revelation in Byzantine Antioch. The Christian Translation Program of Abdallah ibn al-Fadl*, Oakland, CA, 2020, p. 37.

> ninth or early tenth century, preserves part of Psalm 77 (78) in Arabic translation written in Greek script. A number of ninth- and tenth-century Sinai manuscripts contain the same Arabic translation (in Arabic script). Ibn al-Faḍl's version is based on this earlier Arabic translation. He indicates his use of an earlier translation in his preface to the text, where he speaks of what "moved me to correct the Psalter…and extract its sense from Greek into Arabic". That is, he corrected an *Arabic* Psalter that was already available, revising it based on his reading of the Greek (Septuagint) Psalter.[141]

Jack Tannous has remarked that, as early as the 13th century, Bar Hebraeus, when indicating in his *Nomocanon* the subjects to be studied at school, began with the Psalter: "Rule: In the first place, let them read the Psalms of David, then the New Testament, then the Old Testament, the Doctors, then the Commentators".[142] According to Tannous,

> There is in fact evidence that an education in the Scriptures and the liturgy of the type Bar Hebraeus described formed the core of Miaphysite education as far back as at least the early sixth century. Such a pattern of education, however, was not unique to Myaphisites and seems to have persisted over a long period of time.[143]

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Book of Psalms was the book that Middle Eastern Christians read most often.[144] The Psalter was the book they used most often in teaching their children how to read.[145] In the first decades of the 17th century, supported by the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, schools for the Arabic-speaking children opened in Aleppo, Damascus, and Mount Lebanon. Here, the teaching was based on handbooks and spiritual texts printed in Rome, which observed the Catholic teachings.[146] The Propaganda Fide sent considerable numbers of books to the Levant, and especially to Aleppo. In 1637, the Jesuits there received for distribution in Syria twenty volumes of Bellarmine's *Doctrina Christiana* and thirty-six tables of the Arabic alphabet, while the Carmelite monks were sent ten tables of the Arabic alphabet and eight of the Armenian

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141 Roberts, *Reason and Revelation in Byzantine Antioch*, p. 36.

142 Jack Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East. Religion, Society, and Simple Believers*, Princeton and Oxford, 2018, p. 185.

143 Ibid. For other references to the Psalms being taught and their priority in the schools' curriculum, see ibid., p. 17 (n. 27), 20, 27 (n. 66), 185–187, 196, 232, 238 (n. 50), 239. I am grateful to Jack Tannous for his advice on this point.

144 For the 'power' that the Psalter was believed to hold in the times of Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), such as to be read for the purpose of preventing hail from falling on the farmlands, see Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East. Religion, Society, and Simple Believers*, p. 146–147.

145 Ḫalīl Ṣābāt, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a fī al-Šarq al-'arabī*, Cairo, 1966, p. 104.

146 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du ProcheOrient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 469–470.

one. Nevertheless, the demand for Psalters printed in Arabic and Syriac, a basic text in the education program and literacy testing, was greater than the Western presses could supply.

Secular texts were also printed in Rome for the Maronites in this period, such as the *Grammar of the Syriac language* by Ǧirǧīs Amīra, the reprint of which the patriarch of the Maronites Yūsuf Ḥalīb requested from Pope Innocent X in 1645.[147]

Unhappy with the monopoly of the Holy See on books printed for the Middle Eastern Christians, in 1631, Cardinal Richelieu founded in Paris a professional society of printers of religious books, the *Societas Typographica librorum officii ecclesiastici*, securing a royal privilege for it.[148] In exchange, he pledged to print all the books required by the Latin missions in the East: the Bible, liturgical books, the Catholic catechism, grammar books, dictionaries, etc. Since most of these books had commercial value and were sold on the book market, this step was beneficial for the merchants involved in book printing and distribution, who started making a nice profit, even if not for long (initially, thirty years, later reduced to ten).[149]

Around 1640, Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664), a Maronite close to the Druze emir Faḫreddīn of Mount Lebanon, was a student of the Maronite College in Rome.[150] He was the pope's interpreter, a lecturer in Arabic and Syriac at the University of Rome, a professor of theology and philosophy. Joseph Moukarzel describes Abraham Ecchellensis by citing Peter Rietbergen's description of him: "comme 'un médiateur entre les cultures méditerranéennes du dix-septième siècle', à savoir entre la chrétienté latine, les chrétiens orientaux et islam".[151]

Ecchellensis was called to Paris in 1641 by Cardinal Richelieu and the editor Michel le Jay, an attorney with the French Parliament, to resume the project of the

147 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 10.

148 See Mellot et al., *Répertoire d'imprimeurs/libraires*, p. 1342.

149 Many other *Sociétés typographiques* (Printing Societies) were founded in France, Switzerland, and Belgium in the 17th–18th centuries (as elsewhere in Europe). For the French-language ones, see ibid., p. 1342–1345.

150 On the life and works of Abraham Ecchellensis, see Nasser Gemayel, *Les échanges culturels entre les maronites et l'Europe: du collège maronite de Rome (1584) au collège de ʿAyn-Warqa (1789)*, t. I, Beirut, 1984, especially p. 299–317, 386–400; Bernard Heyberger (ed.), *Orientalisme, science et controverse: Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664)*, Turnhout, 2010; Andrei Pippidi, "Chypre au XVIIe siècle, deux rapports inédits", *RESEE*, 41, 2003, 1–4, especially p. 212–214.

151 Joseph Moukarzel, "Les origines des maronites d'après Abraham Ecchellensis", in Heyberger (ed.), *Orientalisme, science et controverse: Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664)*, p. 151, citing Peter Rietbergen, "A Maronite Mediator between Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean Cultures: Ibrahim al Hakilani, or Abraham Ecchellense (1605–1664) between Christendom and Islam", *Lias*, 16, 1989, 1, p. 13.

Polyglot Bible. He revised the Arabic and Syriac texts translated during the days of Savary de Brèves and added new translations to them.[152] Next, he translated into Arabic several works of mathematics and Islamic philosophy.

In 1642, the first Arabic book was printed in England, accompanied by an annotated Latin translation: Saʿīd ibn al-Biṭrīq, *Patriarch Eutichios of Alexandria (933–939), Annals of the Church of Alexandria*. The Arabic type was acquired from the Netherlands. Born in 1584, Selden pursued his legal education in Oxford and joined the political elite at the courts of the Kings James I and Charles I, who punished him successively with prison terms for his opinions on religion and justice. The bilingual book that he edited was the fruit of the collaboration with the erudite oriental scholar Edward Pococke (d. 1691), a disciple of William Bedwell and a traveler in the East, where he also made the acquaintance of the Patriarch Cyril Lukaris.

Edward Pococke was one of the most active Oriental scholars in Europe in the second half of the 17th century. Born in Oxford in 1604, he became passionate about Oriental languages while he was a student. William Bedwell had establisehd the Arabic language course at the University of Oxford. Pococke followed him enthusiastically. Ordained as a priest in the Church of England in 1629, he resided in Aleppo for six years as treasurer of the English merchants' office in Syria. There he pursued his study of Oriental languages – Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopic – and collected Arabic manuscripts that he sent to England. In 1637, he was in Constantinople, where he also acquired a large number of Oriental manuscripts. He then travelled to Paris, where he met Gabriel Sionita who was just preparing the Polyglot Bible. Back at the University of Oxford, where he would teach Hebrew and Arabic, in 1650 he edited a history of the Arabs composed by Bar Hebraeus (Abulfaragius), maphrian of the Syrian Orthodox Church in 1266–1286, giving it the title *Specimen Historiae Arabum*. The University of Oxford had bought in 1637 from Leiden Arabic type that were used for this book too. It was published by the master printer Henry Hall and reedited in 1658 with a Latin translation. The same year, Pococke published an Arabic translation of the *Treatise on the Truth of the Christian Faith* by Hugo Grotius (de Groot). This work was translated into several languages and became quite popular. The type looked more elegant, as it belonged to a newer font. Pococke also published in 1671, together with his elder son, the mystical work *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* (*The Alive, Son of The Awake*) by the Andalusian physician and philosopher Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 1185). In his final years,

152 See Muriel Debié, "La grammaire syriaque d'Ecchellensis en contexte", in Heyberger (ed.), *Orientalisme, science et controverse: Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664)*, p. 99–117.

Pococke translated from Arabic and published an Anglican catechism (1671)[153] and Book of Common Prayer (1674), his last Arabic book.[154] These print-runs were distributed in the Levant.

A Polyglot Bible was finally published in Paris in 1645, in ten volumes that contain the Holy Scriptures in seven languages, including Arabic. The Arabic text is present in volume VII, published in 1642. The type used by the printer Antoine Vitré – consonants and vowels – are those of Savary de Brèves. They were supplemented, at the expense of le Jay, with Arabic type, a Syriac alphabet, and a Chaldean one, manufactured under the supervision of Gabriel Sionita. The general appearance is beautiful: the Polyglot Bible remains in the history of the book as a masterpiece of Oriental printing in Western Europe. Although criticized by contemporary theologians for certain features of the different versions, it was considered a highly valuable work in terms of the mastery of printing that it displayed. To help the readers of the Polyglot Bible, Vitré produced in 1636 tables of all the type-sets he had in his press – Arabic, Syriac, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, and Persian.[155]

After the printing of the Polyglot Bible subjected the editors, Vitré and le Jay, to debts, suspicions, libels, and lawsuits, no other books with Arabic text were printed in Paris until 1679, when the last work was printed with the type of Savary de Brèves, at the press of Pierre le Petit: *The Book of the Psalms of Repentance and Praise to the Holy Virgin*. Then, the famous type of de Brèves was "put away for safe-keeping": the punches in the Accounts Chamber, where Garamond's Greek type had also been preserved since the times of King François I,[156] while the matrices were placed in the Royal Library, from where they were taken temporarily,

153 *Šarḥ qawāʿid dīn al-Masīḥ* (*Explanation of the Foundations of the Christian Faith*), Oxford, 1671.

154 Book of the Divine Liturgies, Church of England rite: *Liturgiae Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ / Al-ṣalawāt li-kull yawm ʿalā ʿādat Bīʿat al-Inkilīz*, Oxford, 1674. See Geoffrey Roper, "England and the Printing of Texts for the Orthodox Christians in Greek and Arabic, 17th–19th centuries", in *Travaux du Symposium international* Le Livre. La Roumanie. L'Europe, *Troisième édition – 20 à 24 Septembre 2010*, Bucharest, 2011, p. 437.

155 Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 228–229.

156 Born in Paris towards the end of the 15th century (d. 1561), Claude Garamond (or Garamont) was trained by Antoine Augereau, a skilled engraver of Paris who learned how to manufacture punches and became a printer and librarian. Garamond lived in Paris, where, around 1530, he had already created typefaces in three sizes for the printer Claude Chevallon. Towards 1540, he was famous all across Europe for his Roman type. Garamond was the first typographer who sold the types, matrices, and punches that he manufactured, succeeding in supporting his printing shop with the income. After he died, most of this material was acquired by the printing presses of Christophe Plantin, in Antwerp, and Jacques Sabon in Frankfurt, while the rest ended up at the French Royal press. See Mellot et al., *Répertoire d'imprimeurs/libraires*, p. 612.

against a receipt slip, when needed by printers who had the task of producing Arabic-type works.[157] In 1692, the typographic materials were placed in the Royal Press that was to become the National Printing Press of France. Josée Balagna explains the lack of interest in printing in Arabic in the second half of the 17th century by the fact that "le déroulement des études ne conduit personne à ce degré de tâche ardue qu'est l'édition scientifique."[158]

Another Polyglot Bible in six volumes, with versions in Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Ethiopic, Latin, Syriac, Greek, and Aramaic, was published by Brian Walton in 1657 in London, at the press of Thomas Roycroft. In the Appendix, maps of the Holy Land and Jerusalem, along with a sketch of the Temple, were provided. Protestants and Anglicans always showed a deep interest in a good knowledge of the languages used in writing the earliest versions of the Bible. Therefore, for this edition, the assistance of the language scholar Edmond Castell (b. 1606) was requested. In 1669, he composed a *Lexicon heptaglotton, hebraicum, chaldaicum, samaritanum, aethiopicum, arabicum conjuctim et persicum separatim*..., meant to help the readers of the Polyglot Bible.

The type created by Erpenius was used in 1654 in the Netherlands to print a collection of *Epistolae catholicae* consisting of the epistles of the Saints James (32 pp.), John (40 pp.), and Jude (24 pp.) in Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic text with vowels. These were the work of two new editors who published at the Elsevier press of the Leiden Academy: Theodor Petreus and Johann Georg Nisselius.

Towards the end of the 17th century, Franciscan monks also opened a press in Rome, with type manufactured at the Saint Francis Seminary. The Franciscans often dedicated themselves to the teaching of Oriental languages required by people entering the service of European embassies or consulates in the Middle East, as well as the missionary work that was specific to their order.

Padua was also one of the Italian cities where Arabic type was used before 1700. In 1688, the press of the Theological Seminary (*Stamperia del Seminario*) published in Latin and Arabic type *Proverbi utili e virtuosi in lingua araba, persiana e turca* / *Kitāb 'amṯāl muḫtaṣira* [...] *bi-l-lisān al-ʿarabī wa-l-fārisī wa-l-turkī*, the work of Humaili ibn Daʿfi Karnuk, a Jacobite Christian of Diyarbakır who had migrated to Italy, where he took the name of Timoteo Agnellini. In 1709, an Arabic Psalter was printed at the seminary for the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Levant.[159]

157 Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 267.
158 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 88.
159 Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 179.

Of the more isolated initiatives during this period, it is worth mentioning several that were due to Northern European scholars. Johann Fabricius, a disciple of Jacob Golius, opened a press in Rostock and printed in 1638, with type cast in Copenhagen, an Arabic grammar enriched with poems by al-Ḥarīrī, Abu l'Ala al-Ma'arri and Ibn al-Fārid. At the University of Altdorf, Theodor Hackspan printed an Arabic handbook in 1646, with locally manufactured type of a different shape than those commonly known. From the collaboration between the theologians Wilhelm Schickard (1592–1635) and Johann Ernst Gerhard the Elder (1621–1668), a rapid learning manual of Arabic was produced in Jena in 1647, comprising declension tables, based on the model of a Hebrew manual that the former had previously prepared. In 1650, Gerhard published in Wittenberg a grammar of Arabic composed in Latin, containing Arabic texts. In the German lands, each printer created his own Arabic type, which gave the landscape of Arabic printing in Northern Europe a more complex appearance than that in the Southern countries.[160]

In Germany, an Arabic Qur'ān was published in 1694 with complete vowels. It was edited by Abraham Hinckelmann (1652–1695), a Protestant theologian and scholar, and a collector of Oriental manuscripts interested in the mystical schools that were much popular at the time.[161] It is not clear who were the readers that Hinckelmann addressed: few people in Europe were able to read the Qur'ān in Arabic, and the book was not distributed in the East. In the preface to this volume, supported by numerous citations from the works of Virgil, Baronius, Gregory of Tours, Abū al-Farrāğ, al-Zamaḫšarī, and others, the editor makes the case for the value of knowledge of the Arabic language and the Islamic culture. The study of the holy books of the Muslims allowed, he claimed, a better understanding of the holy scriptures of the Christians.[162]

Another German, Johann David Schieferdecker (b. 1672), a passionate Oriental scholar, composed and published in 1695 in Leipzig a grammar of the Arabic language accompanied, in the same volume, by one of Turkish. For some time, the Turks had been threatening the frontiers of Central Europe, and the approach of this threat had aroused the interest of the European political and intellectual circles towards the Ottoman Muslim fighters.

160 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 76–77.

161 Alexander George Ellis, *Catalogue of Arabic Printed Books in the British Museum*, London, t. I, 1894, col. 869; Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux Arabes publiés dans l'Europe Chrétienne de 1810 à 1885*, Liège and Leipzig, t. X, 1907, p. 123; Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 376.

162 See also the remarks of Jean Aucagne, S. J., "La préface d'Abraham Hinckelmann, ou la naissance d'un nouveau monde", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 138–141.

Close to the end of the century, in 1698, an Arabic Qur'ān was beautifully printed, with a Latin translation and anti-Islamic comments dedicated to each *ṣūrā*. The author was Ludovico Marracci, the confessor of Pope Innocent XI, a professor of Arabic at the Seminary of Padua, where the type was procured for his Qur'ān. Although very critical towards the Muslim creed, Marracci asserted that Protestantism and Islam fostered common beliefs.

Naturally, texts written in languages other than Arabic were printed with Arabic type in Western Europe before 1700. It needs to be mentioned here that the Arabic alphabet was (and still is) used for a considerable number of languages that belong to various language families: besides Arabic and Ottoman Turkish (written in Latin alphabet since 1929), today Persian, Tajik, Urdu, Afghan (Pashto), and other languages use the Arabic script. Among the first printed books to use Arabic type for several languages was the work of Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski, *Thesaurus linguarum orientalium Turcicae, Arabicae, Persicae* (Vienna, 1680–1687, 4 vols.),[163] published close to the time of the second siege of Vienna (1683).[164]

The Arabic-books production of the 18th century in Western and Central Europe, contemporary with the one discussed in this book, has been presented in numerous contributions to the history of printing in Arabic. In this rapid overview of the chief moments of Arabic printing in these parts of Europe I only have the intention to demonstrate that by the time Arabic books started to be printed in Eastern Europe, Constantinople, and the Levant, Western typographers had already acquired great skill and experience and their productions had travelled east, without fulfilling the needs of the Arabic-speaking Christians for whom many of these books were produced. The most relevant example for the evolution of Arabic printing in Western Europe is, most likely, the lavish edition of the Arabic Psalter commissioned in 1792 in Vienna by Anthimos, the Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem, who added to the text his own commentary and, as a frontispiece, a splendidly engraved portrait of himself, seated in majesty on the patriarchal throne.[165]

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163 Reedited in 1780 and 2000, and still cited today. See Roper, "The Habsburg Empire and printing in languages of the Ottoman Empire", p. 335.

164 Other early European books with Turkish texts printed in Arabic type were Hyeronimus Megiser (1554–1619), *Institutionum linguae Turcicae*, Leipzig, 1612, and André du Ryer, *Rudimenta grammatices linguae Turcicae*, Paris, 1630. The first book printed entirely in Turkish with Arabic type was a translation of the New Testament by William Seaman, financed by the Bible Society, for missionary purposes (Oxford, 1666).

165 *Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Šarīf*, Vienna, at the press of Joseph Kurzböck, 1792. See Roper, "The Vienna Arabic Psalter of 1792 and the role of typography in European-Arab relations in the 18th century and

This cursory survey of the activities of scholars and typographers who printed in Arabic before the opening of Arabic presses in Greater Syria cannot be complete without a reminder of the works of Dimitrie Cantemir, the prince of Moldavia (March–April 1693, then 1710–1711), and prince of the Russian Tsardom from 1711, a member of the Russian Senate from 1721, and councilor of the Tsar Peter I. During the Russian campaign in the Caucasus and at the gates of the Persian Empire (1722–1723, in Dagestan, Derbend, Astrakhan, Bolgar, and Baku), he painstakingly procured Arabic type to produce manifestos in Persian, Arabic, and Tatar. Composed by himself, endorsed and signed by the tsar, these leaflets were meant to be distributed to the populations that the Russian army was going to attack.[166] Cantemir's intention was to convince these people to submit peacefully and thus to avoid all bloodshed. As a humanist thinker, the prince thought that printing would do less harm than swords. Unfortunately, the outcomes of his audacious project were insignificant.

As for the Arabic printing tools and type, the situation was different from country to country. In Italy, beautiful types were manufactured in the Typographia Medicea, which were used both for liturgical books and for secular texts. Then, the Propaganda Fide created their own type and used it for books distributed to the Middle Eastern churches committed to the Latin creed and the Italian missionaries sent there. Other Arabic type was created by the Franciscan Order and the Padua seminary. Dutch printers became famous for their Arabic books and succeeded in selling to English printers the Arabic implements that were used in printing them. Following the Dutch models, new type sets were manufactured in England and used for educational texts (handbooks and dictionaries) and missionary works, mostly Anglican. In France, Savary de Brèves published Catholic books, but his type had a more complicated fate. In Germany, many small presses manufactured their own Arabic type that they used, most times, for a single book.[167]

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earlier", in Johannes Frimmel and Michael Wögerbauer (eds.), *Kommunikation und Information im 18. Jahrhundert: das Beispiel der Habsburgermonarchie*, Wiesbaden, 2009, p. 77–89; Roper, "The Habsburg Empire and printing in languages of the Ottoman Empire", p. 335–336; Vera Tchentsova, "La naissance du portrait dans l'espace orthodoxe: représenter l'auteur dans les livres grecs du début du XVIII^{e} siècle", in Radu Dipratu and Samuel Noble (eds.), *Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond*, Berlin, 2023 (forthcoming).

166 Eugen Lozovan, "D. Cantemir et l'expansion russe au Caucase (1722–1724)", *Revue des études roumaines*, 1974, 13–14, p. 91–102; Andrei Eșanu (coord. ed.), *Neamul Cantemireștilor. Bibliografie*, Chișinău, 2010, p. 122–123; Serge A. Frantsouzoff, "Le Manifeste de Pierre le Grand du 15/26 juillet 1722 rédigé et imprimé par Dimitrie Cantemir. Une mise au point", *RESEE*, 52, 2014, p. 261–274.

167 As for other continents, it is worth recalling that in the United States of America the first work

By the time the first Arabic books were produced in Eastern Europe, in Snagov and Bucharest, Western and Central Europe had produced a multitude of Arabic books, both religious and secular. In spite of the difficulties of manufacturing Arabic type, opening an Arabic language press had become an easy task for the experienced European printers. Undoubtedly, the Middle Eastern, predominantly Maronite, monks and scholars significantly contributed to this achievement by settling – temporarily or definitively – in Leiden, Rome, Paris, and London. Books printed there had two specific destinations: on the one hand, the Catholic or Protestant missions active in the East – and then, the expenses for printing were covered by the institutions that launched the order, such as the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide or the Society of Printers created in Paris by Cardinal Richelieu; on the other hand, the book markets of the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Europe, where editors and printers hoped against hope that their fortune would be made, but to little avail.

1.2 Existing Sources: An Assortment of Motley Information

Compared to the attention given in historical studies of the printed book to Western presses where Arabic books were produced in the 16th–18th centuries, the earliest Arabic presses of the East – Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire – were most often neglected. The 19th century was – and still is – considered the time when the Arabic press was established in the Middle East, primarily by Western European Catholic and Protestant actors.[168] The most popular Arabic translation of the Bible is considered the Van Dyck version printed in Beirut (New Testament, 1860, and Old Testament, 1865), sponsored by the Syrian Mission and the American Bible Society, evidently more widely distributed in the Levant than any previous versions.[169] To counter this Protestant Bible, the Jesuits prepared

to contain Arabic printed text was published in 1821. See Miroslav Krek, "Some Observations on Printing Arabic in America and by Americans Abroad", *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 1994, 6 (1992), p. 75.

168 According to Ami Ayalon: "As the eighteenth century turned into the nineteenth, the Ottoman and Arab benign disregard for printing began to crack and give way to a different attitude. The new century would witness a gradual and eventually extensive Arab adoption of printing, the birth of a publishing industry, and the emergence of massive reading in Arab societies, changes that would further accelerate in the following century"; cf. Ami Ayalon, *The Arabic Print Revolution: Cultural Production and Mass Readership*, Cambridge, 2016, p. 18.

169 The Van Dyck Bible of Beirut presented the Arabic text in such a way that all the old versions specific to each Church of the Arabic-speaking Christianity were lost. Jean Hani described the

another Arabic version, in the Catholic spirit, and entrusted Ibrāhīm al-Yāziğī to revise it. According to Basile Aggoula, "elle n'a été d'aucune utilité pour les masses populaires et est demeurée le privilège d'une élite composée du clergé et des lettrés catholiques".[170]

Eastern European Arabic printed books and Middle Eastern presses of the 18th century such as Aleppo or Ḫinšāra were rarely present in the great records, bibliographies, and studies of Oriental printed books that became, and still are, important sources for research in this field. With the exception of Istanbul, where a press was set up in 1727 by Ibrahim Müteferrika for Turkish in Arabic type, the Eastern presses that printed in Arabic before 1800 were almost unknown until the mid-20th century.

Put together, the original contributions of historians who surveyed the Arabic books printed in Wallachia, Moldavia, and Ottoman Syria by Athanasios Dabbās and Sylvester of Antioch before the year 2000 do not exceed a hundred pages.[171] Most of these sources repeat information published earlier, some of it inaccurate, but adopted as common knowledge after the first publication. A lot of the information given in encyclopedias is imprecise, if not plain wrong. Just a few examples will suffice to prove my point.

David H. Partington, in an otherwise quite informative entry on 'Arabic Printing' in the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (1978),[172] reports on how the first books in Greek and Arabic were printed in Wallachia, and then glides into unchartered territory:

> There does not appear to be sufficient evidence to support the claim that Athanasius [Dabbās – *my note*] published an Arabic Bible in 1700. The press at Snagovo was neglected after the death of Anthime; so the new patriarch, Sylvester, caused a press to be set up first

liturgical rites of the Eastern Churches thus: "À l'intelligence du symbolisme des rites de la messe une aide considérable est apportée par les liturgies des églises orientales, liturgies beaucoup plus stables que celles de l'Occident et riches d'une poésie foisonnante", cf. Hani, *La Divine Liturgie*, p. 14.

170 Basile Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", in Camille Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, Paris, 1982, p. 310–311.

171 Arabic-type books could evidently not be addressed in the three and a half lines devoted to printing in the Romanian Principalities in the otherwise exceptional work *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du livre* edited in three volumes by Pascal Fouché, Daniel Péchoin and Philippe Schuwer for Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie, Paris, 2002–2013.

172 David H. Partington, "Arabic Printing", in Allen Kent, Harold Lancour and Jay E. Daily (exec. eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, Volume 24. *Printers and Printing to Public Policy, Copyright*, New York and Basel, 1978, p. 54–75.

> in the Monastery of Saint Sābā (Sabbas) in Bucharest and then in Yassy. This press issued Melkite liturgical works, such as the *Liturgikon* in 1745 and the Book of Psalms in 1747.[173]

Here, a combination of inaccurate and vague information is given. Whose claim was it that Athanasios Dabbās published "an Arabic Bible in 1700," and where? We are left in the dark here. Patriarch Sylvester first printed in Iași, at the Monastery of Saint Sava (Sabbas), and never in Bucharest, as I shall explain later. The Book of Psalms printed, according to Partington, either in Bucharest or in Iași, in 1747, was, most probably, published in Beirut in 1752.

In the entry on "Book and Book-making" of the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, vol. 1 (1998), the beginnings of Arabic printing in the Middle East and its first century and a half are described in a disappointingly brief (and somewhat erroneous) passage:

> In the Arabic-speaking world, printing was first introduced through the Church, the first printing press being established at the monastery of Quzahīya [*sic*], south of Tripoli, around 1009/1600. In Aleppo in 1118/1706 Arabic type was introduced into Syria for printing the Gospels, the Psalms and other religious books. Later a press was established in the Greek Orthodox monastery of St George in Beirut. Printing became a thriving business in 1834 when American protestant missionaries moved a press from Malta to Beirut [...].[174]

In his contribution to the volume *The Ottoman City between East and West. Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, co-authored in 1999 with Edhem Eldem and Daniel Goffman, Bruce Masters declares:

> Following in this opening to the West [i.e., the foundation by European missionaries of schools in Aleppo], Athanasius Dabbas, a pro-Catholic metropolitan who had studied printing in Rumania, established the first Arabic printing press within the Ottoman Empire in Aleppo by 1706. It remained in operation for about a decade before opposition from the orthodox faction led to its transfer to Mount Lebanon in 1720.

In making these statements, Masters cites a single source: "Muhammad Raghib al-Tabbakh, *Aʿlam al-nubala bi-taʾrikh Halab al-shaba* [*sic*], reprinted edition (Aleppo, 1977), vol. III, pp. 247–48". Unfortunately, his source had it all wrong, as the situation was contrary to what he claimed: towards 1711, Athanasios Dabbās was deemed too Orthodox-inclined by his disciple and apprentice at the Aleppo press ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir, who decided to part ways with the metropolitan of Aleppo

173 Ibid., p. 57.

174 J. L. Sharpe, "Books and Book-making", in Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, vol. 1, t. 1, London and New York, 1998, p. 159.

and establish a new press in Ḫinšāra, on Mount Lebanon, at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist (attached to the Melkite Greek Catholic Church after 1724).

Brill's *Encyclopedia of Islam* provides incorrect information in the entry dedicated to *Maṭbaʿa*, where we find the statement, based on Joseph Nasrallah's *L'imprimerie au Liban* (1948), that in "Sinagovo"[175] the prince of Wallachia "Constantin Bassaraba Brancoveanul" installed "an Arabic press which edited numerous liturgical books in Arabic" and "seems to have ceased production in 1704" – all information to be corrected, as I shall explain below.[176]

While ground-breaking in terms of the research of the features of Arabic types and their evolution, Emanuela Conidi's latest contribution to the field, published in a book edited by Titus Nemeth in 2023 (to which I shall return),[177] still gives an imprecise idea about "the Arabic types used in two liturgical publications produced by Dabbās in the monastery of Snagov, near Bucharest, before moving to Syria."[178] In reality, the two books were produced in two different printing presses of Wallachia, one in the Monastery of Snagov (the Book of the Divine Liturgies, 1701), the other in Bucharest (the Horologion, 1702). The information that Antim the Iberian had "no knowledge of Arabic"[179] is only partially correct: he learned the Arabic alphabet when living in Jerusalem in his youth, as I shall explain later.

Recently, Western historians of Arabic book printing have started to doubt the reliability of the information circulated by the old sources – some dating from the first decades of the 19th century – and have asserted that more research is necessary, based on documents and the direct survey of the printed books, to clarify the contribution of typographers in the Romanian Principalities to the transfer of the printing technology and expertise to the Arabic-speaking communities of the Ottoman Empire.

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175 The spelling of the Romanian placename 'Snagov' has put to the test more than one historian of book-printing: For example, "Snagof ou Synaguphu" in Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne*, col. 1182. In the current catalogue of the Vatican Apostolic Library, the entry on the 1701 Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies indicates that it was printed at "Synagobon".

176 G. W. Shaw, "Maṭbaʿa", in P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W. P. Heinrichs (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, vol. 6, 2012, p. 794–807 (on printing "In the Arab World", p. 794–799). Moreover, calling Athanasios Dabbās, on p. 796, "the Melkite patriarch of Aleppo" is inaccurate: Dabbās was, at the time he printed books, metropolitan of the Church of Antioch for the eparchy of Aleppo.

177 Emanuela Conidi, "An Approach to the Study of Arabic Foundry Type", in Titus Nemeth (ed.), *Arabic Typography. History and Practice*, Salenstein, 2023, p. 11–55.

178 Ibid., p. 43.

179 Ibid., n. 68.

The studies conducted by Romanian specialists of book history were previously hampered by the lack of knowledge of Arabic, which prevented a thorough survey of the texts contained in these books. The study of early printing needs to focus on two different features of the book, seen as a cultural item produced by human hands: the aspect of content – *what* was printed – and that of form – *how* it was printed. For an accurate description of the book, both aspects require a *de visu* survey of a copy from each print run. If specific details of the physical characteristics of the book can be recorded and described without necessarily addressing the content of the book, in comments devoted to the text, researchers cannot do without a good knowledge of the language (or languages) used in composing the book and, often, of other languages that allow them access to studies published about it.

On the other hand, Arabic books printed in the 18th century were not studied thoroughly – as contents, form, type, editors, printers, presses, dating – neither in the West nor in the East, not only because of language issues but also due to a lack of direct access to copies of the books printed in Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire, most of them missing even from the largest of European and Middle Eastern public libraries. Historians who devoted their attention to these books could often consult only one or two of them. The well-known French scholar and bibliophile Baron Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838) examined the Book of the Divine Liturgies of 1701 (Snagov) and the Horologion of 1702 (Bucharest) in the Royal Library of Paris. He then received from the French consul in Syria two of the books printed in Aleppo: The Gospel (1706) and the Book of Prophecies (1708).[180] Wahid Gdoura (Ar. Qaddūra), who chose the beginnings of Arabic printing in Istanbul and Syria as the topic of his PhD thesis,[181] discretely confesses in a footnote of the resulting book that he had only seen two of the titles printed in Aleppo: "Cette étude sera limitée, car je n'ai pu consulter de ces livres, à cause de leur rareté, que l'Évangile de 1706 et les Homélies de 1711."[182] We can

180 As discussed in Silvestre de Sacy, *Magasin encyclopédique*, t. I, Paris, 1814, p. 201, and Émile Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir, Métropolitain de Valachie", *Nouveaux Mélanges Orientaux*, Paris, 1886, p. 515–560.

181 Doctoral thesis defended at Université Sorbonne – Paris IV on January 15, 1983. The jury comprised Dominique Sourdel, president, and Dominique Chevallier and Nikita Eliseef, members.

182 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 146, n. 104. His knowledge of the history of the Church of Antioch seems to have needed some more research as well: on p. 149, he states that "it is only around 1720 that the ex-patriarch [Athanasios Dabbās] reconverted to Orthodoxy and declared war on Zakhir and the Catholic party". However, there is solid proof that Dabbās was attached to the Orthodox spirit from a much earlier date.

also conclude from Joseph Nasrallah's comments that he only surveyed a few of the books printed by Athanasios Dabbās in Wallachia and Aleppo.

A recent testimony to this situation is presented in the article "Aleppo: The first ground for Arab-European cultural encounters in the early modern period" by Otared Haidar, who found that in histories of the book, the subject of the beginnings of Arabic printing in the East remained a marginal one.[183] While historical data concerning the first books printed in the Ottoman lands has lately captured the attention of Arab academic circles, the Romanian side of the story has not been properly investigated up to now. This assertion made by Haidar is conclusive: "The history of Arab print culture that preceded the establishment of Arab press and journalism is completely absent from most of the major resources of modern Arabic literature and culture and is discussed briefly and hurriedly in the rest."[184]

Since the beginning of the 19th century, the two Greek and Arabic books printed by Athanasios III Dabbās together with the Wallachian printer Antim the Iberian and the twelve titles (in eleven volumes) printed by him alone in Aleppo after 1705 have been the focus of several brief notes written by historians of printing preoccupied with the onset of modernity and the relations between the Arabic-speaking Christians and Orthodox Christians of Eastern Europe. The first records concerning these books were given in old catalogues and works of famous bibliographers. Among the first was Christian Friedrich von Schnurrer[185] (1742–1822), a theologian, Oriental scholar, and historian of early printing, chancellor of the University of Tübingen, whose annotated catalogue *Bibliotheca Arabica* (Halle, 1811) became an inescapable resource for the field, despite its shortcomings and lacunae. Another such bibliographer was Alexander George Ellis (1858–1942), a curator in the Department of Oriental Books and Manuscripts of the British Museum (before the transfer of the book collections to the British Library), who composed, together with Alexander S. Fulton and others, the *Catalogue of Arabic Printed Books in the British Museum*. A third was Émile Picot, a French scholar and bibliophile (1844–1918)[186] who provided in his essay "Notice

183 In *Journal of Semitic Studies*, *Supplement* 28, 2012, p. 127–138. This is a special issue published by the Oxford University Press: *From Ancient Arabia to Modern Cairo: Papers from the BRISMES Annual Conference 2009, The University of Manchester*.

184 Otared Haidar, "Aleppo: The First Ground for Arab-European Cultural Encounters", in *From Ancient Arabia to Modern Cairo: Papers from the BRISMES Annual Conference 2009, The University of Manchester*, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Supplement 28, 2012, p. 129.

185 Quite often, he was mistakenly named in subsequent sources "Schnürrer", including by Joseph Nasrallah.

186 Picot worked as a secretary for Charles I, the King of Romania, in 1866-1867, then a vice-consul

biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir, Métropolitain de Valachie" a thorough presentation of Antim the Iberian's printed works, including the two Greek and Arabic books printed in Snagov and Bucharest.

A few of the books printed in Arabic with help from the Romanian Principalities were recorded in the monumental *Bibliografia românească veche* (*BRV*, the descriptive catalogue of the *Early Romanian Printed Books*), observing the rigorous scientific methodology developed for this work of utmost importance for the history of the Romanians' written culture. The descriptions included in *BRV* I relied on the Greek version of the bilingual Book of the Divine Liturgies of 1701 (Snagov) and the Horologion of 1702 (Bucharest). Here, excerpts of the Greek texts were transcribed, followed by the translation done by Constantin Erbiceanu, an erudite Romanian scholar of Greek language and literature.[187]

Some of these books were also surveyed by Fr Cyrille Charon (Kiril Korolevskij), a Greek Catholic monk born in France, professor at the 'Saint John Chrysostom' Patriarchal College in Beirut.[188] He wrote theological comments and bibliographical descriptions of the Arabic books printed by Antim the Iberian with Athanasios Dabbās in his works *Le rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites, Alexandrie – Antioche – Jérusalem*[189] and the *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites (Alexandrie, Antioche, Jérusalem) depuis le schisme monophysite du sixième siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, t. III. *Les Institutions. Liturgie, hiérarchie, statistique, organisation, listes épiscopales*.

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of France in Timișoara (South-Western Romania). An expert in Latin and Romanian studies, he was a professor at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in Paris between 1875 and 1909. See Cécile Folschweiller (ed.), *Émile Picot, secrétaire du prince de Roumanie. Correspondance de Bucarest, 1866–1867*, Paris, 2020.

187 Excerpts from the first Greek version published by Constantin Erbiceanu in *BOR*, 13, 1889–1890, p. 531–539, were reproduced by Alexandru Papadopol-Calimach in his report "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", *AARMSI*, S. II, t. 18, 1895–1896, p. 141–144.

188 Born on December 16, 1878, in Caen, France (d. April 19, 1959, in Rome), Jean François Joseph Charon adopted the name 'Cyril' in Beirut in 1902, when he was ordained to the priesthood by Cyril VIII, the Patriarch of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church. In 1908, while residing in Rome, he applied to join the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church headed by the Metropolitan Andrei Szepticky, receiving the approval in October 1909. Having settled in Rome, he worked at the Vatican Library and was a consultant of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide. Under the names 'Cyrille Charon' and 'Kiril Korolevskij'/'Karalevsky', he published several works that soon became fundamental sources for the history of the Eastern Churches and Christian Arabic culture. He opposed the Latinization and total subordination of the Eastern Catholic churches united with Rome, as revealed by his essay "L'Uniatisme. Définition. Causes. Effets. Étendue. Dangers. Remèdes", published in *Irénikon – Collection*, 1927, 5–6, p. 129–190.

189 Pr. Cyrille Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites, Alexandrie – Antioche – Jérusalem*, Rome, 1908.

It is worth mentioning here the exceptional role that this erudite historian of the Eastern Churches played in the distribution of knowledge of the Arabic books printed with help from the Romanian Principalities. In 1923–1924, Charon sojourned in Bucharest, where he was in contact with Nicolae Iorga and other prominent Romanian historians. His friendship with Ioan Bianu, the director of the Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest, allowed them to pursue a substantial research work on the books printed in Romanian lands.

Ioan Bianu was the organizer and director of the Library of the Romanian Academy between 1879 and 1935, and a great specialist in early printing in the Romanian lands. Until 1928, he taught the history of Romanian literature at the University of Bucharest. He devised a vast program of recording and describing the books printed within the borders of the Romanian Principalities and launched a multi-volumes series of books that contain the richest scientific bibliography of Romanian printing, intended as a "national bibliography of Romania". Published in five volumes in 1903–1944, this monumental work that received the title *Bibliografia românească veche* (commonly known as *BRV*) provides a complete, systematic, and illustrated catalogue of the books printed in the Romanian territories since the very beginning of printing, in 1508, until modern times (1830). Since the publication of this series, the books printed in present-day Romania between 1508 and 1830 are called 'CRV', *carte românească veche*, i.e., 'Romanian early printed books' (labelled as such in Romanian catalogues and bibliographies). Bianu's academic cooperation with Cyrille Charon on the latter's journeys to Romania is evoked in the outstanding autobiography of Charon published in 2006 by Mons. Giuseppe M. Croce.[190]

As reflected in the latest descriptive record of books printed in the Romanian Principalities that are now in the Vatican Library (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; below, 'BAV'), recently published by the Romanian historians of printing Anca Tatay and Bogdan Andriescu,[191] Charon's contribution to the development of the BAV collections is marked on fifty-eight Cyrillic-type books and four Greek-type books in the Romanian corpus, by means of a round stamp where his name is abbreviated 'K'.[192] Charon brought to Bucharest not only accurate information

190 Giuseppe M. Croce, *Cyrille Korolevskij, Kniga bytija moego (Le livre de ma vie). Mémoires autobiographiques*, edition and notes, t. I–V, Vatican City, 2006. For Charon's connections with Bianu (and Hodoș), see t. III, p. 506, n. 1028, 537, n. 1096, 591, n. 1221, 592, 596, 599, 805, n. 1662.
191 Anca Tatay and Bogdan Andriescu, *Carte românească veche și modernă la Roma, în Biblioteca Apostolică Vaticană (sec. XVII–XIX). Catalog / Libri romeni antichi e moderni a Roma, nella Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (sec. XVII–XIX). Catalogo* (*Studi e testi*, t. 546), Vatican City, 2021.
192 Alongside a 'T' for Cardinal Eugène Tisserant (1884–1972), librarian and head of the BAV Archives. See Tatay and Andriescu, *Carte românească veche și modernă la Roma*, p. 27

concerning the first Arabic books printed in Ottoman Syria but also rare books that enriched the collections of B.A.R. Bucharest.[193] On May 3, 1913, while presenting to his colleagues of the Romanian Academy one of the books printed by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch in Iași (in 1746), recently donated to the Library by Fr Cyril Charon, Ioan Bianu, the director of the B.A.R., declared that "on the existence of an Arabic press in Iași we had no knowledge until now."[194] Charon's confidence in the bibliographical work carried out in Romania is also worth noting. He used the descriptions of the *BRV* for the books that he had no access to: for example, that of the Greek and Arabic Horologion printed in 1702 at Bucharest.[195] Charon was the first theologian with an expert knowledge of the history of the Eastern Churches – and the Greek and Arabic liturgical literature composed in them – who carefully studied the books printed in Wallachia and Moldavia for the Arabic-speaking Christians in the 18th century. His research was cited by most of the subsequent historians of Arabic printing.

Marcu Beza (1882–1949) was a Romanian diplomat who traveled far and wide in the Middle East and collected information and items connected to the traces of Romanian culture preserved in those parts of the world.[196] He mentioned the Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities in his works "Biblioteci

("Introductory Study" by Anca Tatay) and the relevant entries on these books.

193 He received in exchange at least one book from the collections of the Library of the Romanian Academy, now in the collections of the Vatican Library: a copy of the *Tomos Charas* printed at Râmnic in 1705, at the press of Antim the Iberian. See ibid., p. 16, 30, and 357–359 (description of the catalogue item).

194 Ioan Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 35, 1912–1913, p. 114.

195 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites*, p. 103, n. 2.

196 Of Macedonian origin, Marcu Beza graduated from the University of Bucharest in 1908, and pursued his studies in London and Oxford (from 1909 to 1914). Born in a wealthy family, he traveled on his own expense in the Balkan countries, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Mount Athos, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Mount Sinai. He continually sought traces of the Romanians' presence and contribution to the cultures of the Eastern peoples and Christian communities. He pursued an outstanding diplomatic career: he was consul general of Romania to Great Britain in 1920–1933, cultural counselor of the Romanian Legation in London in 1920–1932, and, from 1933, consul general of Romania in Jerusalem. He taught Romanian language and literature at King's College, London, in 1920–1932. He published several books in Romanian and even more in English: *Papers on the Rumanian People and Literature*, London, 1920; *Paganism in Roumanian Folklore*, London and Toronto, 1928; *Shakespeare in Roumania*, London, 1931; *Lands of Many Religions: Palestine, Syria, Cyprus and Mount Sinai*, London, [1934]; *Byzantine Art in Roumania*, New York and London, 1940; *Bessarabia and Transylvania, an Explanation. With Five Maps*, [London], [1940]; *Frontiers of Rumania. With two maps*, London, 1941; *Achievements of the Small Nations*, [London], 1943; *The Rumanian Church*, London, 1943; *Heritage of Byzantium*, [London], 1947.

mănăstireşti în Siria, Atena şi insula Hios" ("Monastic Libraries of Syria, Athens, and the Island of Chios") and *Urme româneşti în Răsăritul ortodox* (*Romanian Traces in the Orthodox East*).[197]

In Bucharest, Constantin I. Karadja (d. 1947), a passionate bibliophile and researcher of the early printed books, published in 1940 the coat of arms of the Brâncoveanu family printed in the Aleppo Psalter of 1706, from the copy of the B.A.R. Bucharest, in the chapter devoted to *Die alte rumänische Buchdruckerkunst* in *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst*.[198]

On the basis of information collected from the works of Cyril Charon, Christian Fr. von Schnurrer, Abel Couturier, and several catalogues of old Arabic books composed by Paul Sbath and Louis Cheikho, the German scholar of Oriental studies Georg Graf mentions some of the books printed in Arabic by Athanasios Dabbās in the first volume of his massive *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*,[199] while in volume III, when presenting Dabbās's activities as a patriarch of the Church of Antioch, he includes a brief passage on his printing works.[200]

Dan Simonescu (1902–1993), one of the major historians of early printing and written culture in Romania, studied the topic of Arabic printed books to which Antim the Iberian contributed, especially after 1930 when, following in the footsteps of his professor Ioan Bianu, he started surveying the documents and early Arabic books in the collections of the B.A.R. Bucharest.[201] To understand the Arabic texts included in these books, Dan Simonescu later addressed the Syrian priest Emil Murakade (Ar. Muraqqada), who had come to Bucharest from Damascus on a grant from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch to study theology at the University of Bucharest.[202] Residing in Romania for thirteen

197 Marcu Beza, "Biblioteci mănăstireşti în Siria, Atena şi insula Hios", *Academia Română. Memoriile Secțiunii Literare*, S. III, t. 8, 1936–1938, p. 11; Marcu Beza, *Urme româneşti în Răsăritul ortodox*, p. 163–165.

198 Constantin I. Karadja, "Die alte rumänische Buchdruckerkunst", in *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst*, Leipzig, 1940, unnumbered plate.

199 Graf, *GCAL* I, p. 633–638.

200 Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 128, with a reference to the first volume of this series.

201 See Virgil Cândea, "Contribuția Profesorului Dan Simonescu la istoriografia imprimeriei arabe", in *Centenar Dan Simonescu. Cartea și biblioteca. Contribuții la istoria culturii românești*, Bucharest, 2002, p. 182–184.

202 See Ioana Feodorov, "La Damasc, în căutarea unui prieten al României: Părintele Emil Murakade", *Tabor*, 2015, 5, p. 74–81. Recently, Răzvan Bucuroiu has started preparing, under my supervision, a PhD thesis devoted to Emil Murakade's life and works in Bucharest and Damascus, in order to shed light on the cultural outcomes of his Romanian sojourn.

years, Murakade came to master Romanian so well that he was able to translate literary and theological texts both from Romanian into Arabic and vice-versa.[203]

Simonescu and Murakade surveyed together the six Arabic books held at the B.A.R. Bucharest. Simonescu declared that in 1935, after Ioan Bianu died, he found 'in a safe in his office' Arabic sources and printed materials concerning the Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities, which he could only research after that date.[204] In 1939, the first fruit of the collaboration between Simonescu and Murakade appeared, with the publication of a jointly-authored essay in the academic series *Cercetări literare*: "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea" ("Romanian Printing for the Arabs in the 18th Century").[205] The Appendix begins, on p. 15, with the following note by Dan Simonescu: "The following translations and abstracts are the work of my collaborator Mr. Emil Muracade of Damascus, sent by the Patriarchate of Antioch for higher education at the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest". Simonescu placed in the Appendix the descriptions of four books in the B.A.R. Bucharest, which were composed by Murakade. These books had been 'placed in storage by I. Bianu" and then given to Simonescu by Gheorghe Țițeica, general secretary of the Romanian Academy, to be described and included in *BRV* IV. They were: the Gospel printed in Aleppo in 1706, first edition (p. 15–16), and the one bound two years later, in 1708, with the financial support of Hetman Ivan Mazepa (p. 17–18); the Oktoechos (Paraklitiki), Aleppo, 1711; Nektarios, the patriarch of Jerusalem, *The Rule of Justice and the Transmission of Truth*, and Eustratios Argentis, *Manual against the Roman Popes' Infallibility*, printed together in one volume in 1746, in Iași. The descriptions and translations made by Emil Murakade were included in *BRV* IV.[206] Beside citing the 1939 article in every note dedicated to an Arabic book, Dan Simonescu explicitly

203 In 1946, Emil Murakade returned to Syria, where he served as a priest at the Maryamiyya Cathedral of the Greek Orthodox in Damascus. In 1967, he was the general secretary of the Patriarchate of Antioch. Three pages written by him and signed in green ink, which are attached to the Aleppo Gospel of 1706 in the collections of the B.A.R., attest his good knowledge of the Romanian language. Virgil Cândea met Murakade in Damascus in 1967 and noted that he still spoke Romanian fluently (cf. V. Cândea, "Contribuția Profesorului Dan Simonescu la istoriografia imprimeriei arabe", p. 182–184).

204 Dan Simonescu, "Cărți arabe tipărite de români în secolul al XVIII-lea (1701–1747)", *BOR*, 82, 1964, 5–6, p. 540, n. 44.

205 Dan Simonescu and Emil Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", in *Cercetări literare publicate de N. Cartojan*, Bucharest, t. III, 1939, p. 1–14, with an Appendix on pp. 15-26 and facsimiles on p. 29–32.

206 *BRV* IV, p. 32–34 (CRV 154A and 155A), p. 38–40 (CRV 161A), and p. 61–67 (CRV 250C and 250D).

mentioned Murakade's contribution at the end of the description dedicated to the book of Nektarios and Argentis (Iași, 1746).[207]

Emil Murakade's descriptions of the Arabic books printed in the 18th century held in Bucharest have remained the most accurate and detailed available in printed form. According to Dan Simonescu, his work together with Murakade lasted for only a brief time, 1938-1939. Murakade is most likely the one who in 1938 helped professor Simonescu get connected with the Syrian historian ʿĪsā Iskandar al-Maʿlūf, who sent him his important article "Maṭbaʿa rūmāniyya al-urṯūḏuksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā" ("A Romanian Printing Press [for] the Antiochian Arab Orthodox"),[208] which he had published in Damascus.[209] Translated by Murakade into Romanian, this article provided professor Simonescu with rich information previously unknown in Romania, since al-Maʿlūf had surveyed the Arabic forewords of several books that were not held in Romanian collections. Murakade possibly helped the professor to obtain access to other Arabic resources, some containing illustrations, such as the photo of the Patriarch Sylvester's signature in Greek and Arabic published by Simonescu in "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIIIe siècle".[210] Together, they supplemented and corrected the (approximate and scattered) information collected from the old sources, such as the above-mentioned works by Christian Fr. von Schnurrer, Alexander George Ellis, Émile Picot, and Cyrille Charon. Dan Simonescu revisited the topic of printing for the Arab Christians two decades later, rephrasing the information given to him by Murakade in a more elaborate and accurate version for his article "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis".

For the young Syrian who arrived in Bucharest in his formative years, working alongside Dan Simonescu was a real training period. He had the chance to form a close relationship with the intellectual and ethical model that this exceptional scholar embodied, not only for him but for several generations of Romanian historians of printing and written culture.

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207 The article signed together with Murakade was later republished by Dan Simonescu as "Cărți arabe tipărite de români în secolul al XVIIIlea (1701–1747)" in *BOR*, 82, 1964, 5–6, p. 524–561.

208 This is one of the sources mentioned by Dan Simonescu in his article "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIIIe siècle", *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, 1967, V–VI, p. 55, n. 21, and p. 61, n. 42, but his translation of its title, "La typographie arabe de la Roumanie orthodoxe à Antioche", is inaccurate.

209 In *Al-Niʿma* (journal of the Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch), 1911, 3, p. 44–56.

210 Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIIIe siècle", p. 49–75. See also the notes in the study of Simonescu and Muracade "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", and the details in *BRV* IV.

The studies published by Dan Simonescu with Emil Murakade's help became a classical resource for the historians of Arabic printing, both in Romania and abroad. Simonescu is often cited in foreign publications whose authors addressed the transfer of the printing techniques to the Arab East, as I shall discuss below. In Romania, all the authors who devoted a few pages or lines to this topic cite Simonescu's works.[211]

Between 1982 and 1985, three works marked the advances in the knowledge of early printing in Arabic: the catalogue of the exhibition *Le Livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900* coordinated by Camille Aboussouan (Paris, 1982), Josée Balagna's book *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident (XVI^e^, XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles*) (Paris, 1984), and the published form of Wahid Gdoura's PhD thesis, *Le Début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie: Évolution de l'environnement culturel (1706–1787)* (Tunis, 1985).

Prepared in 1982 for the 'Nicolas Ibrahim Sursock' Art Museum in Beirut, the exhibition *Le Livre et le Liban* was relocated to Paris as a consequence of the insecure situation in Lebanon. Under the direction of Camille Aboussouan, the permanent delegate of Lebanon to UNESCO in Paris, the exhibition was opened in the presence of Jack Lang, the French Minister of Culture. The event presented to the French public the history of the written and printed culture of Lebanon and neighboring countries by means of an exceptional collection of exhibits: manuscripts, printed books, maps, letters, engravings, book illustrations. The items were created either in large centers of calligraphy of the Syriac and Arab scribes, or in Western European scriptoria and presses, and later in Lebanon, in either Muslim or Christian milieus. Considered a major cultural event in France, the exhibition lives on in the memory of both the French and the Lebanese audiences.[212] Its catalogue, a collection of studies dedicated to the manuscript works and printed books of the Eastern Mediterranean countries, became a much sought-after book because of the expert comments it contains, authored

211 For example: Diac. asist. Ioan Rămureanu, "Luptător pentru ortodoxie", *BOR*, 74, 1956, 8–9, especially p. 836–853; Pr. Ilie Gheorghiță, "Tipografia arabă din Mănăstirea Sfântul Sava și venirea lui Silvestru, patriarhul Antiohiei, la Iași", *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, 34, 1958, 5–6, p. 418–423; Florența Ivaniuc, "Tipar de carte bisericească pentru arabi în vremea domnului Constantin Brâncoveanu", *BOR*, 94, 1976, 7–8, p. 792–797.

212 For example, here is the first paragraph of the *Préface* contributed by Marie-Renée Morin to Josée Balagna's book *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, on p. 9: "En 1982, nous furent rappelés nos liens séculaires avec l'Orient méditerranéen. Deux grandes expositions: *Le Livre et le Liban* et *l'Orient des Provençaux* nous remirent en mémoire nos relations économiques et culturelles, relations dont les réussites, aléas et péripéties se retrouvent à travers la grande aventure de l'imprimerie en arabe tentée par des Occidentaux."

by Georges Skaff, Jean Salem, Jean Ferron, Henri Dalmais, Sobhi Mahmassani, Camille Aboussouan, Donatella Nebbiai, Jean Aucagne S. J., Gérald Duverdier, Nasser Gemayel, Paul Khalil Aouad, and others. The Romanian historian Virgil Cândea (d. 2007), one of the chief coordinators of the exhibition, contributed to the catalogue with a text that highlights the connections between the Romanians and the Arabic-speaking Christians: "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumanolibanais par le livre et l'imprimerie" (on p. 283–293).[213]

Possibly not entirely unrelated to this event in Paris, in 1984 Josée Balagna published in her book a record with commentaries of the Western books printed in Arabic type from 1514 to the end of the 18th century, which she studied at the National Library of France in Paris (Bibliothèque nationale de France).[214] Presented as an appendix to her work, the list of books described by Balagna on p. 135–146 (mentioning the BnF shelfmark of each item) allows a comprehensive picture of the printing activities in Western Europe, including all the major presses in Rome, Leiden, Milan, Paris, London, Antwerp, etc.

Author of a PhD thesis devoted to the beginnings of printing in the East, Wahid Gdoura followed in the footsteps of Josée Balagna and studied the same collection of books held by the BnF in Paris. He added to his research, published in French, a great number of Arabic sources, mostly published in Middle Eastern journals. In 1985, Gdoura published a second version of his book in Arabic, with a few additions and improvements. He reorganized his conclusions, with supplementary details, in his work "Le Livre arabe imprimé en Europe: une étape importante dans les relations Orient-Occident (1514–1700)", a contribution to the volume of studies collected by him together with Angela Nuovo, Maurice Bormans, and Abdeljellil Temimi, *Études sur le dialogue interculturel euro-arabe: les premiers ouvrages publiés en arabe en Occident*, Zaghouan and Riyad, 1993, p. 7–33.

Joseph Nasrallah presented the Lebanese contribution to printing in Syriac and Arabic type in his book *L'imprimerie au Liban* (Beirut, 1948). Opened by a foreword by Charles Corm, the book was published under the aegis of the Lebanese UNESCO Commission. In it, Nasrallah discusses the activity of the Aleppo press, providing minimal information on the books printed there by Athanasios Dabbās,

213 On Virgil Cândea's research carried out in Lebanon and published works connected to the artistic and literary heritage of the Antiochian Christians, see Ioana Feodorov, "Through the Looking-Glass. Remembering the First Exhibition of Melkite Icons at the Sursock Museum in Beirut, May–June 1969", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 339–358.

214 A similar endeavor, but much more limited in scope and richly illustrated, is that of Mariette Atallah in her essay "Early Arabic Printing in Europe" published in *MELA Notes*, 2018, 91, p. 43–67.

without any mention of the Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities. Later, based on Dan Simonescu's articles, Nasrallah included brief notes concerning the books printed in Snagov, Bucharest, and Iași in his work *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'église melchite du V^ème^ au XX^ème^ siècle*.[215]

Anṭuwān Qayṣar Dabbās (Antoine César Dabbās), a descendant of the Beirut branch of the Patriarch Athanasios III's family, published together with Naḫla Raššū a monograph devoted to the life and works of his illustrious relative, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq. Al-Baṭriyark Aṭanāsīyūs al-ṯāliṯ Dabbās, 1685–1724* (Beirut, 2008).[216] An attempt to record and describe the books printed at the Aleppo press is presented on p. 102–105, with some inaccuracies and lacunae, mostly resulting from the unawareness of the relevant Romanian sources. Otherwise, the book provides information from a direct source on the works written and printed by Athanasios Dabbās, the family archive and collection of manuscripts and printed books, including, at the end, an interesting genealogical tree.

An exceptional source of information for the topics that I am discussing in the present work are the catalogues of collections preserved in monasteries across Lebanon and Syria. One of them is the *Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts of the Ṣaydnāyā Monastery* (*Waṣf li-l-kutub wa-l-maḫṭūṭāt. Dayr Sayyida Ṣaydnāyā al-baṭriyarkī*), published in 1986 by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus. Eight copies of the first Arabic books printed for the Antiochian Christians with support from the Romanian Principalities are recorded in this catalogue.

The need to shed light on the first Christian Arabic books printed in Snagov, Bucharest, and Iași with Romanian printing tools preoccupied Virgil Cândea for many years. This preoccupation drove him on Lebanese and Syrian roads, looking for copies of these rare books in collections and monasteries of the Byzantine-rite churches. In several of his published works, he presented the conclusions of his research on early Arabic printing, underlining the essential role that printers in the Romanian Principalities, and first of all Antim the Iberian, played in the transfer of the printing expertise to the Christian East. His surveys of Middle Eastern archives, libraries, and collections allowed him to make significant discoveries in

215 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 14–15, 17–25; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 144–146; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 87–89. See also Joseph Nasrallah, "Les imprimeries melchites au XVIII^e^ siècle", *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, XXXVI, 1986, fasc. III–IV, p. 232–241.

216 See my review of this book in *RESEE*, 46, 2009, 1–4, p. 362–364 (accesible online at www.resee.ro).

connection with the relations between the Romanians and the Arabic-speaking Orthodox, which he commented in many of his published studies.[217]

I addition to these resources, a certain number of documents are held by the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest which help researchers to understand the background of the visits that the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch made in the Romanian Principalities, his connections with rulers and upper clergy in Iași and Bucharest, and especially the circumstances for his securing the Monastery of Saint Spyridon (the Ancient) as a metochion of the Church of Antioch from the prince of Wallachia Constantin Mavrocordat in 1746. As this metochion came together with income from the lands, orchards, and shops that belonged to the monastery, this event had significant consequences for the Antiochian Christians. It also helped the patriarch advance his printing project, since an important activity connected to the manufacture of Arabic type took place there. Fr Vasile Radu, a passionate researcher and translator of Christian Arabic texts, recorded the letters and documents preserved in Bucharest that reflect the results of Patriarch Sylvester's residence in Moldavia and Wallachia in the mid-18th century. In his article "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei,"[218] he defines the features of Patriarch Sylvester as an Orthodox scholar, presented his printing activities, cited the Arabic foreword of the books that he printed in Iași, and describes two items that remained in Bucharest after his travels: an Arabic and Greek inscription on the front wall of the Church of Saint Spyridon, recalling the circumstances of its consecration in 1747, and an icon of the patron saint of the church, presented by the Patriarch Sylvester to the parish on the same occasion.

As I mentioned above, a collection of Greek letters exchanged by the Patriarch Sylvester with Moldavian and Wallachian clerics, boyars and their wives was kept for a long time in the Library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus.[219] This manuscript, whose record in the library inventory

217 Virgil Cândea, "Une politique culturelle commune roumano-arabe dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle", *Bulletin de l'AIESEE*, 3, 1965, 1, p. 51–56; Virgil Cândea, "La culture roumaine et le Proche-Orient", in *IIIe Congrès International d'Études du Sud-Est Européen. Histoire, B 2. Relations culturelles du Sud-Est européen avec le monde méditerranéen et Pontique. Co-rapports*, Bucharest, 1974, p. 54–71; Virgil Cândea, "Beginning with 1701: The Romanian–Lebanese Dialogue through Books and Printing", *Studia et Acta Orientalia*, 1983, 11, p. 26–33, reedited (revised and improved) as "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumano-libanais par le livre et l'imprimerie", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 283–293.

218 Pr. Vasile Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și Patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", *Revista istorică română*, 1933, 3, p. 11–31.

219 In 1860, the archive of the Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus suffered a severe fire. Some of the documents survived, including the manuscript discussed here.

is labelled 'Doc. Arabe nr. 71', was mentioned for the first time by Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, who cited a letter dated February 10, 1739, addressed by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch to the *stolnic*[220] Roset of Wallachia.[221] Fr Vasile Radu mentions this collection in his above-mentioned article, where he expresses his opinion that "No. 71 in the collection of Arabic manuscripts at the Patriarchate of Antioch still needs to be surveyed."[222] His note relied on several articles consecrated to Patriarch Sylvester's biography by the Archimandrite Clement Karnapas, published in vols. I-II, 1905–1907, of *Nea Sion*, the journal of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem.[223]

Marcu Beza saw the MS no. 71 while in Damascus around 1936, when the patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch kindly left at his disposal for a few days "two eighteenth-century Greek manuscripts: one by Athanasios Dabbas, *History of the Antiochian Patriarchs* – and the second containing the letters of the patriarch Sylvestrus".[224] Thus, he he had the privilege of seeing the manuscript codex that contained Greek letters exchanged by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch and several princes and boyars of the Romanian Principalities before and after his travels to Iași and Bucharest (1735–1749).[225] In his book *Urme româneşti*

220 The *stolnic* (< Sl. *stolnik* < *stol*, 'table') was an officer of the court in the Romanian Principalities, a boyar in charge of the prince's table.

221 Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Hierosolymitikē Vivliothēkē ētoi Katalogos tōn en tais vivliothēkes tou Hagiōtatou Apostolikou te kai Katholikou Orthodoxou Patriarchikou Thronou tōn Hierosolymōn kai Pasēs Palaistinēs apokeimenōn hellēnikōn kōdikōn*, t. 4, Saint Petersburg, 1899, p. 203–218.

222 Radu mentions that there was also preserved a *Record of the Grants Collected during His Travel by Sylvester of Antioch* (*Catastihul ajutoarelor bănești strânse în călătoria lui Silvestru al Antiohiei*). See Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și Patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 28, n. 5.

223 The secrets of the Damascus manuscripts collection were unveiled by the exceptional work of Ronney el Gemayel, Léna Dabaghy and Mona Dabaghy in "Les manuscrits du Patriarcat Grec-Orthodoxe de Damas dans l'Histoire de Joseph Nasrallah et Rachid Haddad. Index et concordance avec le catalogue d'Élias Gebara", in Željko Paša (ed.), *Between the Cross and the Crescent. Studies in Honor of Samir Khalil Samir, S. J., on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, Rome, 2018, p. 223–276. Unfortunately, as the letters I am referring to were written in Greek and are probably recorded at the library as archival material, not manuscripts, they were not included in this survey.

224 Beza, *Heritage of Byzantium*, p. 72. In Beza, *Urme românești în Răsăritul ortodox*, on p. 164, a photo shows HH the Patriarch of Antioch Alexander III Ṭaḥḥān holding these two manuscripts in his left hand.

225 These letters were seen or mentioned by several scholars before him: Ghenadios M. Arabazoglu, *Fōetieios Vivliothīkī*, Constantinople, t. II, 1935, p. 168–169 (letter of October 1748); Marcu Beza, "Biblioteci mănăstireşti în Siria, Atena şi insula Hios", p. 7, 11–15; Beza, *Urme românești în Răsăritul ortodox*, p. 163–165 (including the reproduction of a letter); Virgil Cândea,

în Răsăritul ortodox (*Romanian Traces in the Orthodox East*) he mentions a letter sent by the prince Grigore Ghica to the Patriarch of Antioch Cyril V (reproduced in a photo),[226] and several correspondents of Patriarch Sylvester: Smaragda, the wife of the prince of Wallachia Matei Ghica; the prince Grigore II Ghica; Ștefan Racoviță, the prince of Moldavia; Ana, a boyar's wife, etc. The Romanian historian Teodor G. Bulat published a passage from a letter where mention is made that the *protosyncellos* Makarios, sent by Patriarch Sylvester from Damascus, arrived at the court of Mihai Racoviță, the prince of Moldavia, carrying a message dated June 10, 7260 (i.e., 1751 AD).[227] This manuscript is proof that after 1750 the Patriarch Sylvester continued to correspond with several princes, boyars, and bishops in the Romanian Principalities, aiming to keep an eye on their support – financial and diplomatic – for the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch.

Based on the minimal information he could find in the above-mentioned sources, Virgil Cândea searched for MS no. 71 in the library of the Greek Orthodox patriarchate in Damascus, when he traveled to Syria in 1969 and 1970. He learned that it was still kept in the library of the Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch but could not obtain a list of the letters it contained.

One of Karnapas's sources was an autograph codex of the Patriarch Sylvester, composed between 1724 and 1730, which was recorded under no. 124 in the library of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Patriarchal Collection).[228] In 1932, Nikolaos S. Phirippidēs published in *Ēpeirōtika Chronika* a Greek note handwritten by the Patriarch Sylvester in the opening of this manuscript (f. 19v): "Here is an account of our patriarchal term, our residence, and the lands of Rumelia and

"Sources roumaines et grecques dans les bibliothèques du Proche-Orient", *Bulletin de l'AIESEE*, 8, 1970, 1–2, p. 74 (reprinted in Virgil Cândea, *Histoire des idées en Europe du Sud-Est (XVII^e–XVIII^e siècle)*, Bucharest, 2018, p. 287–297); *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 86.

226 Nicolae Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, II. *Lettres des Patriarches d'Antioche aux Princes Roumains du XVIII^e siècle*, Bucharest, 1939, p. 31–55 (Greek text), 57–82 (Romanian translation); Beza, "Biblioteci mănăstireşti în Siria, Atena şi insula Hios", p. 7, 11–15; Beza, *Urme româneşti în Răsăritul ortodox*, p. 163–165 (with photos of three letters written in Greek).

227 Teodor G. Bulat, "Din documentele Mănăstirei Văratec", *Arhivele Basarabiei*, 6, 1934, 1, p. 93–94. Constantin Bobulescu's conclusion, relying on this text, that Sylvester was in Iași in 1751 does not seem correct; see Constantin Bobulescu, "Iașii la 1402 în legătură cu aducerea moaștelor sfântului Ioan-cel-Nou de la Suceava", *Revista Societății Istorico-Arheologice Bisericești din Chișinău*, 24, 1934, p. 33–34, n. 3.

228 Papadoupolos-Kerameus, *Hierosolymitikē Vivliothēkē ētoi Katalogos*, vol. 1, p. 203–218, online at: https://www.google.be/books/edition/Hierosolymitik%C4%93_biblioth%C4%93k%C4%93/C4YqAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.

the East that we journeyed through and we celebrated the Holy Easter in".[229] In a letter contained in Codex no. 124, Patriarch Sylvester thanks Grigore Ghica, the prince of Wallachia, for having granted 500 piasters to the monastery of Kykkos on the island of Cyprus, the patriarch's birth place.

In terms of sources preserved in Levantine collections, one of the most useful for my research of Arabic early printing in the East was presented for the first time by Rachid Haddad in his text published in 2006 "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī, secrétaire du patriarche d'Antioche Sylvestre de Chypre."[230] From the letters preserved in this manuscript, labelled as MS no. 9/22 in the catalogue of the library of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate in Homs (today located in Damascus),[231] Haddad excerpted some passages that he published in French translation and commented on from a historical point of view.[232] Fortunately, despite the terrible situation in Syria over the past decades, I succeeded in acquiring a scan of this manuscript and surveyed it for the research I am presenting in this book.[233] The essential information gleaned from the letters exchanged by the patriarch's secretaries and disciples is that at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, Arabic type was manufactured in 1747–1748, while the Patriarch Sylvester resided there, and two years later their creator, and his creations, left for Syria and were used in a new press in Beirut. This precious source confirms the claims found in Romanian documents about the contribution of the printers of Wallachia and Moldavia to the transfer of printing technology and first tools for Arabic books to

229 Nikolaos S. Phirippidēs, "Episkepsis tōn Iōanninōn hypo tou patriarchou Antiocheias Silvestrou", *Ēpeirōtika Chronika*, 1932, 5, p. 117–118.

230 Rachid Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī, secrétaire du Patriarche d'Antioche Sylvestre de Chypre", in Pierre Canivet and Jean-Paul Rey-Coquais (eds.), *Mémorial Monseigneur Joseph Nasrallah*, Damascus, 2006, p. 257–288.

231 Haddad states that the manuscript was held at the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus. Originally in Homs, it was transferred to Damascus, along with the Patriarchate's entire library, after he studied it in 1969. See Philexinos Yuhanon Dolabani, René Lavenant, Sebastian Brock, and Samir Khalil Samir, "Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Patriarcat Syrien Orthodoxe à Homs (auj. à Damas)", in *Parole de l'Orient*, 1994, 19, p. 597. I am grateful to Fr Ronney el Gemayel for this reference.

232 Mention should be made that Rachid Haddad also contributed with information collected from documents at the Antiochian Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus to the work that he prepared together with Joseph Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire de l'Église melkite*, vol. IV, t. 2, where Nasrallah had presented his research on documents in the Vatican Library and Lebanese collections. See Ioana Feodorov, review of *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite du V^e^ au XIX^e^ siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne, t. VI*, in *RESEE*, 60, 2022, 1–4, p. 357–360.

233 I am immensely grateful to Fr Meletios Shattahi, who helped me obtain this copy.

the Ottoman provinces of the East, and especially to Beirut – a totally novel field in Romanian historical research.[234]

Although the Arabic texts contained in Antim the Iberian's books were never studied with the same scientific tools as the other productions of his extensive typographic work, interest in the Greek-Arabic books he printed remains high among specialists of early printing in Romania. In his work *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*, Dan Râpă-Buicliu added the information published by Dan Simonescu, Fr Ilie Gheorghiță, and Virgil Cândea long after the *BRV* was completed.[235] Information on the Greek-Arabic books of Antim the Iberian, relying on the above-mentioned sources, was also included in works published over the last couple of decades by Ana Andreescu, *Cartea românească în veacul al XVIIIlea*,[236] Daniela Luminița Lupu, *Tiparul și cartea în Țara Românească între 1716 și 1821*,[237] Anca Elisabeta Tatay and Cornel TataiBaltă, *Xilogravura din cartea românească veche tipărită la București (1582–1830)*,[238] etc.

In his books published over the last two decades, Doru Bădără includes important comments about the technical aspects of the cooperation between Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās in printing Christian Arabic texts. His works *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVIIlea şi începutul secolului al XVIIIlea*[239] and *Antim Ivireanul și caracterele exotice în istoria tiparului românesc*[240] are crucial for the domain addressed in the present book.

A few Arabic historical works brought to the attention of Middle Eastern researchers the books printed in Aleppo at the press of Athanasios Dabbās in 1706–1711. While commenting on the social and cultural evolution of the Middle East in the final period of the Ottoman rule, great intellectuals of the Nahḍa

234 As the letters he exchanged in 1989 and 1991 with Virgil Cândea reveal, Rachid Haddad intended to present four letters from this collection at a conference that my father planned in Bucharest for the autumn of 1991, but which never took place. These letters are preserved in my family archive.

235 Dan Râpă-Buicliu, *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*, with a foreword by Dan Simonescu (written in 1990), Galați, 2000.

236 Bucharest, 2004.

237 Iași, 2009.

238 Cluj-Napoca, 2015.

239 Doru Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Brăila, 1998.

240 Doru Bădără, "Antim Ivireanul și caracterele exotice în istoria tiparului românesc", in *Antimiana: antologie de studii, comunicări și articole*, Râmnicu-Vâlcea and Bacău, 2012, p. 280–294.

pointed to the adoption of printing as an element of progress.[241] This topic received more attention from the academia after 1900. The source cited most frequently is the article published in 1911 by ʿĪsā ʾIskandar al-Maʿlūf (1869–1956), "Maṭbaʿa rūmāniyya al-urṯūḏuksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā" ("A Romanian Printing Press [for] the Antiochian Arab Orthodox"). Louis Cheikho published a series of articles in *al-Machriq*,[242] which were used by Nasrallah in his book *L'imprimerie au Liban* (1948) and other works. Al-Maʿlūf is the most cited Arab historian who wrote about printing in Syria and Lebanon. Although more than a century old, and practically unfinished (a promised second part was never published), this article of his became a reference for anyone wishing to discuss printing in Arabic for the Christians of the Middle East. ʿĪsā ʾIskandar al-Maʿlūf's library contained nearly 1,200 manuscripts and more than 20,000 books (*al-Ḫizāna al-Maʿlūfiyya*), and it welcomed the scholars who visited his home in Zahle, in the Beqāʿa Valley, as Samar Mikati Kaissi (Associate University Librarian for Archives & Special Collection, University Libraries, AUB) explained in a conference held at the AUB on December 1, 2022. It is most fortunate that al-Maʿlūf's archive and library were rescued and are in the process of inventorying and survey with the American University of Beirut, in a joint project with the British Library.[243]

In his book published in Cairo in 1966, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Šarq al-ʿarabī* (2nd ed.), Ḫalīl Ṣābāt discusses the late adoption of printing in the Middle East, presenting several reasons that influenced Ottoman society to reject it for a long time. The Christians' efforts in printing books for their liturgical and spiritual necessities are marginally addressed. The chapter dedicated to the "Birth of Printing in Syria, 1706–1867 [*sic*]" covers a mere six pages, two and a half of them dedicated to the press of Athanasios Dabbās.[244] After the Aleppo press, the next moment recorded by Ṣābāt is 1841, when the Sardinian printer Belafonti moved to Syria and started printing by lithography, not with movable type. He only printed a few books, and among them, a Psalter.[245] This information is correct,

241 For example, Ǧirǧī Zeydān, *Tārīḫ ʾādāb al-luġat al-ʿarabiyya*, Cairo, t. IV, 1914, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *ʾUdabāʾ al-ʿArab fī al-Andalus wa-ʿaṣr al-Inbiʿāṯ*, Beirut, 1937.

242 Lūwīs Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", *Al-Machriq*, 1900–1906, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22.

243 This joint project, carried out at AUB by Samar Mikati, Elie Kahale and Basma Chebaneh, is described at: https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP1423. See also the current stage of the digitization in the Digital Collections of the AUB: https://libraries.aub.edu.lb/digital-collections/.

244 Ḫalīl Ṣābāt, "Našʾat al ṭibāʿa fī Sūriyā", in id., *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Šarq al-ʿarabī*, p. 101–107.

245 The first book printed by Belafonti was the *Dīwān* of Ibn al-Fāriḍ. See Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", *Al-Machriq*, 3, 1900, 2, p. 357; Ṣābāt, "Našʾat al ṭibāʿa fī Sūriyā", p. 104; Partington, "Arabic Printing", p. 68.

since after Aleppo there was no other printing venture in the Ottoman provinces of the Eastern Mediterranean lands before 1841 – whether with movable type or otherwise. The foundation of other presses, as mentioned by this author, are: Dūmānī's press, Damascus, 1855; the Maronites' press, Aleppo, 1857; the government's press, Damascus, 1864; the *Furāt* journal press, Aleppo, 1876. The author then moves to the period 1868–1918.

Oussama Anouti includes in his work *al-Ḥaraka al-'adabiyya fī balad al-Šām ḫilāla al-qarn al-ṯāmin 'ašar* (Beirut, 1971) a brief subsection dedicated to printing (*al-Ṭibāʿa*, on p. 45–47), extracting information from the works of Cheikho and Nasrallah.

Several articles published after 1990 by Arab historians about one or another aspect of the printing activities in Eastern Mediterranean lands after 1700 rearranged the previously published information, without adding any contribution to the field.[246] They repeat, in broad lines, information that was already known to the academic public, together with some of the errors that plague this research.[247] Although apparently these "recent articles on the topic use the archives of the eastern churches and European consulates in Aleppo to document in detail a journey taken in 1698 by Ithnasius (Ithnāsiyūs) Ibn al-Dabbās al-Ḥalabī, the head of the Eastern Church of Aleppo" (i.e., Athanasios III Dabbās, patriarch of the Church of Antioch, but not in that period – *my note*)," there is no historical evidence whatsoever for Suhayl al-Malāḏī's assertions that "the Wallachian prince Constantin Brâncoveanu helped Dabbās open a press in Bucharest" and it produced "a large number of religious books".[248]

In the past two decades, especially in European countries (other than Romania), a few books, articles, and exhibitions have put Arabic printing on the map of academic topics. Several well-known experts in the culture of Ara-

246 Suhayl al-Malāḏī, "'Āṣimat al-taqāfa al-'islāmiyya wa-'ūlā al-maṭābiʿ al-'arabiyya", *Al-tūrāt al-'arabiyy*, 26, 2006, 103, p. 103–108; Suhayl al-Malāḏī, *Al-Ṭibāʿa wa-l-ṣiḥāfa fī Ḥalab*, Damascus, 1996; Mahā Faraḥ Ḫūrī, "Ḥalab iḥtaḍanat 'awwal maṭbaʿa bi-l-'aḥruf al-'arabiyya fī-l-Mašriq", *Tišrīn*, November 11, 2006. They are all mentioned by Haidar, "Aleppo: The First Ground for Arab-European Cultural Encounters", p. 129, n. 3, 4, and 6.

247 For example, on printing in the Romanian Principalities, Mahā Faraḥ Ḫūrī's sources are the above-mentioned articles by 'Īsā 'Iskandar al-Maʿlūf (1911) and Louis Cheikho (with more erroneous information in her version of things, such as the fact that "*al-Aflāq* or *al-Aflāḫ* forms, together with *Al-Buġdān*, the present state of Romania" (ibid., p. 104, n. 4). There is no need to mention here that modern Romania was formed by the union of five historical provinces: Wallachia, Moldavia, Bessarabia, Bukovina, and Transylvania, and the final act was the Great Union of December 1, 1918.

248 In "'Āṣimat al-taqāfa al-'islāmiyya wa-'ūlā al-maṭābiʿ al-'arabiyya", p. 103.

bic-speaking Christians have focused, in their published works, on historical or theological aspects of their printing activity – and its outcomes. Part of this research was done by consulting the few copies of Arabic books printed in the 18th century that survive in European libraries. All these contributions to the history of printing in Arabic for the Levantine Christians are important sources that I have considered in writing this book. A preliminary conclusion is, however, that historians of the Arabic printed book are generally interested in Middle Eastern presses and printed material produced in the 19th–20th centuries, for which local sources – and surviving copies of the books – are easier to find.[249]

Between October 2001 and January 2002, the Bibliothèque nationale de France presented to the Parisian public a splendid exhibition at its Richelieu site and published a richly illustrated catalogue where the history of writing, as preserved both in manuscripts and printed books, was surveyed from the earliest times until modern times. The evolution of writing, from the emergence of paper factories and scriptoria to that of the printing presses, was followed relying on exhibits from all epochs and locations. While the main focus was on the vast manuscript collections of the library, a section was dedicated to printed books, addressed in the catalogue – *Livres imprimés* – on p. 162–175. Here, the reader is informed that:

> Une imprimerie avait été créé en 1701 à Bucarest. [...] Elle avait été installée grâce à l'action du patriarche melkite d'Antioche, Aṭanāsiyūs Dabbās, lors de son séjour en Valachie et témoignait des bons rapports entre orthodoxes roumains et catholiques syriens.[250]

To be precise, the first Arabic book was printed in Snagov in 1701, the second in Bucharest in 1702. The workshop was not an 'Arabic press', but a Greek/Romanian/Slavonic press where Arabic type and other typographic implements were

249 When one searches the word 'printed' in the outstanding online resource *Biblia Arabica. The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Bibliography of the Arabic Bible*, entries are generally connected to the modern Arabic presses of the Middle East and the books they printed, for example: Jean-Baptiste Belot, "Maṭbūʿāt šarqiyya" ("Eastern Printed Material"), *Al-Machriq*, 46, 1952, 4, p. 501–512 (Abstract: "A Survey of recent [*sic*] printed materials in the East, including the Bible of 1950 produced by the Catholic Press in Beirut"); Antoine ʿAwdū, "Al-Kitāb al-Muqaddas: Maṭbaʿat al-'ābā al-dūmīnīkān fī al-Mawṣil (1875–1878)", in *Tarǧamāt al-kitāb al-muqaddas fī al-šarq: buḥūṯ bībliyya muhdāt ilā Lūsiyān ʿAqqād/Bible Translations in the East: Biblical Researches Presented to Lucian Accad*, Beirut, 2006, p. 43–52 (Abstract: "Investigation of the history of the Arabic edition of the Bible printed by the Dominicans in Mossul [1875–1878] and its translation strategies").

250 Annie Vernay-Nouri, "Livres imprimés", in Guesdon and Vernay-Nouri (eds.), *L'Art du livre arabe. Du manuscript au livre d'artiste*, p. 167.

manufactured for these two books. Athanasios Dabbās did not help install any printing press in Wallachia; he was granted the approval and support for printing two books in local presses. As for the 'good relations between Romanian Orthodox and Syrian Catholics', the Church of Antioch was still one, as this all happened before 1724, the year of its division into the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch and the Melkite Greek Catholic Church of Antioch. Speaking of 'Catholic Syrians' is somewhat untimely for the early 18th century, and especially in connection with Athanasios Dabbās, an Antiochian metropolitan of Aleppo when visiting Wallachia, where he was seen by his hosts as firmly attached to Orthodoxy.

In 2002, on the occasion of an exceptional exhibition devoted to the *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution. A CrossCultural Encounter* organized at the Gutenberg Museum of Mainz (Germany), Eva Hanebutt-Benz, Dagmar Glass, and Geoffrey Roper (in collaboration with Theo Smets) composed a catalogue in German and English, the most diverse and richest illustrated record ever published about printing in Middle Eastern languages and types. Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper dedicated a chapter to "The Printing of Arabic Books in the Arab World". Here, the activity of the Aleppo press is covered in a brief passage.[251] The authors cite Georg Graf's opinion that the Arabic type used by Athanasios Dabbās "originated in the printing press of the monastery of Snagov near Bucharest" during the rule of Constantin Brâncoveanu (but the printer who manufactured them, Antim the Iberian, is not mentioned). Other opinions regarding the source of Dabbās's type are also evoked, including their manufacture by 'Abdallāh Zāḫir. The authors cautiously conclude with regard to the source of the Arabic type of the Aleppo press that, "Until no new sources are found, or the respective printed editions are examined by typography experts familiar with Eastern languages, this will remain an open question." Then follows an overview of the printing activities in Ḫinšāra. For Beirut, the first press mentioned dates from 1834. No printing activity in Beirut in the 18th century is acknowledged.[252] As a matter of fact, owing primarily to the scarcity of extant copies, the books printed at the Beirut press of the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Saint George have remained almost unknown until recent days.

In September 2017 – January 2018, the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA) in Paris hosted a great exhibition dedicated to *Chrétiens d'Orient. 2000 ans d'histoire*.[253] In

251 Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World. Part. I: The Printing of Arabic Books in the Arab World", in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, p. 177–226, here, at p. 178–179.

252 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 191.

253 Subsequently transferred to the MUba Eugène Leroy in Turcoing, in February – June 2018.

one of the halls there were several exhibits connected to Arabic printing, including the punches that Robert Granjon used for an Arabic Gospel book printed at the Medici Press in Rome (1580–1586). Bernard Heyberger included a paragraph concerning the Arabic books printed by Athanasios Dabbās in his contribution to the exhibition catalogue.[254]

Bernard Heyberger had already addressed the topic of printing in Arabic in several published works. In his well-known book *Les chrétiens du ProcheOrient au temps de la Réforme catholique (Syrie, Liban, Palestine, XVI^e^–XVIII^e^ siècle*), he mentions on p. 439–440, in Chapter 14, *Une réforme pour le clergé régulier*, subchapter *Des moines missionnaires*, three presses, including that of Athanasios Dabbās, with a brief presentation of its activity. Printing in Arabic is discussed in several other sections in connection with the books printed in Western Europe for the Latin missionaries and the Melkite Greek Catholic press of Ḫinšāra.[255] In a subsequent article that he devoted to this topic in 1999, "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens (Syrie, Liban) XVII^e^–XVIII^e^ siècles",[256] he comments on the Arabic books printed in Western Europe that reached the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Levant and their influence on local spiritual life and theological thinking. Comments on the Levantine scholars' contribution to printing in Italy are also present in his essay "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity" (Leiden – Boston, 2021).[257]

Printing for the Arabic-speaking Christians has also been discussed by Carsten-Michael Walbiner in several articles over the last few decades. He discussed the Christians' role in introducing printing to the Ottoman Empire[258] and the Melkites' attitude towards printing in the 17th – early 18th centuries.[259] Walbiner

254 Bernard Heyberger, "Transformations religieuses et culturelles à l'époque Ottomane, XVI^e^–XIX^e^ siècle", in Raphaëlle Ziadé (dir.), *Chrétiens d'Orient. 2000 ans d'histoire*, Catalogue d'exposition, Paris, 2017, p. 120.

255 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du ProcheOrient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 93, 141, 144, 149–150, 187, 189, 238, 250, 406, 407, 469, 470, 475.

256 Id., "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens", p. 211–212.

257 See also Bernard Heyberger, *Hindiyya, mystique et criminelle (1720-1798)*, Paris, 2001, p. 54–58, and "Réseaux de collaboration et enjeux de pouvoir autour de la production de livres imprimés en arabe chez les chrétiens (XVII^e^ – début XVIII^e^ siècle)", in Girard, Heyberger and Kontouma (eds.), *Livres et confessions chrétiennes orientales*, p. 381-412.

258 Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of Book-Printing in the Arab World", in Klaus Kreiser (ed.), *The Beginning of Printing in the Near and Middle East: Jews, Christians and Muslims*, Wiesbaden, 2001, p. 11–12.

259 Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Some Observations on the Perception and Understanding of Printing amongst the Arab Greek Orthodox (Melkites) in the Seventeenth Century", in Philip Sadgrove (ed.), *Printing and Publishing in the Middle East*, *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement*,

also briefly describes and comments on a few of the books printed by Athanasios Dabbās in Aleppo and ʻAbdallāh Zāḫir in Ḫinšāra.[260]

Constantin A. Panchenko, in his book *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans 1516–1831* (translated from the original Russian by Brittany Pheiffer Noble and Samuel Noble),[261] mentions printing in Arabic a few times, in connection with the efforts of Athanasios Dabbās to print the essential liturgical books of the Antiochian Church, the anti-Orthodox polemical works later printed by ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir in Ḫinšāra, and the opening of an Orthodox press in Beirut around 1744 with support from the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch.[262] The author dedicates a subchapter to "A Duel of Printing Presses", where he briefly describes the Arabic printing activities in Western Europe, then moving to Wallachia, with an imaginary portrait of the erudite scholar, preacher, and printer Antim the Iberian, later elected a metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, whom he defines as "an extremely colorful personality."[263] Although part of the information on the Romanian side of the story and the Aleppo press is inaccurate and insufficiently supported by historical facts, this could be considered one of the first attempts to underline the role of printing in Arabic for the Antiochian Christians in Ottoman times.[264]

Information on Arabic printing in the 18th century did not get any clearer with time: Ahmed El Shamsy, in his recent book *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics. How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 2020), makes the following assertions:

> When books in Arabic finally began to be printed in the eighteenth century [in the Middle East – *my note*], the technology was initially used either by non-Muslim communities (such as the Levantine Christians, whose presses were, however, financed by European donations, not indigenous demand), or for the printing of secular texts. Islamic literature continued to

2008, 24, p. 65–76; Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Melkite (Greek Orthodox) Approaches to the Bible at the Time of the Community's Cultural Reawakening in the Early Modern Period (17th – early 18th Centuries)", in Sara Binay and Stefan Leder (eds.), *Translating the Bible into Arabic: Historical, Text-critical and Literary Aspects*, Beirut and Würzburg, 2012, p. 53–61.

260 Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Die Protagonisten des frühen Buchdrucks in der arabischen Welt", in Ulrich Marzolph (ed.), *Das gedruckte Buch in Vorderen Orient*, Dortmund, 2002, p. 128–141, and "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of Book-Printing in the Arab World", p. 20–21, 24–27 (brief description of early Arabic books printed in the Middle East).

261 Jordanville, 2016.

262 See p. 395, 457–458, 489.

263 On p. 485.

264 See my article dedicated to this book in *RESEE*, 57, 2019, 1–4, p. 333–349.

> be reproduced exclusively by hand. It was only in the nineteenth century – parallel to the rise of a new readership – that printing presses also began to produce Islamic literature.[265]

It is worth commenting on the author's assertion about the "indigenous demand" that did not "finance" the Levantine Christians' printing presses: first, there was considerable demand for liturgical and prayer books in all churches of the Ottoman Levant, and second, if 'demand' means here 'income from sales', we need to recall that books printed in the 18th century in the Romanian Principalities, Aleppo, and Beirut, were distributed for free and never sold.[266] Moreover, the Aleppo press did not function only with European donations, nor did the one in Beirut, where the printing workshop at the Monastery of Saint George, the first in the city, opened thanks to a local sponsor, as I explain below. After mentioning the "printing of secular texts", i.e., the books printed by Ibrahim Müteferrika (as the author indicates in note 9), El Shamsy apparently suggests that Islamic literature started being printed in the 19th century only because a new readership had emerged. In fact, not printing any Islamic texts was the condition on which Müteferrika was allowed to get his press going, and it was not the absence of a readership that prevented him from printing Islamic literature. Otherwise, his book is rich in interesting comments on and new interpretations of the Muslim readership and reception of Arabic printed literature after 1800.

Another recent contribution to the topic is based on a unique source published in 1908, from which inaccurate and vague information is extracted: "The Greek Catholic Community and its Collective Memories. Religious Orders, Monasteries and Confessional Dynamics in Lebanon", by Rodrigo Ayupe Bueno da Cruz (*Anthropology of the Middle East*, 17, 2022, 2, p. 30–47). While remarking that the printing press there "represents modernity and Arab nationalism in Lebanon", the author believes that "the Chouerite Order evokes a profane memory through its printing press" (p. 32). How "profane" a rich corpus of Christian Arabic liturgical and polemic books printed for the Melkite Greek Catholics of Mount Lebanon could have been seems unclear to me. On the same page, the false idea is repeated that "the first Arabic printing press in the Middle East" was "located in the central Chouerite convent". Later, the author sums up the inconsistent and unsubstantiated information that circulated over a century ago:

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265 Ahmed El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics. How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition*, Princeton, NJ, 2020, p. 65.

266 The author cites, in support of his statement, Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of Book-Printing", p. 11–12.

> The printing press in Arabic letters was built in Lebanon by Abdallah Zaher, a Greek Catholic priest from Aleppo. He created the press in conjunction with Father Fromage, a French priest. At the time, Zaher was the superior of the Jesuit mission in the Levant and raised funds for the press donations [*sic*] from Europe and French merchants residing in Lebanon. Initially, priests put the equipment imported from France in the Greek Catholic convent of Antoura, in Zouk Mikael. However, soon afterward, it was transferred to *dayr mar yūḥannā*, in Khenchara, to provide more extensive facilities for the operation of this Arab press (Bacel 1908: 281–287).[267]

For the overconfident assertion that the equipment of Dayr al-Muḫalliṣ was "imported from France" no proof is provided, except Bacel's statement.[268] I also believe it is inappropriate to place this outstanding achievement of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir and his press on the same level of interest as the winery of the monastery, like this author apparently does:

> While the Salvatorian Order has concentrated its touristic activities on devotion to Abūnā Bshara, the Chouerite Order emphasizes its Printing Press Museum to visitors. Also, another profane attraction in *dayr mar yūḥannā* [*sic*] is the *Cave du Monastère Saint-Jean* winery, one of the most important wine producers in the country.[269]

Before 2000, historians of the Oriental printed book did not pay much attention to the aspect of the particularities of Arabic script, which were among the greatest difficulties that the first printers who manufactured Arabic type confronted, as recent research has started to reveal.[270] This situation did not only involve Arabic printing, but also the other languages that use Arabic script, such as Persian, Ottoman Turkish, Kurdish, Urdu, Malay, etc. With few exceptions, Arabic characters have four graphic forms depending on their position in a word. Even if some of the characters look similar in all four forms, for others, the graphic appearance

267 Ayupe Bueno da Cruz, "The Greek Catholic Community and its Collective Memories", *Anthropology of the Middle East*, 17, 2022, 2, p. 41.

268 Paul Bacel, "Abdallah Zakher et son imprimerie arabe", *Échos d'Orient*, 11, 1908, 72, p. 281–287.

269 Ayupe Bueno da Cruz, "The Greek Catholic Community and its Collective Memories", p. 41–42.

270 Huda S. Abifares, *Arabic Typography: A Comprehensive Sourcebook*, London, 2001; Thomas Milo, "Arabic Script and Typography: A Brief Historical Overview", in John D. Beery (ed.), *Language, Culture, Type: International Type Design in the Age of Unicode*, New York, 2002, p. 112–127; Thomas Milo, "Arabic Typography", in Lutz Edzard and Rudolf de Jong (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, Brill online, *s.v.*; Roper, "Early Arabic Printing in Europe", p. 140; Orlin Sabev, *Waiting for Müteferrika: Glimpses of Ottoman Print Culture*, Boston, 2018, p. 106–107.

is quite different. Moreover, Arabic script also developed additional signs for marking gemination (a double consonant), short vowels, and the indefinite character of nominal elements – the *tanwīn*. In handwriting, when copying a manuscript, there is no problem to observe the particularities of *scriptio plena*, i.e., to mark all the elements that make up an Arabic word: the consonantal root with its semantic content, and added vowels (*a*, *i*, or *u*, short or long) whose combination according to Classical Arabic schemes (*wazn*, pl. *'awzān*) leads to the creation of different meaningful units of language.[271] In printing, as a rule, only the consonants and long vowels are written, and short vowels quite seldomly, generally only in order to avoid ambiguity in Islamic texts (Qur'ān, Ḥadīṯ) or poetry. This is, for example, the case with the passive voice, where the vowel *u* placed after the first consonant indicates the correct verbal form. Auxiliary signs, such as the *šadda* (for gemination), *sukūn* (marking the absence of a vowel), etc., will only be marked in a very carefully prepared book, meant for a religious or administrative use. Most often, because of proofreading and technical difficulties, they are absent from the printed page. Proceeding from the dispute between the supporters of the traditional ways and those of reforming the Arabic press, the famous Oriental scholar Jean Sauvaget offered a summary of the difficulties of printing in Arabic in an essay, "Suggestions pour une réforme de la typogaphie arabe",[272] where he formulated practical solutions in a way that could lead to an agreement of the conflicting views.

The study of the Arabic cast type was the focus of the thesis submitted in 2017 by Emanuela Conidi for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication, University of Reading: *Arabic Types in Europe and the Middle East, 1514–1924: Challenges in the Adaptation of the Arabic Script from Written to Printed Form* (unpublished, 334 pp.). As I mentioned before, Conidi published a condensed version of her dissertation in the essay "An Approach to the Study of Arabic Foundry Type" published in 2023. Although the focus of this essay was not the corpus of books printed in the 18th century in the East, but rather more the production of Western European presses and that of the workshops of Istanbul (Müteferrika) and Beirut in the 19th century, this contribution to the history of Arabic type is an important source for the survey of books printed in Snagov, Bucharest, Aleppo, Ḫinšāra, and Beirut before the 1800s. The rigorous, state-of-the-art methodology that Conidi devised and applied to other types of printed materials than the Christian Arabic books produced in the East

271 See the explanation of the particular features of Arabic (and Hebrew) script in Suarez, Oxford, 2013, p. 13.

272 Published posthumously in *Revue des études islamiques*, 1949, 22, p. 127–133.

would bring great benefits to the research of this corpus. A careful and precise description of the type used in each of the TYPARABIC project corpus entries will surely yield important information on the renewal of the Arabic types and their transfer from one press to another.[273]

In recent years, Titus Nemeth has published several important works in connection with Arabic typography. He contributed to the above-mentioned collection of essays (that he also edited) a study dedicated to "The typography of the *Naḥdaḥ*" (p. 229–309), where he sheds light on the essential role of printing in the progress of the Levantine societies in the 19th century, while explaining the technicalities of Arabic letterforms and typeface based on a wide range of printed matter, mostly produced at the press of Müteferrika in Istanbul and the Būlāq press in Cairo.[274] In 2022, for the collection of essays edited by Scott Reese for De Gruyter, Titus Nemeth contributed a ground-breaking essay devoted to the typographic skills required of Arab typographers and the complex technicalities of printing with Arabic type: "Overlooked: The Role of Craft in the Adoption of Typography in the Muslim Middle East".[275] Moreover, note should be taken of his book *Arabic Type-Making in the Machine Age. The Influence of Technology on the Form of Arabic Type, 1908–1993* (Leiden, Brill, 2017) which, although dedicated to 20th century aspects of the Arabic typography, includes important sections for the research of Arabic type in general, such as, in Chapter 1, "Aspects of the Arabic Script" (p. 14–22) and "The Typographic Representation of the Arabic Script" (p. 22–26).

In broad lines, the focus of the present book – and the TYPARABIC project – is on printed books. However, surveying manuscripts also comes within our tasks, as they are witnesses of the successive versions of texts that came to be printed, they reveal the stages of the historical development of a Christian text, and they sometimes chronologically come *after* a book that was printed, as proof of the

273 A database containing the Arabic types used in samples of printed books from the Romanian Principalities, Aleppo, Ḫinšāra, and Beirut is under construction by several members of the TYPARABIC project team. Once the elements are scanned and placed in a comprehensive table, comparing their features will become easier.

274 The first Arabic press in Egypt, after the short-lived French one installed by Napoleon's administration at Alexandria (1798–1801), was active starting in 1822 in the Būlāq quarter of Cairo, on a piece of the Naval Artillery land overlooking the right shore of the Nile. See Khaled ʿAzab and Ahmed Mansour, *Bulaq Press*, Cairo, 2005; Ahmed Mansour, *The Arabic Printed Book: From Origins to Bulaq Press*, Cairo, 2008; Ahmed Mansour and Mohamed Hassan, "Digitizing Historical Arabic Typography: Bulaq Press Contributions", *Égypte/Monde arabe*, 2, 2020, 22, p. 32–39; El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*, especially p. 65–75.

275 In Reese (ed.), *Manuscript and Print in the Islamic Tradition*, p. 21–60.

need to augment the number of available copies that parish priests or the ordinary faithful required at a given moment. Therefore, the reader of this book will find references to Georg Graf's *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*[276] and several Arabic manuscripts catalogues published in Lebanon in recent years.

One of the most important developments in recent years is the emergence of an exceptional source for the research of manuscripts *and*, as it turns out, printed books: the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (HMML) and its Virtual Reading Room (vHMML). Here, several kinds of materials are of utmost interest for the researcher of early Arabic printing in the East: first, entire printed books, or book fragments, which ended up in manuscript codices, catalogued as such, sometimes preserving copies of lost books; second, 'binder's waste', i.e., printed sheets that remained behind at the press storeroom and were used by binders when making covers for other (content-unrelated) books[277] – again, a chance to recover lost printed books; third, manuscripts that are relevant to the production of printed materials, such as the texts used in preparing books (rarely preserved, in general), or polemical epistles written by opposing actors in the cultural life of the Eastern Churches.

This rapid overview of the researchers of early Arabic printing in the East reveals the scattered and insufficient amount of information on the Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities and later in Aleppo, Ḥinšāra, and Beirut that is available in catalogues, books, and articles published over the last two centuries. Although part of this information was accurately repeated from the first descriptions of books provided in 19th- century sources, the lack of access to copies of the printed books and to the languages required for this research – Arabic, Greek, Romanian – generated a mass of unverified data and imperfect conclusions. Until now, the focus has been on early printing in Arabic in Western Europe and the 19th-century Arabic presses established by various missionary movements in the Middle East after 1800. The Eastern European contribution to printing in Arabic for the Christians of the Church of Antioch has only been addressed by a few Romanian historians of early printing who did not master the Arabic language and only published in Romanian.

276 Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Vatican City, I, 1944; II, 1947; III, 1949; IV, 1951; V, 1953. For non-German-speakers, an Italian translation of a section of Graf's work is now available: *Storia della letteratura araba christiana. Volume II, tomo 1: Gli scrittori melchiti, maroniti, nestoriani fino alla metà del XV secolo*, translated from German by Paola Pizzi, Bologna, 2018 (and *Volume II, tomo 2* under work).

277 See Eric Marshall White, "The Gutenberg Bibles that Survive as Binder's Waste", in Wagner and Reed (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*, p. 21–35.

My purpose in writing this book is to explain the contribution of the Romanian Principalities to the initiation of printing in Arabic, with Arabic type, in the Middle East and to present a descriptive record of the books printed in the 18th century in Snagov, Bucharest, Iași, Aleppo, and Beirut, owing to a collaboration between salient figures of the Church of Antioch and several Wallachian and Moldavian princes and printers. The theological and art historical aspects fall to the responsibility of other members of the TYPARABIC project team. The Advanced Grant that I received from the European Research Council within the Horizon 2020 Program and which I am now directing has allowed me to survey sources and – most importantly – copies of the printed books that form the corpus of this project by visiting the collections that hold such rarities, east and west, and acquiring recently printed books and journals that are essential sources for the entire team's research.

Although the story of Arabic printing in Western Europe and the Istanbul presses has been presented in published books and articles, the contribution of the Wallachian and Moldavian printers, metropolitans, and princes to the Arabic-speaking Christians' efforts to master the art of printing has remained in the shadows. With up-to-date research tools and the benefit of an easier access to relevant information, I have embarked on the mission to present, for the first time, the adventure of Arabic type and printing expertise travelling from the Romanian Principalities to Aleppo, where Arabic book-printing only started to develop in the first decade of the 18th century, soon extending to Lebanon.

2 Arabic Book-Printing in the East Before 1700

2.1 Middle Eastern Societies Facing the Novelty of Printing: Hesitations and Obstructions

Gutenberg printed his famous Bible two years after the troops commanded by Sultan Mehmet II conquered Constantinople in 1453. Within the Ottoman Empire's new frontiers, the discussion about printing did not begin in 1455 but much later, when the new technology was already widespread across Europe and had covered a lot of ground. The British expert in communication sciences Elizabeth Eisenstein states that: "The theme of printing as proof of spiritual and cultural superiority, first sounded by Rome in its crusade against 'illiterate' Turks, was taken over by German humanists trying to counter Italian claims".[1] Muslims were not unaware of the Western typographic achievements: discussions took place, especially in the 17th century, between the (open-minded) supporters and (conservative) adversaries of this revolutionary craft that had, for an Islamic society attached to its own traditions of transmitting the sacred message, quite different implications than in the European societies. At first, the Muslim scholars (*'ulamā'*) may have feared that this invention of the unbelievers (*kāfirūn*) would lead to a distortion of the holy scriptures of Islam. Any religious innovation was liable to suspicion of disrespect to Islam, or even heresy (*bid'a*).[2] As Antoine Galand states in his preface to Barthélemy d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*,

> Pendant que Scaliger vivait, on avait imprimé à Rome les œuvres d'Avicenne en Arabe, un Commentaire sur Euclide, et une Géographie [...]. Mais ces Ouvrages ne furent pas imprimez dans l'intention que ceux qui apprenaient l'Arabe parmi nous en profitassent. [...] Mais, on fit cette grande dépense dans la vue de faire commerce en Levant de ces Livres, dessein qui échoua d'abord, parce que les Mahométans ne voulurent pas recevoir les exemplaires qu'on leur porta. En effet, ils craignaient que dans la suite, on ne leur introduisit l'Alcoran imprimé, ce qui aurait été regarde chez eux comme la plus grande profanation qui pouvait arriver à ce Livre, qui n'est pas moins sacré chez eux que les Saint Livres de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament le sont parmi nous.[3]

1 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 147.
2 Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change", p. 233.
3 Antoine Galand, "Discours pour servir de préface à la *Bibliotheque orientale*", in Barthélemy d'Herbelot [de Molainville], *Bibliothèque Orientale, ou Dictionnaire universel contenant tout ce qui fait connoître les peuples de l'Orient*, t. I, La Haye, 1777, p. XXIX.

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Galand, who travelled to the Levant and was in Istanbul at the end of the 17th century, also described this situation.

> On peut encore ajouter que les Arabes, les Persans, et les Turcs, ne peuvent goûter l'impression, quelque avantage que l'on en tire, et qu'ils aiment mieux lire les Livres de leurs Langues, écrits d'une écriture médiocre, que de les lire imprimes, quelques bine imprimez qu'ils puissent être. Cela paraîtra étrange a ceux qui ont observé et éprouvé, comme c'est la vérité, que nos Livres imprimez se lisent plus facilement et avec plus de plaisir, que les mêmes Livres écrits à la main, même les mieux écrits. [...] Quoi qu'il en soit, il est constant que ces Nations ne trouvent point d'agrément dans l'impression.[4]

The press was not the only European innovation that the Turkish society had to decide about through consultations between *'ulamā'*, court officers, and the Sultan: the new fighting techniques, arms and munitions, even clocks in public areas were, one after the other, topics of controversy. In the mid-16th century, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–1592), the Habsburg ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul, notes in his journal:

> Puisque jamais nation étrangère n'a moins eu de peine à recevoir les belles inventions des autres peuples. N'ont-ils pas incontinent pris l'usage des canons et des mousquets et mille autres choses, qui naissant chez nous, ont été chez eux très glorieusement cultivées? L'impression véritablement, et les horlogers publics, n'y ont pas été approuvées: mais la Religion s'y est seulement opposée, de peur que par l'impression leur sainte Écriture cessait d'être écriture, que par les horloges publics, l'autorité de leurs ministres et de leur sacristains ne fut en quelque façon diminuée."[5]

In the 20th century, opposition to the wondrous invention of the printing press was explained by Virgil Cândea thus:

> L'Orient traditionnel, conservateur, ne pouvait pas résister à cette fascination et à l'impératif du nouveau procédé qui, tout en « affranchissant » des centaines et des milliers de copistes, asservissait le livre à la stéréotypie, le transformant de création unique en un produit de série.[6]

The Sublime Porte manifested a certain indifference towards the circulation of Western printed matter in the territories under its control.[7] At the onset of the

4 Ibid.

5 Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *Ambassades et voyages en Turquie et Amasie*, transl. S. Gaudon, Paris, 1646, p. 342–343.

6 Cândea, "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumanolibanais par le livre et l'imprimerie", p. 283.

7 In Montenegro, for instance, a territory under Ottoman rule, Slavonic printing was present since the end of the 15th century under the influence of its Central European neighbors.

18th century, presses had developed for three centuries in countries and regions subjected to Catholic and Protestant powers. Born in Western Europe, the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants subsequently moved to the Ottoman Middle East, where missionaries from all sides used printed church books in their confrontations.[8] To this complicated situation was added the discontent of the Eastern Churches subjected to the Sultans' government with not having access to printing in Arabic, the language spoken by most Levantine Christians, and for being flooded with liturgical texts printed in the West, issued from other sources than their own theological and ritual traditions and only answering the needs of the Catholic or Protestant faithful.

It has not yet been proven that the Sultan's administration totally banned Arabic printing before the 1700's.[9] Several European witnesses claimed that this is what happened, beginning with the French Franciscan priest André Thevet (1502–1590), a traveler to the East in 1549, who notes that:

> [...] les Grecs, Arméniens, Mingréliens, Abyssins, Turcs, Persiens, Mores, Arabes & Tartares n'écrivent leurs livres qu'à la main. Ce qu'entre autres les Turcs ont pratiqué, par l'ordonnance de Baiazeth, second du nom, leur Empereur, publiée l'an quatorze cens quatre vingt & trois, portant défenses, sur peine de la vie, de n'user de livres imprimés ; laquelle ordonnance fut confirmée par Selim, premier du nom, son fils, l'an mil cinq cent quinze.[10]

Thevet was probably told a legend that circulated in Constantinople, claiming that in 1483 Bayezid II issued an order banning printing, allegedly extended

8 Sclavenitis, "Méfiance vis-à-vis du livre imprimé et emploi parallèle du manuscrit", p. 123. The author presents here examples of Orthodox readers' reactions to the Greek texts printed by Catholics. Thus, at the end of the 18th century, a monk wrote on a copy of the Λειτουργίαι τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων (Paris, 1560): "Moult et encore moult choses ont été faussées dans ces trois liturgies par ces diables de Francs, qu'ils soient maudits trois fois mille fois et pour l'éternité."

9 See Neumann, "Book and newspaper printing in Turkish, 18th–20th century", p. 227–248; Dana Sajdi, "Print and Its Discontents. A Case for Pre-Print Journalism and Other Sundry Print Matters", *The Translator*, 15, 2009, 1, p. 105–135; Orlin Sabev (Orhan Salih), "A Virgin Deserving Paradise or a Whore Deserving Poison: Manuscript Tradition and Printed Books in Ottoman Turkish Society", in Jaroslav Miller and László Kontler (eds.), *Friars, Nobles and Burghers. Sermons, Images and Prints, Studies of Culture and Society in Early-Modern Europe, In Memoriam István György Tóth*, Budapest and New York, 2010, p. 389–409; Kathryn A. Schwartz, "Did Ottoman Sultans Ban Print?", *Book History*, 2017, 20, p. 1–39. This was one of the topics discussed at the 1st conference of the TYPARABIC project in Bucharest (September 5–6, 2022). The forthcoming volume of *Proceedings* (De Gruyter, 2023) contains several texts that are dedicated to this research theme.

10 André Thevet, *Les vrais pourtraits et vies des hommes illustres grecz, latins et payens ...* , t. II, Paris, 1584, p. 514v. In 1584, Thevet was appointed by Catherine de Medici historian and cosmographer of King Henri III.

in 1515 by his son Selim I, who succeeded him (1512–1520).[11] The same ban on opening a press was mentioned by Paul Rycaut, who resided in Istanbul in 1660, and Giovanni Donado, author of a study on Turkish literature printed in 1688.

It seems that Sultan Bayezid II issued a *firman* in 1483 that mentioned printing, and its validity was extended in 1515 by his son Selim I. It was, however, only meant to limit the spread of printing and did not refer to books printed by the *ḏimmī*s, but to the Islamic ones.[12] Informed about the dissemination of books printed in other languages, the Sublime Porte was concerned about the potential distortion of the Islamic holy scriptures placed in the hands of printers who had no theological education. None of the *ḏimmī* communities had any conflicts on this matter with the Muslim authorities – the *Şeiḫ ül-islâm* or the *'ulamā'*. Therefore, the Sultan, who was responsible for his subjects' welfare, let them be. The Sultan's orders were obeyed and enforced even by qadis in the most remote eastern provinces of the empire. Nil Pektaş (Palabıyık) states that "an Ottoman *kadı* would have no direct power over the affairs of non-Muslim subjects of the Sultan, but he was still responsible for ensuring the public order for all within the district under his jurisdiction."[13] Armenians were able to print in Istanbul as early as 1567, enjoying a certain freedom of the press. For a century, they were not bothered either by the Ottoman administration or by the Catholic censorship active in Italy.[14] The Jews of Safed (Şafad), a city in the north of present-day Israel, received in 1576 the first press to have ever been active on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.[15] Brought over by Rabbi Eliezer Ben Itzak Ashkenazi, who had manufactured it in Prague and used it in Lublin and Istanbul (in 1563), it only printed, between 1577 and 1587, Hebrew texts in Hebrew type, as the Sultan's *firman* allowed. Printing in

11 For a critique of Thevet's work as a reliable source ("he was not expert in the languages or cultures of the region") and an English translation of the cited passage, see Schwartz, "Did Ottoman Sultans Ban Print?", p. 12–13.

12 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 177; Sabev, "A Virgin Deserving Paradise", p. 389–409; Schwartz, "Did Ottoman Sultans Ban Print?", p. 4, 14, 19–20.

13 Nil Pektaş, "The Beginning of Printing in the Ottoman Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul", *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları. Studies in Ottoman Science*, 16, 2015, 2, p. 9.

14 Raymond H. Kevorkian, *Catalogue des „incunables" arméniennes 1511–1695 ou chronique de l'imprimerie arménienne*, Geneva, 1986; Meliné Pehlivanian, "Mesrop's Heirs: The Early Armenian Book Printers", in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, p. 57.

15 In Arabic, 'Ṣafad', this is one of the four holy cities of the Jews, alongside Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias. It is an old center of studies dedicated to the Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism.

Hebrew type was not limited to the capital of the Ottoman Empire.[16] In the journal of his travels in the Levant (1671–1674), Johann Michael Wansleben reports that while in Izmir, in February-March 1674, he was invited by the Jewish printer and publisher Abraham Gabbai to buy his printing press.[17]

That said, however, research in the Ottoman archives has not revealed any such document or official act that specifically banned printing in the empire. In fact, the ban seems to have been purely formal. This is also the conclusion of Sinan Kuneralp: "Il semble que l'interdiction de l'imprimerie ne fut que formelle et ne paraît pas avoir été entérinée par un acte officiel. Du moins, aucun document officiel n'a été découvert à ce jour."[18]

Wahid Gdoura wrote in defense of the Sultans Bayezid II and Selim I, who did not encourage the introduction of printing in their empire at the time. Nevertheless, Gdoura recalls, they were learned people, book readers, and proficient in several languages. Selim I is also remembered as a poet.[19] Describing the state of mind of the clerical circles of Istanbul in the 17th century, Wahid Gdoura remarks that neither was the reading public ready for a free and widespread circulation of holy books, especially the Qur'ān:

> Utiliser l'art d'imprimer apparaissait aux yeux des croyants comme une trahison de l'originalité du message du Prophète. Ils craignaient que des gens suspects ou profiteurs allassent publier en de multiples exemplaires des livres religieux falsifiés et défigurés.[20]

Interestingly, this point was also raised by certain "Bishops of Belgium", as Charles White reports from his Constantinopolitan journey in 1844: "[...] a sentiment that appears to find an echo in Christian lands – for, in a pastoral letter recently issued

16 For printing in Hebrew in Istanbul, Salonica, Safed and other cities during the Ottoman rule, see the excellent essay by Yaron Ben Na'eh "Hebrew Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire", in Gad Nassi (ed.), *Jewish Journalism and Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Istanbul, 2001, p. 73–96, and, in the same volume, the extensive *Bibliography of works on* [*Hebrew*] *Journalism and Book Printing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey*, p. 115–129. See also Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut again*, p. 5; Ittai Joseph Tamari, "Notes on the Printing in Hebrew Typefaces from the 15th to the 19th Centuries", in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, p. 46, n. 52; Pektaş, "The Beginning of Printing in the Ottoman Capital", p. 10–17.

17 Alastair Hamilton, *Johann Michael Wansleben's Travels in the Levant, 1671-1674. An Annotated Edition of His Italian Report*, Leiden and Boston, 2018, p. 33.

18 Kuneralp, "Les livres et l'imprimerie à Istanbul au XVIIIe siècle", p. 2.

19 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 87–88.

20 Ibid., p. 104–105.

by the Bishops of Belgium against bad books, printing is set down as the source of the evils complained of, and devoted by implication to abhorrence".[21]

In favor of the copyists' craft, passages from the Qur'ān were invoked, which could be interpreted as commands to transmit the Prophet Muḥammad's teachings only through manuscript copies. According to Thomas F. Carter, Muslim scholars claimed that "it was against the religion and honor of Islam to allow the printing of the Koran, because the Koran rested upon written tradition, and must in no other way be handed down".[22]

When returning from the Orient, Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli (1658–1730), who was well-acquainted with the realities of the Ottoman Empire, expressed a more plausible opinion in his work *Stato militare dell'Impero Ottomanno incremento e decremento del medesimo*. He states that the Turks' preference for manuscript books had less to do with a legal ban and more to do with the cultural tradition and the legion of copyists active in the territories ruled by the Ottomans. The copyists' craft would have suffered from the wide distribution of printed books, they feared. Indeed, this is what later happened. Here is the often-cited passage:

> Les Turcs ne font point à la vérité imprimer leurs ouvrages, mais ce n'est pas, comme on le croit communément, parceque l'Imprimerie leur este défendue, ou que leurs ouvrages ne méritent pas l'impression. Ils ne veulent pas empêcher tant de Copistes, au nombre de quatre-vingt-dix mille, lorsque j'étois à Constantinople, de gagner leur vie ; & c'est ce que les Turcs ont dit eux-mêmes aux Chrétiens & aux Juifs, qui vouloient introduire l'Imprimerie dans l'Empire, pour en faire leur profit.[23]

Count Marsigli's opinions were confirmed in 1788 by Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (1740–1807), an Armenian historian and Oriental scholar who resided in Istanbul and Paris.[24] While visiting Istanbul in 1844, Charles White remarked that the local booksellers would "induce strangers to believe that the transcribers of books have their seats near the gate of the seventh heaven, and that printing presses are made from the calcined wood of Al Zacum, the dread tree of the lowest pit".[25]

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21 Charles White, *Three Years in Constantinople or Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1844*, vol. II, 2nd ed., London, 1846, p. 155.

22 Thomas F. Carter, *The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward*, 2nd ed., revised by L. Carrington Goodrich, New York, 1955, p. 151.

23 Signor Conte Luigi Ferdinando di Marsigli, *Stato militare dell'Imperio Ottomanno, incremento e decremento del medesimo*, The Hague and Amsterdam, 1732, p. 40.

24 Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Empire othoman*, Paris, t. I, 1788, p. 295–298. Antoine Galland, Ferdinand de Saussure, and Joseph de Guignes expressed similar opinions, according to Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 115, n. 161.

25 White, *Three Years in Constantinople or Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1844*, p. 155.

The manuscript codex required various talents and crafts, all endangered by the adoption of a different way of disseminating knowledge, whatever that was. Calligraphers,[26] miniaturists, binders, goldsmiths who applied the gilt coating on leather bindings, were all on the side of the opponents of this new mechanical technology.[27] They would have had to change their suppliers, their manner of negotiating, and the sellers they worked with, who were in contact with copyists' centers across the empire. To order and sell a copy of a manuscript requested by a select public was something else than to receive a large stock of printed books to be sold to a large readership.[28] Interestingly, after printing became available in the Middle East, copyists and binders continued to receive orders for manuscripts made in the traditional manner until the beginning of the 20th century. However, they would often use materials and tools imported from Western Europe, as their old suppliers had reshaped their business to suit modern requirements.[29]

Another issue was that for many centuries, through the rarity and high price of manuscript copies of the holy scriptures, access to them had been restricted to a certain class of educated people, Muslim theologians, and clerics. It was only natural that the adoption of this invention imported from Western Europe worried the *'ulamā'* of the Ottoman capital. More than a simple change in the scholars's habits, printing generated a new perception of the holy scriptures, which reflected differently the sacred character of their content. Obviously, printing brought a level of awareness accessible not only to scholars, but also to the public at large, more than had ever previously been possible in Muslim society. The transmission of religious knowledge would have acquired a "democratic" character beyond the limits acceptable to the society of Istanbul, unprepared for total submission to the winds of change blowing from the West.

"Al- Zacum" is the Tk. *zakkum*, as explained by Orlin Sabev, who identified this tree as the utterly poisonous oleander in his article "A Virgin Deserving Paradise", p. 389.

26 On the manuscript tradition and the privileges of Ottoman scribes, see Pektaş, "The Beginning of Printing in the Ottoman Capital", p. 9–10.

27 Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut again*, p. 7.

28 The transfer from the manuscript market to the book market was not smooth even in Europe. The continuity of trade and the financial survival of the "manuscript book people of Paris" depended on tenacity and luck: see Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse, "Bridging the Gutenberg Gap: the Parisian Booktrade Shifting from Manuscript to Print", in Lucien Reynhout and Benjamin Victor (eds.), *Bibliologia 46, Librorum studiosus: Miscellanea palaeographica et codicological Alberto Derolez dicata*, Turnhout, 2018, p. 335–343.

29 R. Sellheim, "Kitāb", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, vol. 6, 2012, Brill online, *s.v.*

According to the erudite Swiss writer César François de Saussure (1705–1783),[30] who travelled across the Ottoman Empire and commented in 1732 on the delay in the adoption of printing in the capital, the danger was that printing would have allowed more books to circulate than it was advisable for the Sultan's subjects to read.

From the same perspective, Paul Dumont remarked in the introduction to the volume *Turquie. Livres d'hier, livres d'aujourd'hui*:

> Si Evliya Çelebi visitait la Turquie d'aujourd'hui, c'est assurément cette production de masse, signe d'une spectaculaire démocratisation de la lecture, qui l'ébahirait le plus. Que les clercs n'aient plus le monopole des choses de l'esprit, quoi de plus inconcevable![31]

This major transformation in the access to theological knowledge, in the first place, was interpreted by certain historians as a step forward from a traditional society towards a modern one.[32] Clearly, this new type of freedom encouraged the common people to aspire to independence from authoritarian governments and regimes. By means of this new medium, revolutionary ideas detrimental to Ottoman power could easily spread across the empire.[33] Ḫalīl Ṣābāt commented on the administration's fear that the decrease in the price of books caused by printing would have made the written culture available to everyone, and that, in turn, would have helped the population attain a level of education that would encourage it to reject the despotic authority of the state.[34] Similarly, Wahid Gdoura cites a statement made by André Demeerseman (1901–1993)[35] which reveals a similar vision, globally applied:

> La raison qui incita différents gouvernements à retarder l'introduction de l'imprimerie était le maintien de leur autorité sous sa forme ancienne et ils étaient tout naturellement

30 A Swiss writer born in Lausanne, he wrote memoirs of his travels to England, Turkey, the Netherlands, and across Switzerland (1725–1740), published a century later. His remarks on the topic of printing in the Ottoman Empire are presented in *Lettres de Turquie (1730–1739)*, with parallel edition in French and Hungarian, Budapest, 1909, p. 94.

31 Dumont, *Turquie: Livres d'hier, livres d'aujourd'hui*, p. VIII.

32 Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut again*, p. 8.

33 Joseph Abou Nohra, "Les origines et le rayonnement culturel de la première imprimerie à caractères arabes au Liban (1733)", in Frederek Musall and Abdulbary al-Mudarris (eds.), *Im Dialog bleiben: Sprachen und Denken in den Kulturen des Vorderen Orients*, Wiesbaden, 2011, p. 219.

34 Ṣābāt, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Šarq al-ʿarabī*, p. 21.

35 A historian of Tunisian society and political life, active in Tunis at Institut des belles lettres arabes (IBLA), author of books written in French on topics connected to Muslim political thinkers, the modern history of Tunisia, and printing in Arabic, including *L'imprimerie en Orient et au Maghreb: une étape décisive de la culture et de la psychologie sociale islamique*s, Tunis, 1954 (reedited twice).

> incline à penser que les publications et surtout les journaux n'auraient pas tardé à la battre en brèche.[36]

This attitude also influenced the policy related to printing that the Phanariot princes of Wallachia promoted. For example, during the rule of Nicolae Mavrocordat,[37] the control over the princely press was given to the administration of the metropolitan's office. Tit Simedrea[38] explains:

> As it did not yield a substantial income, or possibly for the fear of this 'baking composition'[39] – the book – where the mixture of progressive ideas gets leavened, the Phanar-born voivod felt more confident in placing the printing press under the safe authority of the Church than allowing it to print worldly books that could even have turned, as happened in other parts of the world, menacing to the legitimacy of such a rule. After all, he came from the empire where printing had been limited as much as possible: from Istanbul, where he had learned his lesson well![40]

Another equally significant element in the controversy regarding the "menace" of printing was the opinion of the fierce enemies of printing who declared that it is impure from the perspective of Islamic doctrines, as the typographic material manufactured from a metal alloy (punches, matrices, and type) needed to be

36 André Demeerseman, "Une étape décisive de la culture et de la psychologie sociale islamiques. Les données de la controverse autour du problème de l'imprimerie", *IBLA*, 17, 1954, 66, p. 136. See other considerations in Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change", p. 229–251; Muhsin Mahdi, "From the Manuscript Age to the Age of Printed Books", in Atiyeh (ed.), *The Book in the Islamic World*, p. 1–15; Reinhard Schulze, "The Birth of Tradition and Modernity in 18th and 19th Century Islamic Culture – the Case of Printing", in J. Skovgaard-Petersen (ed.), *The Introduction of the Printing Press in the Middle East*, Oslo, 1997, p. 29–72.

37 Nicolae Mavrocordat (b. 1680, Constantinople – d. 1730, Bucharest), prince of Moldavia: Nov. 1709 – Nov. 1710 and 1711 – Jan. 5, 1716, then prince of Wallachia: January 1716 – November 1716 and March 1719 – September 1730.

38 Teodor Simedrea (1886–1971) was tonsured a monk in 1924 at the Cernica Monastery near Bucharest, taking the name Tit (Titus), and was later ordained archimandrite. A bishop of Hotin (Moldavia) from 1935, he was elected Metropolitan of Bucovina on June 13, 1940. He returned to Bucharest in 1945 and died at the Cernica Monastery. A great theologian and historian of the Orthodox Church and Romanian spirituality, he relentlessly worked for the benefit of the Romanians in Bucovina. See Mircea Păcurariu, *Dicționarul teologilor români*, 3rd ed., Sibiu, 2014, p. 592–593; Arhim. Policarp Chițulescu, *Reuniuni ale spiritului. Mitropolitul Tit Simedrea al Bucovinei (1886–1971) și primele reuniuni spirituale din România*, Bucharest, 2020.

39 In Rom., *aluat*, lit., 'dough', i.e., the flour, water, and salt composition used in making leavened bread.

40 Tit Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", *BOR*, 82, 1965, 9–10, p. 866.

cleaned with pig-hair brushes, this animal being abhorred by the Muslims, who are not allowed to touch it.[41]

A step forward was made in 1588, when Sultan Murad III (1574–1595) issued an order (*firman*), later included in the Arabic translation of Euclid's work *Elements of Geometry* published by the Medici press in Rome in 1594. This act was the first text printed in Ottoman Turkish with Arabic type on a movable-type press. The decree did not indicate if the subjects of the books were limited in any way.[42] It seems, however, that it was interpreted at the time in this way, for afterwards only non-religious books printed in Arabic type circulated in the Ottoman Empire.[43] The document allowed commerce within the Ottoman frontiers in "certain books and works in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish" that were printed in Europe. In the opening presentation of the issue, a phrase goes: *'Arabî ve Fârsî ve Türkî ba'zı mu'teber kitâblar ve risâleler*, "some valued Arabic, Persian, and Turkish printed books and treatises".[44] The Sultan had received a petition addressed to him by two European booksellers who complained that they had been attacked while unloading their merchandise consisting of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish books printed in Europe. Their stock of books had been plundered and a good part of them were seized. According to the Capitulations agreed upon by the Sublime Porte with the Republic of Venice in 1454, then with the king of France François I in 1569, and in 1580 with England, in similar conditions, the Sultan was expected to protect Western merchants who did business in the empire. Therefore, he condemned the aggression and strengthened the rights of the booksellers by issuing this new *firman*, which took on the force of a law for the governors of Ottoman provinces, qadis, and army commanders.

Most likely, the issuing of the 1588 decree also became necessary because of the discussions that took place in the circles of clerics and scholars at the Sultan's court. Reading these books, with the authorities' permission, allowed Ottoman

41 For a broader discussion of these aspects, see André Demeerseman, *L'imprimerie en Orient et au Maghreb: une étape décisive de la culture et de la psychologie sociale islamiques*, Tunis, 1954.

42 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 85, 89.

43 Halil Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire. The Classical Age 1300–1600*, New York and Washington, 1973, p. 174–175.

44 The phrase was reprinted in Latin script in Turgut Kut and Fatma Türe (eds.), *Yazmadan Basmaya: Müteferrika, Mühendishane, Üsküdar*, Istanbul, 1996, p. 16. Cristopher M. Murphy translated it: "certain goods and valuable printed books and pamphlets in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish"; see "Appendix: Ottoman Imperial Documents Relating to the History of Books and Printing", in Atiyeh (ed.), *The Book in the Islamic World*, p. 283. I am grateful to Radu Dipratu for his help in translating this phrase and supplying to me references on the topic.

thinkers the freedom to become better acquainted with the art of printing and decide for themselves about its benefits – or dangers.

Between 1620 and 1627, several incidents occurred in Istanbul involving Catholic and Protestant missionaries who distributed books printed in Greek containing polemic or proselytizing texts considered unacceptable by one or the other of the denominations in the Ottoman capital. The Greek books that the Patriarch Cyril Lukaris requested to be printed, in Constantinople and elsewhere, were considered by the Vatican to reflect Protestant influences.[45] Ovidiu-Victor Olar explains Lukaris's intentions as follows.

> Pourtant, malgré la situation difficile, la réponse à la violente question "Qui sommes-nous?" que Loukaris était prêt à donner – en disant que les chrétiens du rite grec n'étaient ni schismatiques ni hérétiques, mais de vrais enfants de l'Église orientale, des orthodoxes qui, contrairement aux Juifs et aux Latins, ne s'étaient pas éloignés de la vérité de Dieu – pouvait être rendue plus efficace avec l'aide d'une imprimerie. Mais pour réussir à imposer son programme, Loukaris devait contrôler l'imprimerie.[46]

The ambassador of France in Istanbul vehemently protested at the Sublime Porte, provoking an equally vehement reaction from the ambassadors of England and the Netherlands who denounced the activities of the Catholic missionaries eager to attach all Christians in the empire to the Church of Rome. Even if the distortion of the original Christian doctrines in texts that circulated in the post-Byzantine world could pass as merely a "drifting movement" of some Greek theologians and scholars, the heads of the Arabic-speaking churches could only wish, even more, to be able to print those versions of the service books and spiritual works that reflected the liturgical and patristic traditions of the Byzantine Church, which circulated in the East in the form of manuscripts copied again and again over time.

For the Catholics, Patriarch Cyril Lukaris's wish to set up a printing press in Constantinople was new proof of his intention to place harmful books in the Eastern Christians's hands. In a letter dated to 1624, King Louis XIII congratulated the French ambassador to the Porte for having instigated the Ottoman authorities against Lukaris after he requested from England books printed in Greek

45 According to Sclavenitis, "Méfiance vis-à-vis du livre imprimé et emploi parallèle du manuscrit", p. 70: "Les *Confessiones fidei* (Ομολογίες Πίστεως) orthodoxes datant de la domination turque et vénitienne sont, dans une large mesure, érodées par la pensée théologique occidentale, au point que, non sans raison, nombre d'entre elles furent à l'époque considérées comme hérétiques". See also Nil Palabıyık, "An Early Case of the Printer's Self-Censorship in Constantinople", *The Library*, Seventh Series, 16, 2015, 4, p. 390–399.

46 Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 179. On the press of Metaxas and its production, see ibid., especially p. 145–149, 165–182.

and from the Netherlands Arabic books.[47] With the Dutch ambassador's assistance, Lukaris received in Istanbul several Arabic books that contained sections of the Holy Scriptures, from among those printed by Erpenius.[48] His real intention was to help the clergy of the Eastern Patriarchates to develop their knowledge of Greek, as this language was slowly becoming unfamiliar to most priests, monks, and even the upper clergy. Greek books that reached Constantinople were expensive and did not fulfill the needs of the Greek Orthodox. Having seen the presses of Italy and L'viv, Lukaris wished to print in Constantinople itself and distribute the books easily across the Levant. In the Patriarchate of Antioch, communication was possible with foreign visitors due to a shared knowledge of Greek. Considering the large variety of guests and pilgrims to the Arabic-speaking East – Greek, Georgian, Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian – knowledge of Greek, the *lingua franca* of Orthodoxy, was the only solution for all these Christians to connect without resorting to an Arab interpreter. Therefore, Greek books were needed both in Constantinople and in the Arabic-speaking communities of the Ottoman Empire. Patriarch Cyril Lukaris's project to open a Greek press addressed the needs of the Orthodox living under Ottoman government in wide areas of the former Byzantine Empire.

In 1627, the Embassy of England in Istanbul received several crates of Greek printing types. The next day, Lukaris dined with the ambassadors of England and the Netherlands, a fact considered suspicious by the French ambassador, Count de Césy, but equally suspect by the Ottoman authorities. Then, the English ambassador helped Lukaris to open a press for Greek books, directed by Nicodemos Metaxas, who had arrived from England with the printing tools, accompanied by two Dutch printers. Born in Kefalonia, Metaxas had printed several Greek theological books in London, where, among others, he became friends with Mitrophanes Critopoulos (1589–1639), who was studying at Balliol College in Oxford.[49] The books that Metaxas printed in England reflected his attachment

47 MS Fr. 16156 of BnF, f. 430, cf. Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 58.

48 For the report on the whole episode see Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 265–266. See also Colin Davey, "Fair Exchange? Old Manuscripts for New Printed Books", in Robin Cormack and Elisabeth Jeffreys (eds.), *Through the Looking Glass: Byzantium through British Eyes*, London, 2000, p. 127–134.

49 Mitrophanes Critopoulos remained in Oxford until 1623, then travelled in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. In 1632, he was ordained bishop in the Patriarchate of Alexandria, then elected patriarch in 1636. On a journey in Wallachia in 1639, he died on May 30 and was buried there. See Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 191–193.

to the values of tolerance and spiritual progress and his hope for a reasonable solution to the divide between the Eastern and Western churches.[50]

Metaxas then transferred his press from England to Istanbul, where he arrived in June 1627 with a large shipment of printing implements, consumables, and printed books.[51] Having passed through the Ottoman customs with the intervention of the English ambassador, the press was installed in Istanbul with the tacit approval of the grand vizier. Very soon in 1627 two collections of polemical anti-Catholic tracts were printed. A man of peace, Metaxas strived to appease tensions and edited them in a way to avoid any misgivings. However, the Jesuits of Istanbul, who had obtained some of the books brought by Metaxas when reaching the city, read in them a clear Protestant influence.[52] The Count de Césy appealed to the Jesuit priests, who carefully surveyed the books brought from England and the Netherlands, as well as those printed in the Ottoman capital, and found several passages where Islamic beliefs were criticized or even ridiculed. Therefore, 'properly presented', these books could be considered disturbing by the Muslim authorities. The presence of the English king's coat of arms on the title page of Metaxa's books was also a breach of Ottoman authority. This was enough to justify the accusation that Lukaris was encouraging, together with the English, an uprising of the Cossacks, the Greeks, and other Orthodox peoples against the Sultan's rule.[53] Here is what the Count de Césy wrote on January 27, 1628.

> Le Patriarche Cyrille, ennemi des latins, répand l'hérésie dans l'Église d'Orient. Il a fait venir des livres hérétiques, imprimés en grec, qu'il a fait répandre partout. L'ambassadeur d'Angleterre a reçu une trentaine de caisses de caractères grecs pour faire imprimer toutes les hérésies imaginables. Le lendemain, le Patriarche Cyrille dina solennellement avec l'ambassadeur de Hollande, chez l'ambassadeur d'Angleterre.[54]

50 Palabıyık, "An Early Case of the Printer's Self-Censorship", p. 389–390.

51 Ibid., p. 391–392, and N. Palabıyık, "Redundant Presses and Recycled Woodcuts: The Journey of Printing Materials from London to Constantinople in the Seventeenth Century", *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 110, 2016, 3, p. 273–298.

52 Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des grecs au dix-septième siècle*, t. 1, no. 167, p. 237–240, and no. 168, p. 240–243.

53 Palabıyık, "An Early Case of the Printer's Self-Censorship", p. 393, 395–396. For a complete report on the whole story, see Roper, "England and the Printing of Texts for the Orthodox Christians in Greek and Arabic, 17th–19th centuries", p. 431–436; Pektaş, "The Beginning of Printing in the Ottoman Capital", p. 17–19, 22–31.

54 BnF Paris, MS Fr. 16153, f. 48, apud Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 90–91, n. 85.

Based on the suspicions of betrayal that circulated at the Ottoman court, intensified by accusations from the French and Austrian ambassadors that he was sending dangerous books to the Christians of the empire's Eastern Mediterranean provinces, Lukaris was assassinated by the Janissaries in 1638, by order of Sultan Murad IV.[55] The Greek press was closed down but the Janissaries could not capture Metaxas, who found shelter with the Embassy of England. He succeeded in fleeing to his home island where he continued to print Greek books.[56] All the printing implements and books were seized, as well as the Jesuits' library of Istanbul where books were kept that were considered offensive to the Muslims.[57] The irony of the situation is pertinently captured by Nil Palabıyık:

> Nicodemos's inclination towards a rhetoric of moderation in Christian writing is natural, given his previous record of publications and the pluralist sentiments of his circle of learned friends in England. In the multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan city of Constantinople, in which he had recently arrived, Nicodemos tried (albeit failed) to forge a platform for open dialogue and meaningful exchange of ideas between Christians, Jews, and Muslims.[58]

Patriarch Cyril Lukaris's interest in church books printed in the West, which were surrounded by a negative aura in Istanbul, also had an impact on the attitude of the Sublime Porte towards the import of the printing technology to the empire, at a time when the court, the *'ulamā'*, and the Muslim clergy were exchanging opinions – for and against – on this sensitive topic. In January 1628, after the Lukaris episode was over, the French ambassador wrote: "Je me suis décidé de n'être pas seulement sur la défensive: mais de faire jouer quelque ressort, pour leur donner des affaires sur le sujet de l'imprimerie comme une nouveauté dangereuse dans cet État."[59]

Indeed, obstacles to the beginnings of printing in the East were often created not by the political or strategic options of the Sublime Porte but by Western powers who had their own interests. The foundation of a press in Constantinople was seen by the Vatican cardinals as undesirable competition. Therefore,

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55 Cyril Lukaris was declared a great martyr by the Patriarchate of Alexandria on October 6, 2009, and a saint martyr by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in January 2022.

56 Letterio Augliera, *Libri, politica, religione nel Levante del Seicento. La tipografia di Nicodemo Metaxas, primo editore di testi greci nell'Oriente ortodosso*, Venice, 1996, p. 237–240 (inventory of the books printed by Metaxas, with illustrations).

57 Antoine Rabbath, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du christianisme en Orient, XVI^e^–XIX^e^ siècles*, Paris, t. I, 1907, p. 353; R. J. Roberts, "The Greek Press at Constantinople in 1627 and Its Antecedents", *The Library*, 5, 1967, 22, p. 13–43.

58 Palabıyık, "An Early Case of the Printer's Self-Censorship", p. 399.

59 BnF, MS Fr. 16153, cf. Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 64.

through the missionaries that the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide sent to the Ottoman capital, they made all possible efforts to prevent this from happening, so that the Vatican press could keep its monopoly over books that circulated in the Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[60] This was essential in preventing the distribution of books divergent from the Catholic creed. Nevertheless, a general feeling persists that Islam rejected printing for a long time because of intellectual backwardness. As Scott Reese notes in the first phrase of his introduction to the collection of essays published by De Gruyter,[61] "one of the last great biases of the Western academy in relation to Islam centers around the issue of mechanical print".

For Ottoman society, the ban on printing in Turkish with Arabic type was officially lifted during the rule of Sultan Ahmed III (1706–1730) and the Grand Vizier (*sadr ʿazam*) Nevșehirli Damat Ibrahim Pasha (1666–1730). The year 1727 is unanimously considered to be the first moment in the history of book printing in Turkish (in Arabic type).[62] It had become clear since the 17th century that more books were needed than could be copied in the traditional scribal workshops. This prompted a ban to be issued on the export of manuscripts outside the empire.[63] The moment was favorable to the project of opening the first Ottoman printing press. In the rule of the enlightened Sultan Ahmed III printing was not considered alien and worrying anymore.[64] In full agreement with the grand vizier, he wished to promote modernity in the empire's capital as a way to stop the decline of Ottoman society and strengthen the court's authority.[65] One of the weaknesses of his rule was the absence of printing capabilities, which were now universally accepted as a means of cultural and social progress. Volney recorded

60 It is worth mentioning that in the Romanian Principalities, in the 16th-–17th centuries, although most printers were attached to the Church, or even members of the clergy, many typographers printed theological books without securing the approval of the local bishop. See Doru Bădără, "Ceva despre monopolul asupra tiparului din Țările Române, 1508–1714", *Analele Brăilei*, New Series, 10, 2010, 10, p. 381–396.

61 Reese (ed.), *Manuscript and Print in the Islamic Tradition*, p. 1.

62 Cf. Neumann, "Book and newspaper printing in Turkish, 18th–20th century", p. 227.

63 Ibid., p. 230.

64 Incidentally, Dimitrie Cantemir, the prince of Moldavia later to become a prince of the Russian tsardom, who tried to use printing as a way to avoid war, lived for twenty years at the Ottoman court, a good part under the rule of Ahmed III, whose enlightened thinking he embraced.

65 See the comments of Steve Tamari on the reconsideration of the 18th century as "simply the bleakest phase in an already lengthy history of decline" in his essay "Arab National Consciousness in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Syria", in Peter Sluglett with Stefan Weber (eds.), *Syria and* Bilad al-Sham *under Ottoman Rule. Essays in Honour of Abdul-Karim Rafeq*, Leiden and Boston, 2010, p. 309ff.

this deficiency among the causes for the backward condition of Ottoman societies as compared to the Western European ones.[66] At this point in time, the grand mufti and part of the society of *'ulamā'* embraced the idea of printing as a means of progressing and encouraging education.[67]

In the *firman* issued on July 5, 1727, concerning the foundation of a printing press in Istanbul, the conditions for a printing press to work there were clearly indicated:

> Excepting books of religious law, Koranic exegesis, the traditions of the Prophet, and theology, you asked the Padishah's permission in the aforementioned tract to print dictionaries, history books, medical books, astronomy and geography books, travelogues, and books about logic.[68]

The *fetva* indicated precisely what was to be printed: "Copies will be printed of dictionaries, and books about logic, astronomy and similar subjects, and so that the printed books will be free from printing mistakes…"[69]

Finally, the rules devised for book-printing in the Ottoman capital were the following:

1. It was totally forbidden to print holy books – naturally, those of the Muslim: the Qur'ān, Ḥadīṯ, Qur'ānic exegesis, *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).
2. All printed work needed to receive the approval of four theologians – *'ulamā'* – and *qadi*s selected by the Sultan, entrusted with the task of selecting the books to be printed, revise and correct them, and check all texts before going to print. This was, in practice, a right to censorship that the great mufti requested.
3. Elegant Arabic type of a high aesthetic quality was to be manufactured and books were to be printed with care, under the direction of master printers.

In his treatise in support of the printing press, Ibrahim Müteferrika declares the following:

> Except for those on law, exegesis, traditions, and theology, books will be printed, such as dictionaries, histories, medical texts and science books, philosophy and astronomy books,

66 Constantin François Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785*, 2nd ed., Paris, 1790, t. II, p. 273–283.

67 Two contributors to the 1st TYPARABIC project conference (Bucharest, 2022) addressed this topic in papers that will soon be published in the *Proceedings*: Hasan Çolak, "İbrahim Müteferrika and the Ottoman Intellectual Culture in the early Eighteenth Century: A Transcultural Perspective", and Radu Dipratu, "Ottoman Endorsements of Printing in 18th-Century Istanbul".

68 Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, p. 285.

69 Ibid.

> and information about nature, geography, and travelogues. By its grace and majesty, publication of the glorious royal rescript giving royal permission in this matter from the exalted world-renowned Emperor, defender of the faith's exalted position, is fitting.[70]

It is worth recalling here the life story of Ibrahim Müteferrika, the first printer of Turkish books, in Arabic type, who endeavored to secure this approval from the Sultan and started operating the first press of Istanbul in the 1720s.[71] His biography is somewhat legendary, as it is not supported by any historical documents and even his birth name remains unknown. Supposedly born in Cluj, a major Transylvanian city in Northwestern Romania, in a Hungarian family of Unitarian beliefs, he was taken prisoner at a young age by Ottoman troops making their way westwards. His fortune took him to Istanbul, where his intelligence and worldly talents propelled him into the lower levels of the Ottoman court, where he converted to Islam and took the name 'Ibrahim Müteferrika'. Having acquired a certain skill in lobbying, he petitioned for the opening of a Turkish printing press. In 1727, making the best of circumstances favorable to his obsessive project and helped by outside forces (including the French ambassador to the Sublime Porte), he secured a *firman* that allowed him to start printing in the Ottoman capital. The approval covered books printed in Arabic type, without mentioning any language, but it restricted the *content* accepted for publishing to scientific subjects: mathematics, medicine, grammar, lexicography, geography – and maps. The point was that anything religious, theological, or spiritual was banned from being printed. By not allowing such books to be printed, the court was actu-

70 Murphy, "Appendix: Ottoman Imperial Documents", p. 292.

71 For the life and works of Ibrahim Müteferrika, see especially: Neumann, "Book and newspaper printing in Turkish, 18th–20th century", p. 227–248; Maurits H. van den Boogert, "The Sultan's Answer to the Medici Press? Ibrahim Müteferrika's Printing House in Istanbul", in Alastair Hamilton, Maurits H. van den Boogert and Bart Westerweel (eds.), *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, Leiden, 2005, p. 265–291; Andrea Trentini, "Il codice a stampa nel mondo islamico", in Valentina Sagaria Rossi (ed.), *Libri islamici in controluce. Ricerche, modelli, esperienze conservative*, Rome, 2008, p. 147–180; Yasemin Gencer, "Ibrahim Müteferrika and the Age of the Printed Manuscript", in Christiane Gruber (ed.), *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, Bloomington, 2010, p. 154–193; Vefa Erginbaş, "Enlightenment in the Ottoman Context: Ibrahim Müteferrika and his Intellectual Landscape", in Geoffrey Roper (ed.), *Historical Aspects of Printing and Publishing in Languages of the Middle East, Papers from the Third Symposium on the History of Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle East, University of Leipzig, September 2008*, Leiden and Boston, 2014, p. 53–100; Orlin Sabev, *Waiting for Müteferrika: Glimpses of Ottoman Print Culture*, Boston, 2018; Orlin Sabev, "The Müteferrika Press: Obstacles, Circumvention and Repercussion According to Contemporaneous German Sources (1727–1741)", in Dipratu and Noble (eds.), *Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond*, Berlin, 2023 (forthcoming).

ally forbidding printers to address topics connected to the holy scriptures of the Muslims, their exegesis, and the entire domain of Islamic thought.

According to J. R. Osborn, Müteferrika tried to have his printed texts look like manuscript texts, deliberately shaping his Arabic type to resemble the script used in Ottoman scriptoria, to make his books more readable.[72] The demand for printed books was, however, quite modest at first. The educated society of Istanbul, conservative and cautious as to inventions imported from Europe, preferred to keep ordering manuscript copies from the calligraphy workshops of the city. Although quite a large number of books were sold,[73] Müteferrika's press was not exactly a success story in terms of its profitability. Nevertheless, it went down in history as the first Turkish press in the Ottoman Empire, which secured its founder's celebrity to this day. According to Michael W. Albin,

> Among the secular saints of modernization in the Islamic world Ibrahim Müteferrika occupies an archangelic throne. It was he, a Muslim not by birth but by conversion, who Islamicized the printing press, thereby guaranteeing for himself a place in the hagiocracy of reform.[74]

After Müteferrika's workshop closed, several decades passed before a new press was opened in Istanbul, which this time would have a longer period of activity. In 1803, an Arabic grammar, *Muʿrib alizhār* by Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad ZaynīZādeh, was published at the new printing press of Üsküdar that operated under the authority of the Ottoman court.[75] In Istanbul, the printed book only became a sought-after commodity,[76] shaping the way of thinking of the intellectual milieus in the 1870s–1890s,

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72 In his survey of the typographic particularities of Müteferrika's books, J. R. Osborn finds that his was the first "state-supported" printing enterprise and his production mostly consisted of texts that assisted the Ottoman administration. See *Letter of Light. Arabic Script in Calligraphy, Print, and Digital Design*, Cambridge, MA, 2017, passim. In a recent essay (2022), J. R. Osborn explains: "Prior to print, Ottoman society employed a system of script variation to visually classify document genres. The Müteferrika press interfaced with and extended this system by introducing a new genre of administrative text, as well as a new 'style of script' (i.e. movable type printing) with which to represent these novel texts". See J. R. Osborn, "The Ottoman System of Scripts and the Müteferrika Press", in Reese (ed.), *Manuscript and Print in the Islamic Tradition*, p. 61.

73 Sabev, *Waiting for Müteferrika*, p. 58–75.

74 Michael W. Albin, "Early Arabic Printing: A Catalogue of Attitudes", *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 5 (1990–1991), 1993, p. 114.

75 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 194–195. See an early description of this book in Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 104–106, and the more recent work edited by Kut and Türe, *Yazmadan Basmaya: Müteferrika, Mühendishane, Üsküdar*, p. 119.

76 On books as commodities, see Cristina Dondi, "The Venetian Book Trade: a Methodological Approach to and First Results of Book-Based Historical Research", in Wagner and Reed (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*, p. 219–227.

at a time when society at large was in a process of modernization, and the national feelings of various ethnic groups under Ottoman rule were on the rise.[77] Incidentally, the Ottoman press – newsletters, journals and magazines – also had a late start in the second half of the 19th century and witnessed its "boom" as late as 1908.[78]

The situation of Damascus is relevant for the vision that the Ottoman court had of printing as an instrument of progress. Roper and Glass describe it in clear terms:

> In Damascus, the capital of the Ottoman province of Syria until 1918, there were greater obstacles to Arabic book and newspaper printing than in Istanbul, Cairo and Beirut. In the first half of the 19th century practically nothing happened in Damascus. As Arab historians stress, the Ottoman authorities held back development, well aware of the revolutionary power of Arabic typography. The first initiative to break out of this stagnation was taken in 1855 by a man named Ḥannā Dūmānī, who founded *al-Maṭbaʿa ad-Dūmāniya* named after himself, the first typographical workshop in Damascus.[79]

Dūmānī continued to be the only printer of Arabic books in the Damascus region until 1864, when a state-controlled press opened in the city. Moreover, in Damascus, as everywhere else, Christian copyists were not eager to lose their age-old lucrative occupation.[80]

In conclusion, it was neither financial nor technical impediments that obstructed the beginnings of printing in the Ottoman era, but rather the resistance against this "imported" invention that was somewhat imposed from outside the *Dār alislām* (House of Islam), not a natural growth of the local societies. It was invented by the unbelievers, *kāfirūn*, foreign to Islamic traditions, and, in the eyes of the decision-makers at the Sultan's court, it allowed the multiplication of the holy scriptures beyond the needs of the Muslim public. The absence of control by the clerical authorities over *what* was printed and *how* was seen as a danger to avoid, when considering the possibility of spreading to all possible readers the sacred teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad by mechanical means unheard of in a traditional society.

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77 Mehmet Kaplan, *Tevfik Fikret ve Şiiri*, Istanbul, 1946, p. 19.

78 See Erol A. F. Baykal, *The Ottoman Press (1908–1923)*, Leiden and Boston, 2019.

79 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 196.

80 On the Christian copyists of the 15th–17th centuries, see Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 146–147. In the 15th century, in the Maronite communities of Lebanon around 150 copyists were active.

The situation was not much different for the copyists who worked in Christian scriptoria across the empire.[81] Joseph Nasrallah notes the impact that the foundation of printing presses in the Middle East finally had on the Christian copyists' trade.

> La création des Imprimeries d'Alep et de Šuwaïr, et aussi de celle moins importante de Saint-Georges des grecs Orthodoxes de Beyrouth, auxquelles il faut ajouter les presses créées en Moldo-Valachie (Bucarest, 1701, Jassy),[82] a diminué l'importance et le gagne-pain des copistes. [...] Cependant, la multiplicité des ouvrages crées dans les Patriarcats melchites, en particulier dans celui d'Antioche, a rétabli l'équilibre rompu par la chose imprimée.[83]

In the languages used across the Ottoman Empire, even the concept of 'printing' was foreign. For speakers of Arabic (as well as those of Turkish and Persian), words needed to be coined in order to name the many elements specific to the domain of printing, the press, and its outcomes. One theory is that the use, for 'printing', of the Arabic word *ṭibāʿa* ('activity of printing') was inspired from the equivalent word in French or Italian. Words derived from the Arabic root *ṭ-b-ʿ* are recorded in 1829 in the *Dictionnaire français-arabe* of Ellious Bocthor and Armand Pierre Caussin de Perceval: *ṭibāʿatun* and *ṣināʿat al-ṭabʿ* for 'printing', the printing press is a *maṭbaʿa*, and the workshop – *dār al-ṭibāʿa* (lit., a 'house/place for printing'). The new word family of 'printing', with derivatives that name various elements connected to printing and printed books, was created using the triconsonant root *ṭ-b-ʿ*, which includes the semantic features *imprint*, *stamp*, *mark*, *impress*, *seal*. From the 1st form verb *ṭabaʿa* resulted all the derivatives necessary to cover the semantic area of 'printing' characteristic of European languages. These were then employed for all the typographic forms, using woodblocks, movable type, or lithography.[84]

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81 Rare cases of 'inter-faith scribal workshops', with similar issues, are also known in the history of Middle Eastern manuscript copying; see Ronny Vollandt, "The Production of Arabic Multi-block Bibles: A Case Study of a Coptic-Muslim Workshop in Early Ottoman Cairo", *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter*, 3, January 2012, p. 31–32, referring to a "professional workshop, which manufactured books on a large commercial scale" in Cairo, where the MS BnF Arabe 1 was copied in 1584–1585.

82 As I explained before, there were no 'Arabic presses' in Wallachia and Moldavia. A limited number of Christian Arabic books were printed in Snagov, Bucharest, and Iași, with typographic material manufactured locally or brought from abroad for this purpose, in pre-existing presses that printed, as a rule, books in Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian.

83 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 387.

84 Tit Simedrea mentions that the verb *a tipări* (Romanian for 'to print') was present for the first time in a Romanian work dated 1564, in the book *Tâlcul Evangheliilor* printed by Diaconul Coresi at Brașov, and the word *tipograf* ('printer') is first mentioned in the Slavonic *Antologion* printed by Ștefan in 1643 at Câmpulung, in his signature: *Ștefan ieromonah, tipograf sârb* ("Stephen hieromonk, Serbian typographer"). See Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii

Until printing presses were present in the Middle East, a 'book' was a collection of paper leaves bound together, a codex, which could include handwritten pages, blank pages, or pages imprinted using early techniques, by means of woodblocks or stamps.[85] The Arabic word for 'book', *kitāb* (belonging to the family of *kataba*, 'to write'), could refer to any activity connected to writing: inscription, letter, document, administrative act, flyer, manuscript, printed book, etc. In Islamic civilization, the exertion dedicated to collecting all the *ṣūrā*s of the Qur'ān between the covers of a volume was the first initiative connected to making a 'book'.[86] In the *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, vol. 1, the entry on 'Books and Book-making", signed by J. L. Sharpe, starts thus:

> There were no books in Arabic before the Koran. The pre-Islamic literature of the Arabs [...] was preserved in songs, stories and recitations retained in memory and transmitted orally. The oldest extant written examples are no earlier than the middle of the sixth century CE. But it was only during the Umayyad period that Islamic literary culture inspired the collection and codification of the ancient literary remains [...]. The origins of this literary culture are to be found in the scribal development centred on the Koran after the seventh century, during which the Arabic book was defined.[87]

The "Arabic book" is, therefore, strictly connected to the 'scribal development centered on the Koran". This is also the perspective of Beatrice Gruendler's work *The Rise of the Arabic Book* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2020), which is dedicated entirely to the *manuscript* codex of the first Islamic centuries, starting with the 'foundational book' of the Qur'ān, as explained in the Introduction, where a section is devoted to *The Arabic Codex*.[88] In her outstanding research on 'the Arabic book revolution',[89] the author focuses on the *manuscript* codices of the 8th – 9th centuries, not on the *printed book* of a much later age.[90]

1740–1750", p. 882. For comments on the term *maḫtūm*, lit. 'sealed' or 'stamped', used in connection with printing, see Roper, "Arabic biblical and liturgical texts printed in Europe", p. 174–175.

85 Vercellin, "Venezia e le origini della stampa in caratteri arabi", p. 61, n. 12.

86 For details on how the first form of the Qur'ān came to be, see R. Sellheim, "'Kitāb'", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*; Houari Touati, "Book", in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas and Everett Rowson (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Third edition*, Brill online, *s.v.*

87 Sharpe, "Books and Book-making", p. 154.

88 Beatrice Gruendler, *The Rise of the Arabic Book*, p. 3–5. The corpus surveyed is mostly Islamic. "Christian books" (i.e., Christian Arabic manuscript codices or texts) are only discussed on p. 3, 14, 104, 143, and 167.

89 Ibid., p. 164.

90 Vercellin also remarks that even Western researchers consider 'the book' in this perspective: several works and exhibitions include the word 'book' in their title although they mostly

David McKitterick notes that in the catalogues of libraries in Western Europe the distinction between manuscript codices and printed books appeared only in the 17th century. Previously, all works were recorded as 'books.'[91]

It is worth noting, in this respect, the way the Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo (d. 1667),[92] son of the Patriarch of Antioch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm,[93] refers to concepts of the domain of 'printing' in the middle of the 17th century, when no Arabic-type press was yet available anywhere in the Ottoman Empire. The verb *ṭabaʿa*, 'to print', only occurs four times in the *Journal* of the Syrian archdeacon preserved in MS Arabe 6016 of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the longest of all surviving copies. The concept of 'printing' is rarely mentioned there, while the 'books' that he refers to – *kutub, tawārīḫ, nawāmīs* – are generally manuscripts, *maḫṭūṭāt* (Sg. *maḫṭūṭ*), since in Syria texts, particularly the liturgical ones used in the Church of Antioch, circulated only in this form. Even the absence of the word *maḫṭūṭ* from passages referring to written works proves that the time had not come, in the mid-17th century, to indicate precisely if you referred to a manuscript or a printed book.

2.2 An Attempt Doomed to Fail: Arabic Books Sent from the Levant to Western European Presses

Arabic-speaking Christians had complete versions of the essential biblical texts used in Christian liturgy translated into their language in the 9th–10th centuries.[94] The adoption of Arabic as a liturgical language was a slow process, but no other option was available to the Christians of the Eastern Churches after the Ottoman

present comments on manuscript works, types of script, miniatures, etc. His examples are: the exhibition *Das Buch im Orient. Handschriften und kostbare Drucke ans zwei Jahrtausend* at the Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, in November 1982 – February 1983; Johannes Pedersen, *The Arabic Book*, transl. Geoffrey French, ed. and introd. Robert Hillebrand, Princeton, 1984; the collection of essays edited by Atiyeh, *The Book in the Islamic World*, which I cited before.

91 David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450–1830*, Cambridge, 2003, p. 12–13.

92 On Paul of Aleppo (Būluṣ al-Ḥalabī), see Ioana Feodorov, "Paul of Aleppo", in *CMR 10*, p. 344–370.

93 On Patriarch Makarios III, see Carsten Walbiner, "Macarius ibn al-Zaʿīm", in ibid., p. 354–343.

94 Ronny Vollandt, "1.4.11. Arabic (Christian) Translations", in Armin Lange (Gen. Ed.), *Textual History of the Bible*, Brill, first published online: 2016. See also, in the same collection of essays, Ronny Vollandt, "2.4.9. Arabic Translations".

rule was imposed on them. Here is how Basile Aggoula explains the evolution of the vernacular and liturgical languages in the Middle East:

> L'occupation Ottomane de la Syrie et du Liban en 1516 donna un signal d'alarme à ces chrétiens qui devaient choisir entre l'arabe (malgré les réticences multiséculaires de certaines communautés) et le turc, jugé comme une langue inadéquate. Pour ce qui est de la première langue, la grande partie de la chrétienté proche-orientale s'en était lentement et péniblement accommodée, en lui imposant ses lois en matière de vocabulaire et des tournures propres au syriaque, langue liturgique parlée par la majorité, alors que la seconde leur était une «étrangeté». Par ailleurs la mort du syriaque comme idiome parlé rendit le choix obligatoire.[95]

Originating in old Arabic translations revised by Middle Eastern theologians in the 16th century, the holy scriptures preserved the liturgical traditions of Arab Christianity. According to Dabbās and Raššū,

> Arab Christians welcomed the art of printing and appreciated its benefits, after they had seen the books printed in [Western] Europe that had reached them. Nevertheless, their interest in printing did not prevent them from rejecting the content of the books sent to them from Rome and Paris, as [...] they contained texts that reflected the Catholic teachings. The Latin Church was making every effort to attach the Eastern Churches to the Catholic creed [...].[96]

Sent as gifts to the Christian communities of the Eastern Mediterranean provinces, the Arabic liturgical and spiritual books that had received the *imprimatur* (publication approval) from the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide were meant to replace the old manuscripts that had been used for many generations by priests and monks across the Levant. The Arabic-speaking Christians of the Ottoman provinces received from Rome versions of the Gospels and the Psalms that had been edited by scholars attached to the Propaganda Fide so as to observe the Latin teachings and help their dissemination in the churches of Greater Syria. Noticing the absence of presses in the Ottoman provinces of the Eastern Mediterranean, Fr Girolamo Dandini wrote in his report of 1596 "Missione Apostolica al Patriarca e Maroniti del Monte Libano", addressed to the Propaganda Fide, that he saw in this situation "a great benefit for this community (of the Maronites) and for all Christendom."[97] Thus, it becomes clear why the Church of Rome and the king of

95 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 308.
96 Anṭuwān Qayṣar Dabbās and Naḥla Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq. Al-Baṭriyark Aṭanāsīyūs al-ṭāliṭ Dabbās, 1685–1724*, Beirut, 2008, p. 33–34.
97 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 2, citing *Missione Apostolica al Patriarca, e Maroniti del Monte Libano, del P. Girolamo Dandini*, Cesena, 1656, p. 60–69.

France – in his capacity as defender of the Catholic Church – refused to send to the Levant printing presses and tools that could have fallen either into the hands of the Greek Orthodox or in those of the Muslim Ottomans.[98]

Abū l-Fatḥ ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl (d. after 1052) was a deacon of the Church of Antioch, a theologian and translator from Greek into Arabic, active in a period when Byzantium ruled over the city of Antioch and Northern Syria. Grandson of a bishop of the Church of Antioch, he received a good Greek education and then studied Arabic with the famous poet Abū l-ʿAlā al-Maʿarrī.[99] The Arabic versions of biblical and patristic texts composed by him were used, revised, and printed until the 19th century.[100] Although slightly inaccurate, Ibn al-Faḍl's portrait in the introduction to one of the miscellanies composed by the Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm is worth recalling.

> He mastered Arabic, Greek, and Syriac, [...] and translated into Arabic the New and the Old Testament, together with the exegesis devoted to them, for the Christians' benefit, commanding them to read them on all Saturdays and Sundays and our Lord's Feasts.[101]

Born ʿAbd al-Karīm Karma (1572–1635), the second famous scholar who revised Arabic religious texts was a theologian and historian of the Church of Antioch. Educated in both Arabic and Greek culture, he spent some time at the Monastery of the Holy Archangel Michael in Jerusalem, where he devoted himself to translations from Greek into Arabic. Elected a metropolitan of Aleppo under the name Meletios (1612–1634), he then became, for a brief time, Patriarch Efthimios II of Antioch (1634–1635).[102] While a metropolitan of Aleppo, he was in open conflict with the Patriarch Cyril IV Dabbās, who strived to do him harm in any way he could: in 1624–1626, Karma was sentenced to beating and jail by the *wālī* Muṣṭafā

98 For the role of the kings of France, especially that of Louis XIV (1643–1715), in protecting Catholic interests in the Orient, see Hasan Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant and Responses of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates during the Late 17th and Early 18th Centuries", *ARAM*, 25 (2013), 2016, 1 & 2, p. 86ff.

99 Samuel Noble, "'Abdallāh ibn al-Fadl al-Antaki", in Samuel Noble and Alexander Treiger (eds.), *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World 700-1700. An Anthology of Sources*, DeKalb, IL, 2014, p. 171–187.

100 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 49–50.

101 Foreword of the *Kitāb al-naḥla* published by Ḥabīb Zayāt, *Ḫazā'in al-kutub fī Dimašq wa-ḍawāḥī-hā*, Al-Faǧǧāla, 1902, p. 150.

102 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 70–86; Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Melkite (Greek Orthodox) Approaches to the Bible", p. 55–56.

Bāšā, after Patriarch Cyril obtained a *firman* against him from Constantinople, and in 1627 he was again jailed.[103]

He strived to unify the biblical texts that circulated in the first half of the 17th century, proceeding from the observation that texts used in the Eastern Churches, translated from or through Greek, Syriac, Coptic, or Armenian, contained passages that were transferred or interpreted wrongly, were inconsistent, or corrupted. Relying on Greek editions printed in Venice, he translated and revised most of the fundamental liturgical and prayer books necessary for Arabic-speaking Christians: The Book of the Divine Liturgies, the Sticharion, the Typicon, the Horologion, and the Euchologion.[104] The latter two were sent to Rome for printing, both while he was still in office and later, during the term of Patriarch Makarios III. The portrait that Bernard Heyberger recently drew of Meletios Karma is revealing:

> Historians of the Melkite community generally see Meletios Karma as an exceptional figure, considered to be the spearhead of projects for editing the Arabic Bible and liturgical books, who attempted to convince Rome to support a team located in Aleppo. He was a strong figure who was convinced of the necessity to produce revised books in order to improve the education of the clergy and the flock, believing that the Arabic manuscripts had been corrupted by the ignorance of scribes and the insubordination of believers.[105]

Karma completed the translation of the Arabic Bible by 1622, but printing it in Rome proved, again, impossible, for the same reason. The Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide opposed their printing because the council of censors identified in the Arabic version inconsistencies as compared to the Vulgate and the Catholic versions of the other liturgical texts. In a meeting on May 12, 1622, Cardinal

103 For the unrelenting conflict between the two, see Heyberger, "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity", p. 21.

104 According to Bernard Heyberger, "L'entourage de Malatyus Karma, à Alep, travaille dans les années 1620 à la version arabe de la Bible, qui doit être imprimée à Rome". See Heyberger, "Livres et pratique de la lecture chez les chrétiens", p. 213. See also Charbel Nassif, "La révision liturgique du métropolite melkite d'Alep Malâtyûs Karma et les réformes liturgiques dans les pays d'Europe de l'Est au XVIIe siècle", in Yulia Petrova and Ioana Feodorov (eds.), *Europe in Arabic Sources: The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch, Proceedings of the International Conference "In the eyes of the Orient: Europe in Arabic Sources (Kyiv, 22–23 September 2015*), Kyiv, 2016, p. 117–134, and id., "Autour de l'euchologe melkite de Malatios Karmé", *Proche Orient chrétien*, 98, 2018, p. 46–61.

105 Heyberger, "East and West. A Connected History of Eastern Christianity", p. 16. For Karma's dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church in connection with the printing of Arabic liturgical books, see the entire Chapter 3, *The Different Scales of Agency of the Metropolitan of Aleppo Meletios Karma*, in ibid., p. 16–23.

Ubaldini, the Catholic prefect for the province of Syria, informed the Propaganda Fide of the verbal request of Meletios Karma, then metropolitan of Aleppo, "for the printing of some Arabic books and especially the Bible, the translation of which Karmeh wanted to unify because partial versions were found in the east here and there."[106]

In his efforts to obtain the printing of an accurate Arabic version of the Bible that would become a standard version, in 1633 Meletios Karma sent to the Propaganda Fide the the *Pentateuch*, which he had revised, accompanied by a letter where he explained the need to spread through printing, among the Christian communities of the East, a biblical text that preserved the Arabic manuscript tradition of the Holy Scriptures.[107] According to ʿAbdallāh Raheb,

> In the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith on July 4, 1633, Cardinal Ubaldini showed the other cardinals that the Arabic version of Genesis which was sent by the Greek metropolitan of Aleppo contained improper words and some notable differences with that of the Vulgate.[108]

The secretary of the Propaganda Fide then read before Pope Urban VIII a text concerning the preparation of an Arabic translation of the Vulgate, declaring that:

> The Bible, which is printed in France, could not respond to the needs of the Eastern Churches represented by Matran Karmeh, Archbishop of the Melkites of Aleppo; its price would be so high that only an insufficient number of copies could be sent to these Churches.[109]

In 1695, Isṭifān II al-Duwayhī (1630–1704), the Maronite patriarch of Antioch, sent a manuscript of the Maronite liturgical text to Rome for printing.[110] He was aware that, more than ever, the success in obtaining Arabic printed texts in unified ver-

106 ʿAbdallāh Raheb, *Conception de l'Union dans le patriarcat orthodoxe d'Antioche (1622–1672). Partie historique*, Beirut, 1981, p. 39, n. 133. See also Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "'Und um Jesu willen, schickt sie nicht ungebunden!' Die Bemühungen des Meletius Karma (1572–1635) um den Druck arabischer Bücher in Rom", in Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule (eds.), *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage in Honour of Father Prof. Dr. Samir Khalil Samir S. J. at the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, Leuven and Paris, 2004, p. 163–175.

107 Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of BookPrinting in the Arab World", p. 55–56; Hilary Kilpatrick, "Meletios Karmah's Specimen Translation of Genesis I–V", in Sara Binay and Stefan Leder, *Translating the Bible into Arabic: Historical, Text-critical and Literary Aspects*, Beirut and Würzburg, 2012, p. 61–73.

108 Raheb, *Conception de l'Union dans le patriarcat orthodoxe d'Antioche (1622–1672). Partie historique*, p. 46.

109 Ibid., p. 47.

110 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 12.

sions that would be generally accepted, devoid of the inconsistencies in the old monastic manuscripts, was a requirement for the unity of the Maronite Church and its strong bond with the Latin Church.[111] In 1700, the Patriarch notes in connection with the sacred texts printed in Rome: "[...] les Maronites ont également une supériorité sur les autres Orientaux, puisqu'ils sont les seuls à publier librement, et depuis toujours, les vérités de la foi catholique."[112] Thus, at the end of the 17th century, liturgical books had become a weapon in the battles between the various denominations of the East.[113]

2.3 Short-Lived Plans: Istanbul 1546, the Qozhaya Psalter, and Makarios III's Unfulfilled Hopes

2.3.1 The Arabic Text in the Polyglot Bible of Istanbul, 1546

In 1546, a polyglot Bible was printed in Istanbul in Hebrew type, in four languages, including Arabic (and Persian). Fragments of a copy of this book, known as the 'Constantinople Polyglot Bible',[114] were found in the Genizah collections from the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo.[115] The thirty pages identified in the collection, labelled T-S NS 295.212, contain passages of the Old Testament in Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, and Judeo-Persian, as well as the commentary of Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, or 'Rashi' (1040–1106).[116]

111 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 45.

112 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 447.

113 Tensions between the various denominations of the Levant could become extremely violent. There was a rumor that Patriarch Makarios III ibn Ibn al-Zaʿīm died from poisoning because of his Catholic inclination. On the 'martyrs of the union with the Church of Rome', see Raheb, *Conception de l'Union dans le Patriarcat orthodoxe d'Antioche (1622–1672). Partie historique*, p. 72, 83–92, 122.

114 Considering the proportion of Judaic translations it contains, this is most likely closer to a 'Rabbinic Bible'.

115 Roper, "Printed Matter in Egypt before the Būlāq Press", p. 5. The fragments are now in the Cambridge University Library, shelfmark T-S NS 295.212, cf. ibid., n. 13 (on p. 14); Tamari, "Notes on the Printing in Hebrew Typefaces from the 15th to the 19th Centuries", p. 35, 452 (catalogue description); Ronny Vollandt, "Some Observations on Genizah Fragments of Saadiah's *Tafsīr* in Arabic Letters", *Ginzei Qedem*, 2009, 5, p. 9–44; Abou Nohra, "Les origines et le rayonnement culturel de la première imprimerie à caractères arabes au Liban (1733)", p. 219. See also the online presentation by Melonie Schmierer-Lee: Throwback Thursday: The Constantinople Polyglot of 1546 | Cambridge University Library.

116 This is, possibly, what David H. Partington had in mind when asserting in the entry on

Typographers expelled from Spain were the first to print in Hebrew type in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, starting in 1493. The Jews of Istanbul, increasingly numerous after their expulsion from Spain, had avoided the Sultan's intentions of limiting the spread of printing by obtaining as early as 1490 a *firman* which allowed them to open a press for Hebrew liturgical books. Sultan Bayezid II granted them the right to print texts for their community on the condition they would not print in Arabic type. In 1493, Samuel ben Naḥmias[117] and his brother Joseph established the first Hebrew press in the Ottoman capital.[118] The initiators of Hebrew printing argued in the same way as promoters of printing anywhere else: the manuscripts of their holy scriptures were rare, difficult and expensive to copy, and plagued by scribal mistakes. The first book with Hebrew type was printed in Istanbul in 1493, in 408 pages: *Arbaʿah turim* (*Four Series*), a collection of decrees issued by Jewish judges from the earliest times, collected by Rabbi Jaakov ben Asher (b. Germany, ca. 1270 – d. Toledo, 1340).[119] This press was active until the end of the 18th century.[120]

Rabbi Eliezer Ben Itzak Ashkenazi manufactured a printing press in Prague and used it in Lublin. He then transferred it to Istanbul in 1563 and produced, according to the approval granted, Hebrew books printed in Hebrew type.[121] As I mentioned, this press was transferred in 1576 to Safed (Ṣafad), a city in the north of present-day Israel, the first press to have ever been active on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

"Arabic Printing" (quite inaccurately): "The first printing press in the Middle East was located in Istanbul before the end of the 15th century – but it used Hebrew type exclusively. It printed a few Arabic books by using Hebrew characters". See Partington, "Arabic Printing", p. 57.

117 Born in Thessaloniki, he left for Venice with his brother and his son David. There, they all embraced Catholicism. Subsequently known as Giulio Morosino, Samuel became a librarian of the Propaganda Fide and wrote an anti-Jewish treatise of 1,453 pp. On the Naḥmias family, see *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9, New York, 1901, p. 145.

118 Avraham Yaari, *Ha-Defus ha-Ivri be-Kushta*, Jerusalem, 1967.

119 This book was accepted at the time as "the fundamental book of religious law by all Jewish communities"and it was republished several times. See Gad Nassi, *Amplified Glossary of Book Printing*, in Gad Nassi (ed.), *Jewish Journalism and Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, p. 99.

120 Another famous printer of Hebrew books, born in an old family of Jew typographers, was Gershom ben El'azar Soncino, who established a Hebrew-type press in Cairo in 1557 and printed two books. Copies of them were discovered in the Cairo Geniza. For this period of Hebrew printing in Istanbul, see Yaron Ben Na'eh, *Hebrew Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire*, p. 79–80.

121 Ibid., p. 80–81. See also Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut again*, p. 5; Tamari, "Notes on the Printing in Hebrew Typefaces", p. 46, n. 52.

This said, the Jewish typographers' printing activities addressed the Arabic-speaking Christian readership only marginally: their intention was to produce marketable items for the largest possible number of buyers. Printing in the Arabic language with Hebrew type was a short-lived project.

2.3.2 The Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya as a Hub of Cultural Progress

After the Hebrew type was used in several books for printing Syriac texts, the first passage in Syriac type was included in 1539 in a fragment of the *Gospel According to Luke* printed in Pavia by Theseus Ambrosius.[122] The Maronites' presence in Rome, at the College founded for them in 1584, was also necessary because of the help they were able to give to the Italian scholars and printers who produced Syriac and Arabic books for the missionaries sent to the Middle East. Calendars were printed in Arabic in 1582-1583 after the reform of Pope Gregory XIII. The *Garshuni* script was chosen, to facilitate the adoption of the new calendar system by the bishops, priests, monks, and scholars of the eastern Ottoman provinces. As Gérald Duverdier notes, the distribution of this new calendar – and the theological thinking it relied on – in several languages, including Arabic, allowed it to be more quickly adopted, but also inspired a clear understanding of it that helped certain Eastern Churches to articulate why they rejected it.[123]

In 1584, the Pope requested from the printer Domenico Basa and the engraver Robert Granjon an edition in Syriac and Arabic with *Garshuni* script, a book named *Kitāb al-sabʿa ṣalawāt* (*The Seven Prayers* [*of the Day*]).[124] If the first priority of printing was, for the Propaganda Fide press, the service books necessary for the priests of the Maronite Church, there was also a demand for catechisms and prayer books useful for the common people. In the 17th century, priests of the Maronite Church served the Divine Liturgy in Syriac, but private prayers were said in Arabic.

Starting in the second half of the 16th century, Maronites received Arabic books printed in Italy and brought to the Eastern Mediterranean provinces of the Ottoman Empire by the Catholic missionaries.[125] Patriarch Mīhāʾīl al-Rizzī and the

122 See J. F. Coakley, *The Typography of Syriac: A Historical Catalogue of Printing Types*, New Castle and London, 2006, W1 and full-page illustration, p. 28–30; Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, cat. no. *126, p. 166.

123 Duverdier, "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 265.

124 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 237; Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 33.

125 See a list of such books in Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 10–11.

local bishops welcomed Frs Eliano and Bruno in 1580, on their second mission to Syria, when they brought a second print run of the Catholic catechism printed in Arabic, with Arabic type. In Rome, the Maronites had a generous protector, Cardinal Caraffa, who in 1583 called Fr Yūḥannā Ibn 'Ayyūb al-Hasrūni to supervise the printing work of Arabic and Syriac church books. The latter wrote to Fr Eliano, who was on a mission to the Levant: "The Pope gave us access to a press endowed with large Syriac types. God reward him in His Heavenly Kingdom!"[126]

In a letter addressed to Fr Eliano, three Maronite priests of Tripoli in Lebanon expressed their appreciation of the printing work done in Rome: "We wish the church books to be printed under your eyes, with God's will and your science."[127]

Their requests to Rome, conveyed through the Jesuit missionaries, reflected the needs of the clergy of all the Eastern Churches. In 1585, Fr Eliano received from Gabriel al-Bānī, the first student of the Maronite College of Rome, a request to send to Lebanon "The Acts of the Apostles and books to enlighten us" (possibly, works of biblical exegesis).[128] Several patriarchs of the Maronite Church, including Yūḥannā Maḫlūf (1609–1633) and Yūsuf Ḥalīb, asked the Pope for books printed in Syriac and Arabic, both liturgical and secular, for the Catholic communities of the Middle East. Moreover, the Propaganda Fide agreed to print in Rome Arabic versions sent by the Maronite clergy, such as the 1614 Psalter, on the basis of a manuscript sent from the monastery of Qannūbīn.

Nevertheless, the books that were printed in Rome for the Maronites had to pass a revision process that sometimes led to the censoring of passages in the texts sent for printing. The Vatican scholars made an open effort to bring the Syriac and Arabic versions of liturgical books as close as possible to the canonical ones used in European churches, which had been approved by the Propaganda Fide. This was an attempt to unify the church books of the Latin creed, west to east. The "Latinization" of their liturgical books was not approved by the upper clergy of the Maronite Church. This contradiction was apparent from the very first mission of Fr Eliano in the Levant, in 1578, when he started collecting manuscripts from the local monasteries, in order to take them out of service. He wrote then to Pope Gregory XIII:

> In the course of time, and because of their [i.e., the Maronites'] life alongside other denominations, in their books and their Liturgy errors and heresies have crept. This is only accountable to the absence of priests to guide them, not to any disagreement with the Roman

126 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 43–44.
127 Lūwīs Šayḫū, *Al-ṭā'ifa al-mārūniyya wa-l-rahbāniyya al-yasū'iyya*, Beirut, 1923, p. 84. See also Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 44.
128 Šayḫū, *Al-ṭā'ifa al-mārūniyya wa-l-rahbāniyya al-yasū'iyya*, p. 82.

> Church. [...] These inconsistencies that I discovered in their manuscripts do not reflect their true beliefs, but they were transcribed by ignorant scribes. If you ask them about their doctrine, they will answer that it is similar to the Roman creed."[129]

Girolamo Dandini also collected manuscripts from the Lebanese monasteries, but he took them to Rome and handed them to the Pontifical Archives. The revision of a liturgical text was delayed, in 1592–1594, by the painstaking effort of comparing the available manuscripts of the Maronite Church with the Latin canonical text, which revealed a significant number of nonconformities.

The attitude of the Jesuits towards their liturgical literature convinced the Maronite upper clergy of the benefits of opening their own printing press in the dioceses of present-day Lebanon. Here, they would have had to deal with the authority of the Ottoman governors.[130] The attempt to bring a printing press into Ottoman territory was discussed at a time when the Maronite clergy was in turmoil. In March 1610, as the "reforms" of Patriarch Yūsuf Rizzī, who tried to force Western Catholic rituals upon the local churches and "Latinize" the liturgy, had angered many of the Maronite faithful and their spiritual leaders, Pope Paul V asked the new patriarch, Yūḥannā Maḫlūf, to revert to the old rituals.[131] Printing for themselves, in Maronite territory, was a step forward to gain autonomy from the Church of Rome. On the other hand, through the assistance it offered to the Maronite Church, the Vatican secured the permanence of the Maronites' attachment to the Latin doctrines.

Thus, in 1610, a printing press was installed at the Maronite Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya (Quzḥayyā),[132] close to the stream of Saint Sergius (Mār Sarkīs) in the Qādīšā Valley of northern Lebanon. This was indeed the first Christian press for Syriac and Arabic books to function on Ottoman territory. An old establishment dating back to the 12th century, enjoying a remote location in the mountains, away from the roads traversed by Ottoman officials and troops but visited by many Christian pilgrims, the Monastery of Saint Anthony

129 Ibid., p. 759.

130 For a historical report on the difficult life of the Maronites of Mount Lebanon in the early 17th century, see Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaque-garchouni édité à Qozhaya", p. 519–521.

131 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 59, n. 176.

132 On the etymology of this rare word, see Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaque-garchouni édité à Qozhaya", p. 513–514. Basile Aggoula preferred the form 'Quzḥayyā' and suggested the translation 'the lightnings' (*les éclairs*), cf. his essay "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 297 and 313, n. 1. The forms 'Qazaḥyā' and 'Qozaḥyā' in the online entry on Mīḫā'īl al-Raǧǧī's article published in *Al-Machriq*, 32, 1934, 3, p. 337–361, do not seem to have a phonetical support; see سفر المزامير بالسريانية: طبعة قزحيا. طبعة كمبردج || The Book of Psalms in Syriac: Qazaḥyā Edition. Cambridge Edition (biblia-arabica.com).

was the community where several Maronite patriarchs and bishops came from. According to Joseph Nasrallah, in the early 17th century, the monastery owned farmland and a watermill, and all around it there were stone-carved *kellia* where recluses lived.[133] In the 15th century, this was the abode of several hermits of the al-Rizzī family. Mīhā'īl al-Rizzī left the monastery only to become patriarch of the Maronite Church (1567–1581),[134] like his successor, his brother Sarkīs (1581–1596) and their nephew Yūsuf (1596–1608).

Another member of this family, Sarkīs al-Rizzī, born in 1572 in a village near Ehden, was a student of the Maronite College in Rome from 1584. He returned to Lebanon towards 1592, to live a hermit's life at the Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya. Girolamo Dandini found him there in 1596. Ordained bishop of Damascus in 1600, and later a vicar of the Patriarch Yūsuf al-Rizzī, Sarkīs travelled to Rome in 1606 to convey to the Pope a congratulatory message from the head of the Maronite Church.

In 1610, Sarkīs al-Rizzī set up at the Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya a press where a single book, with two versions of the same text, was published: a Psalter in Syriac and Arabic. The first version was printed with Syriac type (*Serṭo*, the western Syriac script), the second, with *Garshuni* type. This is a beautifully printed book, in black and red ink, with decorative elements and a visible effort to delight the reader. A note placed at the end of the book mentions the printers: Eliās ibn al-Ḥağğ Ḥanna, a monk of Qozhaya, and the deacons Yūsuf ibn ʿAmīma and Yūsuf ibn Yūnān,[135] who had been active in Italy under the direction of the master Pasquale Eli of Camerino.[136] All the Arab printers spent time in Rome and returned in 1609. Therefore, the typographic material is supposed to have been brought from Rome, installed, and used by printers who had some preliminary training in an Italian press where such books had already been produced. Joseph Nasrallah notes that only a master printer from Europe could have made things work in Qozhaya:

133 Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 56–61, presents an overview of the monasteries and hermitages in this famous valley, including that of Qannūbīn.

134 The doctrinal opinions of this patriarch, alien to Catholicism, and his relations with the Jesuit missionaries, are presented by Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 99–101. The biography of several members of the Rizzī (Ruzzy) family is provided in ibid., p. 464–465.

135 On the apprentices of the Qozhaya press, see Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaque-garchouni édité à Qozhaya", p. 518.

136 The note was published by Fr Butros Ġālib in his article "Nawābiġ al-madrasa al-mārūniyya al-'ūlā", *Al-Machriq*, 1924, 7, p. 501, and republished by Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 4.

> En 1610, personne au Liban, en dehors des anciens élèves du Collège Maronite de Rome, n'avait vu une imprimerie. Personne, non plus, ne pouvait en assurer le fonctionnement. Force avait était d'appeler un typographe d'Europe. Son nom nous est conserve au début et à la fin du Psautier, c'est le maitre Pasquale Eli, originaire de Camerino, ville des Marches d'Italie, de la province de Macerata.[137]

Recorded by Schnurrer in 1811 in his *Bibliotheca Arabica*, on p. 351–354, the Qozhaya Psalter was briefly described much later, in 1900, by Louis Cheikho.[138] As surviving copies are rare, only a few researchers of the written culture of Eastern Christianity were aware of the existence of this book in the last century: Franz Babinger mentioned it in 1925.[139] A copy held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France was surveyed by Mīḫā'il al-Raǧǧī, Basile Aggoula, Wahid Gdoura, and J. F. Coakley.[140] In 1934, in his article "Sifr al-Mazāmīr bi-l-suryāniyya: ṭab'a Quzḥayyā, ṭab'a Cambridge" ("The Syriac Psalter: the Edition of Qozhaya, the Edition of Cambridge"),[141] Fr Mīhā'īl Raǧǧī compared the Psalter of 1610 with the edition of W. Emery Barnes published in *The Peshita Psalter According to the West Syrian Text* (Cambridge, 1904).[142] Joseph Nasrallah briefly described a copy held in the library of the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) in Lebanon,[143] which I have also seen in 2022. Carsten-Michael Walbiner surveyed a copy in the Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, acquired in 1611 by a German scholar who travelled in Lebanon.[144]

The most accurate and detailed description of the Qozhaya Psalter, relying primarily on the copy held in the library of the USEK, is Fr Joseph Moukarzel's article "Le psautier syriaque-garchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610. Enjeux historiques et présentation du livre".[145] The author notes the rarity of this book, which previously obstructed a full investigation of its form and content. Having studied the Psalter thoroughly, Joseph Moukarzel provides comprehensive infor-

137 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 7.

138 Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibā'a fī al-Mašriq", *Al-Machriq*, 3, 1900, 6, p. 253–255. This description was repeated by 'Abū l-Futūḥ Raḍwān in his book *Tārīḫ maṭba'at Būlāq wa-lamḥa fī tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a fī buldān al-Šarq al-'awsaṭ*, Cairo, 1953.

139 Franz Babinger, "Mitteilungen 1. Ein vergessener maronitischer Psalterdruck auf der Nürnberger Stadtbücherei", *Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1925, p. 275.

140 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 297–298; Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 59–66; Coakley, *The Typography of Syriac*, W8-W9, p. 45–48.

141 Published in *Al-Machriq*, 32, 1934, p. 337–361.

142 See also the comments of Nasser Gemayel, "Les imprimeries libanaises de Rome", p. 190–193.

143 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 1–8.

144 Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of BookPrinting in the Arab World", p. 22–23.

145 Fr Joseph Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaquegarchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610. Enjeux historiques et présentation du livre", *MUSJ*, 63, 2010–2011, p. 511–566.

mation and comments on all its features of content and form. He also addresses the dissemination of the Psalter and gives a detailed picture of the historical circumstances and the scholars involved in its printing. The press of the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik produced a facsimile edition of this book in 2017.[146]

The bilingual Psalter of Qozhaya comprises 260 pp., with a text size of 28 x 15.5 cm and 24 lines per page. Printed in black and red ink, the title, in Syriac and Arabic, is placed on the first page inside an elegant border:

– in Syriac: *Ktobō d-mazmūrē d-Dawīd malkō wa-nbīyō* / *The Book of Psalms of the King and Prophet David*,
– and in Arabic: *Kitāb mazāmīr 'am taṣābīḥ al-malik wa-l-nabiyy Dāwūd* / *Book of the Psalms or Songs of the King and Prophet David*.

The title page, which looks quite profuse, includes bishop Sarkīs al-Rizzī's coat of arms, a hymn to the Virgin Mary composed in Lebanese Arabic, and a note that is repeated on the last page: "In the beautiful hermitage of the Qozhaya Valley, on the blessed Mount Lebanon, the work of master Pasquale Eli and the humble Yūsuf ibn ʿAmīma of Karm Sadda, a deacon by rank, in the year 1610."

There follows a foreword addressed by bishop Sarkīs al-Rizzī to "the faithful Catholic brethren," where he explains the benefit of the Psalms for the redemption of the soul, without any details about the circumstances surrounding the book publication. He mentions the assistance of the bishop Ǧirǧīs Amīra, "our dear elder brother," who offered advice and blessing and "worked together with us." According to a note in the book, the latter revised the Syriac text of the Psalms from a doctrinal point of view and approved its printing.[147]

Then comes the text of the 151 Psalms – 150 canonical and the final apocryphal one – followed by the ten biblical odes (*taṣābīḥ*), the two last ones only in Syriac, then, a prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian's, the blessing of the archbishop of Ehden under whose authority the monastery was placed, and a final note, as a colophon, on p. 259–260. The Psalms are placed in two columns: to the right – the Syriac text in *Serṭo* type, to the left – in Arabic, in *Garshuni* type. The two sets of types are different in letter size. They were both considered elegant, manufactured after models of a calligraphic handwritten script, by Joseph Nasrallah[148]

146 I have seen this copy at the USEK library in May 2022. I am grateful to Fr Joseph Moukarzel for the wonderful reception there and the access to all the Arabic printed books in the library collections. The description that follows chiefly relies on Fr Joseph's above-mentioned article in the *MUSJ*.
147 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 62; Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaquegarchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610", p. 535.
148 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 3: "Les caractères *caršūnī* sont fins, de petite taille, les syriaques plus gras et plus grands."

and later by Carsten Walbiner.[149] According to Basile Aggoula, these types were nicer than all those available in European presses at the time.[150]

Historians of Arabic printing explained the choice of Syriac for the Psalms alongside Arabic (the vernacular of the time) by the desire to encourage its conservation as a liturgical language in the Maronite Church. This was an essential feature of Maronite culture, different from other cultures of the region, none of them equally attached to the Church of Rome. According to a note of Fr Girolamo Dandini, the Maronite communities were surrounded by sects able to disturb their connections, still fragile, with the pontifical see.[151]

Bishop Sarkīs al-Rizzī sponsored this book himself, as well as the manufacture of the type. Unsurprisingly, history records that the bishop struggled for a long time because of his debts.

Joseph Nasrallah remarked with surprise: "Il est regrettable que les sources de l'histoire religieuse du Liban se soient tu sur l'origine de la première imprimerie du pays".[152] Thus, this printing press is neither mentioned in the *Annals* of Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī, the patriarch of the Maronite Church, nor in the *History of the Lebanese Congregation* composed by the Maronite bishop Ǧibrā'īl Farḥāt. Local sources do not mention it, neither do any of the famous Western travelers in their journals: Thévenot (1655–1659), Chevalier Laurent d'Arvieux (1660), Jean Goujon (1668–1669), Henri Maundrell (1697), Richard Pococke (1738), etc.

Bishop Giuseppe Assemani[153] mentioned in the catalogue of Lorenzo de Medici's library (*Catalogo Biblioth. Medicaea Laurentianae*), which he prepared while residing in Italy, a Psalter printed in 1585 in Syriac and Arabic, with *Garshuni* type, which he described in detail. The volume he mentioned was not preserved, nor is any other copy of this book extant. Therefore, several scholars – Chr. F.

149 Walbiner, "The Christians of Bilād al-Shām (Syria): Pioneers of BookPrinting in the Arab World", p. 23.

150 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 299. On the aspect of the type, see Fr Joseph Moukarzel's comments in "Le Psautier syriaquegarchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610", p. 526–527.

151 Jérome Dandini, *Voyage du Mont Liban*, transl. R. S. P. Richard Simon, Paris, 1675, p. 96; Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 66.

152 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 1.

153 The Maronite scholar Yūsuf al-Sam'ānī. About him and the Assemani family, see Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 96, 131, 247, passim. On the entire episode connected to the Qozhaya Psalter, see Moukarzel, "Le Psautier syriaquegarchouni édité à Qozhaya en 1610", p. 514–515.

von Schnurrer, Silvestre de Sacy, Louis Cheikho, and Joseph Moukarzel – have rejected the existence of this book, suggesting that Assemani saw a later Psalter.[154]

Nasrallah notes at the end of his survey of the Qozhaya Psalter that this was "an attempt with no future" (*un essai sans lendemain*). Basile Aggoula surmised that the book was printed on a mobile press transferred from Rome and returned to the supplier, while the typographers who had printed it also went back to where they had come from.[155] Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper found a different explanation: the typographic activity could not continue without the assistance of the Church of Rome, and this never came.[156] Indeed, as become apparent from Girolamo Dandini's note cited before, the aim of the pontifical authorities was, at the time, to disseminate through the missionaries they sent to the Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire books printed *in Rome*, under the direct control of the scholars working for the Propaganda Fide, devoid of any distancing from the Catholic dogmas. Encouraging the printing of books in Ottoman territory, with no control over the accuracy of the printed texts, was not seen as helpful to the projects of the Holy See for the Maronite Church, and for Arabic-speaking Christians in general.[157]

In 1625, three years after the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide had started supporting more the activities of the missionaries sent to the Middle East, a monk of the Capuchin order by the name of Joseph received approval to install a press in Lebanon. He had been quite insistent, being worried about the activities of Patriarch Cyril Lukaris, who was sending Greek and Arabic books printed in Protestant countries to the Christians of Mount Lebanon. Informed of the patriarch's project to set up a printing press in Constantinople, Father Joseph started conceiving a press for Greek, Arabic, Syriac, Persian, and Turkish that he intended to install in Lebanon by transferring typographic tools and materials from Italy and France. It is not known if he was aware of the printing that had been done at Qozhaya. In any case, he knew that although there was no official ban on printing in the Ottoman Empire, this enterprise was not safe, especially if he intended to print books in Arabic and Turkish, with Arabic type, which would draw the attention of the Ottoman authorities.

Finally, the Propaganda Fide decided to issue a decree on February 4, 1628, forbidding the installation of this press in Lebanon, since its own press had

154 This is not, however, the opinion of Basile Aggoula, who wished to place the first printed book of the East in 1585, cf. Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 297, 299.
155 Ibid., p. 300.
156 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 178.
157 Kuneralp, "Les livres et l'imprimerie à Istanbul au XVIII[e] siècle", p. 2.

started functioning in 1627, working with several alphabets and languages, just as Pope Gregory XIII had desired. After long conversations with Savary de Brèves, Father Joseph had already prepared type for several Oriental languages. Nevertheless, the Propaganda Fide preferred to keep its control over printing for the Maronites, which it would have lost, had an independent press started operating on Mount Lebanon.

At the Monastery of Saint Anthony of Qozhaya, printing was resumed only in the beginning of the 19th century, on a press transferred in 1803 by Fr Serafīm Šušanī of Beirut from the monastery Mār Mūsā al-Habašī of Duwār (Lebanon), where it had started to work in 1798. This press was active until 1897.

It is worth remembering here, for the purpose of our research, that there is no word in Arabic type in the book printed in 1610 at the Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya. The inaccurate idea that the Psalter of Qozhaya was the first book printed in the Middle East in *Arabic type* stems from the decision of some Arab authors to publish in Arabic script the final note of the book, printed in the Psalter in *Garshuni type*. Thus, the Qozhaya Psalter was the first book printed in the Ottoman Empire *with text in the Arabic language*, but *printing with Arabic type* did not occur until 1706, in Aleppo. In the early 17th century, the Maronites' aspiration to print in the lands ruled by the Sublime Porte could only be fulfilled by transferring tools and expertise from Rome. Furthermore, that after the first book was printed, the press closed down, probably because the local apprentices were not able to learn the craft of book-printing before the Italian printer(s) returned home, at least not enough to continue printing by themselves. Finally, the book printed there was meant for a distinct Christian readership, the faithful of the Maronite Church. Thus, the Psalter printed at the Monastery of Saint Anthony in Syriac and Arabic with *Serṭo* and *Garshuni* script, while being the first Christian book printed on the Eastern Mediterranean coast, was not a book meant to be distributed to all the Arabic-speaking Christians in the Ottoman Empire. It could hardly help the faithful of the Church of Antioch, who strived, at the time, to normalize the use of Arabic – language and script – in their liturgical and spiritual life.

2.3.3 Makarios III's Dream of Printing in Eastern Europe

The determination of the Wallachian and Moldavian rulers to open presses was one of the reasons why Patriarch Makarios III ibn al Zaʿīm and his son Paul travelled to the Romanian Principalities in 1653–1658. Paul's report on his travels alongside his father, preserved in several manuscripts, contains precious information on historical figures and events, churches and monasteries, liturgical

rites, icons, and popular traditions of the peoples in Constantinople,[158] Eastern Europe and Muscovy that they came to be acquainted with.[159] In his *Journal*, Paul of Aleppo included many passages in praise of the printing activities supported by Vasile Lupu, the prince of Moldavia (1634–1653), and Matei Basarab, the prince of Wallachia (1632–1654), about the library of the Cantacuzino family on their estate in the village of Mărgineni, and the circulation of printed books at the princely courts and in the clerical circles of these lands. The Antiochian archdeacon commented in connection with Vasile Lupu:

> In his time in Moldavia, at his court, many books were printed, church books, education books, and comments in the Wallachian language,[160] for the people of Moldavia had first read in Serbian,[161] i.e., in Russian, as from the Bulgarian and the Serbian lands to Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as from the Cossacks' lands to Moscow, they all read in Serbian, and this is how all their books are [written][162]. Nevertheless, the language of the people of Moldavia and Wallachia is Wallachian, so, they did not understand what they read. Therefore, [the prince] built near his monastery a great school all in stone,[163] and he printed books in their own language.[164]

Paul's interest in the language of liturgy and that of the church books in the Romanian Principalities can be explained by the similarity of their situation to

158 See Mihai Ţipău, "Byzance et les Grecs dans le récit de voyage de Paul d'Alep", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 79–94.

159 Never translated and edited in its entirety, Paul of Aleppo's *Journal* is now the object of a complete annotated English version, alongside the Arabic text, which I am preparing, together with Yulia Petrova, Mihai Ţipău, and Samuel Noble, for the Brill Editors series ACTS directed by Alexander Treiger. For brief passages translated into English to illustrate the importance of Paul of Aleppo's work as a historical source, see Ioana Feodorov, "Chapter 12: Paul of Aleppo", in Noble and Treiger (eds.), *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World 700–1700. An Anthology of Sources*, p. 252–275.

160 In the manuscript, *bi-l-lisān al-falāḫī*, an expression that Paul uses both for Moldavian and Wallachian, as Romanians spoke the same language, which was in the early process of developing into the Romanian literary language.

161 The author refers to Old Slavonic, or Church Slavonic.

162 I.e., in the Cyrillic script.

163 Vasile Lupu's College, or the "Basilian School", established by a princely decree of May 9, 1640. The college started functioning in 1641 and closed after burning down completely in 1723. Young men studied Greek, Latin, Slavonic, and Romanian there. See Nicolae Iorga, *Documente privitoare la familia Callimachi*, t. I, Bucharest, 1902, p. 449–451.

164 This is a passage from the English translation to be published soon in the above-mentioned volume with Brill Editors. In MS Arabe 6016 of Bibliothèque nationale de France, the passage is placed on ff. 33v–34r.

that of Syria under the Ottomans: there, the Christians who had no theological or monastic education no longer understood Greek and Syriac. Paul's father, Patriarch Makarios III, translated and adapted into Arabic several Greek works designed to bring the liturgical rituals of the Church of Antioch closer to those of Byzantine tradition. At his request, other translators participated in this effort, among them his son Paul. Their travels to the Holy Land,[165] Eastern Europe, and Georgia were an opportunity to reconnect with the Byzantine roots of church services as they were formulated in the works that circulated there in manuscript copies and especially in printed books.[166]

Another revealing episode for the appreciation that Patriarch Makarios III had for the benefits of printing occurred during the visit he paid to the Pechersk Lavra ('Monastery of the Caves') in Kyiv, where the Syrians were invited to see the famous press of the monastery. Here is what Paul reports on this visit:

> Next to the large church [of the Pechersk Monastery] there is an admirable printing press, famous all around these lands.[167] All their church books come from here. They are splendidly printed, in various sizes and colors, with images on large sheets, showing wonders from other countries, icons of saints, wise teachings, and such. We printed here, as patriarchs are accustomed to, a certain number of letters of absolution signed in red ink by our master the patriarch, i.e., with his name written in their language, and the icon of the [Holy] Apostle Peter. They came in three sizes, a whole sheet for noblemen, a medium one for common people, and a small one for women.[168]

Traveling across the Romanian lands during their long absence from home, the Syrians had the opportunity to see several libraries – of monasteries, princely courts, and wealthy boyars – where the Romanian, Greek, and Slavonic books were plentiful. Books printed by the monk Makarios[169] at the Dealu Monastery in

165 In 1642, Makarios III and Paul went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem accompanied by Maximos, the catholicos of Georgia, and sixty clerics and lay people from Aleppo. See MS Arabe 6016, BnF, f. 7r.

166 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 148; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 87–127; Hilary Kilpatrick, "Makāriyūs Ibn al-Za'īm (ca. 1600–1672) and Būlus Ibn al-Za'īm (1627–1669)", in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography 1350–1850*, Wiesbaden, 2009, p. 262–273. For the works written by Makarios III and Paul of Aleppo, see also Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 445–451.

167 The press of the Kyiv Pechersk Monastery was founded by the Archimandrite Yelisey Pletenetsky, apparently in 1606, on the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The first book, a dictionary, was printed there in 1626.

168 MS Arabe 6016, BnF, f. 82v.

169 This was possibly the same monk Makarios who had worked at the press of Cetinje. See Dan Simonescu, "Tipografi sârbi în slujba vechiului tipar românesc", *Analele Societății de Limba Română* (Panciova – Zrenjanin), 3–4, 1972–1973, p. 533–538; Mircea Păcurariu, *Geschichte der*

Târgoviște, the Book of the Divine Liturgies in 1508 (Fig. 1), the Oktoechos and the Gospel, had such a wide circulation across all the Orthodox areas (the Romanian Principalities, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, present-day Ukraine, and Muscovy) that they surely reached the libraries that Makarios III and Paul of Aleppo visited. While they were in Wallachia, at the Cozia Monastery, Paul paid a visit to the *stolnic* Constantin Cantacuzino, from whom he wished to obtain the unique manuscript copy of the *Comments to the Psalms of David the Prophet* composed by Niketas, the metropolitan of Heraklion (b. around 1060), who had collected passages from the works of forty saints and church fathers including Theodoret, the bishop of Cyrrhus in 423–457.[170] Paul reports that he and his father wished to copy this important text, translate it into Arabic, and then secure its printing "in the lands of Europe, for our benefit and that of the entire Christian people."[171]

Another work that they would have liked to see printed was the Book of the Divine Liturgies revised by Meletios Karma. When leaving for Europe, the Patriarch Makarios III took with him a manuscript Liturgikon that Paul refers to several times in his *Journal*. The patriarch cited from it in 1656, when asked to arbitrate the divergent opinions of the participants in the synod convened by Nikon, the Patriarch of Moscow. In the discussions concerning the "inventions" that had crept into liturgical books over time, Makarios appealed to an Arabic version of the Liturgikon used in the Church of Antioch since the old days.[172]

Fr Charbel Nassif has studied a manuscript preserved at the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos (MS 1049) that contains the Greek and Arabic version of the Liturgikon, a copy made in 1637 by the secretary and scribe Ṭalğa al-Ḥamawī,

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Rumänischen Orthodoxen Kirche, Erlangen, 1994, p. 221–222; Ionel Cândea and Cristian Luca, "Libri manoscritti e a stampa nei Paesi Romeni del Cinquecento", in Luisa Secchi Tarugi (ed.), *L'Europa del libro nell'età dell'Umanesimo (secc. XV–XVI). Atti del XIV Convegno Internazionale*, Florence, 2004, p. 176.

170 See Virgil Cândea, "Sources byzantines et orientales concernant les Roumains", *RESEE*, 16, 1978, 2, p. 311–312; Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Valahia*, Arabic manuscript edition and English translation by Ioana Feodorov, Bucharest and Brăila, 2014, p. 345, n. 852, and p. 346, n. 854.

171 MS Arabe 6016, BnF, ff. 270r–271r. See Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Valahia*, p. 347.

172 In an article of 1896, Georgy A. Murkos declared that he had seen at the Vatopedi monastery on Mount Athos a Book of the Divine Liturgies in Greek and Arabic copied in 1647, with an Arabic foreword, which Patriarch Makarios had carried with him on his first journey to Europe. See Georgy A. Murkos, "O sluzhebnike Antiokhiĭskogo patriarkha Makariĭa, nakhodiashchemsia na Afone", in *Drevnosti Vostochnye. Trudy Vostochnoĭ komissii Imperatorskogo Moskovskogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva*, t. II, Moscow, 1896, fasc. 1, p. 1.

brother of the Patriarch Efthimios II Karma.[173] The manuscript ends with a text signed by Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm, mentioning that it was given as *waqf* to the Church of the Saints Cyprian and Justina in Damascus.[174] This is the same version that was printed in 1701 in Snagov (Wallachia) by the Metropolitan Athanasios Dabbās, as I shall explain below. However, according to Fr Charbel, the copy kept at Vatopedi is not the one that accompanied the Patriarch Makarios III on his journeys.

173 Ṭalğa exchanged letters with Edward Pococke who, before he became the first professor of Arabic at Oxford, was chaplain to the English merchants of the Levant Company in Aleppo from 1630 to 1636. These letters are preserved in MS Pococke 432 of the Bodleian Library. He is also mentioned in these letters as the owner of a manuscript work called *Man taʿallaqa al-dīn al-naṣrānī*. See Hilary Kilpatrick, "Arabic Private Correspondence from Seventeenth-Century Syria: The Letters to Edward Pococke", *The Bodleian Library Record*, 23, 2010, 1, p. 21, 25–27.
174 Charbel Nassif, "Le Liturgicon arabe de Vatopedi (Mont Athos, Vatopedi 1049)", *Chronos*, 2021, 42, p. 57–82.

3 In the Wake of Parting: Christian Arabic Printing to Suit All Needs

3.1 The Great Divide: 1724, the Year when (almost) Everything Changed

From the 16th century on, the Christians of the Church of Antioch strived to replace Greek and Syriac, the old liturgical languages, with Arabic, a language understood by the majority of the people. One reason was the increasing awareness of Arab identity in the Middle Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, in a population which lived in the midst of Turkish speakers, under a Muslim administration. First the Greek language, then Syriac lost ground before Arabic, and thus, the necessity arose to have all liturgical books available in this language, in versions revised by the theologians and scholars of the Church of Antioch. An effort to unify the existing texts that circulated in inconsistent versions filled with copyists' errors and doctrinal variations was becoming urgent. Standardized liturgical texts in a sufficient number of printed copies were required. Unified church books would provide the clergy, especially its upper ranks, with a feeling of consistency and harmony of the theological expresssion. This would be a strong support for the unity of the Byzantine-rite communities in their prayer and communion. There was no opposition to the use of Arabic in church life and liturgy among Arabic-speaking Christians, as there often was in Western Europe to the use of the vernacular. Arabic versions of the essential liturgical books had been in use to some degree since the 10th century.[1] They circulated in beautifully copied manuscripts, some decorated with splendid miniatures.[2] In Damascus in the 17th century, the Psalms were read in Arabic, and the Epistles and Gospels in Greek, Arabic, and Turkish.[3] However, a movement towards standardization was absent from the Arabic-speaking churches for a long time. Referring to the early period of Arabic liturgical literature, Ronny Vollandt summs it up as follows:

1 *HMLÉM* III.1, p. 216, n. 126.

2 A relevant example is the manuscript of the Arabic Psalter of IMO in Saint Petersburg, comprising several tens of colored miniatures created by Yūsuf al-Muṣawwir, a good friend of Paul of Aleppo. A facsimile was published by Val. V. Polosin, N. I. Serikoff and S. A. Fransouzoff (eds.): *The Arabic Psalter*, *facsimile edition of Manuscript A 187, The Petersburg Arabic Illuminated Psalter from the collections of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg Branch*), Saint Petersburg and Voronezh, 2005. See my presentation of this book in *RESEE*, 46, 2008, 1–4, p. 481–484.

3 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 150.

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> Furthermore, textual standardization was never brought into effect, also as Arabic never reached the status of an official church language, as did Syria and Coptic. Although it appears that especially those translations that are attested in great numbers had a preferred, popular standing within their respective communities, none of them underwent a process of becoming canonically or liturgically binding. With regard to both their biblical texts and liturgical traditions, Arabic-speaking Christian churches have demonstrated and also cultivated, in a certain way, great variety over the course of history.[4]

The difficult situation of the Christian communities living in the Eastern Mediterranean lands pushed the patriarchs of various churches to seek the help of the upper clergy and powerful rulers of Western European countries. The priest Sauma was sent in 1287 by the Catholicos Yapalaha of the Nestorian Church of the East (1282–1317) to ask for support from the Pope Honorius IV and the European princes for the Mongol Khan Argun (1284–1290), who was purportedly preparing to drive the Mamluks out from Jerusalem, Palestine, and Syria, restoring these places to Christian rule. Fr Sauma was granted an audience by Phillipe le Bel, the king of France, and Edward I, the king of England. He passed through Genoa and, in 1288, before Easter, met with the pope and handed him a message from the Khan Argun and a collection of Syriac manuscripts.[5]

The Greek College founded by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 and the Maronite College founded in 1584 were assigned the mission of educating the clerics who arrived in Rome from the Middle East.[6] This education observed the Latin teachings and helped strengthen the ties between the Vatican and the Eastern Churches that were attached to them, through the successive series of graduates who were granted diplomas in Theology and Philosophy.[7]

The first series of graduates from the Maronite College consisted of twenty students from Lebanon. The special relations that some of the Eastern Christians, especially the Maronites, enjoyed with the Church of Rome required a strict observance of its dogmas and rites. Among other restrictions, all printed books produced there needed approvals that were carefully considered so that no "doctrinal error" proper to other creeds would sneak into the texts prepared for distribution in Eastern churches.[8] The liturgical books presented by Catholic missionaries to

4 Vollandt, "1.4.11. Arabic (Christian) Translations", previously cited. See also R. Vollandt, "2.5.8. Arabic Translations", in the same Brill collection of essays.

5 See the report of this episode in Boustany, "Trois chroniques syriaques", p. 88–90.

6 On the few Greek Catholic students of the Greek College in Rome, see Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Monastic Reading and Learning in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Šām: Some Evidence from the Monastery of Al-Šuwayr (Mount Lebanon)", *Arabica*, 51, 2004, 4, especially p. 468–469.

7 Duverdier, "Du livre religieux à l'orientalisme", p. 159.

8 Id., "Défense de l'orthodoxie et lutte d'influences", p. 265.

the Arabic-speaking clergy in the Ottoman provinces would have replaced the ancient manuscripts that generations of local priests had used.

The *Biblia Arabica* had been envisioned by the Levantine scholars as a version that preserved the liturgical traditions of Syriac and Arabic liturgical texts, relying on old local revisions. However, as I have mentioned before, the theologians of the Roman Church decided to print an Arabic translation of the Vulgate instead.

In these circumstances, the patriarchs of the Church of Antioch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm, Athanasios III Dabbās, and Sylvester of Cyprus took upon themselves the same task: to preserve the Byzantine spirit in its Arabic expression. This state of affairs was similar for both the people of the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman provinces of the Middle East, although the degree of the hold of the Sublime Porte over them differed. One of their common aspirations was related to the liturgical language of the Christian churches. Wallachians and Moldavians, all speakers of Romanian, struggled to move from church Slavonic, the liturgical language they had inherited from their forefathers, to Romanian. Here, the same need to print liturgical and spiritual books in the vernacular had developed. In the foreword to the *Cazania lui Varlaam*, Vasile Lupu, the prince of Moldavia, a supporter and sponsor of the printing of this important Romanian book, declared:

> From whatever God allowed to us and gave us, in his mercy, we give in turn this gift to the Romanian language, a book in the Romanian tongue, first – to praise God, then – to educate and benefit the faithful souls. And even if it is not an expensive [gift], welcome it not as a worldly thing, but as a heavenly gem, and while reading it, remember our names, do not forsake us in your prayers, and stay healthy.[9]

In Wallachia (Rom. *Țara Românească*, Ar. *al-Fallāḫ*), the first book was printed in 1508, and the fame of local printers soon spread to the Middle East. They started early on with printing in Slavonic and Greek, and then later expanded to Romanian. Printing in several scripts (types) and languages was common after 1700, when the presses of the Romanian Principalities produced books in many languages, including Serbian, Bulgarian, and Turkish (with Greek type).[10] Coming from Western and Central Europe, the first typographers who worked in

9 Vasile Lupu, "Cuvânt împreună cătră toată semenţiia românească pretutinderea ce să află pravoslavnic într-această limbă", in *Carte românească de învățătură*, Iași, 1643, p. 3.

10 In the Romanian lands, Armenian type was used for the first time in Iași, in a press established by the Moldavian scholar Gheorghe Asachi, where two Armenian books were printed in 1847: *A Key to Reading*, a handbook for children, and *Confession of the Faith of the Holy Armenian Church for the Use of Small Children*. See Claude Mutafian, *La saga des Arméniens de l'Ararat aux Carpates*, Paris, 2018, p. 347. I am grateful to David Neagu for this reference.

Târgoviște – the famous Serbian monk Makarij,[11] Demetrios and Moses Liubavich, found there the freedom to pursue their work on Wallachian soil, where no monopoly was imposed on printing.[12] Printers from other areas inhabited by Romanians joined them in this activity: in Sibiu, Filip Moldoveanul, in Brașov, Diaconul (the Deacon) Coresi, in Iași, the Metropolitan Varlaam.[13] In 1640, during the term of the metropolitan of Moldavia Varlaam, the hieromonk Sophronius Pochasky was dispatched to Iași by Petru Movilă (Petro Mohyla), the metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia (1633–1647), with a press and master printers to run it, installing them at the prince's monastery of the Three Holy Hierarchs ('Sfinții Trei Ierarhi').

Petru Movilă was born in Suceava (northern Moldavia) on December 21, 1596, into a Moldavian family of boyars and princes.[14] He was the son of the prince

11 On the Serbian monk Makarij, see Mitar Pešikan, Katarina Mano-Zisi and Miljko Kovačević (eds.), *Pet vekova srpskog štamparstva: 1494–1994. Razdoblje srpskoslovenske štampe: XV–XVII v.*, Belgrade and Novi Sad, 1994, especially p. 138–139.

12 As I already explained, in contrast with other European countries, in the Romanian Principalities printers were most often the owners of their typographic implements, presses, and book production. See, For example, the cases of Dimitrie Liubavich, Diaconul Coresi, and Antim the Iberian presented by Doru Bădără on p. 393–396 in his article "Ceva despre monopolul asupra tiparului din Țările Române, 1508–1714".

13 For an English-language overview of printing in the Romanian Principalities in the 17th century (including a list of titles), see Dennis Deletant, "Rumanian Presses and Printing in the Seventeenth Century", *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Part I, 60, 1982, 4, p. 481–499, and Part II, 61, 1983, 4, p. 481–511.

14 On Metropolitan Petru Movilă, see: *Arkhiv ʺugo-zapadnoĭ Rossii*, Part I, t. VII, Moscow, 1887 (Peter Movilă's *Memoirs* – fragments); E. Ternovskiĭ, "Pëtr Mogila, Biograficheskiĭ ocherk", *Kievskaia starina*, 2, 1882, 4, p. 1–24; S. I. Golubev, *Kyivskiĭ mitropolit Pëtr Mogila i ego spodvizhniki*, Kyiv, I, 1883; Ghenadie Enăceanu, "Din istoria bisericească a românilor. Petru Movilă", *BOR*, 7, 1883, 7, p. 431–453; Ghenadie Enăceanu, "Petru Movilă (Biografia)", *BOR*, 7, 1883, 12, p. 734–772, and 8, 1884, 1, p. 4–39 (cont.); P. P. Panaitescu, "L'influence de Pierre Mogila, archevêque de Kiev, dans les Principautés roumaines", *Mélanges de l'École roumaine en France*, 5, 1926, 1, p. 3–97; I. Negrescu, "Mitropolitul Petru Movilă, înfățișat de noua literatură teologică rusă", *Ortodoxia. Revista Patriarhiei Române*, 4, 1952, 1, p. 135–160; Igor Shevchenko, "The Many Worlds of Peter Mohyla", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Special Issue, *The Kiev Mohyla Academy: Commemorating the 350th Anniversary of its Founding (1632)*, 8, 1984, 1/2, p. 9–44; Matei Cazacu, "Pierre Mohyla (Petru Movilă) et la Roumanie. Essai historique et bibliographique", in ibid., p. 188–222 (reprinted in Emanuel Constantin Antoche and Lidia Cotovanu (eds.), *Des Balkans à la Russie médiévale et moderne: hommes, images et réalités*, Brăila, 2017, p. 461–486); "Mitropolitul Petru Movilă la 340 de ani de la moartea sa, 1647–1987" (collection of essays), *Mitropolia Ardealului*, Part One, 32, 1987, 6, p. 49–77, and Part Two, 33, 1988, 1, p. 7–36; Virgil Cândea, "Quelques notes sur Pierre Movilă et la culture roumaine ancienne" *Nouvelles études d'histoire*, 1995, 9, p. 31–40; P. P. Panaitescu, *Petru Movilă. Studii*, ed. Ștefan S. Gorovei and Maria Magdalena Székely, Bucharest, 1996; Rev. Dr Stephan Jarmus (ed.), *Faith and Culture. Special Issue on Petro Mogyla*,

Simion Movilă[15] and his wife Marghita (Margaret). In September 1607, Petru fled to the Cossacks' lands with his mother, after his father was murdered. From 1608 to 1620 they resided in the castle of Stanisław Żółkiewski, military commander of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1547–1620).[16] He was educated by the Brotherhood of L'viv (Lemberg), the Bratstvo monks, then at the academy founded by the Polish Crown chancellor Jan Zamoyski.[17] He succeeded in mastering several languages and cultures: Polish, Slavonic, Belorussian, Latin, and Greek. He was tonsured a monk at the Pechersk Lavra in Kyiv, the chief religious and cultural center of Ukraine, a *stavropegion* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. He was soon elected head of the monastery, and, in 1633, he was elected metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia. He soon initiated an ambitious plan of spiritual revival and national liberation for the Orthodox of present-day Ukraine. One of his most passionate projects was to print as much as possible and disseminate theological and spiritual knowledge to Orthodox readers. From 1616 on, at the press he had set up at the Pechersk Lavra, he worked side by side with the typographers in printing books in Greek, Polish, and Latin. He then extended a helping hand to the princes and metropolitans of the Romanian Principalities, by sending over printers and tools: to Govora, in the Vâlcea region, in 1637, to Dealu (Târgovişte) and Câmpulung, in the 1630's, to Iași, before 1643.[18]

One of the first texts printed in Iași, in 1643, is a masterpiece to this day: *Carte românească de învățătură, Dumenecile preste an și la praznice împărătești și la svenți mari*, commonly known as *Cazania lui Varlaam* (*Varlaam's Book of Teachings*), a Romanian-text book of homilies and readings for Sundays and feasts of the entire year, in 1,012 pages, composed in 1637 by Varlaam, the metropolitan of Moldavia.[19] Sent from the Pechersk Lavra in Kyiv to help the Moldavians with

1997–1998, 11; *Sinodul de la Iași și Sf. Petru Movilă, 1642–2002*, Iași, 2002; Vera Tchentsova, "Pour un corpus des inscriptions grecques de l'église Saint-Sauveur de Berestovo", *Museikon*, 2017, 1, p. 77–94, especially p. 78–80. Several books and collections of essays were dedicated to Petru Movilă by the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University (Cambridge, MA).

15 Prince of Wallachia (Oct. 1600 – July 1601, Aug. 1601 – Aug. 1602) and Moldavia (July 1606 – Sept. 1607).

16 He was also castellan of L'viv, voivod of Kyiv and great chancellor of the Polish Crown, later appointed great hetman.

17 *Hippaeum Zamoscianum*, or the Zamoyski Academy.

18 For a brief presentation of early printing in the Romanian Principalities, see Doru Bădără, "The Beginning of Printing and Print Culture in the Romanian Principalities", forthcoming in Dipratu and Noble (eds.), *Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond*, Berlin, 2023.

19 See the new edition by Stela Toma (ed.), *Carte românească de învățătură*, *Dumenecile preste an și la praznice împărătești și la svenți mari*, t. II, Bucharest, 2011, and Dan Zamfirescu, *Carte*

printing, the famous printer and engraver Ilya, a disciple of Petru Movilă, the metropolitan of Kyiv, who had worked in L'viv and Kyiv, was among the most productive typographers of his age.[20] Metropolitan Varlaam's book was illustrated by Ilya with countless engravings and decorative elements that represent biblical scenes, icons of saints, floral initials, page ornaments, etc.

Since the rule of Suleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566), Wallachia and Moldavia had enjoyed a special status relative to that of other principalities that were not completely engulfed by the Ottoman power.[21] They were considered lands within the *Dār al-ḏimma*, the 'House of the tribute-payers'. This status secured to them a certain autonomy and various rights, including religious freedom. Paul of Aleppo remarked while sojourning in Moldavia and Wallachia during his trip in 1653–1658 that there were no mosques anywhere in the Romanian Principalities, there were churches, crosses, and loudly-ringing bells everywhere, no regular Ottoman army stationed in any major city, and, for six years in a row, he never heard the *ezan* (the Muslim call to prayer).[22]

Christian Arabs travelled to Constantinople, Jerusalem, the Holy Land, and Sinai, learning everywhere about the abundant donations and political assistance at the Sublime Porte that the rulers of the Romanian Principalities granted to Christians of the former Byzantine Empire. Since the 16th century, patriarchs of the Church of Antioch turned their eyes toward Eastern Europe. The welcoming answer they received from rulers and upper clergy of the Romanian Principalities, the Cossack lands, and the Russian Tsardom inspired them to embark on long, perilous journeys. News about the freedom in the Orthodox countries of Eastern

românească de învățătură, *Dumenecile preste an și la praznice împărătești și la svenți mari*, preamble and introductory study, t. I, Bucharest, 2012–2013.

20 See the thorough presentation of this famous engraver's works recently published by Oksana Yurchyshyn-Smith: *The Monk Ilia (fl. 1637–1663). Catalogue. Ukrainian and Romanian Baroque Engraving*, Kyiv, 2021. See also: Oksana Yurchyshyn-Smith, "Dated Ukrainian Print of the Seventeenth Century", *Print Quarterly*, 18, 2001, 2, p. 190–199; Oksana Yurchyshyn-Smith, "Development of Byzantine Iconographic Tradition in Ukrainian Antimensia of the XVIIth Century", *Byzantinoslavica*, 1998, 59, p. 320–324.

21 See Viorel Panaite, "The Legal and Political Status of Wallachia and Moldavia in Relation to the Ottoman Porte", in Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (eds.), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Leiden and Boston, 2013, p. 9–42; Viorel Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Its Tribute-Payers from the North of the Danube*, 2nd rev. ed., Leiden and Boston, 2019, p. 344–374; Viorel Panaite, "Watching over Neighboring Provinces in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of Tributary Princes from the north of the Danube in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", in Gábor Kármán (ed.), *Tributaries and Peripheries of the Ottoman Empire*, Leiden and Boston, 2020, p. 7–23.

22 Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Valahia*, p. 430ff.

Europe reached the Patriarchate of Antioch and encouraged the heads of the Arabic-speaking faithful to travel to Iași, Târgoviște, and București after 1580, in search of assistance of many kinds – financial, spiritual, and diplomatic. Their hopes relied, first of all, on the Christian solidarity and well-known munificence of the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia, who were famous for having paid the debts of the Eastern Patriarchates many times, and having sent all forms of help to Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Mount Athos.[23] This was especially important as the rulers of the Romanian Principalities were devout Christians whose purpose was to support the Byzantine-rite faithful of the lands under Muslim rule all through the Ottoman era.

The Romanian Principalities were not unfamiliar to Arabic-speaking Christians. The Byzantine influences over their cultures, Orthodox spirituality, common traditions, the struggle to preserve the church rites and rituals in the dire circumstances of being governed by a Muslim power, and the commercial links between merchants of the Eastern Mediterranean coast and Southeastern Europe, all these brought the Arab Christians close to the Greek Orthodox in Moldavia and Wallachia. The latter were also aware of the life of Christian communities in the Eastern countries that they visited when going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land or Sinai. They brought from there not only memories and souvenirs but also inspiration for religious foundations at home. Thus, the Monastery of Sinaia in the Carpathian Mountains north of Bucharest was built by Mihail Cantacuzino the *spătar*[24] after he returned from Mount Sinai, with the intention to celebrate

23 On the substantial help that Wallachian and Moldavian princes granted to the Eastern Christians for several centuries, see: Nicolae Iorga, "Vasile Lupu ca următor al Împăraților de Răsărit în tutelarea Patriarhiei de Constantinopole și a Bisericii Ortodoxe", *AARMSI*, S. II, t. 36, 1913, p. 207–236; Marcu Beza, *Heritage of Byzantium*, p. 39–42; Teodor Bodogae, *Ajutoarele românești la mânăstirile din Sfântul Munte Athos*, Sibiu, 1940; Paul Lemerle and Paul Wittek, "Recherches sur l'histoire et le statut des monastères athonites sous la domination turque", in *Archives du Droit oriental*, t. III, Paris, 1948; Petre Ş. Năsturel, *Le Mont Athos et les Roumains. Recherches sur leurs relations du milieu du XIV^e siècle à 1654*, Rome, 1986; Constantin Șerban, *Vasile Lupu, domn al Moldovei (1634–1653)*, Bucharest, 1991, p. 188–193; Boško I. Bojović, "Chilandar et les Pays Roumains. Continuité liturgique et institutionnelle dans les actes princiers (XV^e–XVII^e siècles)", in Ionel Cândea, Paul Cernovodeanu and Gheorghe Lazăr (eds.), *Închinare lui Petre Ş. Năsturel la 80 de ani*, Brăila, 2003, p. 141–150; Florin Marinescu, "Cu privire la metoacele Sfântului Munte în România: cazul mănăstirilor Vatoped și Ivir", in idem, p. 627–629; Emilian Băbuș, Ioan Moldoveanu and Adrian Marinescu (eds.), *The Romanian Principalities and the Holy Places along the Centuries*, Bucharest, 2007; Pr. dr. Ioan Moldoveanu, *Contribuții la istoria relațiilor Țărilor Române cu Muntele Athos (1650–1863) în întâmpinarea a 1045 de ani de la fondarea Muntelui Athos (963–2008)*, Bucharest, 2007.

24 This was the officer of the court who carried the prince's sword and cared for his weapons.

that extraordinary place. This eagerness to found holy churches and monasteries upon returning from the Holy Places had started much earlier: around 1512, back from a journey east, a certain Iosif (Joseph) founded on a hill near the Moldavian Monastery of Bistrița, with the support of Ștefăniță voivod, the prince of Moldavia (1517–1527) and a grandson of Stephen the Great, a hermitage named *A Besericanilor*, later named the 'Bisericani Monastery' (i.e., 'of the monks who celebrate the Divine Liturgy without interruption'). Ostrich eggs, sometimes beautifully adorned, are hung from the great chandelier before the Royal Doors of monastic churches all across Romania, a tradition that dates back to the late Middle Ages, when pilgrims travelled to the Holy Land and Mount Athos and, once home, imitated the particularities of ritual and church life they had witnessed there. This is connected to the early monastic use of ostrich eggs in the desert of Sketis in Egypt, as a reminder of the requirement to stay awake, especially if you were a monk seated in the narthex. As ostriches (male and female) untiringly guard their eggs, never allowing themselves to fall asleep before they hatch lest they be stolen by desert jackals or snakes, or be harmed and hatch no more, Christians should never let their mind stray when praying at church. The most splendid example is the row of ostrich eggs hanging from the main chandelier in the church at the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos.[25]

The upper clergy of the Eastern Churches received from the rulers of the Romanian Principalities donations and *metochia* every time they presented themselves to their courts. A single example, that of the Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheos II Notaras, is enough to illustrate the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Eastern Churches. Elected in January 1669 by a council convened in Constantinople, he left for the Romanian Principalities in February 1670. There, he was welcomed with great joy and respect at the princely courts of Bucharest and Iași, where he was granted significant monetary donations for the Holy Sepulcher both from the princes – Antonie of Popești in Wallachia[26] and Gheorghe Duca in Moldavia[27] – and from the nobility, upper clergy, and hegumens of monasteries.[28] Back in Bucharest in May 1673, he received from the Prince Grigore

25 See Virgil Cândea, "Les oeufs d'autruche et la vigilance", *RESEE*, 31, 1993, 3–4, p. 301–303, and Ioana Feodorov, "Ouăle de struţ din bisericile ortodoxe: înţeles duhovnicesc şi tradiţie decorative", in Manuela Nevaci, Irina Floarea and Ioan-Mircea Farcaş (eds.), *Ex Oriente Lux. In honorem Nicolae Saramandu*, Alessandria, 2021, p. 481–504.

26 He ruled from 1669 to 1672.

27 He ruled intermittently in Moldavia and Wallachia from 1665 to 1678.

28 Boris L. Fonkich has published a letter dated April 11, 1670, preserved in Moscow, which was sent by Dionysios, the future metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia (since 1672, as Dionysios I) to Paisios Ligarides, metropolitan of Gaza, who was residing in Moscow at the time. The writer

Ghica two *metochia*, the Monastery of Căluiu and the Ungurei Skete. In 1683 and 1686, Dositheos travelled again to Bucharest and Iași, and he was appointed as an advisor to the Wallachian prince Șerban Cantacuzino. The prince then granted him diplomatic assistance with the Sublime Porte, so he succeeded in securing from the Ottoman authorities the necessary firmans to repair churches within the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Later, he was in a close relationship with the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, a resolute supporter of the Middle Eastern Christians. The foundation of the printing press for Greek books in Iași in 1682 was, again, an act of munificence from the prince of Moldavia Gheorghe Duca, a benefactor of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem by means of gifts of money, political support, and spiritual assistance.

The first patriarch of the Church of Antioch to visit the Romanian Orthodox was Joachim V ibn Ḍaw. Bishop of Tripoli in Lebanon from 1576 (named Dorotheos), he was elected patriarch of the Church of Antioch in 1581 with the support of the Damascene faithful, adopting the name Joachim (Yuwākīm).[29] A complicated battle over the patriarchal see ensued between him and Michael Sabbāġ, for several years. Having secured a *firman* of confirmation in June 1583, Joachim V occupied the see of the Church of Antioch until 1592, when he was murdered in obscure circumstances.[30]

Joachim V travelled to L'viv and then Moscow in 1586–1587, and on his way to the Russian Tsardom he was invited by the bishop Gheorghe II Movilă to visit him in Rădăuți, northern Moldavia. He presented his host with two items that later reached the Monastery of Sucevița, a foundation of the Movilă family: a splendidly copied Slavonic Gospel (probably received as a gift while in L'viv), now exhibited in the museum of the monastery, and an icon of the Holy Virgin

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reports on the welcome that Patriarch Dositheos received at the princely courts of Bucharest and Iași, where he arrived before Lent, and the gifts that were presented to him. The patriarch was preparing to go to Iași, as "the Prince [Gheorghe] Duca is a great friend of the Holy Sepulcher and His Beatitude". See Boris L. Fonkich, "Pis'mo Dionisija Ivirita Paisiju Ligaridu", in id., *Grecheskie rukopisi i dokumenty v Rossii v XVI – nachale XVIII v.*, Moscow, 2003, p. 433–444. I am grateful to Vera Tchentsova for the information above. For the collections of Greek letters preserved in the Moscow archives, see Vera Tchentsova, "The Correspondence of Greek Church Leaders with Russia", in *CMR 10*, p. 485–491.

29 On patriarch Joachim V and the troubles that occurred on his election, see Assad Rustum, *Kanīsat madīnat Allāh 'Anṭākiya al-'Uẓmā*, t. 3, Beirut, 1928, p. 23–37; Kuri, *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis*, p. 126; Robert M. Haddad, "Constantinople over Antioch, 1516–1724: Patriarchal Politics in the Ottoman Era", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 41, 1990, 2, p. 220–222; Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, especially p. 134–135, 254–255, 369–371.

30 Paul of Aleppo reports that Yuwākīm died a martyr's death while journeying across the Ḥawrān, in present-day southeastern Syria; cf. MS Arabe 6016, BnF, f. 5r.

with the Child Jesus and Saint Nikita (currently missing, possibly misplaced).[31] Paul of Aleppo reports in his *Journal* that his father Patriarch Makarios III and himself saw the Patriarch Joachim's portrait when visiting the Pechersk Lavra in 1656. After him, Jeremiah of Aleppo, the Antiochian metropolitan of Acre, visited Moldavia and, according to Arabic chronicles, died in Iași and was buried there.[32]

During his journey to the Romanian Principalities in 1653–1654 and 1657–1658, Patriarch Makarios III and his son Paul resided among the Moldavians and Wallachians for almost four years. Afterwards, Makarios composed several miscellanies (among them, the *Mağmuʿ laṭīf* and the *Mağmuʿ mubārak*) where he included chapters about them, gleaned from Greek sources or resulting from his own observations. Only two of these have been edited and translated so far: I have published the section on the life of Saint Paraskevi the Young, whose relics the patriarch and his son venerated in Iași (Arabic edition, English, then Romanian translations), and the chronicle of the Wallachian princes (Arabic edition and French translation).[33] While hosted by Wallachian and Moldavian princes, bishops, and boyars, the Syrians acquired and copied works written by Greek scholars and church fathers that they would translate, abridge and adapt for the

31 Orest Tafrali, "Le monastère de Sucevitza et son trésor", in *Mélanges Charles Diehl*, Paris, t. II/2, 1930, p. 225. The text of the icon inscription was published by Arhim. Melchisedec [Ștefănescu] in "O visită la câteva mănăstiri și biserici antice din Bucovina", *Revista de istorie, arheologie și filologie*, Iași, 1, 1883, t. II, fasc. 1, p. 50-51, and Dimitrie Dan, *Mănăstirea Sucevița*, Bucharest, 1923, p. 58–59.

32 Information given by ʿĪsā Iskandar al-Maʿlūf in *Al-Šaʿla*, Damascus, II, 8, March 1922, p. 383, cf. Haidar, "Aleppo: The First Ground for Arab-European Cultural Encounters", p. 31, n. 3.

33 Ioana Feodorov, "La Chronique de Valachie (1292–1664). *Tawārīḫ wa 'aḫbār muḫtasira 'an afandiyyat al-'Aflāḫ*. Texte arabe du Patriarche Macaire Za'im", introduction, edition of the Arabic manuscript and French translation, *MUSJ*, 52 (1991–1992), 1995, p. 3–71. A Romanian translation via a French intermediary, with commentary, was published by Virgil Cândea in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 8, 1970, 4, p. 673–692, with the title "Letopisețul Țării Românești (1292–1664) în versiunea arabă a lui Macarie Zaim". For the second text, see Ioana Feodorov, "The Unpublished Arabic Version of the Life of Saint Paraskevi the New by Makarios az-Za'im al-Ḥalabi", introduction, Arabic edition of the manuscript copy, and English translation, Kinga Dévényi (ed.), *Proceedings of the 20th Congress of the UEAI, The Arabist. Budapest Studies in Arabic. Part One*, 2002, 24–25, p. 69–80; Ioana Feodorov, *Viața Sfintei Cuvioase Parascheva după versiunea arabă a Patriarhului Macarie al Antiohiei (sec. XVII)*, Romanian translation of the Arabic text, introduction and notes, Iași, 2006.

faithful back home. Among them were Paisios Ligaridis,[34] Matthew Kigalas,[35] Agapios Landos, and Damascene of Studion (the *Physiologus*).[36] Considering the efforts of the Arab Christian travelers to bring home to Greater Syria manuscripts useful for the soul and mind of their brethren, the new catalogues published over the last twenty years by monastic and public libraries of Syria and especially Lebanon will reveal the extent of the connections between Eastern Europe and the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Ottoman provinces. By studying these collections, new data on the circulation of ideas and written works between European and the Arab East will be obtained.

Among Patriarch Makarios III's main objectives while journeying in Eastern Europe was to collect many Greek works, whether manuscript or printed, and to convince the rulers of all countries on his way to print liturgical books in Arabic for the faithful of the Church of Antioch. Naturally, all the heads of this church who ever passed this way were interested in acquiring Orthodox liturgical books printed in Greek in the Romanian Principalities: The Book of the Divine Liturgies, the Horologion, the Gospels, the Psalms, the Acts of the Apostles, the Oktoechos, etc. Anti-Catholic and anti-Protestant texts circulating in Eastern Europe and the Balkans were also of the utmost interest to them: Maximos of Peloponnesus' *The Manual against the Schism of the Pope's Followers* (printed at Bucharest in 1690),[37]

34 Patriarch Makarios III included in his work *Kitāb al-naḥla* (*Book of the Bee*) the history of the Byzantine Empire since its foundation to the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by the Ottomans, which he adapted from the unique copy of the Greek monk Paisios Ligaridis's composition *Chrīsmologion Kōnstantinoupoleōs neas Rōmīs parōchīmenōn enestotōn kai mellontōn* (*Collection of Prophecies about the Past, Present, and Future of Constantinople, the New Rome*). According to Paul of Aleppo (BnF MS Arabe 6016, f. 270v), the Greek manuscript was copied by a clerk at Makarios's command while they resided in Wallachia. See Graf, *GCAL* I, p. 89, n. 2; Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 97–99; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 90.

35 His *Synopsis* (*Chronograph*) published in Venice in 1637, which relies on pseudo-Dorotheos of Monemvasia, was translated into Arabic by patriarch Makarios III together with his son Paul: *Al-Durr al-manẓūm fī 'aḫbār mulūk al-Rūm* (*The Well-Strung Pearls of Stories about the Rūm People's Emperors*). Several manuscript copies of this work are preserved in monasteries across Mount Lebanon, in Saint Petersburg, at Duke University (USA), etc. See Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 106–107; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 95; A. I. Mikhaylova, "An Illustrated Arabic Manuscript of a Translation of a Seventeenth-Century Greek Chronograph", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 4, 1998, 1, p. 57-64.

36 Gérard Troupeau, "Une version arabe du Physiologus", *Parole de l'Orient*, 1975–1976, 6–7, p. 237–250; Cătălina Velculescu, "Ein Tierbuch aus dem Jahrhunderten 16–20 (Zwischen Damaskenos Studites und C. N. Mateescu)", *RESEE*, 39, 2001, 1–4, p. 133–141.

37 Yūwāsāf al-Muṣawwir, the metropolitan of Sidon and Tyr and a famous icon painter, contributed in 1696 to the translation of this work into Arabic. He worked alongside the bishop Christodoulos of Gaza and composed a preface for the Arabic version. See Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 123.

Meletios Syrigos' *Argument against Calvin's Principles and Cyril Lukaris's Claims*,[38] bound with the Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem's *Manual against the Calvinist Confusion* (Bucharest, 1690), and Simon of Thessaloniki's *Against Heresies* (Iași, 1683).

Seen, at the time, as a strong weapon in the confrontations between the Christian denominations, printing was especially coveted by the heads of the Eastern Churches. In the Church of Antioch, under siege from the Catholic missionaries since the early 17th century, there circulated Latin-rite catechisms and liturgical books, imported from Italian presses. In the mid-17th century, it was no longer possible to serve the Divine Liturgy and read the Psalter at church or at home without standardized texts. Consequently, as recorded in a letter dated December 14, 1663, Patriarch Makarios III wrote to request the Propaganda Fide to keep sending Arabic books useful to the Antiochian clergy and faithful.[39]

After Makarios III, another Antiochian metropolitan and scholar resided in Wallachia intermittently between 1698 and 1704: Athanasios Dabbās, in between his two tenures as patriarch of Antioch. I shall be discussing his activities later in connection with his special relationship with the printer Antim the Iberian and the outstanding printing work that he carried out both in Wallachia and the Ottoman provinces of Syria.

A subsequent momentous sojourn in the Romanian Principalities was that of Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch, intermittently between 1735 and 1748. His scholarly and typographic work in Bucharest and Iași had consequences reflected in books that crossed the '1724 divide'. Direct contacts between the Antiochian clergy and the rulers and metropolitans of the Romanian Principalities were shaped by the major (and unhappy) event in the life of the Church of Antioch: the division of 1724, when the Greek Catholic community of Syria succeeded in electing a second patriarch, after Sylvester, who had been recommended as a successor by Athanasios III Dabbās on his deathbed. Thus, the new Greek Catholic Melkite Church of Antioch was born, and together with it, a tough dialogue, often devoid of brotherly love, between the two Churches of Antioch and their 'champions', theologians and scholars who would use the printed book as a support and weapon in debates. Nevertheless, transferring the printing technology to Greater Syria in the first decade of the 18th century was a major achievement for

38 See Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 328–331.

39 This was considered proof of his inclination towards the Union with the Church of Rome (cf. Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 141). Another point in his "indictment" was that he had expressed his gratitude to a Jesuit medical doctor who had cared for him while in Aleppo (ibid., p. 393).

all faithful, a triumph of modernity over conservative tendencies in society, and an opportunity for all communities to have access to education and intellectual progress. The joint work of clerics, printers, translators, book editors, and authors of theological and polemical works all through the 18th century produced a rich harvest of works that, whether published or not, helped the Arabic-speaking communities of the Middle East stay in contact with their Christian brethren outside the Ottoman Empire.

The connections that the Patriarchate of Antioch established and preserved with countries in Eastern Europe were an important element in their awareness of the fact that they belonged to a civilization deeply rooted in the early Christian spirituality. Naturally, Lebanon, a multiconfessional region where many ethnic communities coexisted for centuries (and 42% of the population was Christian in 1992),[40] placed itself in the avantgarde of the Arab Renaissance of the 19th century, the *Nahḍa*, born in Aleppo.[41] The recent testimony of Alexandre Najjar, a Lebanese intellectual who emigrated to France without parting with his familiar universe back home, is revealing in this respect.

> Situé dans une région qui fut le berceau des trois religions monothéistes, le Liban est, comme chacun le sait, un pays multiconfessionnel qui réunit dix-huit communautés religieuses: les maronites, les sunnites, les chiites, les Druzes, les grecs-orthodoxes, les grecs-catholiques (melkites), les arméniens-orthodoxes, les arméniens-catholiques, les syriens-orthodoxes (jacobites), les syriens-catholiques (syriaques), les chaldéens, les catholiques latins (directement rattaches à Rome), les protestants, les coptes, les assyriens (nestoriens), les juifs (une centaine a peine depuis l'exode provoque par la guerre), les alaouites et la communauté ismaélite. Cette diversité a toujours suscité la curiosité ou l'admiration.[42]

40 Harry Norris and David Taylor, *The Christians*, in R. Tapper (ed.), *Some Minorities in the Middle East*, London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1992, p. 29. See also Philip Fargues, "The Arab Christians of the Middle East: A Demographic Perspective", in Andrea Pacini (ed.), *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East. The Challenge of the Future*, Oxford, 1998, p. 48–66; "Chrétiens du Moyen-Orient, des Ottomans à nos jours", in Aurelien Girard, Sylvain Parent and Laura Pettinaroli, *Atlas des chrétiens. Des premières communautés aux défis contemporains*, Paris, 2016, p. 72–73. For more recent figures in terms of Christian denominational repartition in the Middle East, see Pierre Blanc, Jean-Paul Chagnollaud, *Atlas du Moyen-Orient. Aux racines de la violence*, Paris, 2016, p. 10–11.

41 For the lively intellectual life of Lebanon and the role of the journals printed there in the 19th century, see Caesar E. Farah, "Awakening Interest in Western Science & Technology in Ottoman Syria", in id., *Arabs and Ottomans: A Checkered Relationship*, Istanbul, 2002, p. 23–27, and, in the same volume, "Syro-Egyptians and the Literary Revival Movement", p. 29–35, and "Censorship and Freedom of Expression in Ottoman Syria and Egypt", p. 51–76.

42 Alexandre Najjar, *Dictionnaire amoureux du Liban*, Paris, 2014, p. 197 (*s.v.* "Confessionnalisme").

In the Ottoman period, Beirut was the capital of a vilayet and the third largest city in the empire, with a hundred thousand residents and a rising Christian population in the 18th century.[43] Aleppo and its surroundings had hosted colonies of French, English, Venetian, and Dutch merchants since the end of the 15th century. In this area, foreign missions from Western Europe found a welcoming climate for the foundation of schools and presses, which substantially contributed to the birth of modern movements dedicated to social and cultural progress.[44] Literacy, helped by the dissemination of printed texts, encouraged a rise of the national feelings of Arabs living in Ottoman societies.[45] Albert Hourani described the effect that printing had in the mid-19th century, when newspapers started to be published in various provinces of the Ottoman Empire:

> These currents of thought were to have their echoes far beyond the Christian communities, because of an important change which took place in the 1860's: the growth of the periodical press. Until then, the only important newspapers had been those published by the government, in Cairo and Constantinople, and containing mainly (although not exclusively) official news. There had also been a few papers published in French, Greek, and Armenian, but virtually nothing in Arabic, until in the 1860's the increase in the number of printing-presses, of Arabic writers and of the reading public, as well as the comparative liberalism of the Turkish and Egyptian regimes, made possible the creation of private newspapers and periodicals.[46] For the next thirty years these were to be mainly in the hands of Lebanese Christians, whether they were published in Beirut, Cairo, or Constantinople.[47]

It is also the opinion of Thomas Philipp in his commentaries that precede the edition of Ǧurǧī Zaidān's autobiography edited by him in 1979:

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43 According to Constantin Panchenko in his book *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, on p. 96, "In Ottoman lists of *jizya* payers (i.e., able-bodied adult men), in 1640 there were 2,500 Aleppo Christians, in 1695 there were 5,391 and in 1740 there were 8,120." For further details on all the Patriarchates of the Christian East in Ottoman times, see the entire chapter *Geography and Demographies* in ibid., p. 88–119.

44 The testimony of European travelers to the Ottoman province of Syria in the 18th century are relevant in this respect. See a comprehensive record of travelogues and memoirs written by Westerners about the Ottoman territories that are now Syria and Lebanon with Hasan Kujjah, *Ḥalab fī kitābāt al-mu'arriḫīn wa-l-bāḥiṯīn wa-l-zuwwār wa-l-'udabā'/Aleppo in the Writings of Historians, Travelers, and Authors* (in Arabic), Leiden and Boston, 2023, p. 223–228.

45 For the theme of Arab national identity in the 18th century and the background of its emergence, see Tamari, "Arab National Consciousness in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Syria", p. 309–321.

46 For a selective list of "Revues et journaux libanais dans le monde (1852–1900)", see Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 330–332. Of the entire list, twenty-one journals were initiated in Beirut between 1852 and 1899.

47 Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939*, Cambridge, 1983, p. 97.

> During the last quarter of the nineteenth centurythe press had become for the Arab *Nahḍa* the most important instrument of expression. Almost everyone of the new intelligentsia in the Arab world was at some time in his life involved in editing, publishing, or writing for a magazine or newspaper. When Zaidān began the publication of his magazine, some 170 magazines and newspapers had been published in Egypt.[48]

Zaidān founded in 1891 a printing press which he baptized in 1896 *Dār al-hilāl*. The magazine that he printed there, with the same title of *al-Hilāl*, declared itself a "scientific, historical and literary magazine", in which articles were dedicated to social, historical and cultural questions. This enterprise was highly successful, reaching a wide audience of Arabic speakers, from Egypt to New Zealand.[49]

As Elizabeth Eisenstein notes, "typography endowed scholarship with new powers."[50] To all these transformations, the Romanians contributed directly and generously, in support of the Orthodox Christian communities, the heirs of Byzantine civilization.

This discussion should also encompass the elements of unity and cohesion that using the same printed liturgical and prayer books secured for the Christian Arabic-speaking communities living under Muslim rule. Speaking the same language, serving the Divine Liturgy, praying, and learning with the same books kept the faithful of the Eastern Churches together in a predominantly Muslim society, whose laws and regulations they had learned to observe, for the sake of their own survival. Elisabeth Eisenstein comments on the situation in Europe when liturgical languages diversified.

> In the form of the Lutheran Bible or the King James Version, the sacred book of Western civilization became more insular as it grew more popular. It is no accident that nationalism and mass literacy have developed together. The two processes have been linked ever since Europeans ceased to speak the same language when citing their Scriptures or saying their prayers.[51]

The first decades of the 18th century were marked by dissensions in the Church of Antioch, fueled by the Latin missions, which had gained significant influence on Syrian Christian society, and the constant pressure from the Ottoman governors who were eager to tax the *ḏimmī*s as efficiently as they could. As soon as Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās died on July 13, 1724, a part of the faithful declared their attachment to Rome, after years of internal strife in the Church of Antioch. Thus,

48 Thomas Philipp, *Ǧurǧī Zaidān. His Life and Thought*, Beirut and Wiesbaden, 1979, p. 39.
49 Ibid., p. 39-40.
50 Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, p. 124.
51 Ibid., p. 162.

several centuries after the Great Schism of Europe in 1054, a Catholic segment separated from the body of the ancient Church of Antioch, without fully embracing the Latin creed and rite.[52] While preserving the Greek rite and Arabic-language liturgy, they took over exclusively the name "Melkite" in their title: the Melkite Greek Catholic Church of Antioch.[53] Derived from the Syriac word *melek*, "emperor", up until 1724 the name "Melkite" had referred to all the Chalcedonian Christians, who adopted the decisions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council convened in Chalcedon in 451, under the Byzantine emperor's control. Apparently, the word had been coined by the adversaries of the Byzantine rite and doctrine to denigrate the faithful of the Middle Eastern provinces who had adopted them, calling them "the emperor's servants".[54]

The reasons for the split in the Church of Antioch so long after the Great Schism of 1054 is explained by historians of the Eastern Churches in various ways. In recent years, Hasan Çolak has identified several opinions about this.[55] One assumption is that this movement was meant to lead to the autonomy of the local clergy.[56] Thus, the election of Cyril VI as a Melkite Greek Catholic patriarch was a reaction on the Syrian faithful's part to the Greek domination conducted from Constantinople over the clergy of the Church of Antioch.[57] Indeed, for the two centuries before 1724, for the next two centuries, the patriarchs of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch were mostly locally born and bred, but they had a solid education in Greek language and Byzantine culture. According to another opinion, this was the conclusion of a personal battle between two heads of the Antiochian Church for the patriarchal see, both giving it their best political shot.[58]

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52 On the way these Catholics, who do not consider themselves Latins, define their theological and liturgical options as opposed to the Greek Orthodox, see Korolevskij, "L'Uniatisme. Définition. Causes. Effets. Étendue. Dangers. Remèdes", p. 185.

53 For the history of the 'Melkites', in their various Churches and communities, see Ignace Dick, *Les Melkites Grecs-Orthodoxes et Grecs-Catholiques des Patriarcats d'Antioche, d'Alexandrie et de Jérusalem*, Turnhout, 1994; "Melkitische Kirche" and "Melkitischen Mönchtum", in Hubert Kaufhold (ed.), *Kleines Lexikon des Christlichen Orients*, Wiesbaden, 2007, p. 346–351.

54 See Sidney H. Griffith, "'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies in Arabic in the Third/Ninth-Century Syria", in David Thomas (ed.), *Syrian Christians under Islam: The First Thousand Years*, Leiden, 2001, p. 9–55. See also Cyrille Korolevskij, "Antioche", in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie éclésiastiques*, t. III, Paris, 1924, cols. 563–703; Cyrille Charon, "L'origine ethnographique des melkites", *Échos d'Orient*, 11, 1908, p. 82–91.

55 Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 85–95.

56 Thomas Philipp, *The Syrians in Egypt 1725-1975*, Stuttgart, 1985, p. 19.

57 Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, London and Berkeley, CA, 1988, p. 42–50.

58 Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "The Split of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (1724)

Whatever the case, the Christians' attachment to one church or the other in Ottoman Syria became so vague that sometimes not even the local bishops could tell if the faithful or the head of a certain community had embraced union or not.[59] Therefore, support from the Eastern European Christian peoples became even more desirable after 1724, when the two co-existing Churches of Antioch, the Greek Orthodox and the Melkite Greek Catholic, were caring for the spiritual needs of communities who resided in the same Ottoman-ruled provinces. Shaped by a similar imperative to survive, the needs of these divided communities were presented to different traditional supporters, east and west – for the former, in the lands of European Orthodoxy, for the latter, in Rome. Naturally, they received solutions that differed in form and degree. After the dust settled on the Antiochian Churches of the Ottoman province of Syria – now *two* instead of *one* – Arabic presses and the printing of liturgical and spiritual books became one of the grounds where the battle was fought between followers and opponents of union.

3.2 Looking for Relief in Eastern Europe: The Romanian Connection

The Romanians' connection to Arabic printing is due to Athanasios Dabbās, metropolitan and patriarch of the Church of Antioch, who was the guest of prince Constantin Brâncoveanu at the Wallachian court in Bucharest.

Būlos (Paul) Dabbās was born in Damascus in an old Christian family rooted in the Ḥawrān,[60] where two previous patriarchs had been born: Athanasios II (1611–1618) and Cyril IV (1619–1628). The predominantly Greek education that the young Paul received at home also included studies of Classical Arabic, Syriac, Latin, and Italian. He was ordained a monk at the Monastery of Saint Sabbas near Bethlehem, given the name Procopius, and then ordained a hieromonk and elected abbot. While living in monasteries of Jerusalem and its surroundings, he had close ties with monks of the Franciscan order and other Catholic missionaries.

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and the Emergence of a New Identity in the Bilād al-Shām as Reflected by Some Melkite Historians of the 18th and Early 20th Centuries", *Chronos*, 2003, 7, p. 13.

59 See details in Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 88–89.

60 This region of south-west Syria (which includes part of the territories of present-day Syria) is among the first to have had a majority of Christian population from the earliest times. Bernard Heyberger described it thus: "Une zone comme celle du Ḥawrān reste en dehors de tout changement. Au XIXe siècle, elle apparait comme une sorte de conservatoire des traditions et des coutumes"; cf. Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 559.

Made metropolitan of Aleppo, he was elected in 1685 as patriarch of the Church of Antioch and confirmed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate on August 25, 1686, as Athanasios III.[61] At the time, the Damascene Christians preferred a patriarch born in the capital of the elayet of Damascus.[62] However, a competitor from the al-Zaʿīm family was challenging this election: the Patriarch Cyril V.[63] To avoid the division of the Church of Antioch, Dabbās accepted to renounce his seat, with the understanding that he would return to the patriarchal see after Cyril V's demise. A grand-son of Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm, Cyril was aged 15 when elected to the patriarchal see for the first time, with the support of the pasha of Damascus but in the absence of a consensus in the Christian community of the city. A stern opponent to the papal authority and a heir of his forefathers' love for theological studies, he composed several works preserved in manuscripts.[64]

Patriarch Athanasios III remained on the see of Antioch between June 25, 1685, and October 1694, and then from January 1720 until his death on July 13, 1724. The agreement signed by the two competitors to the see in 1694 stipulated in Article 6 that upon Cyril's death, Athanasios would return to office. In the meantime, he would serve as a metropolitan of Aleppo – the rank that he had when travelling to Wallachia, from 1698 on.[65] Between 1705 and 1707, Athanasios was also archbishop of Cyprus, appointed by Gabriel III, the Patriarch of Constantinople. He was in Cyprus briefly in 1705 but the following year he was back in Aleppo, at the metropolitan residence.

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61 The name 'Athanasios' was preferred by members of the Dabbās family. Another Athanasius, of a later generation (d. 1797), is mentioned in *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 339. This one, though, was not Athanasius IV, as he is mentioned in old sources such as Alexander George Ellis, *Catalogue of Arabic Books in the British Museum*, London, 1894, on p. 328. Although initially Cyrille Charon took this information from Ellis (Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites*, passim), he corrected it later in his entry "Antioche" of *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie éclésiastiques*, III, Paris, 1924, col. 563–703. The error was repeated by Romanian and foreign authors until recently, For example, Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", p. 1–32; Râpă-Buicliu, *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*; Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World. The Roots of Sectarianism*, Cambridge, 2004.

62 Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World*, p. 85. For the discussions that preceded his election, see p. 85–86. On the competition between the two contenders, see: Haddad, "Constantinople over Antioch, 1516–1724", p. 230ff.; Walbiner, "Bishops and Metropolitans of the Antiochian Patriarchate in the 17th Century", p. 584; Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 90–96.

63 See Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 539–540.

64 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 130–131; Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 456.

65 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 129, 132.

Letters preserved in the Vatican Archive reveal that Athanasios Dabbās was supported by the Latin Church and considered a Catholic-inclined cleric until 1718. In his correspondence with Rome, Dabbās asked for help and expressed his hope that Rome would not abandon the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Antiochian Church.[66] During his time, there were voices that accused him of inclining towards union with Rome, like other patriarchs and bishops of the Church of Antioch before him. One of the more credible contemporary testimonies to this effect is that of Germanos Farḥāt, the Maronite bishop of Aleppo, who included in his work *Kitāb dīwān al-badiʿ* a portrait of Athanasios, claiming that:

> This Athanasios was from the city of Damascus and was raised since he was young in the Roman creed. He was a student of the Jesuit monks, acquired from them the knowledge of the holy faith, and its truths and doctrines were deeply rooted in him.[67]

The complex situation of the relations between the Church of Antioch and the Church of Rome cannot be detailed here. It is useful, however, to cite an enlightening passage of Bernard Heyberger's above-mentioned book.

> La supériorité de l'Église tridentine sur les autres est tellement évidente pour les Occidentaux, qu'ils interprètent le moindre signe de bonne volonté d'un prélat envers eux comme le premier pas vers l'"union". Inversement, les manifestations d'agacement des Orientaux face à la chasse aux "abus" menée par les Latins ne peuvent être que des preuves de leur attachement au "schisme" ou à l'"hérésie". Dans ces conditions, se demander, comme certains le font encore aujourd'hui, si Malātyūs Karma, Makāryūs al-Za'īm ou Athanāsyūs Dabbās étaient catholiques, ou même si dans le secret de leur conscience seulement ils l'étaient, c'est encore se placer du point de vue du missionnaire latin.[68]

Cyril V died on January 5, 1720, not before signing a Latin confession of faith (in 1716). In the meantime, the climate in Aleppo was not calm, as the contradictions were building up between those inclined towards union with Rome and those opposed to it. Bruce Masters paints this picture of Aleppo in 1709:

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66 See the letter from Pope Innocent XII to Dabbās published in 1794 by Joannes Dominicus Mansi and reedited in F. Labbeus and G. Cossartius (eds.), *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, t. 46, col. 117, n. 1. Mansi published several letters from Rome to Dabbās, dated until 1717, where he is treated as Catholic.

67 See Fā'iz Freijate, "Al-Baṭriyark Aṭanāsiyūs Dabbās bi-qalam al-Muṭrān Girmānūs Farḥāt (+ 1732)", *Al-Waḥda*, 13, 1974, 3, p. 203.

68 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 391.

> The Jesuits claimed that between 5,000 and 6,000 individuals were already taking communion from them in Aleppo by 1714.[69] If that figure were true, it would mean that almost half the city's Christians were Catholic. [...] Whatever the total number of communicants, alarm at these defections caused the hierarchy of the established churches to petition the Sultan for redress. In an order received in 1709, the Porte informed Aleppo's governor that he was to forbid local Christians from attending Latin mass that was regularly being offered at the Shaybani Khan, ostensibly for the French merchant community. Subsequent arrests, resulting in imprisonment for those apprehended, occurred. Similar orders would be received throughout Syria for the next century.[70]

Back at the head of the Church of Antioch, Athanasios Dabbās reverted its course to the path of Orthodoxy, whose teachings he acknowledged and professed with more conviction during his second tenure. He resumed the spiritual mission of his forefathers Meletios Karma and Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm, in line with the heritage of Byzantium. Its doctrine and teachings are reflected in his sermons and theological works, his comments on repentance and confession, and his translations of Greek ascetic and ethical texts. In the chronicles of the Church of Antioch, Athanasios Dabbās is remembered first for his good guidance as a metropolitan of Aleppo. Among other feats worth remembering, he issued in July 1716 a code of conduct that he placed, carved in marble, inside the cathedral of Aleppo. In it, he addressed several moral and administrative issues: how a good Christian ought to dress[71] and behave when entering the church to avoid all impropriety and extravagance; how priests should be ordained based on their ascertained virtues ("pour eviter les ordinations 'par corruption, par simonie, par recommandation, ou par la force des puissants'.");[72] that all Ottoman officers of the court or notables be removed from the high levels of decision-making in the Church of

69 Citing Bernard Heyberger, "Les chrétiens d'Alep (Syrie) à travers les récits des conversions des Missionnaires Carmes Déchaux (1657–1681)", *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome*, 1988, 100, p. 461–499.

70 Bruce Masters, "Aleppo: The Ottoman Empire's Caravan City", in Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters (eds.), *The Ottoman City between East and West. Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, Cambridge, 2005, p. 54. Here, the author cites the Damascus and Aleppo Court Records, vol. II, p. 27, and vol. LI, p. 95.

71 Including that Aleppo women should not wear green clothes, cf. Būlus Qarāli, "Manšūr[an] li-l-baṭriyark Athanāsiyūs Dabbās wa-l-muṭrān Iġnātiyūs Karbūs", *Al-maǧalla al-sūriyya*, 1928, 1, p. 8, cited by Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 53, n. 25.

72 Cf. Būlus Qarāli, "Manšūr[an] li-l-baṭriyark Athanāsiyūs Dabbās", p. 6–7, cited by Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 92–93. See also Būlus Qarāli, "Manšūr baṭriyarkī qadīm", *Al-maǧalla al-sūriyya*, 4, 1929, 6, p. 374–378.

Antioch, etc.[73] At a close inspection of these precepts, echoes from the teachings and sermons of the bishop Antim the Iberian come to mind, as well as the spiritual advice contained in Dimitrie Cantemir's ethical treatise *The Divan*, which Dabbās translated in 1705 from Greek into Arabic.

Dabbās is also known for other translations from Greek and especially for his compositions in Arabic, which enriched the Christian Arabic literature of his time. He composed an *Epistle on Repentance and Confession* that he printed in his press in 1711. In 1719, Dabbās wrote a collection of *Sermons for the Sundays and Feasts of the Year*. In 1715, he translated from Greek into Arabic the Triodion, which I shall return to below. He also translated a book on Rhetoric composed by Frangiskos Skoufos (1644–1697), Τέχνη ῥητορικῆς (Venice, 1681), in Dabbās's Arabic version: *Kitāb fī ṣinā'at al-faṣāḥa*.[74]

In 1721, Dabbās completed the Arabic translation of the famous book on the Great Schism *Petra skandalou ētoi diasafēnēsis tēs archēs kai tōn alēthōn aitiōn tou schismatos tōn dyo Ekklēsiōn Anatolikēs kai Dytikēs* (*The Rock of Scandal or Clarification of the Onset and the True Causes of the Schism between the two Churches, the Eastern one and the Western one*)[75] by Ēlias Mēniatēs (1669–1714).[76] Dabbās's Arabic version, where he only included the first part of the book (56 chapters), was printed at Oxford in 1726 as *Kitāb yuḍ'ā Saḫrat al-šakk: fī bayān bad' al-inšiqāq wa-asbābi-hi wa-suqūṭ al-Kanīsa al-Ġarbīya min al-Šarqīya wa-fī al-aḫlāqīya al-kullīya bayna-humā* (*The Book Called the Rock of Scandal, which Reveals the Origin and Sources of the Division and the separation of the Two*

73 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 135, 151, 162, 533.

74 Stefano Di Pietrantonio is preparing a PhD thesis dedicated to this text, which he will defend at the Université Catholique de Louvain in 2025. He has presented the preliminary outcomes of this research in his study "Le *Kitāb fī ṣinā'at al-faṣāḥa* du patriarche Athanase III Dabbās: enjeux littéraires et linguistiques d'un texte de rhétorique gréco-arabe inédit", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 132–192.

75 *Petra skandalou, ētoi Diasaphēsis tēs archēs kai tōn alēthōn aitiōn tou schismatos kai dichonoiōn tōn dyo ekklēsiōn, anatolikēs kai dytikēs, meta tōn pente diaphōnousōn kyriōn diaphorōn*, Leipzig, 1718. For Rowland Sherman's involvement in this enterprise, see Simon Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge: Trade, Religion, and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1600–1760*, Oxford, 2020, p. 244–245.

76 Who, incidentally, also composed a book of *Sermons on Repentance and Confession*. See Stylianos G. Vayanos, *Elias Meniates: Biography & Translation of his Sermons on Repentance and Confession. A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*, Brookline, MA, 1998 (unpublished PhD thesis).

Churches, the Western and the Eastern, and their Dissimilar Morality).[77] Writing about this book, Ǧibrā'īl Farḥāt states that Dabbās paid for its printing from his own pocket. C. Levenq asserts, without producing proof, that two editions of this book were printed, one in London, the other in Aleppo.[78]

The strained relations between the Catholics and the Orthodox reached a boiling point in 1722–1723: while travelling to and from Istanbul, where he participated in the council convened by the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremias II, Chrysanthos Notaras, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, witnessed the progress made by the Catholic missions in Damascus and Aleppo.[79]

Athanasios Dabbās's works reflect the conflictual relations in Aleppo and Damascus, generated by the activities of the Jesuit missionaries, who identified there the erudite scholars capable of polemizing with the Greek Orthodox theologians. Thus, the Arabic version of the decrees of the Council of Constantinople of 1722, prepared one year later by the Patriarch Athanasios III, who was present there, was criticized by ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir in his epistle *Muḫtaṣar al-tafnīd li-l-maǧmaʿ al-ʿanīd* (*Brief Denunciation of the Hostile Council*) written at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra. Zāḫir's reaction, which may seem exaggerated, was probably prompted by the fact that the clergy in attendance at this council addressed a complaint to the Sultan's court against the Catholics, which convinced the Ottoman administration to ban the missionaries' activities.[80] The measures taken by the local governors were drastic. The Latin missionaries were forbidden from any contact with the Greeks, Armenians, and Syrians under the false pretense of dispensing education to them. The bishops of Aleppo and Sidon were imprisoned and many priests in these cities, as well as Damascus and Tripoli, were threatened with exile if they did not revert to their patriarch's creed.[81]

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77 See Roper, "England and the printing of texts for Orthodox Christians", p. 439; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 142–143.

78 C. Levenq, "Athanase", in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, t. IV, 1930, p. 1369–1376. An Aleppo edition is also mentioned in Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, on p. 80, in the legend of the second page of this book: "imprimé à Alep en 1721", but, again, no proof is given for this assertion.

79 According to a letter addressed to the Jesuit monk Fleuriau on July 21, 1723, published in the collection edited by Gobien, cf. Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 89.

80 Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 87.

81 Ibid., p. 89, n. 31. An effort was also made by the heads of Eastern Churches to recover their flock. See, For example, Anaïs Massot, "Patriarch Maksīmūs Maẓlūm's Reverse Missionary Enterprise during the *Tanẓīmāt* Period: Bringing the Greek Catholics back into the Greek Rite", in Vanessa R. de Obaldía and Claudio Monge (eds.), *Latin Catholicism in Ottoman Istanbul. Properties, People & Missions*, Istanbul, 2022, p. 109–120.

After 1694, in search of financial and political assistance for the Syrian Christians, Athanasios Dabbās journeyed to Constantinople and from there to Wallachia, where, as he had heard, Christians enjoyed more freedom than in the Ottoman-ruled lands. He was also aware of how generous the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was towards the Christians of the Ottoman Empire: among other feats, in January 1692, he had signed an endowment of 109,000 *ban* (ca. 840 thalers) to seventeen churches and monasteries of the East.[82]

Dabbās's visits to Bucharest happened in dire times for the Syrian Christians, who had been living under Ottoman rule since 1516, the year Sultan Selim I conquered the territories inhabited by many faithful of the Eastern Churches. The books printed for the Antiochian priests reflect the situation of the Christian communities in the Middle East. Dabbās asserts in his foreword to the Aleppo Psalter of 1706: "Our brethren in faith in Arab lands who have kept their devotion are living in misery because of the oppression to which the Ottomans have subjected them.

Dabbās, then metropolitan of Aleppo, was in Bucharest in March 1700. At Constantin Brâncoveanu's court he was treated as an honored guest, he became the prince's advisor, heard his confessions and ordained bishops and priests. The Romanian chronicles mention that on May 12, 1700, he officiated at the wedding of the prince's daughter Safta to the Great Logothetes (Rom. *vel logofăt*) Iordache Crețulescu.[83] On July 11, 1703, he participated in a liturgical service to celebrate the receipt by Brâncoveanu of the *firman* of confirmation from the Sublime Porte. On September 20, 1702, the Wallachian prince signed a document of annual donation to the Church of Antioch amounting to 500 thalers, as long as the prince would live. Resulting from the income produced by the salt mines of Wallachia, the donation was going to be collected annually by an envoy of the Syrian patriarch, on October 26, the feast of Saint Demetrios. The prince's decision was explained in the donation act in these terms:

> Having learned that the holy and divine Patriarchate of Antioch [...] is weakened and devoid of support, and seeing that the holy father Athanasius, who was formerly a patriarch of this church, came and brought blessing and prayer for us, asking us to assist and give something

82 Nicolae Iorga, *Studii și documente*, t. V, Bucharest, 1903, p. 363.

83 Ștefan D. Grecianu, *Viața lui Costandin Vodă Brâncoveanu de Radu Vel Logofăt Grecianu*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 98–100; Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor*, Vălenii-de-Munte, t. II, 1909, p. 10–11; Dinu C. Giurescu, "Anatefterul. Condica de porunci a vistieriei lui Constantin Brâncoveanu", in *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, t. V, Bucharest, 1962, p. 367.

> to his holy patriarchate, from our gain, [...] we made this merciful donation to the patriarchate so it stays strong, unwavering, and untouched, as long as my lordship is alive.[84]

According to confirmation documents preserved at the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest, the amount was regularly paid until the end of the 18th century.

A beautiful portrait of Athanasios Dabbās, composed shortly after his death, was included by the *vornic*[85] and chronicler Radu Popescu in his *Histories of the Princes of Wallachia* (*Istoriile domnilor Ţării Româneşti*):

> And then again, we saw this holy patriarch kir Athanasius, as he came here in our lands in the days of Costandin Vodă[86] and those of his lordship Nicolae Vodă.[87] He was a godly man, good, kind, humble, avoiding doing harm, and surpassing in gentleness anyone else whom we have seen in our life. He also made Orthodox church books in Arabic type, printing them here in our country. And then, taking them and spreading them to the churches, everyone was filled with happiness and thanked his holiness for the thing that they had never seen before books printed with Arabic characters.[88]

Seeing the desire of the Wallachian prince to better understand the church life of Syria before and after the Ottoman conquest, Athanasios Dabbās compiled in 1702, in Greek, a *History of the Patriarchs of Antioch* (*Synopsis peri tōn hagiotatōn patriarchōn Antiocheias*) that he dedicated to his protector Constantin Brâncoveanu.[89]

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84 This act was published by Teodor G. Bulat in his article "Daniile lui Constantin-vodă Brâncoveanu pentru Orientul orthodox", *BOR*, 82, 1964, 9–10, p. 940. See also *Condica Marii Logofeţii (1692–1714)*, Bucharest, [2009], p. 362–363.

85 The *vornic* was charged with internal affairs and he was the supreme judge of the court and country.

86 Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.

87 Prince Nicolae Mavrocordat. As he ruled in Moldavia in Nov. 1709 – Nov. 1710 and 1711 – Jan. 5, 1716, the implication is that Dabbās returned to the Romanian Principalities, visiting Moldavia this time, after he left Wallachia in 1704. No other source mentions this visit.

88 Constantin Grecescu (ed.), *Radu Popescu, Istoriile domnilor Ţării Româneşti*, Bucharest, 1963, p. 273–274, reprinted as Radu Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Ţării Rumâneşti*, in Mihail Gregorian (ed.), *Cronicari munteni*, t. 1, Bucharest, 1961, here, p. 544.

89 Atanasie Dabbās, "Istoria patriarhilor Antiohiei – *Synopsis peri ton hagiotaton patriarchon Antiocheias*", translation by Fr Vasile Radu and Ciril Karalevsky, *BOR*, 48, 1930, 10, p. 851–864, 961–972, 1039–1050, 1136–1150; 49, 1931, 2–3, p. 15–32, 140–160. The original manuscript containing 46ff. (r/v) is preserved at the National Library of Austria in Vienna (Ms. Suppl. Graec. LXXXV, Coll. Kollár LXXI, col. 451–460). Dabbās's preface was translated into Latin and published in *Kaiserlich-Königliche Hofbibliothek Petri Lambecii Hamburgensis Commentariorum de augustissima Bibliotheca Caesarea Vindobonensi liber primus(-octavus) ... Editio altera. Opera*

Another important work that owes its existence to Athanasios Dabbās's sojourn at the Wallachian court is the Arabic translation of the Greek version of Dimitrie Cantemir's work *Divanul sau gâlceava înţeleptului cu lumea sau giudeţul sufletului cu trupul* (*The Divan or the Wise Man's Dispute with the World, or the Litigation between Soul and Body*), only seven years after it was printed at Iași (1698), at the press of the Monastery of Trei Ierarhi (Three Holy Hierarchs). *Book One* and *Book Two* of Cantemir's work are his own creation, while *Book Three* is Cantemir's translation from Latin of a book by Andreas Wissovatius, a major theologian of the Polish Unitarians (Fig. 8). Having probably started while still residing in Bucharest, Dabbās translated into Arabic the Greek version of the *Divan* made by Jeremiah Cacavelas, Cantemir's Greek tutor, whose original title was: *Κρίτηριον ἢ Διάλεξις τοῦ Σοφοῦ μὲ τὸν Κόσμον ἢ Κρίσις τῆς Ψυχῆς μὲ τὸ Σῶμα*. Cacavelas had translated the original Romanian text sent to him by the author into a mixture of literary and vernacular Greek, the common style of Cretan literature at the time.[90] The Arabic translation was given the title *Salāḥ al-ḥakīm wa-fasād al-ʿālam al-ḏamīm* (*Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*). Dabbās indicates in the foreword that he was the translator of this book, not the author. The Syrian metropolitan was very careful about accurately rendering the content of Cantemir's work, rather than its form. Therefore, the Arabic text includes improvements to its content.

However, Cantemir's name is absent, as well as all reference to the original work. Therefore, for a long time, the presumed author of the *Divan* was either Dabbās himself or Saint Basil the Great, alternatively mentioned in the catalogues of the few collections that held manuscript copies of this work. The connection between this translation and Cantemir's original work was established in 1970 by the Romanian historian Virgil Cândea while surveying the collections of monastic libraries across Lebanon.

Copies of Dabbās's work circulated in the Ottoman territories of Greater Syria until the end of the 19th century, both in the Orthodox and the Catholic milieus.

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et studio A. F. Kollarii, *Supplementorum liber primus posthumus*, Vindobonae (Vienna), 1766. See also Korolevskij, "Antioche", col. 697. The Romanian diplomat Marcu Beza brought to Romania copies of fragments of a copy preserved in Damascus, which he saw around 1936. He states in his work *Heritage of Byzantium*, on p. 72: "He [the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch – *my note*] showed me, and left at my disposal for a few days, two eighteenth-century Greek manuscripts: one by Athanasius Dabbas, *History of the Antioch Patriarchs* [...]". Nicolae Iorga translated and commented the fragments brought by Beza in "Manuscripte din biblioteci străine relative la istoria românilor", *AARMSI*, S. II, t. 20, 1897–1898, p. 224–234.

90 Dimitrie Cantemir, *Divanul* (*Opere complete*, vol. I), ed. Virgil Cândea, Bucharest, 1974, p. 44–46.

Eleven copies were identified, and among them the longest one is seemingly the one preserved at the BnF in Paris, dated 1705, which covers 281 recto/verso folios, copied in *nasḫī* script.[91] The monk *Ǧibrā'īl (*Gabriel) Farḥāt, who in 1725 became the Maronite bishop of Aleppo, revised Dabbās's translation. *Ǧibrā'īl Farḥāt was born in Aleppo on November 20, 1670, in the rich Maronite family Maṭar (d. Aleppo, June* 10, 1732).[92] He took the name 'Germānūs' (Germanos) when appointed bishop of Aleppo in 1725.[93] Several works of Patriarch Athanasios III passed through the expert hands of Farḥāt, himself the author of an outstanding series of works and translations from Greek to Arabic. The most famous, along with a *Diwān* of poetry, is his Arabic grammar *Baḥṯ al-maṭālib*, composed for a Christian audience. Another work of his, *Iḥkām bāb al-iʿrāb min luġat al-aʿrāb*, completed in 1718, comprises a large number of words taken from the terminology employed by the Arabic-speaking Christians.

91 I have edited and translated into English the Arabic version of Cantemir's *Divan* based on the two manuscripts of BnF Paris and the Vatican Library. In 2006, I published with the Editing House of the Romanian Academy the book: Dimitrie Cantemir, *The Salvation of the Wise Man and the Ruin of the Sinful World (Ṣalāḥ al-ḥakīm wa-fasād al-ʿālam al-damīm*). In 2008, I was granted the *'Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki' prize for text editions* by the Romanian Academy, for this book. I subsequently prepared the revised edition with Yulia Petrova (Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv), and published it with Brill in 2016: *Dimitrie Cantemir, Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*.

92 For his biography and works, see Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 406–428; Ignatiĭ Iu. Kratchkovskiĭ, "Farḥāt", in *Akademik I. Iu. Krachkovskiĭ. Izbrannye sochineniia*, t. III, Moscow and Leningrad, 1956, p. 247–250; Joseph Féghali, "Germānos Farḥāt, Archevêque d'Alep et arabisant (1670–1732)", *Melto. Recherches orientales*, 2, 1966, 1, p. 115–129; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 137, 139–140, 144; Nuhād Razzūq, *Germānūs Farḥāt – ḥayātu-hu wa-'ātāru-hu*, Kaslik, 1998; Ignatiĭ Kratchkowsky and A. G. Karam, "Farḥāt", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. P. Bearman et al., Brill online, *s. v.*; Hayat el-Eid Bualuan, "The Contribution of Eighteenth-Century Christian Historians of Bilād al-Shām to the Arab Renaissance", *ARAM*, 25 (2013), 2016, 1 & 2, p. 267–268; Elena Sahin, "Jirmānūs Farḥāt", in *CMR 12*, p. 135–142; "*Jirmanus Farhat (1670–1732)*, introduced by Kristen Brustad and translated by Anthony Edwards, from *Issues Desired by Students Required*", in Tarek El-Ariss (ed.), Anthony Edwards and Anna Ziajka Stanton (assist. eds.), *The Arab Renaissance: A Bilingual Anthology of the* Nahda, New York, 2018, p. 71–82; Stefano Di Pietrantonio, "Le *Kitāb fī ṣināʿat al-faṣāḥa* du patriarche Athanase III Dabbās: enjeux littéraires et linguistiques d'un texte de rhétorique gréco-arabe inédit", in Ioana Feodorov, Bernard Heyberger and Samuel Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, Leiden and Boston, 2021, p. 136–137.

93 See the edition prepared by Rušayd al-Daḥdāḥ: *Bāb al-iʿrāb ʿan luġat al-aʿrāb: muʿğam luġawī ʿāmm: zāʾid masrad luġawī ʿām/al-ʿallāma Ǧirmānūs Farḥāt. Dictionnaire arabe par Germanos Farhat, maronite, éveque d'Alep. Revu, corrigé et considérablement augmenté sur le manuscrit de l'auteur par Rochaid de Dahdah, scheick maronite*, Marseille, 1849.

Athanasios Dabbās's connections with Antim the Iberian are not much revealed in surviving documents. It is probable that the copy of Cantemir's *Divan* reached the metropolitan of Aleppo through Antim, who constantly received from the presses of Iași, and other cities of Wallachia and Moldavia, whatever they printed. Moreover, there is historical proof that Antim received a copy of this book from Iași.

More important than the works that he composed at the court of Bucharest, Dabbās scored a victory that many of his predecessors had only dreamed of: he received the assistance of Antim the Iberian, the printer of the Wallachian prince, to print Arabic liturgical books for the Syrian Christians.

3.3 Snagov and Bucharest, Home of the First Arabic Books Printed in Eastern Europe

In the old days, in the cities of Christian Syria, the Divine Liturgy was officiated in Greek, as revealed by the numerous manuscripts of the Liturgy of Saint Jacob, the hymns of Saint Roman the Melodist, some composed in Beirut, and the canons of Saint John Damascene, still preserved today. In the first Christian centuries, in the dioceses where Syriac was the vernacular of the faithful, there were interpreters who would translate for them from Greek during the services.[94]

The center of Greek culture was Antioch, a city strongly attached to the Byzantine culture, where the great scholars and theologians expressed themselves and wrote in Greek. Born here, Saint John Chrysostom apparently had no knowledge of Syriac, the vernacular of the residents of villages in the city's periphery, who had little access to Greek education. Conquering terrain after the Islamic conquests of the 7th century, Arabic gradually replaced Greek in the liturgical rituals of the Church of Antioch. Nevertheless, the transfer was intermediated by Syriac. Liturgical texts were first translated from Greek into the vernacular, more accessible to the masses, so that between the 11th and the 16th century the church language of these regions was almost exclusively Syriac. Even in the mid-17th century, manuscript copies of the Book of the Divine Liturgies used in monasteries and rural churches across the lands of present-day Syria and Lebanon were, for the most part, still written in Syriac. This epoch was defined by Cyrille Charon as "the Syro-Byzantine period."[95]

94 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats melkites*, p. 137–138.
95 Ibid., p. 140.

Recently promoted to a research domain in its own right,[96] the Arabic spoken and written by Christians living in territories on the eastern Mediterranean coast contradicts the widespread idea that Arabic is only the language of Islam and the Qur'ān. Revealing a comprehensive historical vision, it is thus defined by the erudite Catholic scholar Joseph-Marie Sauget (1926–1988).

> Et comme du reste les chrétiens avaient appris à parler l'arabe avant de savoir l'écrire, quand ils commencèrent à l'écrire, ils ont eu immanquablement tendance à reproduire la langue qu'ils parlaient, c'est-à-dire avec, d'une part, les particularités empruntées aux dialectes arabes locaux, lesquels, nous l'avons dit, avaient déjà de leur cote subi l'influence des anciens parlers, et d'autre part avec des réminiscences des anciennes langues de culture: grec, syriaque et copte. C'est en tout cas ce qui ressort à l'évidence des documents écrits parvenus jusqu'à nous. Malgré toutefois les particularités distinctives qui peuvent permettre de déceler l'origine géographique ou même l'époque de rédaction de ces textes, il n'est pas question pourtant de les définir comme des langues différentes et il s'agit bien d'une seule et unique langue: et c'est elle que nous appelons l'*arabe chrétien*. Nous sommes en mesure désormais d'en proposer une définition: l'arabe chrétien est la langue utilisée par les chrétiens arabisés, soit quand ils exécutent des traductions à partir du grec, du syriaque ou du copte, soit quand ils écrivent immédiatement en arabe.[97]

If, in the pre-Islamic period Arabic-speaking communities already inhabited parts of the Middle East, after the Muslim conquests of the 7th–8th centuries the

96 Especially due to language scholars who continued, on a larger corpus and wider temporal interval, the research that Joshua Blau initiated in the middle of the 20th century. It continued with the groundbreaking work of Jacques Grand'Henry (Catholic University of Louvain), the father of this domain: For example, see his works "Le moyen arabe occidental: Problèmes de caractérisation et de périodisation", in Rudolph Peters (ed.), *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants (Amsterdam, 1–7 septembre 1978)*, Leiden, 1981, p. 89–98, and "Le moyen arabe de la version arabe du discours 40 de Grégoire de Nazianze, premiers éléments d'analyse", in Frederic Bauden (ed.), *Ultra Mare: Mélanges offerts à Aubert Martin*, Louvain, 2004, p. 1–9. Jérôme Lentin devoted his PhD thesis to the inventory and description of Middle Arabic features in a vast corpus of manuscript texts from the Middle Ages to pre-modernity: *Recherches sur l'histoire de la langue arabe au Proche-Orient à l'époque moderne, Thèse d'état*, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris III, 1997, Lille. The interest for this research field quickly grew, with articles, books, and conferences dedicated to 'Middle Arabic'; For example, Pierre Larcher, "Arabe moyen et moyen arabe", *Arabica*, 2001, 48, p. 578–609; Jérôme Lentin and Jacques Grand'Henry (eds.), *Moyen arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire. Actes du Premier Colloque International Louvain-la-Neuve, 10–14 mai 2004*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2008; Jérôme Lentin, "Middle Arabic", in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, vol. 3, Leiden and Boston, 2007, p. 215–224; Liesbeth Zack and Arie Schippers, *Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic*, Leiden and Boston, 2012; etc.

97 Joseph-Marie Sauget, *Littératures et manuscrits des chrétientés syriaques et arabes*, articles collected by Louis Duval-Arnould and Frédéric Rilliet, Vatican City, 1998, p. 155.

Arabic language slowly conquered the whole region, engulfing the entire population. When the Ottoman troops conquered the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, most of the locals, both Muslims and Christians, were Arabic-speakers (with the obvious exception of Armenians and Greeks in the area of Jerusalem). Towards the end of the 8th century, Arabic, in its Christian usage, was already a literary language, used in the translation of holy books and patristic texts from Greek and Syriac, as well as in original theological works.

In the 11th century, having translated into Arabic several texts by Saint John Chrysostom, the Syrian deacon ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl prepared, probably by revising an earlier version according to the Greek originals, an Arabic translation of the Holy Scriptures that became classical.[98] Arabic manuscripts are preserved which contain the Book of the Divine Liturgy, the Synaxarion, the Psalter, the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, etc.[99]

The Orthodox Christians of the Romanian Principalities also strived to move from Church Slavonic to the vernacular, Romanian, the language spoken both in Moldavia and Wallachia, named by the Arab travelers *al-fallāḫī* ('Wallachian'). Romanians were the first Eastern European Christians who started, at the end of the 15th century, the long process of replacing the old church language, already

98 On the early translations of biblical texts and the Arabic-speaking scholars who prepared them see: Ebied and Teule (eds.), *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage in Honour of Father Prof. Dr. Samir Khalil Samir S. J. at the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, Leuven and Paris, 2004; Paul Féghali, "Les Épîtres de Saint Paul dans une des premières traductions en arabe", *Parole de l'Orient*, 2005, 30, p. 103–130; David Thomas (ed.), *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, Leiden, 2007; Sidney H. Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic. The Scriptures of the "People of the Book" in the Language of Islam*, Princeton and Oxford, 2013; Hikmat Kashouh, *The Arabic Versions of the Gospels. The Manuscripts and their Families* Berlin and Boston, 2012; Ronny Vollandt, "1.4.11. Arabic (Christian) Translations", in Armin Lange (gen. ed.), *Textual History of the Bible*, Brill online, *s.v.*; Ronny Vollandt, "Beyond Arabic in Greek Letters: The Scribal and Translational Context of the Violet Fragment", in Ahmad al-Jallad (with a contribution by Ronny Vollandt), *The Damascus Psalm Fragment. Middle Arabic and the Legacy of Old Ḥigāzī* (Series *LAMINE*, 2), Chicago, IL, 2020, p. 93–110. Anyone researching this domain will greatly benefit from accessing the database supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft *Biblia Arabica. Bibliography of the Arabic Bible*, directed by Ronny Vollandt (general editor) and Nathan P. Gibson (associate editor).

99 See Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, p. 50ff.; Ronny Vollandt, "Some Historiographical Remarks on Medieval and Early-Modern Scholarship of Biblical Versions in Arabic: A *Status Quo*", *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World*, 2013, 1, p. 25–42; Alexander Treiger, "The Earliest Dated Christian Arabic Translation (772 AD): Ammonius' *Report on the Martyrdom of the Monks of Sinai and Raithu*", *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*, 16, 2016, p. 29-38; Habib Ibrahim, "Some Notes on Antonios and His Arabic Translations of John of Damascus", in Barbara Roggema and Alexander Treiger, *Patristic Literature in Arabic Translations*, Leiden and Boston, 2020, p. 158–179.

incomprehensible to the common people, with the Romanian vernacular, as revealed by the Psalter copied at Șcheii Brașovului, the *Sbornic* of Voroneț, or *Psaltirea Hurmuzaki*. Romanians then replaced the old Slavonic manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures, filled with errors and inaccuracies, with standardized printed versions that relied on translations revised against the Greek versions. Liturgical texts became more accessible to the clergy through the addition of Romanian notes in the margins.

The first complete version of the New Testament in Romanian, composed by the monk Sylvester under the supervision of Simion Ștefan, the metropolitan of Transylvania, was printed in Alba Iulia in 1648 (*Noul Testament de la Bălgrad*). The process continued into the 17th century, when Romanian liturgical texts started to be produced in Wallachia and Moldavia, beginning with those of prince Șerban Cantacuzino's rule. In 1682–1683, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles were published in Romanian at Bucharest, while in 1688 the *Bible of Bucharest* was printed. This event, marked by the significant addition of a foreword composed by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, reflected a major development in the assertiveness of Romanian as a liturgical language.[100] The place of Romanian in the liturgy was especially strengthened during Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu's rule, owing to the visionary and tireless work of Antim the Iberian.[101]

Besides the canonical liturgical books, secular texts were also printed in Romanian in Wallachia, from the times of prince Matei Basarab (1632–1654), for the benefit of the nobility and common people, such as the *Pravila* (*Law Book*) of the Govora Monastery, in 1640. As I mentioned, Varlaam, the metropolitan of Moldavia, printed in 1643 in Iași his composition *Cazania lui Varlaam* (*The Homiliary of Varlaam*), also known as *Carte românească de învăţătură* (*Romanian Book of Teachings*). In 1646 and 1652, two other *Law Codes* (*Pravile*) were printed in Romanian: *Carte românească de învățătură de la pravilele împărătești și de la alte giudeațe* (*Romanian Book of Teachings about the Prince's and Other Judges' Laws*), at Iași, and *Îndreptarea legii* (*Guidebook to the Law*), at Târgoviște.

The Romanian liturgical and spiritual books printed between 1680 and 1720 were not only a fulfillment of the needs of the churches in the Romanian

100 Virgil Cândea, "Semnificația politică a unui act de cultură feudală (Biblia de la București, 1688)", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 16, 1963, 3, p. 651–671 (reprinted in Virgil Cândea, *Stolnicul între contemporani*, 2nd ed., Bucharest, 2014, p. 181–208); Virgil Cândea, "Les Bibles grecque et roumaine de 1687–1688 et les visées impériales de Şerban Cantacuzène", *Balkan Studies*, 10, 1969, 2, p. 351–376.

101 George Ivașcu, *Istoria literaturii române*, Bucharest, t. I, 1969, p. 93–94; Mircea Tomescu, *Istoria cărții românești de la începuturi până la 1918*, Bucharest, 1968, p. 11; Gabriel Strempel, *Antim Ivireanul la 250 de ani de la moartea sa*, Bucharest, 1966, p. 681.

Principalities – they were part of the defense strategy of the Orthodox faith against the pressure of Catholicism. The Union of Brest – Litovsk of 1596 had provided the missionaries new ways of convincing large groups of Christians in the present-day territories of Poland and Ukraine to adopt the Latin creed. After the Emperor Leopold I approved, by issuing two successive Diplomas in September 4, 1691, and March 19, 1701, the forced (and enforced) attachment of the Transylvanian Orthodox to the Catholic Church, the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu grew even more eager to assist the anti-Latin actions of the other Greek Orthodox Churches.[102] On September 20, 1703, Brâncoveanu wrote to David Corbea, his envoy to the tsar's court in Moscow:

> Soon, a book will be printed here against those who claim to be Orthodox, but in truth are attached to the creeds of the Pope's followers. [...] We shall then have it translated into Serbian [i.e., into Slavonic] and, as scholars assure us, it will be very useful to all the Orthodox.[103]

In 1709, Constantin Brâncoveanu wrote to the Patriarch Chrysanthos Notaras about a new printing press that he had in mind to set up at the Monastery of Saint Sava in Bucharest. In 1713, Antim promised to send tools and his apprentice Mihail Ștefan to set up a Greek press in Jerusalem, which Patriarch Chrisantos was keen on installing there.[104]

A precious testimony was brought by Edmund Chishull in his account *Travels in Turkey and Back to England* (London, 1747). The author reported on his journey from Constantinople to England in 1702, crossing the lands of Wallachia and present-day Bulgaria. Among the remarkable people he met and portrayed, here are his recollections of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.

> The name of the prince is *Joannes Constantinus Bassarabas*, who has enjoyed the principality about thirteen years, having succeeded *Serbanus Cantacuzenus*, brother of the above mentioned *Constantinus Stolnichus*. He is a promoter of good order and discipline in the province,

102 In a letter addressed in 1708 to Andrew, the patriarch of Moscow, the *stolnic* Constantin Cantacuzino called Atanasie, the head of the Church of Transylvania after the union with Rome, "bishop Satanasie of Ardeal" (in Romanian, "vlădica Satanasie dă Ardeal"). On Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem's opinion of this figure, see Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 337.

103 Alexandru A. C. Stourdza, *Constantin Brancovan, prince de Valachie, 1688–1714, son règne et son époque*, Paris, 1915, t. III, p. 49, cited by Andrei Pippidi, "Á propos des débuts de l'imprimerie en Géorgie", in *Impact de l'imprimerie et rayonnement intellectuel des Pays Roumains*, Bucharest, 2009, p. 39.

104 Doc. no. LXVI in Nicolae Iorga, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor, volumul XIV al Colecției „Hurmuzaki", Partea III, c. 1560 – c. 1820*, Bucharest, 1936, p. 107.

> a reviver of architecture, and encourager of learning both at *Bucurest* and other places of the principality; into which he has introduced two or three printing presses, and from thence published several books useful for the instruction and edification of the Greek church.He is about forty-seven years of age, and has ten children, four of them sons; the second of whom, being about fourteen years of age, is well-instructed in the Latin and Greek languages. He is of an affable, mild and courteous temper; generous, careful of the education of his family and a great encourager of religion; and therefore liberal in his disbursements for printing and giving away books, erecting of monasteries, adorning of churches, and other acts of piety.[105]

Although not exactly enchanted by Wallachia in terms of its society and culture,[106] Chishull notes on April 27, 1702, that he visited a printing press where Christian Arabic books were being printed under the supervision of the Patriarch of Antioch (no doubt, Athanasios Dabbās, a former patriarch of the Church of Antioch and metropolitan of Aleppo at the time). He also mentions that he watched the typographers print a Greek book, the *Kiriakodromion*, and acquired several books while there. The passage is worth recollecting.

> APRIL XXVII
> I visited the press of this place, where I found them printing some pieces of devotion in Arabic, under the care of the Patriarch of *Antioch* to be distributed by him about his dioceses. Beside this, they were undertaking to print a large *folio* of the famous *Maximus Hieromonachus*, called κηριακοδρομιων or the course of the several Sundays throughout the year. On this occasion I there bought several books, among which one containing all the Liturgies, *Hymns, Rituals, Lessons*, and other devotional tracts, used on all occasions in the Greek church through the course of the whole year. [...] The same day I was favoured with a present of several Greek books, lately printed in this province [...].[107]

We do not know precisely how the consultations happened at the Wallachian court concerning the manufacture of Arabic type and the printing of books for the Arabic-speaking Christians of Ottoman Syria. It is, however, clear that Antim the Iberian took upon himself this difficult task helped by the bishop and scholar Athanasios Dabbās, the best advisor he could have as to the Arabic script on which he intended to model his type on.

Born around 1650 in Georgia and baptized Andrei, Antim Ivireanul called himself 'the Iberian'[108] in the books that he printed, to remember and celebrate

105 Edmund Chishull, *Travels in Turkey and back to England*, London, 1747, p. 78–79.
106 "[...] *Wallachia*, a country which on this side is exactly level, and luxuriantly rich, but desolate for want of culture and inhabitants.", cf. ibid., p. 78.
107 Ibid., p. 80.
108 I.e., from 'Iberia', Gr. Ἰβηρία, Rom. 'Ivir'. 'Ivireanul' is an exonym for the Georgian kingdom of Kartli, not to be confused with the Spanish and Portuguese peninsula called 'Iberia'. The Georgian 'Iberia' gave its name to the monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos.

his distant roots. As a true son of Eastern lands, he remained watchful to the events in his country of origin and a supporter of all who, in one way or another, were connected to it. Thus, not enough attention has been given until today to the fact that his special relations with Athanasios Dabbās relied on the ties between the Church of Antioch and that of Georgia, which had depended on it for a long time. The official title of patriarch of "the Church of Antioch and All the East" (*Kanīsat Anṭākiyya wa-sā'ir al-Šarq*) includes the Church of Georgia.[109]

Today, the path that Antim took from Georgia to Wallachia is known with more certainty owing to certain Greek documents discovered by church historians of the Church in the last decade. The Patriarch Chrysantos Notaras gave precise information on the first part of Antim's life in a letter sent in December 1709 from Constantinople,[110] which was published in Romanian translation by Archimandrite Mihail Stanciu and Gabriel Ștrempel in 2013.[111]

Born in the city of Ude in Iberia, a province that included the eastern and southern lands of present-day Georgia, Andrei (later, Antim) was captured by Ottoman troops during a raid. Rescued by the Patriarch Dositheos Notaras who paid his captors a ransom, he was taken to Jerusalem. As a captive of the Ottomans and then a resident in Jerusalem, Andrei became acquainted with the local society and, gifted in language-learning, he acquired Greek and Turkish, and the Muslims' ways. Reaching Moldavia before 1688, already tonsured a monk,[112] he started acquiring the craft of printing in Iași, at the Cetățuia Monastery,[113] whose press had been founded by Mitrophanes, the bishop of Huși, a disciple of the Metropolitan Dosoftei.[114] Here, Andrei became the hegumen of the monastery. In

109 For the relationship between the two Churches, see Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Die Beziehungen zwischen dem griechisch-orthodoxen Patriarchat von Antiochia und der Kirche von Georgien vom 14. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert," *Le Muséon*, 2001, 114, p. 437–455.

110 Published in Pēnelopē Stathē, *Chrysanthos Notaras Patriarchēs Hierosolymōn. Prodromos tou Neoellēnikou Diafōtismou*, Athens, 1999, p. 297–305.

111 In Antim Ivireanul, *Scrisori*, Bucharest, 2013, p. 43–65 (specially p. 49–54).

112 In the note 95, on p. 54 of *Scrisori*, Archim. Mihail Stanciu expresses his opinion that Antim was already a hieromonk when he left Jerusalem for Iași.

113 On this period of Antim's life, see Arhim. Mihail Stanciu, "Descoperiri recente referitoare la venirea Sfântului Antim Ivireanul în Țările Române", *Ortodoxia. Revista Patriarhiei Române*, 66, 2014, 1, p. 132–142.

114 Concerning the foundation of the Greek printing press in Iași and the role of Mitrophanes, see the account by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem reproduced in Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 557–559, and Vera Tchentsova, "La naissance du portrait dans l'espace orthodoxe: représenter l'auteur dans les livres grecs du début du XVIII^{e} siècle" (forthcoming).

1688, after the Metropolitan Dosoftei left on his exile to Poland,[115] Mitrophanes moved to Bucharest, where he directed the metropolitan press. There, several printers who had accompanied him from Iași, and among them the Georgian Andrei, were employed. The Bucharest press had been brought from Târgoviște in 1678, in the times of the Metropolitan Varlaam and the Prince Gheorghe Duca and was initially placed in the palace of the Metropolitan see of Ungro-Wallachia.[116] The printers' names are not mentioned in the first books printed there. Other sources reveal that Mitrophanes worked on the printing of the *Bible of Bucharest*, commissioned by none other than the future prince of Wallachia Constantin Brâncoveanu. Mitrophanes then continued his activity in Buzău, in a new press that he opened after he was elected bishop in June 1691. Some sources attest that Andrei worked there until 1696,[117] although in 1694 he is mentioned as hegumen of the monastery of Snagov, where he was known as 'the monk Antim'.

Antim the Iberian's first participation in a typographic project in Wallachia was identified by the Romanian historian of early printing Dragoș Morărescu on the basis of style (as his name is not present in the book), in connection with the preparation of the Bible of 1688 alongside the apprentices of Mitrophanes.[118] Antim may be the printer mentioned by the name 'Andrei' at the end of the second volume of the *Saints' Lives* translated by the Metropolitan Dosoftei and printed in Iași in 1682–1686. 'Antim the hieromonk' is indicated as the typographer of the book *Guiding Chapters* by Basil of Macedon printed in October 1691, a translation from ancient to modern Greek achieved by Chrysanthos Notaras, the nephew of Patriarch Dositheos II, a stern defender of Orthodoxy against the Latins' missionary activities and himself a future patriarch of Jerusalem.[119] Afterwards, Antim is indicated by his monastic name in the *Service of Saint Paraskevi* published in 1692

115 The Metropolitan of Suceava Dosoftei (Dositheos) fled to Poland in 1686 because of King John III Sobieski's retreat from Moldavia after his failed expedition against the Ottomans. Dosoftei lived in Poland until his death in 1693. See Vera Tchentsova, "L'exil pour dernière demeure: le métropolite Dosithée (Dosoftei) Barilă à Stryi", *Analele Putnei/The Annals of Putna*, 16, 2020 [2021], 1, p. 111–138.

116 Barbu Teodorescu, "Cultura în cuprinsul Mitropoliei Ungrovlahiei, A. Cărturari, tipografi, biblioteci, școli", *BOR*, 77, 1959, 7–10, p. 839–840.

117 Păcurariu, *Geschichte der Rumänischen Orthodoxen Kirche*, p. 274–279, 330–331.

118 Dragoș Morărescu, "Xilografii Bibliei lui Șerban Cantacuzino (1688)", *Dacoromania*, 1988, 7, p. 337.

119 According to a Catholic missionary who was writing in 1723, Patriarch Chrysanthos was, at the time, "the most zealous partisan of schism"; cf. Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 89, citing a letter in the collection published by Gobien.

in Greek, where a note placed at the end mentions that the book was printed by 'the humble monk Antim from Ivir'.

A master engraver and printer, well-known for his erudition and knowledge of Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian, Antim became, in 1694, abbot of the Monastery of the Dormition of the Mother of God on the island of Snagov near Bucharest. There, he installed a press financed by Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, which was active until 1701, while the Bucharest press was not active yet. He also worked on a second press that belonged to him. Coming to Bucharest at the end of 1701, he worked in the prince's press until 1705, when he was appointed bishop of Râmnic.[120] From Bucharest, where he had transferred the printing implements used in Snagov, the press accompanied him to Râmnic,[121] where the activity continued until 1708, when Antim was elected metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia and returned to the capital. From Râmnic the press moved to Târgoviște, where it was active between 1709 and 1715 and then it was transferred to the metropolitan residence in Bucharest. In 1715, a short while before being taken by janissaries to the Sublime Porte, only to be later assassinated, Antim opened a new press within the monastery that he built not far from the metropolitan church and palace, which he dedicated to the Feast of All Saints (Fig. 3).

The period when Athanasios Dabbās worked together with Antim the Iberian covered the latter's typographic activity in Snagov and Bucharest and ended in 1705, when both of them moved out of the Wallachian capital, heading for a new life of pastoral guidance and spiritual works – Antim, in Râmnic, and Dabbās in Aleppo.

The attribution of the type necessary for the books printed in Snagov and Bucharest to Antim the Iberian relies, first of all, on the forewords that the two wrote together.[122] Signed by Dabbās, the texts indicate that Antim was charged by the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu to manufacture Arabic type and print these two books, which implies more than this one endeavor. The technical details of printing in a non-Latin script were explained in detail by Doru Bădără in the preface to my book *Tipar pentru creștinii arabi. Antim Ivireanul, Atanasie*

120 Meanwhile, he remained the hegumen of the monastery of Snagov, a title given to him in several documents written between 1702 and 1704; cf. N. Șerbănescu, *Istoria Mănăstirii Snagov*, Bucharest, 1944, p. 112.

121 For the period Antim printed in Râmnic and the endowment of his press there, see Doru Bădără, "Originea materialului tipografic din prima tiparniță de la Râmnic", in Cândea, Cernovodeanu and Lazăr (eds.), *Închinare lui Petre Ș. Năsturel la 80 de ani*, p. 605–608.

122 A complete reedition of the Arabic text and English translation of these forewords will be published in the volume that is being prepared by Yulia Petrova (with Ioana Feodorov and Mihai Țipău) in the EAPE series of De Gruyter.

Dabbās și Silvestru al Antiohiei (Brăila, 2016). According to him, Antim possessed the required competencies and skill to make this first Arabic-type set in a country with no such printing tradition. He knew Ottoman Turkish and he had already mastered the technology of printing in several alphabets: Greek, Cyrillic, and Latin,[123] developing in his printing workshop the necessary tools for this. Anton-Maria del Chiaro, Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu's Italian secretary, witnessed that Antim used in his press 'wood and brass types.'[124] On a censer belonging to the Monastery of Snagov that Antim had repaired in 1694 after becoming abbot, his apprentices inscribed, at his order, the donation inscription in Latin script. Antim was able to draw, carve, engrave, and polish with mastery the matrices for icons, as the saints' images in his books reveal. He also made splendid engravings of typographic elements that copied manuscript ornaments, characters, and vignettes. He was aware of what was being printed in Western presses and how, and received books that sometimes inspired him in his own creations. For example, a few decorative elements on the title page of *Dello scherno degli Dei, poema piacevole del Sig. Fracesco Bracciolini* (Florence, 1625) appear, slightly altered, in several of his books. Later, we find them in books printed in Aleppo by Athanasios Dabbās, who in 1704 was presented with Antim's woodblocks, financed by the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.[125] However, most ornamental features in Antim's books found their model in the Greek and Slavonic books that made up the libraries of the Wallachian and Moldavian boyars and metropolitans.

In Antim's press, the lead-alloy casting technique was also used, as he mentioned in a letter, dated to July 1714, addressed to the Patriarch Chrysanthos Notaras: "More than 50 oka of lead have been used to cast the new types, for the old ones were broken when [the press was] moved from Târgoviște to Bucharest."[126] The opinion that the types of Savary de Brèves were the model for others, including "the monastic presses of 18th century Romania, Syria, and Lebanon,"[127] cannot apply to the Romanian Principalities: there is no proof that this might have happened, neither documents, nor similarities with the books printed by Antim in Snagov and Bucharest. This could be established, though, for books printed in the Greek Catholic community of Ḫinšāra, where Jesuit missionaries

123 He had Latin type in his workshop and used it for a few words in his books.

124 For explanations on these typographic pieces, see Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 64ff.

125 I owe this example to Oana Iacubovschi, who is preparing, as one of the outcomes of the ERC TYPARABIC project developed in Bucharest, a database of ornaments and type in the 18th-century Arabic books printed in the East.

126 Iorga, *Documente „Hurmuzaki"*, 14, III, Doc. no. LXXII, p. 115.

127 Roper, *Early Arabic Printing in Europe*, p. 145.

circulated Catholic books printed in Western presses. Catholic books printed in Western Europe for the Arabic-speaking Christians were seldom brought to the Romanian lands.[128]

Undoubtedly, working with material to be printed in languages that they did not master was a challenge for the printers of that time, who were aware of the mistakes that crept into their books. In the forewords to his Greek and Arabic books, Antim begged the readers' pardon for the mistakes they could find, as he was "a stranger to the Arabic language" (*ġarīb min al-luġa al-ʿarabiyya*). This was not the first case where books were printed in languages that the typographers did not master. This happened in Western presses, as much as in the Eastern ones. In 1698, the printer who worked on several Greek books of anti-Catholic polemics had no knowledge of Greek, but he was aware of the 'signature' usage: a semicircular groove was carved at the bottom of each type (letter) and the rule said that it was placed so as to make a continuous line with the preceding and following characters. Thus, if a letter was placed upside down, the master printer, when revising the page, would see the mistake and reverse its position.[129]

The case of Mihail Ștefan,[130] Antim's apprentice whom he sent in 1709 to his home country Georgia to open the first press there, is also revealing. Upon leaving Wallachia, he received from Antim punches, matrices of book ornaments, and type cast in the *nuskhuri* and *mrglovani* (or *asomtavruli*) scripts.[131] The next year, assisted by the Georgians in his newly installed press of Tbilisi, he succeeded in manufacturing new punches and cast type in another style of Georgian script, *mkhedruli*.

Antim's books were printed in black and red ink (Fig. 2) and adorned with elegant decorative elements such as icons of saints, initials, intricate borders, arches, flower garlands, vignettes, etc. (Fig. 4). Antim replicated some of the ornamental elements in his books when building the church of his Monastery of All Saints in Bucharest (Fig. 5). This is not a unique idea, but the other examples come from far-away cultures, which could hardly have inspired Antim the Iberian in Wallachia. Anton D. Pritula (curator and lead researcher in the Oriental Department at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia) has explored the Syriac Lectionary manuscripts illumination of the 16th–18th centuries where

128 For instance, the Library of the Holy Synod in Bucharest only holds a dozen such titles.

129 Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 55.

130 He was called by the Georgians Mikhael Stephaneshvili Ungrovlakheli, a name preserved in documents and printed books.

131 Cf. Dan Dumitrescu, "Activitatea tipografică a lui Mihail Ștefan în Gruzia", *Studii*, 11, 1958, 4, p. 138.

architectural elements are replicated in beautiful miniatures. Here, 'decorative' poetry is written in monumental estrangela script. Pritula mentions "a geometrical composition, reminiscent of an architectural portal, which most commonly features at the beginning of a work (fol. 1v)", present in the Gospel lectionary Borg. Sir. 169 [22] of the Vatican Library.[132]

Antim personally printed 42 books in Wallachia: twenty-seven in Greek, eight in Romanian, three in Romanian and Slavonic, two in Arabic and Greek, one in Greek and Romanian, and one in Slavonic.[133] Printed in numbers large enough to satisfy the need of Orthodox clergy locally and beyond Wallachia's borders,[134] these books were equally destined to priests and common people, and they were easy to read. Antim composed and printed two books of sermons and teachings addressed to the clergy, which he then presented to them. Ever since the rule of Șerban Cantacuzino (1678–1688), it was customary to give printed books away, not to sell them. As Doru Bădără notes in his study, the act of presenting books to those who needed them was similar to an act of foundation, rich in significance and outcomes for the spiritual and cultural progress of society at large.

Antim the Iberian translated from Greek into Romanian all the essential liturgical books for the priests, including the Liturgikon, Hieratikon, Oktoechos, and Horologion. He was one of the most determined supporters of the imperative to serve the Divine Liturgy not in Church Slavonic but in Romanian, the language that all the faithful understood. Gabriel Ștrempel, one of the Romanian experts in the history of early printing,[135] remarked that in the foreword to the Prayer Book (Rom. *Molitvenic*) printed in 1706 at Râmnic, Antim challenged the dogma of the sacred character of certain languages, "evoking the assertions of the doctors of the church who declared that it is not forbidden to serve the Divine Liturgy 'for each believer in his own language'".[136] He also intended to help the clergy enrich their knowledge, especially the confessors, who were responsible for the spiritual guidance of the common people. His apprentice and disciple Mihail Ștefan, who worked on the Prayer Book, praised him in these terms:

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132 See Anton Pritula, "East Syriac Poetry Embedded in the Manuscript Illumination: 16th Century", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 26, 2020, 1, p. 26–36, here, p. 28. See also Anton Pritula, "East Syriac Poetry Embedded in the Manuscript Decoration: 17th–18th Centuries", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, 26, 2020, 2, p. 4–11.

133 Arhim. Policarp Chițulescu (coord. ed.), Doru Bădără, Ion Marin Croitoru, Gabriela Dumitrescu and Ioana Feodorov, *Antim Ivireanul, Opera tipografică*, Bucharest, 2016, especially p. 31–34.

134 Teodorescu, "Cultura în cuprinsul Mitropoliei Ungrovlahiei", p. 841.

135 Director of the Library of the Romanian Academy from 1993 to his death in 2020.

136 Gabriel Ștrempel, *Antim Ivireanul la 250 de ani de la moartea sa*, p. 681.

> And with the devout Arabs, at this same enlightened prince's expense, you shared the joy of this glorious craft of typography by also printing Orthodox books in their language, such as their people had never seen before.[137]

Since I have stated that the welfare of the faithful was one of Metropolitan Antim's main concerns, it is worth evoking here his instructions for the typographers who worked in the Bucharest press, which he recorded in the *Typikon of the Monastery of All Saints* (Rom. *Așezământul Mănăstirii Tuturor Sfinților*) issued on March 24, 1716, the day the church building started.

> *Chapter 17. Concerning the Printing Press*
> When the presses work, either the Greek one or the Romanian one, be it with foreign money or the house's own, the typographer who works together with his apprentices, whatever their number, will be entitled to receive as a wage three thalers per sheet and ten books printed on the press master's paper, and his apprentices – one book; each sheet will be paid six thalers, half for the typographers' wages and half as income of the house. And if anything at the press gets broken, the house will be responsible for mending it. And when there is no work to be done, neither foreign, nor the house's own, and the typographer would wish to print a book at his own expense, he will be allowed to do so, provided he informs the hegumen and the *epitropos*; and out of any amount he earns from this book, he should give the church the fourth part.[138]

In Antim's vision, the printing craft had to endure, and progress from one generation to the next, as a heritage of knowledge useful to the church and the good Christians. Thus, he included in the foundation document of the Monastery of All Saints clear provisions concerning the master printers' duty to train apprentices.

> I also leave this as a pledge:[139] printers have the duty to teach the printing craft one after the other, so that this craft does not get lost in the country, nor book-making ever get abandoned, for the benefit of the country and the support of the house.[140]

The transmission of the printing knowledge was, therefore, one of the Metropolitan Antim's main concerns, worthy of 'a pledge" (or "a curse", in case of infringement). In the same spirit, he did his utmost to transmit the competencies

137 *Și pre cei pravoslavnici arapi, cu a acestuiași luminat domn cheltuială, i-ai făcut părtași bucuriei acestui slăvit meșteșug al tipografiei, tipărindu-le și în limba lor cărți, carii bucurii nice odinioară nu s-au învrednicit neamul lor a vedea despre pravoslavie*, cf. *BRV* I, p. 542.
138 Arhim. Sofian Boghiu, *Sfântul Antim Ivireanul și Mănăstirea Tuturor Sfinților*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 160.
139 Rom. *blestem*, lit. 'curse'.
140 Ibid.

that he acquired over a lifetime by continuously working in several presses across Wallachia, to other Christian peoples: the Arabic-speaking Christians and the Georgians.

Antim's works brought immense benefits to the Romanians, the people who had adopted him, and the Georgians, the people of his birth. They also helped all the Orthodox Christians whom his spiritual, creative, and printing works reached. Nevertheless, his demise was violent and tragic. In 1716, two years after the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was executed in Istanbul alongside four of his sons and his trustworthy counselor Ianache Văcărescu, on August 15, 1714, Antim faced a similar fate. Having refused to accompany the Prince Nicolae Mavrocordat when leaving the country, Antim had taken over a ruling mission and, together with the boyars' assembly, they elected a local prince, the *vornic* Pătrașcu Brezoianu. They were hoping to secure a better government than that of the Phanariot princes chosen for Wallachia by the Sublime Porte. In September 1716, the Metropolitan Antim was seized by the prince's Ottoman guards and imprisoned at court. From his pastoral position as metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, Antim defended the Romanians' interests until the last day of his residence in Bucharest. In a "public" trial that took place in the presence of the Wallachian upper clergy around September 23, Antim was accused of conspiracy, witchcraft, and "devilish complicity" (Satanism). He was excommunicated[141] and exiled to the Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai. He never reached this presumed destination, as the prince's guards killed him at Çanakkale (Gallipoli). They threw his body in the river Tunca (Tundzha) that crossed Adrianople,[142] as reported by Anton-Maria del Chiaro, Brâncoveanu's secretary, or in the Enos Gulf on the Aegean Sea, according to the Greek scholar Mitrophanes Grigoras. The terrible death of the great scholar and metropolitan Antim the Iberian is reflected with dismay in the *Anonymous Chronicle of Brâncoveanu's Times*.[143] It is remembered until today as an example of the martyrdom of many Wallachian and Moldavian Orthodox figures in the first decades of the 18th century.

141 Certain historians claimed that his excommunication was proclaimed in a document issued by Jeremiah III, the Patriarch of Constantinople, but this document has never been found.

142 Modern-day Edirne in Turkey.

143 An anonymous composition bearing the title *The History of Wallachia from October 1688 to 1717*, this work is preserved in five manuscript copies in libraries of Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca. It was attributed in turns to Radu Popescu, Teodor Corbea, and *spătar* Preda Buzescu (Pârscoveanu). The author, who seems favorable to Constantin Brâncoveanu, reports on the events during his rule, then that of Ștefan Cantacuzino, Nicolae Mavrocordat, and the first years of Ioan N. Mavrocordat's rule.

A different version of the events is revealed by a single document that was presented and commented by the Romanian historian Matei Cazacu, who suggests that Antim died a martyr's death in Snagov, where he was drowned in the lake sometime during the second half of the month of September 1716.[144]

By request of the Romanian Orthodox Church, in 1966, the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras overturned the excommunication pronounced against the Metropolitan Antim the Iberian. In 1992, Antim was declared a saint of the Romanian Orthodox Church, commemorated on September 27. He is widely considered in the Eastern Church as a model of spiritual righteousness, pastoral guidance, and scholarly work.

When meeting Antim, the metropolitan of Aleppo Athanasios Dabbās, who had just stepped down from the office of patriarch, must have felt a spiritual connection to this great father of the church, all the while a humble servant of the Wallachian Orthodox, working relentlessly for both the soul and the wellbeing of his flock. Dabbās must also have been impressed with the capacity to print in many languages and types that he witnessed at the Wallachian court, also owing to Antim's genius as a typographer and engraver. Among other things, he succeeded in training quite a few apprentices, whose names are mentioned at the closing of fourteen of his books printed at Snagov.[145]

As reported by Athanasios Dabbās in the final paragraph of the second foreword to the 1701 Greek and Arabic *Book of the Divine Liturgies*, Brâncoveanu instructed Antim "to manufacture an Arabic press with great care". Dabbās addressed to the Wallachian prince a plea that included the same points invoked by printers all over Europe: manuscript copies of the holy scriptures were difficult to get, costly, and filled with errors inserted by copyists who had minimal theological education. Thus, with the Antiochian metropolitan by his side, Antim carved punches and cast the Arabic type necessary for the printing of two bilingual books – Greek and Arabic – in 1701, the Book of the Divine Liturgies, at Snagov, and 1702, the Horologion, at Bucharest. These books contain Greek texts previously printed by Antim, placed in parallel columns with the medieval Arabic texts translated from Greek and Syriac that had been revised by Meletios Karma[146] and Athanasios Dabbās, as the latter declares in his forewords. The books were prepared for printing by Dabbās himself, as revealed by the use of the expressions *bi-ltimās wa-mušārafa*, "at the entreaty and under the supervision of [Metropolitan Athanasios]". All the ornamentation of the books – frontispieces,

144 Matei Cazacu, "Cine l-a ucis pe Antim Ivireanul?", *Magazin istoric*, 3, 1969, 4, p. 47–49.
145 Boghiu, *Sfântul Antim Ivireanul și Mănăstirea Tuturor Sfinților*, p. 17.
146 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats melkites*, p. 47–49, 96.

images of saints, Christian symbols, borders, and vignettes – were created by Antim and his apprentices.

Considering the needs of the clergy and the common people, the editorial plan that Athanasios Dabbās devised began with the Book of the Divine Liturgies and the Horologion. These were also the two first choices of Antim when he started printing. The Antiochian metropolitan would later observe the Wallachian editorial model after opening his own press in Aleppo: Psalter, Gospel, Epistles, Oktoechos, etc.[147] After the Melkite Greek Catholic Church separated from the main body of the Church of Antioch in 1724, the Christians of Greater Syria, notwithstanding their doctrinal views, continued to celebrate the Divine Liturgy for another century using Dabbās's editions of Snagov, Bucharest, and Aleppo.

The language of the books that would be printed in Antim's press was an element that Athanasios Dabbās seemingly discussed with all the parties concerned.

> When your lordship learned how miserable we were and he was explained in detail about the custom of the devout priests of our country who serve in the churches of the Savior, i.e., that they read the secret prayers of the Divine Liturgy in Arabic, while the *ekfonises* and the *ektenia* they generally say in Greek, you ordered, in your great mercy and with God's will, that not only the *ekfonises* but all the prayers of the service and the hymns be carefully printed in both languages, so they can be easily used by priests of our people. Thus, this book would be useful not only to those who master Arabic, or those who know both languages, but also to the Greek priests, so that the good reaches as many people as possible. Moreover, your lordship decided that when the book is finished, by God's will, it would be distributed as a gift to the Arab priests to your everlasting memory, so they can serve with ease the Divine Liturgy in both languages, as ordered [...].[148]

Since in the Western European presses casting a whole set of Arabic type could take between four and six months, the preparation of punches and other Arabic typographic material in Snagov must have started in 1700, several months before the first Greek and Arabic book was completed on January 1, 1701. We find a confirmation of this timeline in the letter addressed in 1700 by the Metropolitan Theodosios of Ungro-Wallachia to Adrian, the Patriarch of Moscow, where

147 They were all reprinted, some in numerous subsequent editions (revised or not). See Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats melkites*, p. 55–96; Al-Maʿlūf, "Maṭbaʿa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 44–56.

148 Athanasios Dabbās, first preface to the *Book of the Divine Liturgies*, Snagov, 1701.

he informs him that "the prince is overseeing the affairs of the church: he has ordered the printing of books in Greek, Romanian, Slavonic, and Arabic".[149]

In the foreword to the Horologion, Dabbās compares Brâncoveanu to King David, praising him for having had first printed the Book of the Divine Liturgies and now this second book, and expressing his deep gratitude in the name of the Christians of the Church of Antioch. As revealed in the fragment cited above, the considerable sums necessary for the printing of the Greek and Arabic books were covered by the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.[150] As they were produced in the prince's press, the two books were financed by the prince and presented to Athanasios Dabbās as gifts for the Antiochian clergy. In the first preface of 1701, addressed to Brâncoveanu, Dabbās states: "For you acquiesced at once and ordered that this Horologion dedicated to the service of the Divine Mysteries be printed in Arabic at your expense, from your overflowing munificence." In both forewords, that of the Book of the Divine Liturgies and that of the Horologion, Dabbās thanks Prince Brâncoveanu for his generosity, as he gave Antim "a free hand in spending" for the Arabic type and "his lordship ordered" that the expenses required by the book-printing "to be covered from his own purse".

In the second foreword to the Book of the Divine Liturgies, addressed to the faithful of Syria, Dabbās explains in detail the circumstances that helped the printing of this book.

> And his highness immediately ordered the skilled master printer who resided at his court, the respected father kyr Antim [the Iberian], to start working, giving him free hand in spending so he would carefully set up an Arabic press and print the service of the Divine Liturgy in the two languages, i.e., Greek and Arabic. And his highness ordered that they be presented as gifts to the faithful priests of our Arab lands, for the salvation of his soul and those of his late parents'.

According to Fr Cyril Charon, Constantin Brâncoveanu also covered the cost of the beautiful brown leather binding of the item in the collections of the B.A.R. Bucharest, adorned with a silver plate on the front cover that represents the Savior on the Cross.[151]

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149 Silviu Dragomir, "Contribuţii privitoare la relaţiile Bisericii româneşti cu Rusia în veacul XVII", *AARMSI*, S. II, t. 34, 1912, p. 1138.

150 For an estimate of the costs of book-printing in Wallachia at the time, see Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 556.

151 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats melkites*, p. 56, and *Le rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 556.

The information provided in the forewords of the two books is confirmed in a handwritten note on the title page of the copy that belonged to the *stolnic* Constantin Cantacuzino, now in the collections of the B.A.R. Bucharest: "These *Liturgies* in Greek and Arabic, his holiness the father *Proin Antiochias* asked the Prince Constantin-voivod and he had them printed."

The consistent contribution of the Wallachian prince is also mentioned in the opening text of the *History of the Patriarchs of Antioch* composed by Dabbās for his protector.

> Therefore, I believe that your ability as a ruler, enlightened by God, was guided by your innate generosity towards the mercy and honor of this see, so that, through your munificence agreeable to God, Arabic type was manufactured for the benefit of the many, which is in praise of God the Lord of all things. Maybe because you continually obey the wise Solomon, who said: "Honor the Lord by all your righteous toil, give Him from the harvest of your righteous governing, and never stop doing good for he who needs it, as long as your hand can help".[152] [...] For none other, of the righteous princes from before, ever honored this patriarchal see [of Antioch] by such a great sign of munificence – i.e., the Arabic type for book-printing – except your highness, who are crowned by God.[153]

Dabbās's statements have been read by all previous historians as the most valid proof that the two books were printed at the expense of the court of Wallachia. However, having carefully searched the archival records and correspondence of the time,[154] I have not found any mention of sums spent on printing these two Greek and Arabic books by the prince's treasury – nor on printing any other books, for that matter. It is therefore possible that these expenses were covered by Brâncoveanu from his own fortune, not from the court treasury. Antim the Iberian also personally financed some of the books that he printed: two at the

152 *Proverbs*, 3: 9.

153 Dabbās, "Istoria patriarhilor Antiohiei – *Synopsis peri ton hagiotaton patriarchon Antiocheias*", 1930, 10, p. 861–863. See also Iorga, *Manuscripte din biblioteci străine*, p. 234.

154 Constantin D. Aricescu (ed.), "Condica de venituri şi cheltuieli de la leatul 7202–7212 (1694–1704)", *Revista Istorică a Arhivelor României*, 1878, p. 1–750; Nicolae Iorga, *Documente privitoare la Constantin vodă Brâncoveanu*, Bucharest, 1901; Grecianu, *Viața lui Costandin Vodă Brâncoveanu*, Bucharest, 1906; Nicolae Dobrescu and Constantin Giurescu, *Documente privitoare la C. Brâncoveanu*, Bucharest, 1907; Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor*, t. I, Vălenii-de-Munte, 1907; Nicolae Iorga, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*, t. 14, III, Bucharest, 1936; Giurescu, *Anatefterul*, p. 353–493 (the years 1695–1702); Constantin Şerban, "Contribuţie la repertoriul corespondenţei Stolnicului Constantin Cantacuzino", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 19, 1966, 4, p. 683–705; Paul Cernovodeanu, *În vâltoarea primejdiilor. Politica externă și diplomația promovate de Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714)*, Bucharest, 1997; *Condica Marii Logofeții (1692–1714)*, etc.

monastery of Govora, while he was a bishop of Râmnic, and ten after he became metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia. This could explain, at least to some extent, his poor financial situation in 1712: he had a total debt of about 4,496 thalers, at a time when land estates cost several hundred thalers.[155] In some of the books that Antim printed, the name of the sponsor is mentioned. One of the first books printed at Govora was paid for by the archimandrite Ioan of Hurezi, a hegumen dear to the Prince Brâncoveanu, while the Oktoechos and the Antologion of 1705 were printed at the expense of the *spatar* Mihail Cantacuzino. In the last book, the mark of patronage is clear: the Cantacuzino family coat of arms is present on the title page.

It is possible that Antim was in the habit of keeping records of the expenses required by his printing works, since he wrote to the Patriarch of Jerusalem Chrysanthos Notaras on August 9, 1714, in connection with the books he had printed for him: "As for the expenses that we incurred for the types that were recast and the printers' wages, I have not recorded them, nor do I need to say more about them to you; great or small, we humbly present them to your holiness."[156]

There is no information on the magnitude of the print runs of the two Greek and Arabic books of Snagov and Bucharest. An indication that Dabbās's books did not reach far, geographically speaking, could be the information given by Vassili Grigorovith-Barski when journeying in the Holy Land in 1726. Attending the service at a church in Jaffa where he sees chanters singing in Greek in a pew and Arabic in the other, Barski remarks: "Les habitants chantent toujours en arabe [...], ils ne connaissent point d'autre langue. Leurs livres pieux ne sont pas imprimés mais manuscrits et leur alphabet est semblable à celui des Turcs. Ils observent la règle des Grecs."[157]

Antim the Iberian printed a sufficient number of copies as to have his books circulate in all the territories inhabited by Romanian-speakers.[158] A precise indication is only documented in 1746, in the first foreword of another book printed in Moldavia for the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Church of Antioch: *Qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq* (*The Rule of Justice and the Transmission of Truth*), by

155 Cazacu, *Cine l-a ucis pe Antim Ivireanul?*, p. 48.

156 Iorga, *Documente "Hurmuzaki"*, t. 14, III, Doc. no. LXXIII, p. 116.

157 Grigorovitch-Barski, *Pérégrinations (1723-1747)*, p. 189-190.

158 This is the conclusion of research conducted by Nicholas Bishara of the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy, who extracted from the new series of *Mărturii românești peste hotare* (*Romanian Traces Abroad*) the information on all the copies of books printed by Antim the Iberian preserved in foreign collections. This seven-volume collection of descriptions of cultural items created by Romanians that are not within the borders of Romania anymore covers 58 countries.

Nektarios, the patriarch of Jerusalem. Here, a figure of 1,500 copies is mentioned, printed "so they are disseminated freely among Christians."

3.4 The Aleppo Press, a Visionary Metropolitan's Audacious Project

Antim the Iberian's press did not produce any other book in Arabic type after Athanasios Dabbās left Bucharest for good in 1704. There are no documents that reveal the fate of the Arabic printing implements manufactured in Antim's presses. The accepted theory, based on Dabbās's assertions, is that, when leaving, he was presented with the Arabic type and other typographic tools that had been used in printing the two books of Snagov (1701) and Bucharest (1702). It is unthinkable that he took with him on his journey home the entire inventory of a printing press, which, according to a list of the endowments of the prince's press in Bucharest, comprised dozens of items, some of large dimensions. These included the press itself, type, galleys, forms (or frames), the padded balls, pins, friskets, tympans, not to forget the metal bars for the alloy used in the manufacture of type, as well as the punches and matrices (for various alphabets). Carrying all this in his bags would have been impossible for a metropolitan of the Church of Antioch, especially since he was first heading for Cyprus, where, as the archbishop of this island, he was expected to pay a pastoral visit. Of all these items, one was essential to him in his intention to continue printing in Arabic in Aleppo: the Arabic type.

The technology of movable printing requires three essential elements: the type made from a metal alloy, the press, and ink appropriate for printing.[159] The expertise accumulated by working alongside Antim could help Athanasios Dabbās recreate a press in Aleppo, while ink was a commodity that he could purchase either in Ottoman Syria or in Constantinople. Thus, while the second and third items could be procured outside Wallachia, the Arabic type was difficult to make rapidly, without help from the skilled printers and apprentices of Antim's presses. This must have been the most precious gift of Antim to Dabbās: the set of Arabic type and the Arabic-script woodcuts, which he had manufactured himself. Obviously, after Dabbās's departure, Antim had no intention to use the Arabic typographic items again. The enterprise had to move somewhere else, in the distant lands where the Arabic-speaking readers of these books lived.

159 Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 875–876, citing A. [Charles] Mortet, *Les origines et les débuts de l'imprimerie d'après les recherches les plus récentes*, Paris, 1922, p. 8–10.

An idea most remote from the truth was proposed by Joseph Abou Nohra, who asserted that Antim the Iberian accompanied Patriarch Athanasios to Aleppo, to help him install the press that they had brought over from Bucharest and initiate the Syrian apprentices in the art of printing.[160]

In terms of the *location* of this first Arabic press in the Ottoman province of Syria, it is worth mentioning that the Christians of Aleppo enjoyed a certain freedom in the 18th century that may have helped the birth of the art of the Arabic printed book there. In his book, referring to the Christian community of Syria in the 18th century, André Raymond evoked "the favourable circumstances in which it found itself in Aleppo". This is how he described the situation, while referring to "the important part the Christians played in the Aleppine textile industry and [...] the prominent position they secured themselves in the great commerce of Aleppo".

> The Christian community [of Aleppo] could not have known such a development without the tolerance shown them by the Ottoman authorities. [...] Aleppo did not differ on this point from other Arab Cities, but the situation of the Christians seems to have been particularly favourable in the Syrian city, as indicated by Alexander Russel who lived in Aleppo around 1750 [...].[161]

Unfortunately, no documents are available that could help us understand the local authorities' view of Dabbās's intentions to print Christian Arabic books in the city they ruled. Whatever the case was, beginning in 1706, at the metropolitan residence of Aleppo,[162] Dabbās printed eleven books in Arabic, including one – the Psalter – with a second edition. It does not seem possible that he learned in Wallachia the art of printing from A to Z, like a professional printer,[163] or mastered the highly technical operation of setting movable type on the page form, not to mention the complicated task of creating new type. It is more plausible that his press was joined by skilled young people, goldsmiths, and handy apprentices. They brought their craftsmanship from various other fields of work, just like in Gutenberg's case, and joined it with the printing expertise transferred to Aleppo from Wallachia by Athanasios Dabbās and the Syrian monks who accompanied him there.

The books that Athanasios Dabbās printed at his Aleppo press are described below, in Chapter VI, where titles and comments are provided for each of the books.

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160 Abou Nohra, "Les origines et le rayonnement culturel de la première imprimerie à caractères arabes au Liban (1733)", p. 221.

161 Raymond, *Arab Cities in the Ottoman Period*, p. 89.

162 *Fī makān 'iqāmati-hi bi-Ḥalab*, "at the place where his residence of Aleppo was" cf. Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 89.

163 As Walbiner suggests, see "Melkite (Greek Orthodox) Approaches to the Bible", p. 58–59.

Here follows a brief inventory, useful for the comments on the overall production of this first Arabic-printing enterprise inside the Ottoman Empire's margins.

Of the three books printed in 1706, the first one seems to have been the Psalter, *Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Šarīf*, selected as a logical continuation of the standard editorial plan of any Orthodox press, as witnessed in Wallachia by Prince Brâncoveanu's Syrian guests. A reprint was required in 1709, as the print-run of the first edition was probably insufficient for clergy's needs. The Psalter held a special place in the inventory of essential books for the Christian readers: used by the clergy daily, it was also the ordinary reading book in monasteries and in private homes, a manual for teaching and individual learning (Arabic, in this case), the choice spiritual guide for any Christian, from an early age. This accounts for its printing in the Monastery of Qozhaya, the first – and only – book produced there, but also for the many editions of Ḫinšāra – fifteen by 1900. As Basile Aggoula notes, this also reveals the increasing interest of the local Christian populations in acquiring a good knowledge of the Arabic language:[164]

> Le *Psautier* de Šueir n'était pas seulement un livre de prières destiné à la récitation liturgique, mais un manuel de lecture pour les chrétiens. Il y a dans les éditions successives de ce livre, depuis Qazḥayyā jusqu'à Šueir où les éditions se sont répétées (15 en 166 ans, c'est-à-dire une chaque 12 ans à peu près), l'indice d'un intérêt grandissant des populations chrétiennes, depuis la fin du XVI[e] siècle, pour la langue arabe.[165]

Soon after the Psalter, the first complete Arabic Gospel (Tetraevangelion) was printed in Aleppo: *Kitāb al-Inǧīl al-Šarīf al-Ṭāhir wa-l-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr al-Ẓāhir*, *The Book of the Noble and Pure Gospel, the Shining and Brilliant Lamp*. In its time, the 1706 Arabic Gospel of Aleppo was distributed all over Greater Syria and reached churches and monasteries where copies are still preserved today. Later, in the 19th century, copies would enter the collections of the great libraries of Western Europe, and beyond.

A third book was printed in 1706, a liturgical Gospel, i.e., a Gospel book with the same title, but with a double-sized content, comprising the four Gospels with additional commentary for each pericope. Instead of the 243 pages of the previously published text, this book contains 584 pages. Called by some researchers "a Lectionary",[166] it bears a certain resemblance to the Latin lectionaries, but the comments inserted for the use of the altar-serving priests of the Church of Antioch

164 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 308.
165 Id.
166 Serge Frantsouzoff, "Le premier lectionnaire arabe orthodoxe imprimé", in *Istorie și cultură. In honorem academician Andrei Eșanu*, Chișinău, 2018, p. 461.

are definitely Orthodox in content and style. Moreover, the book is addressed to a Byzantine-rite readership consisting of priests who could benefit from the Gospel commentaries when preparing their sermons for Sundays and major feasts.

It is worth mentioning that after 1706 no Arabic Orthodox printed Gospel was printed until a new version was produced in 1863 at the press of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem, under Patriarch Cyril II (1792–1877).

Dabbās's editorial plan continued in 1707 with *Kitāb al-Durr al-Muntaḫab min Maqālāt al-Qiddīs Yūḥannā Famm al-Ḏahab*, *The Book of the Chosen Pearls from the Sermons of Saint John Chrysostom*, reprinted several times in Beirut and Cairo in the 19th century. This contains thirty-four sermons of this great theologian and father of the church born in the city of Antioch, much loved by the Syrian Christians. In 1708, Dabbās printed the *Kitāb al-Nubū'āt al-Šarīf*, *Holy Book of the Prophecies* (Rom. *Paremiar*), another text required in churches and monasteries across Greater Syria.

In 1708, the Aleppo press produced an important liturgical book, the first Arabic printed *Apostolos*: *Kitāb al-'Abraksīs wa-huwa 'aʿmāl al-Rusul al-Qiddīsīn ṯumma al-Rasā'il al-muḫtaṣṣa bi-Būluṣ al-Rasūl ṯumma Yaʿqūb wa-Buṭrus wa-Yūḥannā wa-Yahūdā*, *Book of the Apraksis, which is The Acts of the Holy Apostles and the Epistles of Paul the Apostle, Jacob, Peter, John, and Jude*.

The same year, the remaining blocks of printed sheets of the 1706 Tetraevagelion and the liturgical Gospel with commentary needed to be bound so they could be distributed to clergy and churches. Dabbās needed financial support for his enterprise, and any amount was useful. First, Dabbās succeeded in acquiring the funds necessary for the binding of one of the Gospels from the Hetman Ivan Mazepa, an ally of Constantin Brancoveanu, who may have recommended him.[167]

167 A manuscript note about the hetman Mazepa composed by the military historian Lt. Col. Dimitrie Pappazoglu, dated 1862, is attached at the end of the 1708 Gospel preserved at the B.A.R. On hetman Mazepa, see Demetrius Dvoichenko-Markov, "Hetman Ivan Mazepa in Romanian Literature", in Stephen Fischer-Galați, Radu R. Florescu and George R. Ursul, *Romania between East and West. Historical Essays in Memory of Constantin C. Giurescu*, New York, 1982, p. 147–158; K. A. Kochegarov, "Rol' Ivana Mazepy v russko-turetskikh otnosheniiakh pervoĭ poloviny 1708 g.: poezdka Zgury Stilevicha k seraskeru Iusufu-pashe", in *Ukraïna v Tsentral'no-Skhidniĭ Ievropi*, t. 9–10, 2010, p. 152–192; Teofil Rendiuk, *C. Brâncoveanu și I. Mazepa: pagini inedite de istorie în memoria remarcabilului domnitor al Munteniei Constantin Brâncoveanu și ilustrului hatman al ucrainei Ivan Mazepa*, Bucharest, 2014. This last book, devoted to Ivan Mazepa and his connections with Wallachia, was published in Romanian, Ukrainian, and English by Teofil Rendiuk, after he published in 1991 two studies on Mazepa in a brochure in Kyiv (in Ukrainian).

Born in 1640 in Podolia (d. 1709), Ivan Mazepa was elected great hetman of the Cossacks in 1687. At first an ally of the Moscow court, he changed his options around 1708 and became an opponent and soon "a traitor" in the tsar's eyes. In the Romanian Principalities, he was known for his alliance in 1709 with the king of the Swedes Charles II against the tsar of Moscow Peter I, and for his support of cultural works. He contributed to the erection of the wall enclosure of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra: one of the gates, built with his financial support, still preserves his coat of arms (Fig. 6), identical with that placed on the front page of the Arabic Tetraevangelion bound in 1708 (Fig. 7). After the defeat of the Swedes by the Russians at the Battle of Poltava on July 8, 1709, Mazepa retreated to Bender (Tighina), where he continued to seek support from the Moldavians and the Wallachians. Apparently, he was in contact and cooperation with Constantin Brâncoveanu for twenty-one years. When Mazepa died in September 1709 in Bender (possibly of exhaustion, after the battle of Poltava),[168] he was first buried in the small rural church of Varnița, a church that was later demolished. The next year, his earthly remains were brought by his companions to Moldavia and buried on March 18, 1710, in the church of Saint George in Galați.[169]

Mazepa was only able to help with the binding of the first version of the Aleppo Gospel. For the second, Dabbās was advised to appeal to Colonel Daniel Apostol, one of Mazepa's comrades in arms, who had taken the side of Tsar Peter I. Thus, the Gospel with commentary was bound with the financial assistance of Colonel Daniel Apostol.

In 1709, a second edition of the Psalter was printed, apparently identical to the first Aleppo edition of 1706.[170] Nothing more happened afterwards, for two years. In 1711, after a gap that could be explained by a lack of funding, four texts were printed, completing the necessary collection of liturgical books considered by Dabbās as essential for any Christian priest: *Kitāb al-Bāraklītīkī, 'ayy al-Mu'azzī al-Ḥāwī* (*Book of the Paraklitiki, or 'The Comforter'*), also known as the Oktoechos; *Mawā'iẓ 'Aṯanāsiyūs al-Baṭriyark al-Ūrašalīmiyy* (*Sermons of Athanasios, the Patriarch of Jerusalem*), containing sixty-six sermons by Athanasios preceded by a *Maqāla li-l-Qiddīs Yūḥannā Famm al-Ḏahab fī 'Īd al-Faṣḥ* (*A Sermon by*

168 The Battle of Poltava on July 8, 1709, was the last great clash of the Great Norther War between the Swedes and the army of Peter the Great, which he commanded himself. After the defeat of King Charles XII of the Swedes (Carl Gustaf Rehnskiöld), the Muscovite court increasingly extended its pressure and influence over Northern Europe.

169 Unfortunately, this church was completely ruined in 1962 and only an approximate location of the hetman's burial place is now known.

170 A comparison between the two editions is under way, as one of the tasks of the TYPARABIC project team.

Saint John Chrysostom for the Easter Feast) and a eulogy dedicated to the author by Chrysanthos Notaras.

Finally, in 1711, a book composed by Athanasios Dabbās himself, *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-ʾiʿtirāf* (*Brief Epistle on How to Repent and Confess*), was printed at the Aleppo press, the only personal composition that he succeeded in printing.[171] This last work of his printing press deserves special attention. To support his comments and advice, the author cites Saint John Damascene (Part One, Ch. 1), passages from the Old Testament (p. 40–42), the episode of David the Prophet and Nathan (p. 55), and the Book of Numbers (p. 56–57). He evokes the Patriarchs of Alexandria Basil, Peter, and Dionysius, Gregory the Theologian, Basil the Great, and John Chrysostom (p. 52–53), Solomon the Wise (p. 81), the Holy Apostle Paul, and the Prophet Malachi (p. 85).

To understand the foundations of Dabbās's theological thinking and spiritual teachings contained in this book, his other works and the history of his contacts need to be considered. The first question that comes to mind is why did Dabbās feel the need to address the topics of repentance and confession in a personal writing. The answer to this question can be gleaned by surveying some other actions that he took in his metropolitan eparchy of Aleppo after returning from his long sojourn in Wallachia.

Back in Aleppo, Dabbās resumed his pastoral control of the diocese that he agreed to lead after he had temporarily relinquished the patriarchal see of the Church of Antioch. In 1716, when more than a decade had passed since his return from Wallachia, Metropolitan Athanasios issued a directive to the Christians of the Antiochian Church, teaching them how to lead a righteous life and to behave in church and at home. Among others, he forbade the christening of infants later than forty days after birth, stating that the death of an unbaptized infant was a mortal sin for the parents.[172] The definition of mortal sins is one of the main topics that Dabbās discusses in his *Risāla waǧīza*, in such minute detail that the reader is left with the impression of his awareness of a pervasive ignorance on the part of the common people of his eparchy. According to Louis Cheikho, Dabbās also wrote a *Cathechism of the Orthodox Faith*.[173] This would have been another

171 I have presented this book in my article "Recent Findings Regarding the Early Arabic Printing in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces", *RESEE*, 58, 2020, 1–4, p. 91–105.

172 Paul Carali (Būlus Qarāli) edited one chapter of Dabbās's directive in "Manšūrāni li-l-baṭriyark Aṯanāsiyūs Dabbās wa-l-muṭrān Iġnātiyūs Karbūs", *al-Maǧalla al-sūriyya*, 3, 1928, Part 1, p. 6–8 (commentaries), and Part 2, 77-79 (texts). See also Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient*, p. 524.

173 He was contradicted by Joseph Nasrallah, in the absence of a copy of this work. See *HMLÉM* III.1, p. 135.

attempt at improving the religious education of the Orthodox in the Patriarchate of Antioch, at a time when Latin propaganda, organized by diligent Jesuit missionaries, was most active. Dabbās also worked together with Elias Faḫr (Ilyās ibn Faḫr al-Ṭrābulsī) and Rowland Sherman (in French and Italian sources, 'Chairman'), an Anglican merchant residing in Aleppo, on the Arabic translation of the first part of the trilogy *Ekthesis* by Gabriel Severus.[174] This book discusses the main points of contention between the Byzantine-rite Church of Antioch and the Latin Church.[175] All these works and preoccupations prove Dabbās's continuous efforts to raise the theological knowledge of his flock, both clergy and ordinary faithful, with a focus on the Orthodox rites, rituals, and conduct.

The second important question concerns the sources of Dabbās's opinions of sin, repenting, and confession. I suggested in my survey of this book two possible answers, both connected to his Wallachian journeys.

In 1711, at the time the *Risāla waǧīza* was printed, Dabbās had already translated Dimitrie Cantemir's *The Divan or the Wise Man's Dispute with the World, or the Litigation between Soul and Body*, whose title he adapted in Arabic as *Ṣalāḥ al-ḥakīm wa-fasād al-ʿālam al-ḏamīm*.[176] The final version of this text, revised by Gabriel Farḥāt,[177] was apparently ready in 1705.[178] Cantemir's work contains pas-

174 ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir later wrote a polemical epistle against this work: *Al-tiryāq al-šāfī min samm al Fīlādelfī*, *The Curing Antidote to the Poison of the Philadelphian* [*Archbishop*].

175 See Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 476; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 115–116.

176 Dabbās translated the Greek version of Cantemir's book, which was prepared in 1697–1698 by the Romanian prince's Greek teacher Jeremiah Cacavelas, with the title: *Kritīrion ī dialexis toy sofoy me ton kosmon ī krisis tīs psychīs me to sōma, dia mochtou kai filoponias Iōannou Dīmītriou Kōnstantinou Boeboda*. The Arabic translation is a fairly accurate transfer of the Greek version of Cantemir's text.

177 See Feodorov and Petrova, *Dimitrie Cantemir, Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*, p. 64–70; Ioana Feodorov, "The Arabic Version of Dimitrie Cantemir's Divan: A Supplement to the Editor's Note", *RESEE*, 46, 2008, 1–4, p. 195–212.

178 A grandson of Fausto Sozini, Andzrej Wiszowaty (1608–1678) was a theoretician of the Socinian movement and a professor at the Rakówian Academy of the Polish Brethren. The Socinians became, in the 16th century, the most active Unitarians of Central and Eastern Europe. Wiszowaty studied in Raków until 1629, then at Leiden and Amsterdam, and travelled extensively across Europe. A disciple of Johannes Crellius, he appreciated the works of Kepler, Galileo, and Campanella. He is the author of the *Racovian Catechism* (1605), on which he worked with Joachim Stegmann (1595–1633), and the *Religio rationalis* (published posthumously in Amsterdam in 1684–1685). After the Socinians were expelled from Poland in 1639, he lived in exile, residing after 1666 in Amsterdam. He directed the publication of the *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum quos Unitarios vocant, instructua operibus omnibus Fausti Socini* (Amsterdam, 2 eds., 1665, 1668).

sages that refer the reader to the same spiritual citations as the *Risāla waǧīza*. In *Book One*, Chapter 43, the same examples of sinners and repentance are offered:

> [David] finally liberated himself from your [i.e., Satan's] grip, realized the filthy mischief that you did to him, decided to confess his sin truthfully, as the Prophet Nathan explained to him. So, the penitent Prophet chanted, saying: 'Have mercy upon me, Lord, by thy great mercy' (*Ps* 51:1), or when he says: 'I know my faults, and my sins are permanently in my sight' (*Ps* 51:3).[179]

Moreover, repentance and confession came up when the translator (or translators, if we count Farḥāt in) added comments concerning the reality of the 'Purgatory'.

> O you! Do not imagine that after the ruin of the framework of your body and the separation from your soul, and if you die without repentance, your sins would be forgiven, in a hell where there is no repentance and no acknowledgment of mistakes. (For no imaginary Latin *purgatorium*, or even one hundred of those, would do any good to you, since there is no confession and no repentance in hell).[180]

This work is entirely devoted to teachings on the way to attain Salvation and acquire a place in Heaven. Naturally, repentance and confession come up in the flow of Cantemir's (and Wissovatius's) discourse. Repentance and admonition to atone appear (sometimes in strong words) more than twenty-four times in the *Ṣalāḥ al-ḥakīm*, in *Book One* and *Book Two*, the ones that were composed by Cantemir, not by Wissovatius. In *Book Three*, at least twenty passages refer to repenting and confessing one's sins early in life, and regularly. The wisdom and the tone of Wissovatius's work are also perfectly aligned with the one in Dabbās's *Risāla waǧīza*:

> You, who used God's grace for evil deeds, should you also be granted by God time to repent? This rarely happens. Beware not to give the flower of your life to Satan, and present to God the dry stalks. Beware not to fall into the pit of despair with sin, for we have been given many examples of repentance and remorse. Do not rest at all, because the end of your life is unknown. Do not think that you will abandon sin when it abandons you.[181]

After 1724, his grandson Andrzej Wiszowaty Jr was a teacher at the Unitarian Academy of Cluj (Transylvania), in present-day Romania.

179 Feodorov and Petrova, *Dimitrie Cantemir, Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*, p.143.

180 Ibid., p. 307.

181 Ibid., p. 385, 387.

While translating Cantemir's book, Dabbās may have encountered passages where the Latins' claims were briefly mentioned, including the ones on the 'Purgatory', which are closely related, in a theological perspective, to the discussion about sin and atonement. This was an incentive for him to address, in his own *Risāla waǧīza*, the sensitive issues of repentance, confession, and sin. His intention in writing this work was to enlighten the potential Arabic-speaking readers of Ottoman Syria who were also facing the forceful Jesuit pressure towards union with the Latin Church. In any case, a comparison of the two texts, Cantemir's *Ṣalāḥ al-ḥakīm* and Dabbās's *Risāla waǧīza*, bears a great probability of discovering similarities between them, both in content and in form.

Another book, written by Antim the Iberian – a very important person in several of Dabbās's projects –, reveals a close similarity to Dabbās's *Risāla waǧīza*. During his long residence in Bucharest, the latter was in close contact with the brilliant Georgian scholar, whose rise to the dignity of metropolitan of the Wallachian Orthodox Church he witnessed while there. In 1705, Antim, already a bishop of Râmnic, printed at his press installed there when moving from Bucharest a book of 50 pages, hiw own work: *Brief teachings on the mystery of repentance* (*Învățătură pre scurtu pentru taina pocăinții*). The small book, an in-8° format, is composed in Romanian, and printed in Cyrillic script.[182] Its structure is not far from Dabbas's epistle *Risāla waǧīza*. Antim addressed his discourse to the clergy and laity alike. The declared purpose of his book was to contribute to the improvement of the Christians' conduct and to teach priests how to advise the faithful, during confession, on ways to rectify their bad conduct. Antim wrote and printed this text in Romanian to give it a wide circulation. Among his works, this was one of the most appreciated by the Romanian readership.[183] But since Antim's text was never translated, Dabbās could only have become acquainted with his thought during their conversations, which must have been frequent, for several years, as they often met at court and worked together in two of Antim's presses. They seem to have had a similar outlook on many theological and spiritual points. Here is just one relevant example, out of the many available.

Part Three of the *Risāla waǧīza*, Ch. 1, "On How He Needs to Be and Behave", starts with: "On How He Has to Be". Here, Dabbās defines the confessor and his required features, from all points of view:

182 See the description in Chițulescu (coord. ed.), Bădără, Croitoru, Dumitrescu and Feodorov, *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 132–133.

183 One single copy is preserved today, at the B.A.R. in Bucharest.

> Be aware that the priest entrusted with hearing confession, which is a great authority over all kingdoms in the world, its glories, nations and worlds, needs to be endowed with all the holy virtues and have all spiritual and bodily qualities together. He must be righteous, pious, pure, intelligent and chaste in his conduct, have a pure mind and a humble heart, be mild-tempered in his interactions, embody perfection to its utmost degree and in all aspects, have a good reputation, be agreeable, resourceful, well-spoken, strong-minded, stern in his assertions, to avoid banter, mockery, and idle talk, be pleasant to talk to and the best possible educator, in order to tend to his flock. For if he cannot discipline himself, how would he be able to discipline others?[184]

In Antim's *Brief Teachings on the Mystery of Repentance*, the definition of the confessor is placed in Part Two: "How the confessor must be, and how he must hear confession, and how he must set people straight".[185] This is the part that closely resembles Antim's text:

> The priest who accepts the difficult and challenging task of hearing confession has to be elderly, or at least 40 years of age, honest, devout, leading a good life, well-spoken, a well-doer; he must not be a drunkard, nor a tavern-goer, nor an irritated man, nor someone who utters profanities or swears, and, in short, he must avoid, as much as possible, to be a source of scandal or a bad example for the common people. Second, he has to be enriched with education and good deeds, and to understand the Holy Books and the canons of our Church, which will help him rectify the people who confess to him.[186]

Dabbās's *Risāla waǧīza* was printed in 1711 with the last funds available for his enterprise, just before closing down for good. It seems plausible that the metropolitan of Aleppo intended to print his Arabic version of Dimitrie Cantemir's *Divan, or the Dispute between the Sage and the World by Demetrius Cantemir*, which he finished in 1705. There are several elements that point to his intention of placing the Arabic *Divan* on the priority list of the Aleppo press.[187] As I already

184 Athanasios Dabbās, *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-ʾiʿtirāf*, Aleppo, 1711, p. 73–75. I am grateful to Fr Charbel Nassif for kindly suggesting improvements to the passages of this book that I translated from Arabic.

185 Antim the Iberian, *Învățătură pre scurtu pentru taina pocăinții*, Bucharest, 1705, p. 32–35.

186 *Despre taina Pocăinței* (*On the Mystery of Repentance*), in Sfântul Antim Ivireanul, *Despre păstorirea credincioșilor*, text selection, introduction and comments by Fr Adrian Agachi, Bucharest, 2016, p. 203. The English translation is mine.

187 For quotations from the Arabic version that support this idea, see Feodorov, *Dimitrie Cantemir, The Salvation of the Wise Man*, p. 51, 60; Ioana Feodorov, "The Arabic Version of Dimitrie Cantemir's Divan: A Supplement to the Editor's Note", p. 195–212; Ioana Feodorov, "Intervențiile traducătorului în textul versiunii arabe din 1705 a Divanului lui Dimitrie Cantemir", in *Revista de istorie și teorie literară. Actele Colocviului Național "Literatura română veche. Priorități ale cercetării actuale", București, 27–28 iunie 2013*, 7, 2014, 1–4, p. 135–142.

mentioned, Athanasios Dabbās appealed in 1705 to Ǧibrīl (Gabriel) Farḥāt for the revision of his translation of Cantemir's *Divan* from Greek into Arabic. He had removed, in his version, the author's name, the forewords and any references to the Moldavians, which could have revealed the origin of the work.[188] These choices of the translator, as well as other aspects of the text, led me to the conclusion that the Arabic version of the *Divan* was meant to be printed in Aleppo, perhaps among the very first books in Dabbās's editorial program. The urgency of printing liturgical books must have convinced him to leave this book for later. Dabbās was acutely aware of the Antiochian clergy's needs, which must have determined him to postpone printing his works until the very last of the editorial program he had in mind at first, when insufficient funds forced him to put an end to his printing activities.

Dabbās also prepared an Arabic version of the Triodion, which, I presume, he also intended to print at the press that he so painstakingly kept functioning as long as he could secure the necessary funding. The text is preceded by a preface where Dabbās explains that the manuscripts of the Triodion in circulation were filled with mistakes and lacked some services. According to Joseph Nasrallah, this version was prepared by Dabbās and revised by Gabriel Farḥāt.[189]

In the current state of research, it seems that other texts composed by Athanasios Dabbās, listed in the subsection *al-Našr* ("Publications") of the book signed by Anṭuwān Qayṣar Dabbās and Naḫla Raššū, were not printed at the Aleppo press.[190] The information is, however, incomplete and uncertain (here, as well as in previous works), so it is possible that further research uncovers some other books printed by Dabbās. For example, Dabbās and Raššū added to the list of prductions of the Aleppo press a book named *Fuṣūl min al-'Inǧīl al-muqaddas* (*Chapters from the Holy Gospel*), apparently printed in 1708. According to them, the book contains "a selection of scriptural texts for the feasts around the year, with explanations on the readings for Sundays and feast days".[191] No copy of this book is known to exist, nor any other information about it, but a manuscript with

188 See Feodorov and Petrova, *Dimitrie Cantemir, Salvation of the Sage and Ruin of the Sinful World*, p. 64, 67–68, 71–72.

189 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 143–144. Nasrallah recorded a good number of manuscripts where the Arabic Triodion in Dabbās's version is preserved: MS Ḥarissa 66, two in Dayr el-Šīr, one in the library of the Syrian Patriarchate of Beirut, one in Dayr al-Muḫalliṣ, one in Tyre, and two in private collections of Syria.

190 Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 105.

191 Ibid., p. 104.

this title and content was located by Louis Cheykho in the Bibliothèque Orientale of Beirut.[192]

It is worth recalling that Athanasios Dabbās wrote several works that only circulated in manuscript form. One of the most interesting is *Mawāʿiẓ ʾāḥād wa-ʾaʿyād al-sanat* (*Sermons for the Sundays and feasts of the entire year*), which comprises teachings concerning priesthood, marriage, baptism, and funerals, composed by means of adapting certain patristic writings, not yet identified, which Dabbās had translated from Greek and Latin and from "old Oriental languages", probably Syriac.[193] It is probable that in some of these teachings Athanasios Dabbās was inspired by writings that he came across or acquired while in Wallachia. Dabbās's work was publicized in Aleppo in the form of an edict after he occupied the metropolitan see in July 1716.

It has been noted that Dabbās's entire editorial program at the Aleppo press comprised liturgical books, with no polemic intention.[194] The only exception, which is not attributable to Dabbās, is the assertion of Patriarch Chrysantos Notaras in *Mawāʿiẓ ʾAṭanāsiyūs* (1711) that the "enemies of faith" (probably, the Catholic or Protestant missionaries) were spreading in the Levant "false and deceitful beliefs" (Foreword, p. 6).[195]

The Aleppo press ceased its activity at the end of 1711, most probably because Dabbās had run out of money. According to the testimony of a contemporary of Dabbās, the monk Yaʿqūb Ṣāġātī, who was living in Ḫinšāra when ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir settled there, the costs of printing were prohibitive and the Aleppo press must have stopped because of a lack of funding.[196] Metropolitan Athanasios was not able to cover the expenses required by the continuation of this activity, as the Bishopric

192 Louis Cheikho (with Louis Maʿlouf and Constantin Bacha), *Vingt traités théologiques d'auteurs arabes chrétiens, IXe–XIIIe siècle*, 2nd ed., Beirut, 1920, p. 34. The manuscript is now available through the vHMML database (Project no. US.J. 01337), but the title, *Fuṣūl min al-ʾInǧīl al-muqaddas*, is apparently an early description of its contents (a manuscript that has some chapters from the Gospels), rather than its title.

193 Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 105.

194 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 146; Nasrallah, "Les imprimeries melchites au XVIIIe siècle", p. 231, note 4.

195 Chrysantos Notaras declared, referring to the book collection of his uncle, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem (1669–1707): "These writings serve as weapons by means of which any attack on Orthodoxy can be overturned, for it may be threatened by teachers who pretend to be grace-given prophets […]" (*ibid.*).

196 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 152. See also Carsten-Michael Walbiner, review of Eva Hanebutt-Benz, Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution. A Cross-Cultural Encounter*, Westhofen, 2002, in *Oriens Christianus*, 88, 2004, especially p. 285.

of Aleppo was poor. He could not secure the help of the Patriarch Cyril V anymore, although he had previously financed from the patriarchal treasury the printing of two books: the Book of Prophecies and the Oktoechos.[197] In Wallachia, in the second decade of the 18th century, the Phanariot princes' rule was just beginning. The political circumstances were not favorable to Eastern cultural projects like the ones that had been supported by the munificent Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, deposed from his throne and executed by order of the Sultan in 1714.[198]

Dabbās sent messages to Moscow too, asking for help in keeping the Arabic press active for the benefit of the Christians attached to the Church of Antioch across the Middle East. Vera Tchentsova studied the letters sent by the metropolitan of Aleppo to the Tsar Peter I in December 1706 and February 1707. Dabbās presented his plea in the same terms as he had previously done before Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.[199] He subsequently addressed Piotr Tolstoi, the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, whom he asked to intervene with the tsar in favor of his request and assist his emissary, Leontios, in reaching the court of Moscow, where he would present to the tsar a copy of the recently printed Arabic Psalter. In the second epistle addressed to the tsar, which reached Moscow in March 1707, Dabbās informs him of the death of Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem (on February 7) and the election of his nephew Chrysanthos Notaras as the new patriarch (1707–1731). According to the hypothesis of Vera Tchentsova, based on the watermark of the paper used for writing the message addressed to Fiodor A. Golovin, these messages, endorsed by the ambassador Tolstoi, were written at the *metochion* of the Holy Sepulcher in Constantinople.[200] The two letters received a polite reply from Gabriel Golovkin, the Russian chancellor for Foreign Affairs, but the tsar did not offer any consistent support. The Syrian delegation left Moscow in April 1710, having received from the tsar a small donation of around 90 rubles. This only helped Dabbās carry on his printing activities for a short while.

197 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 146.

198 According to Tit Simedrea, the press also declined in Wallachia after the Phanariot princes sat on the throne of Bucharest, because "although some of them were inclined to book-reading, they did not care much for printing"; see Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 865.

199 Vera Tchentsova, "Les documents grecs du XVIIe siècle: pièces authentiques et pièces fausses. 4. Le patriarche d'Antioche Athanase IV Dabbâs et Moscou: en quête de subventions pour l'imprimerie arabe d'Alep", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 2013, 1, p. 173–195. Dabbās's letters dated December 1706 and February 1707 were published in Greek on p. 185–194, with a French translation and comments.

200 Tchentsova, "Les documents grecs du XVIIe siècle", p. 183.

In the meantime, Dabbās had contacted the two Cossack hetmans, Ivan Mazepa and Daniel Apostol, who in 1708 financed the binding of the remaining print-run of the 1706 Gospel, in the two above-mentioned versions. In 1708, Constantin Cantacuzino mentioned the Arabic books printed at Snagov and Bucharest in a letter sent to Zgura (Zgur Stilou),[201] the hetman's diplomatic envoy. However, Mazepa soon died at Tighina, in 1710, and in 1711 the Russo-Turkish war started, which absorbed the attention and resources of all the regional powers, drawing them into the political and military turmoil of those days.

After the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was taken to the Sublime Porte in chains, Dabbās lost all hope of ever receiving financial aid from Wallachia. On August 5, 1714, he wrote again to Tsar Peter I, counsellor Golovkin, and Prince Dmitri Golitsin, asking for support in resuming the printing work at the Aleppo press. This repeated plea seems to have remained unanswered. The court in Moscow had no interest in getting involved in the problems that the Christians of Ottoman Syria were facing. Dabbās's relations with the Cossacks surely did not help his case before the tsar either.

The most reliable source for the research on the books printed in Aleppo consists in the corpus formed by their forewords.[202] Most of the books printed by Athanasios Dabbās include a foreword signed by him where the lofty aspirations that stirred him are clearly expressed. First of all, his intention was to spread the word of God in Arabic, the language spoken by the Christians of Greater Syria. One of the reasons that Dabbās evoked for his resolve to painstakingly pursue on Syrian soil the printing work that he had started in Wallachia was his mission to enlighten the Christians of the Church of Antioch, clergy and laymen alike. He inherited this mission from his predecessors, the Patriarchs Efthimios II Karma (bishop Meletios of Aleppo in 1612–1634) and Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm. This declaration is an echo of Karma's statement in the foreword to the Arabic Horologion that he prepared for printing: "The greatest need [of the Christians] is to understand the prayer and to say it."[203] Likewise, in the foreword to the Arabic Psalter published in London in 1725 by Salomon Negri (Suleymān al-Aswad), who worked together with the Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās, the latter explains:

201 I am grateful to Vera Tchentsova for identifying this character.

202 A collection of these forewords – edited Arabic texts and English translations – is being prepared by Yulia Petrova and me for De Gruyter, within the same series EAPE.

203 *Inna ḥāǧati-him al-quṣwā hiya 'ilā fahm al-ṣalāt wa-l-qiyām bi-hā*, cf. MS 46 of the library of the monastery of Ṣaydnāyā in Siria; see *Waṣf li-l-kutub wa-l-maḫṭūṭāt. Dayr Sayyida Ṣaydnāyā al-baṭriyarkī*, Damascus, p. 48.

> The priest Suleymān [al-Aswad] prepared this Arabic translation without adding or deleting anything from it, only guided by the science of grammar and the depths of the Arabic language. And more so, for it to be largely distributed and provide more benefits to all who believe in Christ in these Eastern lands, he endeavored to rewrite the said book, as you see it in this translation, to which we added the contents of the common Psalter and the contents of each and every Psalm, to ease the understanding of its meaning.[204]

Salomon Negri had worked under the supervision of Athanasios III Dabbās before leaving for Western Europe.[205] He received his early education at the Jesuit school of Aleppo and there he was persuaded to go to Paris. The Jesuit fathers were hoping that thus, he would embrace Catholicism.[206] After he followed classes at the Sorbonne for a while, he was invited by the Anglican Church Missionary Society in London to revise, against the canonical Greek texts, the Psalter and the Gospel printed in Aleppo in 1706. His versions were published in London: in 1725 – the Book of Psalms, and in 1727 – the New Testament.[207] The publication of these books was done under the auspices of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), the oldest Anglican mission organization in the world, founded in 1698 by Thomas Bray.[208] The Arabic Psalter of London was printed in 6,000 copies, and the New Testament in 10,000 copies. As revealed by the letters exchanged by Salomon Negri with the SPCK,[209] the intention of the

204 *Book of Psalms of David the King and Prophet* (*Kitāb Zabūr Da'ūd al-Malik wa-l-Nabī*), London, 1725, preface by Athanasios Dabbās.

205 See Di Pietrantonio, "Le *Kitāb fī ṣināʿat al-faṣāḥa* du patriarche Athanase III Dabbās", p. 139–140.

206 Balagna, *L'imprimerie arabe en Occident*, p. 103–104.

207 *Al-ʿAhd al-Ǧadīd li-Rabbi-nā Yasūʿ al-Masīḥ*, London, 1727. See Roper, "England and the Printing of Texts for Orthodox Christians", p. 437–438.

208 The Anglicans' assistance to the Middle Eastern Christians continued in the 19th century with the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), founded in 1804, which aimed to procure Bibles to the Christian population living under Ottoman rule (in Greek and Karamanlidika). See Richard Clogg, "Enlightening 'a Poor, Oppressed, and Darkened Nation': Some Early Activities of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Levant", in Stephen Batalden, Kathleen Cann and John Dean (eds.), *Sowing the word: the cultural impact of the british and Foreign Bible Society 1804–2004*, Sheffield, 2004, pp. 234–250; Richard Clogg, "Publishing for 'the poor, ignorant, and oppressed Christians of Lesser Asia': early 'Greco-Turkish' translations of the British and Foreign Bible Society", in Evangelia Balta and Mehmet Ölmez (eds.), *Between religion and language: Turkish-speaking Christians, Jews and Greek-speaking Muslims and Catholics in the Ottoman Empire*, Istanbul, 2011, p. 225–244 (both republished in Richard Clogg, *Miscellanea Graeco-Turcica. Essays on Greek and Turkish History*, Istanbul, 2015, p. 65–80 and 81–96, respectively).

209 See *An Extract of Several Letters Relating to the Great Charity and Usefulness of Printing the New Testament and Psalter in the Arabick Language; For the Benefit of the Poor Christians in Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Egypt, and Other Eastern Countries, with a Proposal*

Anglican society was to "preserve and propagate the Christian Faith among our Brethren in Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and other Eastern Countries from whence We first received it".[210]

In London, Negri also contributed to the Arabic version of a *Brief History of Christianity* written from a Protestant perspective, useful to the Anglican missionaries sent to the Middle East. Negri also worked on the Arabic version of the Bible revised by Meletios Karma, and his version was preferred by the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide.[211]

After printing the Book of Psalms in 1706, Dabbās continued to rework its text, unhappy with the version that he had hurriedly printed, the first book of his new press. In MS Cambridge 1041 (Add. 257), a Book of Psalms in Greek and Arabic with text written in two columns, it is stated in the foreword that it is a version of the Aleppo Psalter by Athanasios Dabbās together with the Orthodox priest Suleymān al-Aswad, known in Europe as Salomon Negri. The Psalms are seemingly followed by two Greek versions of the Creed, whereas only the first one is also translated into Arabic. This revised version is the one published in 1725 in London, where Negri was working at the time, an edition sponsored by the SPCK.[212]

Some commentators have expressed their surprise at Dabbās's wish that the Arabic Gospel be widely distributed not only to churches but also the homes of laypeople. Indeed, in the foreword to the Gospel of 1706 (p. 2–3), Dabbās declares that every Christian should have a copy at home, as it contains enough meaning to benefit all kinds of people, be they scholars (*'ulamā'*) or uneducated. Therefore, he resolved to have the Gospel printed, so that his readership, whom he addresses in this foreword, could easily come into the possession of a copy and be able to ascertain its truths. This led Walbiner to express his surprise thus:

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for Executing so Good an Undertaking, London, 1725, p. 3. Publishing extracts of the letters exchanged by Salomon Negri with prominent members of the SPCK was meant to attract sponsors for the Society's printing projects.

210 Paula Manstetten, "...for the Benefit of the Poor Christians of the Eastern Nations..." – Printing the Psalter and New Testament in Arabic in Eighteenth-Century London", online at *Biblia Arabica. The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Bibliography of the Arabic Bible*, posted on November 4, 2021. See also the online information on the project directed by Prof. Dr Mark Häberlein and developed by Paula Manstetten at the University of Bamberg: *Transfer Processes between East and West from an Actor-Centered perspective. Salomon Negri as Translator and Cultural broker between the Arab World and Latin Europe in the Late 17th and Early 18th Century*.

211 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 85.

212 See Roper, "England and the Printing of Texts for the Orthodox Christians in Greek and Arabic, 17th-19th centuries", p. 436–439.

> One can only speculate about the reasons for al-Dabbās' obvious aim to make the Bible a book read by all strata of people, an approach that contradicted not only Orthodox conceptions but the reality in early modern Syria. The idea sounds very Protestant, and such an impact cannot be excluded totally as al-Dabbās had come in contact with Protestant thinking – although perhaps unconsciously – while in the Balkans.[213]

There is a remark to be made after reading this passage: a good part of the Christian education in countries with an Orthodox majority was historically based on reading the Gospel and the Psalms. Dabbās's intention, possibly at odds with that of the upper clergy of other Churches,[214] was to place the Arabic Gospel in the hands of people of all walks of life. To some extent, this echoed the Wallachian and Moldavian princes' and bishops' belief that the education of Christian people should be based on the sound foundation of the word of God. This is why, starting in the 16th century, the Wallachian and Moldavian rulers encouraged printing in Slavonic, Greek and, later, in the vernacular – Romanian – by financing presses throughout their territories. Moreover, Dabbās's aims resemble those expressed in several works composed by Antim the Iberian, who nourished the same desire to spread the teachings of the Holy Apostles as far as possible, even to Georgia – which he also undertook.

Moreover, who could be the Protestant visitors to Brâncoveanu's court capable of altering the Syrian metropolitan's reception of the Orthodox way of life that he enjoyed while in Bucharest? He does not seem to have encountered in Bucharest any great Protestant cleric or scholar capable of changing the opinions of a former patriarch of the Church of Antioch. For someone who is aware of the

213 Walbiner, "Melkite (Greek Orthodox) Approaches to the Bible", p. 60–61.

214 For example, the Confession of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem issued by the Synod of Jerusalem of 1672 states: "QUESTION I. *Ought the Divine Scriptures to be read in the vulgar tongue by all Christians?* No. For that all Scripture is divinely-inspired and profitable (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16) we know, and is of such necessity, that without the same it is impossible to be Orthodox at all. Nevertheless they should not be read by all, but only by those who with fitting research have inquired into the deep things of the Spirit, and who know in what manner the Divine Scriptures ought to be searched, and taught, and in fine read. But to such as are not so exercised, or who cannot distinguish, or who understand only literally, or in any other way contrary to Orthodoxy what is contained in the Scriptures, the Catholic Church, as knowing by experience the mischief arising therefrom, forbiddeth the reading of the same. So that it is permitted to every Orthodox to hear indeed the Scriptures, that he may believe with the heart unto righteousness, and confess with the mouth unto salvation; (Romans 10:10) but to read some parts of the Scriptures, and especially of the Old [Testament], is forbidden for the aforesaid reasons and others of the like sort". Cf. J. J. Overbeck (ed.), *Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem. The Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church Drawn up in the Year 1640 by Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kieff*, London, 1899, p. 152–153.

spiritual life of Wallachia in the days of Constantin Brâncoveanu (as before and after his rule), Dabbās's Orthodox thinking cannot be put to doubt. Besides, he was known to have had contacts with Protestant communities in the Holy Land and Aleppo, before deciding to leave for Wallachia. Certain ideas that reached Eastern Europe and the Middle Eastern Christians were a sign of modernity and an appreciation of the human spiritual and intellectual powers, such as the need to read more – for a better education of the general public. This was, in fact, one of the points in favor of promoting printing, wherever modernity was struggling to take hold. If the Reformation was in favor of a large-scale effort of education, which implied reading, this was not held against it either by an enlightened prince of Moldavia such as Dimitrie Cantemir, or by a patriarch of the Church of Antioch like Athanasios Dabbās. The following remarks of Frédéric Barbier illuminate this discussion:

> La doctrine réformée se donne donc aussi à lire à travers les mutations dans l'ordre des livres. Les idées développées à Wittenberg synthétisent une réflexion d'ordre théologique et politique, et donnent un rôle central au couple éducation / lecture: même en dehors de sa dimension chrétienne, la qualité de la formation relève de l'intérêt public et passe par la fondation et l'entretien de bibliothèques mises au service des collectivités.[215]

In Wallachia, Athanasios Dabbās experienced the period of determined work towards the adoption of Romanian as the liturgical language of the church and the faithful. While a guest of the court, he saw how church texts were being translated and printed, and the access of every Christian to the profound spiritual meanings of the Divine Liturgy was becoming easier for everyone. This particular point featured among the reasons for Dabbās's return to Bucharest after his first visit around 1698. To read in Dabbās's attitude an influence of Protestant thinking is to ignore the reality of his long sojourns in Wallachia, in an Orthodox milieu where the life and works of the Byzantine fathers of the church were still present as spiritual and inspirational models. And this, not only for the upper clergy or monastic communities, but for every Christian man and woman.

The books that Athanasios Dabbās printed in Aleppo were intended to be presented to parish churches and institutions, to be used by bishops and serving priests, unlike other books printed for the Levantine Christians (especially those coming from Rome, Paris, or London), which were mostly intended for sale.[216]

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215 Frédéric Barbier, "L'éthique luthérienne et les bibliothèques (1517–1572)", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 84, 2022, 2, p. 247.

216 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 149; Nasrallah, "Les imprimeries melchites au XVIII[e] siècle", p. 233.

The connection between the Arabic-text books printed in Wallachia in 1701–1702 and those produced soon after in Aleppo has been discussed ever since the end of the 19th century, when Émile Picot described Antim the Iberian's books in his article "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir, Métropolitain de Valachie". The identity between the Arabic type used in Snagov and Bucharest and that used at the Aleppo press was first suggested by Schnurrer, who was later supported by Cyril Charon[217] and Georg Graf.[218] Without having surveyed these books in depth, Dabbās and Raššū repeat the improbable theory that the Arabic type could not be manufactured in Aleppo because of unsurmountable technical difficulties. Therefore, they express their definite opinion that the type must have come from Wallachia.[219]

However, having studied the type of the two books printed in Snagov and Bucharest and compared them to those of the Aleppo Gospel of 1706 and the *Holy Book of the Prophecies* printed in 1708, Picot concluded:

> Ayant été assez heureux pour trouver à la Bibliothèque du roi ce Bréviaire grec et arabe de Bucharest, dont les caractères sont incontestablement les mêmes que ceux du *Missal*, et pour recevoir d'Alep, par la complaisance du consul général de France, M. Rousseau, deux des livres arabes imprimes en cette ville, savoir: l'*Evangeliarium* de 1706 [...] et le *Liber Prophetiarum* de 1708 [...], je puis assurer que les caractères d'Alep sont totalement différents de ceux de Bucharest et leur sont fort inferieurs [...].[220]

Silvestre de Sacy, Louis Cheikho and, several decades later, Miroslav Krek[221] and Basile Aggoula also noticed considerable differences between the type of Snagov and Bucharest and that of Aleppo. The opinion that the type used in Dabbās's press was that created by Antim, supported by some historians of early printing in Romania who were not acquainted with the Arabic language and script, was recently reconsidered as part of the research of the corpus surveyed by the TYPARABIC project team in Bucharest. By simply placing a page of the Snagov book beside one of a book printed at the Aleppo press in 1706, the differences of type are clearly discernable. The appearance of the Aleppo type is visibly inferior to the one created by Antim, both technically and aesthetically.

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217 "Les autres livres imprimés, soit en Valachie, soit à Alep, avec les caractères fondus en Valachie", cf. Korolevskij, "Antioche", col. 692. See also Dabbās, "Istoria patriarhilor Antiohiei – *Synopsis peri ton hagiotaton patriarchon Antiocheias*", p. 169.

218 Graf, *GCAL* I, p. 117.

219 Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 68–73.

220 Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 544.

221 Miroslav Krek, *Typographia Arabica: The Development of Arabic Printing as Illustrated by Arabic Type Specimens. Exhibition Catalogue*, Waltham, 1971, p. 27, 31.

In 1982, Aggoula declared with certainty: "Les caractères d'Alep qui se rapprochent de ceux de l'*Horologion* imprimé à Bucarest en 1702, c'est-à-dire de ceux d'Anthimos, diffèrent largement. Ils sont dessinés dans la ville-même par des calligraphes autochtones."[222]

Indeed, as for the Aleppo type, it is evident that the characters belonged to several sets, with those first used in 1706 of a lower quality that the ones used in Snagov and Bucharest. Two other Arabic typesets used later, from 1707 on, imitate the *nasḫī* script and look more gracious and balanced. The titles are printed either in a larger type or with carved woodblocks, a technique imported from the Wallachian presses.[223]

Dabbās seems to have taken with him, when leaving Bucharest, neither punches nor matrices for manufacturing Arabic type, but only a complete set of somewhat used type, which accounts for the manufacture of a few new characters, to secure a complete usable set. Thus, a combination of old (Wallachian) and new (Aleppo) types were used in printing the first books, while after 1707 an entirely new set became available, owing to the skillful work of the local apprentices. In his list of the books that he had bought in Aleppo and brought to Germany, now in the University Library of Gotha, Seetzen states that, since these printed books had an unattractive appearance, they did not sell much and, therefore, new type was procured from Bucharest in Wallachia and two printers were brought over who mastered the art of bookbinding.[224] Seetzen drew his conclusions based on four books printed by Dabbās, recorded in the beginning of his list, which he composed while he was still residing in Aleppo, having arrived there in November 1803.[225]

Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper cite two other sources, Suhayl al-Malāḏī[226] and the Aleppine scholar [Yūsuf al-Ṣā'iġ] al-Būlusī, a historian of the Church of

222 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 300.

223 See Nasrallah's comments in *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 21.

224 "Da diese gedruckten Werke, wegen ihres wenig empfehlenden Aeusseren, nur wenig Absatz fanden: so verschaffte man sich neue Lettern von Bukurescht in der Wallachey, und ließ zu welche die Buchbinderkunst verstanden [...]"; see Ulrich J. Seetzen, "Nachricht von den in der Levante befindlichen Buchdruckereyen von U. J. Seetzen in Haleb 1805", *Intelligenzblatt der Jenaischen Allgem. Literatur-Zeitung*, 1805, 76, col. 643.

225 Ibid., p. 199. Book titles were printed in the German journal in Arabic script, with mistakes accountable either to Seetzen's manuscript, or to the press-workers' poor knowledge of this language (if any at all).

226 Suhayl al-Malāḏī, *Al-ṭibāʿa wa-l-ṣaḥāfa fī Ḥalab*, Damascus, 1996. Here, the Aleppo press of Athanasius Dabbās is discussed on p. 18-20, repeating information gleaned from the same old sources: Levenq, Graf, Charon, Cheikho, Schnurrer, Buṭrus al-Bustānī, etc.

Antioch, who asserted that ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir made the type of Dabbās's press in Aleppo from the start.[227] The metropolitan of Aleppo din not like the result, so he asked the Maronite monk Gabriel Farḥāt, who travelled to Rome in 1711–1712, to bring back a complete Arabic cast type set and other printing implements.

For the time being, before an in-depth comparison of all the books in the TYPARABIC corpus project is complete, the most plausible explanation is that Athanasios Dabbās brought with him to Aleppo the Arabic type cast by Antim the Iberian and then a less skilled engraver, perhaps ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir, used them as a model to cast a new, less beautiful set of types. The printing technology in Dabbās's press did not reach the level of performance that he had witnessed while working in the Wallachian presses. As noted by de Sacy based on the few Arabic books that he surveyed, in Aleppo "the printing was done in almost dry conditions, on poorly dampened sheets".[228]

An important element escaped the historians of early printing in the East: the comparison of the books printed by Antim the Iberian in Greek, Slavonic, and Arabic demonstrates that engraving matrices and woodcuts created at Wallachian presses migrated to Ottoman Syria. Thus, the coat of arms of Wallachia in the Aleppo Psalter of 1706 (Fig. 9) is a slightly modified version of that of *The Orthodox Confession* of 1699 (Snagov) (Fig. 10), reprinted in the Book of the Divine Liturgies of 1701 (Snagov) (Fig. 11), and the New Testament of 1703 (Bucharest).[229] In the Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies of 1701, the icon of Saint Basil the Great (Fig. 12) is identical to the one created in 1698 by the monk Dimitrios on a model of 1652 (before Antim's printing activity started) and signed in Greek characters. This woodcut would be used for the Book of Divine Liturgies of Buzău (1702) (Fig. 13), Râmnic (1706), and Târgoviște (1713). Some of the icons present in the second book printed in Aleppo, the Gospel (1706), are inspired from Antim's. In 1694, shortly after he moved to the Monastery of Snagov, Antim opened there a school for engravers and printers where, among others, Gheorghe Radovici, Dionisie Floru, and Mihail Ștefan received their professional training. Among the fourteen books printed at Snagov, one bears the signature of Mihail Ștefan and another, that of Gheorghe Radovici.[230]

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227 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 179. Here, the two Arab historians' opinion is repeated, that "these Aleppo types were manufactured in the city itself and were most likely cut from wood by the Syrian ʿAbdallāh az-Zāḫir", which may suggest that in Aleppo printing was done at first with woodcuts (block printing), which was not the case.

228 Pierre-Claude-François Daonou (ed.), *Bibliothèque de M. le Baron Silvestre de Sacy*, Paris, 1842, t. I, p. 286.

229 Ana Andreescu, *Cartea românească în veacul al XVIII-lea*, Bucharest, 2004, p. 22, 24.

230 The vast and fascinating domain of engravings in the early printed books of the Romanian

While preparing to transfer his press to Râmnic, in his new function as bishop of this diocese, Antim presented Athanasios Dabbās with woodcuts of frontispieces and text borders, floral decorations, and vignettes from his old press, which adorn the books printed in Aleppo. The origin of the Greek type in the Aleppo books was never addressed: for example, in the Oktoechos of 1711. Was there any Greek type included in Antim's gift of printing tools? Antim often presented other printers with material created by him or in his presses. For example, he manufactured new typographic implements for the press founded at the request of the Patriarch Chrysanthos Notaras at the Monastery of Saint Sava in Bucharest.[231] The journey of models and woodcuts of icons of saints between typographic workshops of various countries was a reality in the 16th–17th centuries. Engravings from Kyiv and L'viv travelled to Govora and Câmpulung in Wallachia, as Gabriel Ștrempel first explained in his classic work *Romanian-Russian Relations in the Field of Printing*.[232] Master printers and apprentices who journeyed from Kyiv to Iași and Târgoviște, from Montenegro to Wallachia, from Bucharest to the Holy Land and Greater Syria carried with them printing knowhow, technical expertise, editorial competencies, and tools: woodcuts, matrices, punches, type, etc.[233]

A thorough survey of the visual art elements in the Arabic books printed in Wallachia and Greater Syria in the 18th century is under way within the TYPARABIC project developed in Bucharest. Three art historians – Oana Iacubovschi (Romania), Alina Kondratiuk (Ukraine), and Fr Charbel Nassif (Lebanon) – are currently inventorying and describing together the iconography and ornaments of the Arabic books included in the project corpus (48 titles). The outcomes of their research will become available to the academic public in printed works and

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Principalities and neighboring countries has been comprehensively surveyed by Oana Dimitriu (B.A.R. in Bucharest) in her PhD thesis, which she is preparing for publication under the aegis of the Institute for South-East European Studies in Bucharest (with a great number of illustrations).

231 The press at the Monastery of Saint Sava in Bucharest was primarily aimed to produce Greek theological and polemical books necessary for counteracting the Latin proselytism in the Holy Land. See Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 859–860; Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 29.

232 Gabriel Ștrempel, *Relații româno*ruse în lumina tiparului*, Bucharest, 1956, especially p. 10–11.

233 Hilary Kilpatrick notes: "Printers were often nomadic. They followed itineraries from Venice to Montenegro and Serbia, from Serbia to Wallachia, from Wallachia to Transylvania, from Muscovy to Lithuania and Ukraine, from Ukraine to the Romanian principalities, even, in Metaxas's case, from England to Constantinople"; see Hilary Kilpatrick, "From Venice to Aleppo: Early Printing of Scriptures in the Orthodox World", *Chronos*, 2014, 30, p. 49–50. This situation was not limited to a particular ethnic group: Gershom Soncino wandered continuously, opening printing workshops in Soncino, Casamaggiore, Brescia, Barco, Fano, Pesaro, Ortona, Rimini, and Cesena in Italy, then in Salonica and Constantinople, where he died in 1534.

a database in Open Access before the end of the project term in 2026. This effort has recently become possible due to the ERC Advanced Grant that the TYPARABIC project secured, which will allow the team members access to more collections and libraries that hold copies of these books, scattered in many countries.

It is not out of the question to imagine that Antim the Iberian sent an apprentice from his Bucharest press to Syria. The Romanian historian Alexandru Papadopol-Calimach maintained with certainty that before sending one of his best disciples to Georgia, Antim sent an apprentice of his to work at the Aleppo press.[234] In 1709, Mihail Ștefan reached Tbilisi in Georgia, carrying printing tools and implements manufactured in Wallachia by his master Antim the Iberian. Was he sent beforehand to Syria, to help install the Arabic press of Aleppo and cast new Arabic type? Although this belongs to another research path, its relevance in painting the general picture of Antim's willingness and exertion in helping the Christians of the Middle East, especially his people in Georgia, persuaded me to present in *Addenda I* the life and works of this most cherished apprentice, Mihail Ștefan (or Ișvanovici). Again, these Christian books were freely distributed to the clergy and reached the devout readership as presents from the king and patriarch, a gift made possible by Antim, the brilliant Georgian-born printer, and his worthy disciple Mikhael Stepaneshvili (as the Georgians named him).

The accompanying texts of several books printed in the Romanian Principalities reveal that one of the Arab apprentices who travelled to Bucharest together with Athanasios Dabbās was the monk Mīḫā'īl of Kūrat al-Ḍahab (near Tripoli, Lebanon), named by some authors Bizzī (Ar. 'Mīḫā'īl Bizzī rāhib'). Ordained a hieromonk by Dabbās, he apparently worked at the Wallachian presses where Arabic books were produced, the only Arab apprentice with continuity in the printing activity.[235] He also worked as a printer under the direction of Sylvester, the Patriarch of Antioch, and may even have returned years later to Bucharest, accompanying that patriarch alongside another apprentice, the *šammās* Ğirğis al-Ḥalabī (deacon George of Aleppo).

Regarding the name and identity of the monk Mīḫā'īl, conflicting opinions were expressed in the 1980s in the academic circles. First, his Arabic name was transliterated differently by various historians: Bazzī, Bizzī, or Bezi. The formula ميخائيل بزي راهب placed at the end of several books printed in Iași was read in multiple ways: *der Mönsch Michael Bazzī* by Georg Graf,[236] *Editore Michaele Bezi*

234 Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", p. 150.
235 Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibā'a al-'arabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 122; Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 276.
236 Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 141.

Monacho by an anonymous author in a note on the copy of the *Risāla muḫtaṣara fī l-radd ʿalā ʿadam ġalaṭ bābāwāt Rūmiya* (Iași, 1746) at the B.A.R. Bucharest, *Mihail Bezi* and *Michel Démètre Bezi* by Dan Simonescu[237] and, having consulted the Syrian priest Emil Murakade, *le moine Michel Démètre* and *Michel Bezi*, by the same Simonescu.[238] Virgil Cândea repeated the reading of Georg Graf, whom he trusted completely, as he was (and still is) acknowledged as a great authority on Christian Arabic literature.[239] Joseph Nasrallah held a different opinion: "Le texte arabe porte *Mīḫā'īl bi-zaï rāheb* = Michel, moine par l'habit".[240] Indeed, *bi-zayy rāheb*, "in the habit of a monk", is an expression of humility that copyists often added to their names when signing their work in manuscripts colophons.[241]

It is worth mentioning that Joseph Nasrallah, who presented at first as decisive the role of the Syrian and Lebanese Catholics, supported by the Church of Rome, in the transfer of the printing technology to the Ottoman provinces, finally admitted the value of the pioneering activity of Athanasios Dabbās.

> Le patriarche melkite Athanase Dabbās (1647–1724) entretenait depuis 1685 d'excellentes relations avec Constantin Brancoveanul, voïvode de la Valachie. Il intéressa le prince au sort de ses prêtres d'Orient qui manquaient de livres pour la récitation de leur office ou pour l'accomplissement de leurs charges pastorales. Sur ses instances[242] le prince fit installer à Sinagovo [*sic*], en Valachie, une imprimerie arabe qui édita plusieurs livres de liturgie. Lorsqu'en 1704 Athanase regagna la Syrie,[243] il tint à installer une imprimerie dans sa ville patriarcale, Alep. L'initiative de cette création revient certainement au seul patriarche; personne n'émet un doute à ce sujet. Quant à l'origine de l'imprimerie, elle est discutée.[244]

237 Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis", p. 63, 65, 74–75.

238 Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", p. 8, 26.

239 Cândea, "Une politique culturelle commune roumano-arabe dans la première moitié du XVIII[e] siècle", p. 54; Cândea, "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumanolibanais par le livre et l'imprimerie", p. 288.

240 After he first included Virgil Cândea in a group of authors of '*bèvues cocasses*' ('funny blunders'), in the company of Fr Ignace ʿAbdo Ḫalife, [Giuseppe] Cozza-Luzi (abbot of the Basilian monastery of Grottaferrata near Rome), [Jean-Baptiste] Chabot, and G[ustav] Bickell, all guilty of similar blunders, which he listed in the footnote 157 in *HMLÉM* IV.2, on p. 89, Nasrallah soon admitted that the mistake originated in Graf's *GCAL*, III, p. 141, line 5 (*HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 221, n. 234).

241 The issue is debatable, since in Ottoman Syria (as well as today) there *was* a family called Bizzī. For example, Vincent Mistrih mentions a copyist active around 1859, called "Mikhâ'îl Bizzî, moine du Monastère Général du Balamand, de la ville de Lattakieh, fils du prêtre Samuel Istibrian"; cf. Vincent Mistrih, "Notes sur une collection privée de manuscrits arabes-chrétiens en Syrie", *Studia Christiana Orientalia. Collectanea*, 23, 1990, 2, p. 101.

242 Probably, "insistances."

243 Actually, in 1705. He travelled to Cyprus in 1704, after leaving Bucharest.

244 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 17.

However, Wahid Gdoura is quite clear in his *Conclusion*:

> Les imprimeurs d'Alep eurent le mérite d'implanter la première typographie arabe au Proche-Orient des 1706. [...] Elle servit de modèle pour l'imprimerie de Shuaïr et de Beyrouth et forma les imprimeurs et les graveurs qui allèrent travailler au Mont-Liban. L'art d'imprimer obtint le droit de cité en Syrie grâce à elle.[245]

The question of the origin of the printing implements used in Aleppo can receive a single answer today: the Arabic type and tools used by Antim and Athanasios Dabbās in printing two books in Wallachia in 1701 and 1702 were taken to Aleppo, where it was partially used as such, and partially replaced with new type for the first books printed in 1706. In 1707, new fonts were manufactured, but all the other typographic items presented by Antim, less easy to reproduce, were still used: frontispieces, vignettes, text borders, floral decorations. They became models for the apprentices of the Aleppo press and especially for ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir.

The need for more copies of the first books printed by Dabbās remained strong after he ceased his printing activities. In 1716, Cyril V, the patriarch of Antioch, asked the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide for a reprint of the Book of the Divine Liturgies of 1701 and the Horologion of 1702, as they were required by the local clergy. He even offered to cover the costs of their reedition. His request received no answer.[246]

By printing in Wallachia with Arabic script the first two Arabic books for the Christians attached to the Church of Antioch, which were then widely distributed in the Ottoman provinces of the Middle East, Athanasios Dabbās opened the path for a transfer of the art of printing to the East. His endeavor was also instrumental in establishing Arabic as *the* liturgical language in the Church of Antioch and spreading standard versions of the chief liturgical texts of the Arabic-speaking Christians.

245 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 152–153.
246 Ibid., p. 151.

4 Christian Arabic Book-Printing after the 1724 Division: A Fruitful Antagonism

4.1 A New Mission for a New Patriarch: Defending the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch

In the 17th century, nominations for the see of Antioch received a final endorsement in Constantinople, where various points of view and interests were at play and needed to be accommodated. In the urban centers of Greater Syria, pashas supported the church leaders who were backed by the notables and wealthy families. The situation is thus reflected in Paul of Aleppo journal, with reference to the city of Aleppo.

> Vicars were appointed with the support of the well-to-do locals, obeying the pasha's orders, for some, backed by the weight of purses and props, were more successful in their battles and competitions, so that they burdened the church with debts of thousands [of *akçe*].[1]

In these circumstances, Patriarch Makarios sent an emissary who resided in Istanbul and followed, as much as he could, the fulfillment of the interests of the Church of Antioch. In one of his letters addressed to the tsar of Moscow Alexei Mikhailovich in 1654, the patriarch mentions his representative Ivan Feodulov who resided in Constantinople.[2]

In the first decades of the 18th century, the bishops of the Churches of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria gained a certain autonomy and more power of decision. This came after a relative consolidation of the Christian Orthodox spirit across the Ottoman Empire in the early 18th century, which could reflect the union of the Greek Orthodox clergy's forces facing the threat of Latin proselytism. It was also the time when urban notables gained more power before the local government controlled from Istanbul. Albert Hourani describes the social situation of that period thus:

> It was the pressure of these local forces which gave a new form to the relationship between the Ottoman Government and the provinces. All over the empire, there arose local ruling groups controlling the machinery of local Government, ultimately loyal to the Sultan but possessing a force, a stability and to some degree an autonomy of their own. It was onlt

1 Ibid., f. 303r.

2 The letter is preserved in Moscow at the RGADA, Fond 52, inventory 1, year 1654, no. 21, part 3, f. 93; cf. Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 558, n. 192.

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> through the mediation of these groups that the Ottoman Empire was still able to keep some sort of moral and material hold on its subjects.[3]

On the other hand, the change in attitude at the center of the imperial power was also an outcome of the increasing influence that wealthy families from the Phanar had after 1715 inside the mechanism of government of the provinces subjected to the Sublime Porte. Their members became princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, they were dignitaries at the Sultan's court, dragomans, etc.[4] Polyglot and experienced diplomats, talented lobbyists, well-connected in the high circles of the capital, the Phanariots encouraged a new impetus in the fight against the Catholic influence in the Sultan's entourage. Western ambassadors and envoys, whose influence in Istanbul had long been in play, backed the Jesuit monks or Protestant scholars who resided there. During the first half of the 18th century, helped by these Christian officers of the Ottoman court – most of them educated, Greek-speaking, and devout Christians – the patriarchs of the Eastern Churches succeeded in achieving aspirations that their predecessors could not.[5]

Towards the middle of the 18th century, when the Phanariots had secured a considerable clout in administrative matters connected to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul were involved in the re-thinking of the activity of the churches in the Eastern territories of the empire. Therefore, the *berat*s issued to the patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem comprised more chapters than those of the preceding centuries.[6] The Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople had had a great power in the first centuries of Christianity, when the Eastern Churches organized their internal life by synodal reunions. As Klaus Peter Todt explains:

> Though the bishops of Constantinople could not trace back the foundation of their church to one or several apostles – as the bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem did – it was the fact that their city had been declared the capital of the eastern Empire that provided them with precedence over those three more ancient churches. This preeminence was first formulated in the canons of the two Ecumenical Councils of Constantinople (381) and Chalcedon (451). Here, it was the establishment of the archbishop of Constantinople

3 Hourani, *A Vision of History*, p. 47.

4 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, especially p. 137–169.

5 Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 89–91.

6 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 154–169; Hasan Çolak and Elıf Bairaktar-Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution. A Study of Early Modern Patriarchal Berats*, Istanbul, 2019.

> as supreme instance in canons 9 and 17 of the Council of Chalcedon which proved most important.[7]

Gradually, the Ecumenical Patriarch lost his effective power in the Eastern Patriarchates, which conducted their destiny according to local circumstances and political ties.[8] For example, Patriarch Sophronios II, who had lived and worked for a long time in Aleppo and Damascus and was even asked to succeed Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch when he died in 1766 (which he declined), was not able to solve in 1777 the petition of the faithful of the Church of Antioch against the poor pastoral ruling of their new patriarch, Daniel of Chios.[9] Appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Daniel, who was of Greek origin, had generated a conflict with the sizeable Arabic-speaking communitiy of Damascus. The noble and wealthy families would sometimes dictate the election of a certain bishop, or even that of the patriarch of Antioch, through subterranean intrigues that reached as far as Constantinople.[10] It happened that a patriarch resorted to the authority of the local Ottoman governor, who became a cautious referee in disputes in Syria and Lebanon. When the patriarch's interests coincided with those of the authorities – i.e., to restore the social order – the conflict was settled less painfully for the local Christian communities.

Summing up the evolution of the power balance between Constantinople and Antioch, Robert M. Haddad describes the situation in the beginning of the 18th century, the time when printing for the Antiochian Christians was made possible by Athanasios Dabbās.

> The story of patriarchal politics at Antioch, principally during the reigns of Ignatius ʿAtiyah (1619–34) and Cyril al-Zaʿīm (1672–1720), should clarify the nature of Constantinople's authority over the Melkite see of Antioch after Syria fell to the Ottomans in 1516. The tale tells of an Ottoman-sanctioned authority of Constantinople over Antioch, evident from the early years of the Ottoman *imperium* in Syria but always seriously compromised by indigenous Syrian authorities and by Ottoman provincial officials who were unable or unwilling to counter them. As the narrative approaches the eighteenth century, it reveals the grip

7 Klaus-Peter Todt, "The Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of the East", in Christian Gastgeber et al. (eds.), *A Companion to the Patriarchate of Constantinople*, Leiden and Boston, 2021, p. 142.

8 For the series of changes that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople underwent in the 18th century and the collaboration between the Ottoman administration and the ecclesiastic institutions, see Elıf Bayraktar-Tellan, "The Patriarchate of Constantinople and the 'Reform of the Synod' in the 18th Century Ottoman Content", *Chronos*, 2019, 39, p. 7–22.

9 According to Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 269, the autonomy of the Eastern Patriarchates did not allow him to intervene in such matters.

10 Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 159.

> of Constantinople over Antioch (and Istanbul's over Syria) loosened also by the religious ambitions of Rome and the political interests of Catholic France.[11]

In the first two decades of the 18th century, the resolute actions of the Western missionaries, especially the Jesuits, became more forceful, aiming to convince as many of the faithful of the Church of Antioch to adopt the Latin creed.[12] Under the wary eye of the Ottomans, Jesuit priests would dress like Syrian clerics in order to enter the homes of the faithful and handed the local governors petitions against the Antiochian bishops and priests who obstructed them.[13] After 1724, the year that a part of the Church of Antioch split and entered into union with the Latin Church, relations between the newly-defined churches became violent, so much so that, for example, Yūsuf Mark, a Greek Orthodox educator and scholar – later to become an apprentice typographer – chose not to sign a polemical work he had composed, for fear he would become a target of the wrath of Aleppo's Catholics. He was convinced that they had tried to poison him before, while he was travelling.[14]

Under pressure from the Latin missionaries, a part of the clergy of the Church of Antioch adopted Catholicism and later returned to their original church.[15] In 1746, the faithful of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch who had secretly embraced the Latin creed were prohibited from entering Catholic churches. To avoid this ban, they attended Maronite churches and prayer halls, where the divine service was done according to the Latin rite.[16]

A revealing episode of 1742 is recounted by Rachid Haddad based on letters between Sophronios of Kilis and the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch, after the former had become Bishop of Acre. The Franciscan friars had occupied a church in town that belonged to the Orthodox, and Sophronios succeeded in recovering

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11 Haddad, "Constantinople over Antioch, 1516–1724", p. 217–218.

12 While discussing the Jesuits' fascination for the eremitic life, Bernard Heyberger notes "l'idéal d'action dans le monde qui fait la véritable identité jésuite"; see Bernard Heyberger, "Monachisme oriental, catholicisme et érudition (XVIIe–XXe siècles)", in Florence Jullien and Marie-Joseph Pierre (eds.), *Monachismes d'Orient. Images, échanges, influences*, Turnhout, 2011, p. 170.

13 For the conflictual climate generated by the Jesuits in Ottoman Syria, see Chapter V, 2.d) *Aleppo between Orthodox and Catholic Parties (1732–1750)*, in Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 192–198.

14 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 277.

15 Ibid., p. 266, where the case of a priest Ambroise is evoked: he embraced Catholicism around 1734, then returned to the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch a few years later.

16 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 196.

it by paying the Ottoman governor eight purses of gold coins. However, the faithful of that particular parish chose to stay attached to the Franciscan mission.[17]

The Catholics' schemes produced tension in the relations between the Greek Orthodox and the envoys of the Sublime Porte, and clashes were usually resolved with money, which caused great financial losses for the Church of Antioch. The conflictual rapports between the Western missionaries and the clergy of the Ottoman provinces were arbitrated by the local Ottoman governor (Ar. *mutasallim*), assisted by a qadi and a mufti, who were required to intervene even in the dogmatic disputes between the Christians of different denominations – Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Greek Catholic, and Syriac Orthodox and Catholics. In mediating these conflicts, the Ottoman authorities proceeded in equal condescendence, as revealed by a report of 1658 referring to the pasha's answer to complaints by some Syriac Orthodox about the Capuchin missionaries: "Learn that you are all equally non-believers, whatever faith you harbor outside our own, and all those that you Christians call 'saints' are in hell". [18]

Apparently, Patriarch Matthew of Alexandria[19] was more successful around 1755, when he obtained in Istanbul orders against the Catholic missionaries, which the Ottoman governor of Cairo, Ibrahim Kiḫiyā, was called to enforce. To shield themselves from danger, the Catholics appealed to the mediation of some sheikhs of the al-Azhar Islamic university, the highest authority in the Muslim world at the time. However, the governor said that he was bound to obey the Sultan's orders.[20] Thrown in jail by the authorities, the Catholic missionaries who were accused of social strife were required to pay fines (*badriyya*) in order to be released. In these circumstances, the bishop Sophronios of Acre proposed to Patriarch Sylvester to write and approve, alongside the patriarchs of Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Alexandria, a declaration requesting that the missionaries who stirred conflicts

17 See other reports on the battle waged by Sophronios against Catholic missionary works with Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 266–267.

18 "Sachez que vous êtes tous des infidèles quelle que foy que vous puissiez tous tenir hors la nostre, et tous ceux que vous autres chrestiens appelez Saincts sont en enfer", cf. MS Fr. 17881, BnF, 1668, ff. 31v–32r, cited by Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 354–355.

19 Matthew Psaltis, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria from 1746 to 1766, was born on the Greek island of Andros. For a while, he was a hegumen of the Zlătari Monastery of Bucharest. Originally built of wood in the 17th century, then rebuilt of brick in 1705 (in the form still extant today), this church became a metochion of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria soon after its reconstruction, when Patriarch Gerasimos II Paladas (1688-1710) visited the court of Wallachia.

20 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 278–279.

between communities be punished and banned from the territories of these dioceses.[21] These measures seemed necessary as long as the enmity between parties could lead to violence. Haddad recounts another episode extracted from the correspondence of Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, where Michael, the son of Yūsuf Mark, exchanged profanities with a Catholic of Aleppo who was denigrating the Patriarch Sylvester and then resorted to beating him with a stick.[22]

Between 1720 and 1730, Ottoman Syria was the scene of a real competition in the distribution of printed Orthodox, Latin, and Protestant books. This activity concentrated the efforts of several notable personalities of the time, including Chrysanthos Notaras, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who received Greek printed books from the Romanian Principalities. Printing in Arabic was resumed on Moldavian territory in the mid-18th century due to the efforts of Sylvester, Athanasios Dabbās's disciple and successor as patriarch of the Church of Antioch. Thus, one of the important outcomes of Antim the Iberian's work in Snagov and Bucharest for the benefit of the Antiochian Christians was the relaunch of an Arabic-language and Arabic-type printing activity in the Romanian Principalities, this time under the direction of the Patriarch Sylvester.

Born in the 1690s in Cyprus (Ar. Qubruṣ), and therefore named by Arabic sources *al-Qubruṣī*, Sylvester was probably the son of Patriarch Athanasios III's sister.[23] He was educated by the patriarch, then ordained a deacon, a priest, and a *protosyncellos* of the Patriarchate of Antioch.[24] Modern historians claim that Sylvester was tonsured a monk on Mount Athos, where he seemingly studied the art of icon painting according to Byzantine models.[25] While an archdeacon, Sylvester accompanied Athanasios III on several of his journeys including

21 Ibid., p. 266.

22 Ibid., p. 280.

23 Sylvester mentions his parents by the names of Giorgis and Fotini in the inscription on the icon that he presented to the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest. According to Le Quien (*Oriens Christianus*, II, Paris, 1740, p. 776), his father was an Orthodox Greek, and his mother was a Maronite. He was contradicted by other historians, such as Clement Karnapas in "O Patriarchis Antiocheias Silvestros O Kyprios, 1724–1766", *Nea Sion*, 2, 1905, p. 193–194.

24 On his life and works, see *Nea Sion*, 2, 1905, p. 191–206, 525–541; 3, 1906, p. 28–43, 364–389, 471–485, 602–617; 4, 1906, p. 49–67, 290–313, 429–444, 498–514; 5, 1907, p. 54–69, 361–378, 638–652, 846–867. Among the more recent sources, see especially Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Kypriaki Logiosny, 1571–1878: Prosopografiki theorisi*, Lefkosia, 2002, p. 252–254. Mihai Ţipău is preparing a monograph on Sylvester of Antioch where he will evoke many Greek documents and chronicles relevant for the life and pastoral works of this exceptional figure of the Church of Antioch.

25 For Sylvester of Antioch and icons, see Archimandrite Policarp Chiţulescu, „Le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche et son disciple spirituel Constantin César Dapontes et l'histoire de leurs icônes", *Museikon*, 2022, 6, p. 157–168.

Wallachia, before 1704, as local chronicles suggest. Brought up in a Greek-speaking family, Sylvester received his early education in an Orthodox monastery. Owing to his heritage and keen learning, he became a Greek language scholar with a deep knowledge of Byzantine culture.

Designated as a successor on the Antiochian see by Patriarch Athanasios III in a document that he signed near his death, Sylvester was elected and soon consecrated by a Synod in Constantinople. This speedy procedure was considered necessary because the same year, backed by the pasha of Damascus, the local Jesuits missionaries, and a group of Christians who supported the union with Rome, Seraphim Ṭānās was also elected a patriarch, named Cyril VI. This action taken by a fragment of the Christian community of Damascus displeased the Ecumenical Patriarchate and angered the majority of the faithful. Alerted by them, Jeremiah III, the Patriarch of Constantinople, swiftly convened a synod that confirmed Sylvester on the see of the Church of Antioch.[26] In the *berat* that validated Sylvester as patriarch, composed in Greek in the chancellery of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, it is mentioned that the election was also supported by Patriarch Chrysanthos of Jerusalem. A second *berat* in Turkish, with the same content, was issued in 1730 by the Ottoman court, after the advent of Sultan Mahmud I. There, the value of the *peşkeş* paid by the Patriarch Sylvester to obtain this document is also mentioned: 10,000 *akçe*. There is also a list of the dioceses that he ruled: Antioch, Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Sidon, Beirut, Lattakia, Payas, Adana, Hama, Homs, Baalbek, Diyarbakır, Erzurum, Akhaltsikhe, and Çıldır, with adjoining territories.[27]

26 In *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East* (p. 171, n. 526), Hasan Çolak remarks that the opinions are divided as to the canonical character of the election of Cyril VI and, later, that of Sylvester by involving the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Some sources maintain that Sylvester was lawfully enthroned by the Patriarch of Constantinople, as requested by the Syrian faithful. On the canonicity of these elections, see Dom C. L. Spiessen, OSB, "Les patriarches d'Antioche et leur succession apostolique", *Orient Syrien*, 7, 1962, 4, p. 339–345. Carsten Walbiner expresses his belief that "from the strict point of view both elections/consecrations were at least doubtful if not in-canonical" [*sic*]; cf. Walbiner, "The Split of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch", p. 13, n. 9.

27 The confirmation documents of Istanbul were commented on and translated in Çolak and Bairaktar-Tellan, *The Orthodox Church as an Ottoman Institution*, p. 218–220 (August 29, 1724) and 226–228 (October 2, 1730). See also A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (ed.), *Analekta hierosolymitikēs stachiologias: hē, Syllogē Anekdoton kai Spanion Ellinikon Syngrafon peri ton kata tin Eoan Orthodoxon Ekklision kai Malista tis ton Palaistinon*, Saint Petersburg, II, 1894, p. 385–389, where the opinion held by a part of the clergy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is evoked, with respect to the election of Sylvester.

Another supporter of Sylvester was the Phanariot prince of Wallachia Nikolaos Mavrokordatos (Nicolae Mavrocordat), who was apparently acquainted with Athanasios III. Mavrocordat was an erudite son of the Phanar, the offspring of an aristocratic and scholarly family, who mastered several languages – Italian, French, Latin, Turkish, and apparently also Persian and Arabic – and had inherited, and further enriched, a great library of historical and literary works.[28] According to the Romanian chronicler Radu Popescu,

> This year [1724], also, his holiness the Patriarch of Antioch [Athanasios] died, and before passing away he left word that Sylvester, his *protosyncellos*, be appointed in his place. And they wrote to his lordship, the prince of our country, to appeal to the Porte, with his highness's friends, so they do not appoint any other but this one, whom his holiness had named. And thus, owing to his lordship's letters, written to some of his friends, it was decided that Sylvester, the one named by his beatitude Patriarch Athanasios, be appointed.[29]

The great dragoman Grigore Ghika (1698–1741), a future prince of Wallachia (1728–1735, intermittently) and Moldavia (1735–1741) also spoke at the Sublime Porte in favor of Sylvester.[30] It is unclear why Ghika was not mentioned in the list of Sylvester's supporters contained in the letter of confirmation issued by the Patriarch Jeremiah III. Nevertheless, he is mentioned in the second *berat* issued by the Ottoman chancellery. As the Sultan's great dragoman, Ghika held enough power in Istanbul to interfere in the election of a patriarch of the Church of Antioch. His decision must have been determined by the exceptional ties that had connected Sylvester's predecessor and spiritual teacher Athanasios III Dabbās with Wallachia, and especially with the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu and the country's upper clergy.[31]

Sylvester was enthroned by the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah III on October 8, 1724, and headed the Church of Antioch until he died on March 13, 1766.[32] His

28 See the laudatory portrait of Nicolae Mavrocordat drawn by Apostolo Zeno in the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* that he edited in Venice, vol. 33, 1721, part I, p. 511–513, reedited in Corneliu Dima-Drăgan, *Biblioteci umaniste românești. Istoric. Semnificații. Organizare*, Bucharest, 1974, p. 192–193 ("Anexa IX").

29 Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Țării Românești*, p. 273; M. Gregorian (ed.), *Istoriile domnilor Țărâi Rumânești*, p. 544. See also Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 91.

30 The son of Matei Ghica with one of Alexandru Mavrocordat's daughters, Grigore was proficient in several languages, a talented speaker and writer. He held the position of great dragoman of the Ottoman court for 11 years, from 1717 to 1728. Accused of treason, he was executed by the Sultan's order.

31 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 179 and 190, n. 583.

32 Another recent contribution on Patriarch Sylvester is the PhD thesis of Vasileios Nassour,

time was that of the division that split this church in two: from 1724 on, Sylvester led the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch, and Cyril VI Ṭānās the Melkite Greek Catholic community, supported by Rome. This latter community had been growing over the previous century, in connection with the Latin missionaries' activity in Greater Syria. In 1726–1730, several attempts to secure the see for Cyril VI and to replace Sylvester failed one after the other.[33] Finally, in 1730, while residing at Dayr al-Muḫalliṣ, the Monastery of the Savior on Mount Lebanon, Cyril was confirmed by Pope Clement XII as Patriarch of the newly-founded Melkite Greek Catholic Church of Antioch.[34]

Contemporary testimonies, including several letters of his disciple Sophronios of Kilis (the Bishop Sophronios of Acre, later, the Patriarch Sophronios II of Constantinople) contained in Mūsā Ṭrābulsī's collection reveal Sylvester as a strong defender of the Orthodox spirit and the old rites and rituals of the church, rooted in the Byzantine tradition.[35] In a letter dated 1751, Eustratios Argentis, a medical doctor and philosopher of Chios, declares him 'a second Athanasios' and 'a truly apostolic man'.[36] Having chosen a monastic life since his young age, he lived according to the teachings of the ancient holy fathers of the church and showed sternness towards the sins of his flock, in the same spirit as his predecessor. For instance, when the Christians of Aleppo welcomed him back from Constantinople after he obtained the confirmation *berat*, Patriarch Sylvester noticed that he was offered, on a Wednesday, a meal that included fish: he rose from the table in anger and severely reprimanded the hosts.[37]

His firm attitude in defense of the Orthodox rituals is also reflected in his encyclicals addressed to the bishops and faithful of Ottoman Syria preserved in the Codex no. 124 of the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem,

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Silvestros Patriarchēs Antiocheias (1724–1766) kata tis Hellēnikes kai Aravikes pēges, PhD thesis, Thessaloniki, 1992 (unpublished).

33 Korolevskij, "Antioche", cols. 648–649, where the author notes the essential role played by the Phanar-born nobility in contradicting before the Ottoman court Serafim Tanās's claims. See also Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 181–191.

34 The division in the Church of Antioch was addressed by Rachid Haddad in several books and articles, including his unpublished PhD thesis *The Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the origins of the Melkite Schism* (Massachusetts, 1965). For other sources, see a list of titles in Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 91, n. 51.

35 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 265.

36 Timothy Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule*, Oxford, 1964, p. 30; see Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 171, n. 529.

37 Rustum, *Kanīsat madīnat Allāh 'Anṭākiya al-'Uẓmā*, t. 3, p. 143. On the severity of Sylvester's measures against the less devout, see Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 172–173, relying on documents in the Ottoman archives.

an autograph work composed in 1724–1730.[38] Relying on the information contained in this codex, the Archimandrite Clement Karnapas portrays Sylvester as the savior of the Church of Antioch in the 18th century through his firm opposition to the enemies of the Orthodox faith.[39] Rachid Haddad evokes "the apostolic zeal of Sylvester, Sophronios, and many other in defense of the holy cause of their church. The long-distance, exhausting journeys abroad and the active and unrelenting correspondence stand proof in this respect".[40]

Sylvester's activity over his 42 years of pastoral leadership provided enough material for Hasan Çolak to dedicate an entire chapter to him in his book *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East: Relations between the Ottoman Central Administration and the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria*. Çolak found significant evidence of an "anti-Catholic organization of the Patriarchate of Antioch" under Sylvester.[41] Nevertheless, the patriarch seemingly encouraged a moderate spirit, carefully weighing the important elements before deciding on all issues during his long mandate as the head of an Eastern Church of great tradition. Thus, he hesitated to sign the decision issued in 1756 by the Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril V which stated that the baptism of non-Orthodox (i.e., the Catholics and the Armenians) was not considered valid. This issue often came up in the conflicts between the Orthodox and the Catholics.[42] Sylvester avoided signing this encyclical, which was, however, endorsed by the patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem, who only accepted Orthodox baptisms.[43] Moreover, several letters written in 1737 by Louis-Sauveur marquis de Villeneuve, the ambassador of France at the Sublime Porte, sent to the Count of Maurepas in Constantinople, reveal that the Patriarch was not against the opening of a Jesuit school in Damascus that year and he issued an order ("un Commandement") that defended his "procureur" (*wakīl*)[44] Ebn Thoma from persecuting the Latin missionaries.[45] This Ebn Thoma was considered "un schismatique", the enemy of Catholics and missionaries in Damascus, as he was:

38 Karnapas, "O Patriarchis Antiocheias Silvestros O Kyprios, 1724–1766", *Nea Sion*, 5, 1907, p. 866.

39 Karnapas, "O Patriarchis Antiocheias Silvestros O Kyprios, 1724–1766", p. 193–194.

40 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 288.

41 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 204.

42 The topic was also debated passionately at the synods convened in Moscow while Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm was there.

43 Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 247–248.

44 The *wakīl*, similar to a vicar, was appointed by the patriarch to replace him in managing administrative issues in his absence.

45 See Sinan Kuneralp (ed.), *Les rapports de Louis-Sauveur marquis de Villeneuve, ambassadeur*

> "Le saraf, et l'homme de confiance du Pacha de Damas, qui est la créature du Kiaya du Grand Vizir. La protection que ce Pacha donne à ce procureur de Sylvestre est si forte que les PP de Terre Sainte doutent encore, s'il convient au bien de la religion de faire usage de ce Commandement".[46]

We may presume that as the leader of the Greek Orthodox flock, Sylvester was trying hard to balance the situation and maintain peace in his community.

During the term of Sylvester, due to a closer relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the central administration of the empire, the Church of Antioch obtained benefits and incomes as never before, which resulted from two important sources: first, from collecting a tax named *tasadduq*, required of all Christians residing in the territories of the Patriarchate of Constantinople but not those attached to the Church of Antioch;[47] second, from the system, traditionally employed in the Romanian Principalities, of granting *metochia* to the Patriarchate of Antioch. Sylvester was supported in various moments by dignitaries of the Ottoman court: for instance, in a letter dated November 15, 1725, the Reis Efendi brought to the attention of the French ambassador in Istanbul the fact that the French had no right to intervene in favor of the Latin missionaries in Damascus at the expense of Sylvester and his community, because this city had not been included in the Capitulations and did not have a large Frankish presence (Westerners, French, Catholics),[48] as opposed to Galata, Smyrna, Sidon, or Alexandria.[49] Four documents held in the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BOA) in Istanbul studied by Hasan Çolak reflect the help that Patriarch Sylvester received every time he complained to members of the Sultan's court about wrongs committed by the administration against the Antiochian Christians.[50]

The situation was typical for the mid-18th century: the central administrative body did not oppose the attempts of Middle Eastern patriarchs to improve, by securing donations and gifts, the situation of the Christian population across territories of the empire. In 1745, members of the Sultan's court supported the envoys of Patriarch Parthenios who were charged to collect donations for "the

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du Roi de France auprès de la Sublime Porte (1728–1741), t. IV. *(1736–1739)*, Istanbul, 2021, p. 198 (letter of February 15), 252 (letter of July 6), and 291 (letter of July 28).

46 Letter of July 28, 1737, referring to a newly secured "Commandement' from Patriarch Sylvester, an order to exile Ebn Thoma.

47 Ibid., p. 173–174, 215–217; Çolak, "Catholic Infiltration in the Ottoman Levant", p. 92.

48 See Ioana Feodorov, "The Meaning of *Ifrang* and *Ifrangiyy* in Paul of Aleppo's Journal", in Radu G. Păun and Ovidiu Cristea, *Istoria: utopie, amintire şi proiect de viitor. Studii de istorie oferite profesorului Andrei Pippidi la împlinirea a 65 de ani*, Iași, 2013, p. 177–188.

49 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 190–191.

50 Ibid., p. 232–235.

poor Orthodox monks living in the monasteries of Jerusalem." When a conflict broke out in Rumelia, on the eastern stretch of the Via Egnatia, with the collectors of the *ğizyā'* (the 'capitation'), the envoys of the Patriarch of Jerusalem received a letter ordering them to refrain from obstructing the Antiochians without good reason, and all donations, bequests, presents, and for other gifts offered by Orthodox priests, monks, and the ordinary people to be collected by the patriarch of Jerusalem with the confirmation of Orthodox witnesses.[51]

Incidentally, at the time, *berat*s of confirmation granted to the eastern patriarchs included a new indication that, although in the Ottoman-ruled provinces non-Muslims were not allowed to ride horses, the patriarch and his attendants were exempt from this injunction, as they enjoyed a certain immunity from Islamic laws.[52] During the fall of 1746, before leaving for the Romanian Principalities, Patriarch Sylvester wrote to Istanbul, asking for a document to be issued to him, ordering the Ottoman authorities and commanders on his road to facilitate his journey and not obstruct him in collecting donations granted to his person (not to the Church of Antioch), for he had no other means of subsistence. The letter he received as *laissez-passer* was addressed to all the qadis on his way from Istanbul to Wallachia (*Eflak*).[53]

Patriarch Sylvester had many sources of information on the princes' and boyars' munificence in the Romanian Principalities, which had been a real help for the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem: patriarchal chronicles, contemporary events, and the direct testimony of his predecessor Athanasios III Dabbās. If indeed he visited Wallachia in the patriarch's retinue, he had the opportunity to see it with his own eyes. The close ties that Dositheos and Chrysanthos Notaras had with the courts and upper clergy of Bucharest and Iași were well-known in Damascus. In 1727, the monk Azaria was sent by Patriarch Chrysanthos to Southeast Europe to secure donations, aiming to also reach Transylvania. He was also charged with collecting the inheritance of good Christians who had bequeathed their assets to the monks of Jerusalem, whenever they could reach an agreement with the heirs.[54] On the threshold of the 17th and 18th centuries, a network of connections was in place between the

51 Ibid., p. 227–228.

52 Ibid., p. 229; see also p. 234, concerning the outfit adopted by the patriarchs' envoys while travelling.

53 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 235ff., where part of the document is translated (BOA.D.PSK.16/11, dated October 20, 1746).

54 Ibid., p. 209. On the practice of collecting money from the Orthodox of South-Eastern Europe, see especially p. 213–218.

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Eastern Patriarchates, and the courts of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Moscow.[55]

The donations of the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia to the Eastern Patriarchates are also documented in files held at the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest. In an act dated December 8, 1746, Constantin Mavrocordat, the prince of Wallachia, validates the decision of the prince's divan to grant the Patriarchate of Alexandria 300 thalers yearly by means of an exemption from the tax placed on winery incomes, named "vinărici," which was required from the *metochia* of this patriarchate, the monasteries of Stănești, Zlătari, and the Holy Archangel on the river Râmnic (Vâlcea County). In exchange, the prince desired that the patriarch sends a Greek language teacher and an Arabic-language teacher to tutor the Wallachian pupils. This act was reconfirmed on November 15, 1761.[56]

According to his notes included in the Codex no. 124 of Jerusalem, Sylvester travelled from Ioannina to Bucharest in 1730, after Easter, and then left for Constantinople.[57] He mentions that he sojourned for a while in Wallachia when Prince Nicolae Mavrocordat was ruling, thus confirming the assertion of the chronicler Radu Popescu. Their meeting could not have occurred later than September 3, 1730, the date the prince died. In 1733, he was in Wallachia again, at the court of Constantin Mavrocordat, as Patriarch Meletios of Jerusalem (1731-1737) stated in a speech, adding that "the prince much honored and helped him [i.e., Sylvester]."[58]

The first information on the presence of Patriarch Sylvester in Moldavia is provided by him in the foreword to the book *The Rule of Justice and the*

55 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 211–212, citing Dēmētrios E. Stamatopoulos, *To Hagiotafitiko Metochi Kōnstantinoupoleōs. Katagraphē merous tou Archeiou tou Hagiotaphitikou Metochiou*, Athens, 2010.

56 See the facsimile and description of this document preserved in the Collection 'Monastery of Saint Spyridon the Ancient' at the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest (ANR, Fond BU-F-00146), in Claudiu Victor Turcitu, *Istorie în documente. Mavrocordații (1711–1786)*, Bucharest, 2015, p. 218–219 (Doc. nr. 99). The collection at the ANR contains documents written in Romanian, Slavonic, and Greek. For a description of the Fond BU-F-00146, see Maria Soveja, Iulia Gheorghian and Marcel Dumitru Ciucă, *Îndrumător în Arhivele Centrale*, vol. I, Part. I, 2nd ed., Bucharest, 1972, p. 175–176; Vasile Gh. Ion, *Actele Secției Bunuri Publice – București. Mănăstirile: Slobozia lui Enache și Apostolache, Snagov, Spirea din Deal, Sf. Spiridon Nou și Sf. Spiridon Vechi*, Bucharest, 1954, p. 115ff.

57 *Nea Sion*, 2, 1905, p. 198, cf. Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 25.

58 *Nea Sion*, 5, 1907, p. 857, 859, cf. Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 25.

Transmission of Truth. Here, he mentions that he was in Iași in 1735.[59] Having reached the Moldavian capital after a thorough preparation of his journey by an intense exchange of letters with the local boyars and clergy, Sylvester was hosted as a most honored guest at the Monastery of Saint Sava, where Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm had also resided eight decades earlier. Letters addressed to the Patriarch Sylvester attest that in January 1735 he was in Lattakia, where he met the deacon Sophronios (the future Bishop of Acre),[60] and later he arrived in Damascus, then in Homs. Therefore, his journey to Iași must have started in spring, when the sea routes were safer to travel.

In a letter of 1736 from Patriarch Neophytos of Constantinople to the metropolitans of Asia Minor, towards whom Patriarch Sylvester was heading at the time, he requested them to grant, as much as they could, financial assistance to the Patriarchate of Antioch, greatly indebted to the Ottoman administration.[61] In 1739, Patriarch Sylvester sent from Damascus to Iași an emissary named Ḥaǧǧī Yūḥannā, who carried a letter of recommendation dated February 10 and addressed to the Prince Grigore Ghica, asking him to grant support to the Patriarchate of Antioch. He sent a similar letter at the same date to the Metropolitan Neophytos of Ungro-Wallachia.[62]

The Greek scholar and chronicler Konstantinos Dapontes,[63] who accompanied Constantin and Ioan Mavrocordat during their rule in Bucharest and Iași,

59 *Qadā' al-ḥaqq*, see *BRV* IV, p. 64, and the description below, in Chapter VI.

60 According to Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 261, Sophronios handed to him the amount he had collected as *nūriya* (patriarchal dues) in the region of Adana – Payas – Antioch – Idlīb.

61 See "Patriarshie dokumenti (1592–1735)", in *Materialy dlia istorii arkhiepiskopii Sinaiskoi gori*, Saint Petersburg, 1909, p. 300, cf. Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 245.

62 Neofit Cretanul (or Criteanul), 'of Crete' (1738–1753), metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia from 1738 to June 16, 1753, when he was poisoned by order of the ruling prince of Wallachia, Matthew Ghica, who accused him of plotting against him with a group of boyars. On October 22, 2023, he was canonized by the Romanian Orthodox Church as a martyr, and his feast was included in the Orthodox calendar, to be celebrated on June 16.

63 Also known as Kaisários (Rom. Chesarie) Dapontes (1713–1784), he composed the *Katalogos historikos tōn kath' hēmas chrēmatisantōn episēmōn Rōmaiōn* (*Historical Catalogue of the Distinguished Rhomaioi in Our Area*), edited and translated into Romanian by Constantin Erbiceanu in *Cronicari greci carii au scris despre români în epoca fanariotă*, Bucharest, 1888, p. 87–227. See also Nestor Camariano, "Constantin Dapontes et les Principautés Roumaines", *RESEE*, 8, 1970, 3, p. 481-494; Claudia Rapp, "Kaisarios Dapontes (1713–1784): Orthodoxy and Education between Mount Athos and the Danubian Principalities", *Analele Putnei/The Annals of Putna*, 11, 2018, 1, p. 61–80.

notes that Sylvester was in Moldavia in 1741. He also composed an elegant portrait of the Patriarch:

> Sylvester, the successor [of Athanasios III] who came from Cyprus, virtuous, kind, a painter, died in his see, may his memory live forever! He had come to Iași for alms, in the days of my lord Ioan-voivod [Mavrocordat]. He preached in churches and served the Divine Liturgy in Arabic, for he knew [how to]. He also printed the Divine Liturgy in Arabic and Greek in Iași, and *antimensia* too.[64]

Papadopol-Calimach presents another testimony about Sylvester: "Elders tell a traditional story that the Turks [i.e., the Turkish-speaking Christians] kneeled in the metropolitan church of Iași when they heard the Patriarch Sylvester serving the Divine Liturgy in Arabic".[65]

Patriarch Sylvester's journeys can also be traced in the letters exchanged by some of the people who made up his entourage, especially the deacons Mūsā Ṭrabulsī and Yūsuf Mark. The MS 9/22 held in the library of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus is a compilation of copies of successive letters, seemingly collected by Yūsuf Mark, where the patriarch's actions and projects are recorded in the flow of friendly conversations.

Born in Tripoli of Lebanon (d. ca. 1773), Yūsuf Mark was a *protosyncellos* of the Patriarchate of Antioch and a disciple of the Patriarch Sylvester, whose rejection of the Latin proselytism he embraced. He is the author of an epistle in twelve chapters against the primacy of the pope, *Kitāb al-šuḏūr fī naqd haḏayān al-nūr* (*The Book of Light Flowing to Fight against Folly*),[66] and he copied important theological works, such as, in 1744, part of Nektarios of Jerusalem's *Περί τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Παπᾶ ἀντιρρήσεις*,[67] to which he gave the Arabic title *Kitāb ǧālā' al-abṣār min ġiša' al-akdār* (*The Book that Clears the Eyes from the Mire of Trouble*). In the ecclesiastical annals of the city of Beirut, he is portrayed as 'the teacher of book lovers', 'the first among priests, light of theological learning, glory of the Arab writers'.[68] Just

64 Daponte, *Catalogul istoric al oamenilor însemnați din secolul al XVIII-lea*, p. 103. See also id., *Cronicari greci care au scris despre români în epoca fanariotă*, Bucharest, 1890, p. 103, and Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", p. 146.

65 Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", p. 146, citing the Greek historian Constantin Sathas, *Neoelliniki philologia*, p. 457–458.

66 Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 148; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216.

67 Printed in Iași, 1682, London, 1702, and Paris, 1718.

68 "Iz beirutskoi tserkovnoi letopisi XVI-XVIII vv.", in *Drevnosti Vostochniya*, 3, 1907, 1, p. 88; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216; Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 472.

like the printers of the Romanian Principalities and beyond, the Arab scholars involved in printing activities enjoyed the high esteem of their contemporaries.[69]

By combining the information available in this collection of letters with that of the Codex no. 124 of Jerusalem, we can glean some more details of Patriarch Sylvester's journeys. In a letter dated July 5, 1737, the information is given that he was, at the time, at Gümüşhane, while on October 17 of the same year he was in Erzurum.[70] In the Jerusalem codex, Sylvester mentions that he was in Moldavia and then Trabzon in 1742 and 1745.[71] In 1743, while the plague was wreaking havoc in Damascus, the patriarch travelled to Moldavia accompanied by the deacon Mūsā Ṭrabulsī, who gives an account of their preparations for departure. According to the Syrian historian Mīḫā'īl Burayk who relied, as a rule, on local sources, Sylvester headed for Moldavia in 1744 with his vicar Mīḫā'īl Ṭūmā, determined to open an Arabic-language press in Iași. He was surely aware by then of the Moldavian printers' skill and experience, and the technical capabilities of the presses there.[72] He had secured Arabic translations of the polemical works that he wanted to distribute in Ottoman Syria. On May 3, 1745, Ioan Mavrocordat, the prince of Moldavia, signed an endowment act for the Patriarchate of Antioch, due to the Patriarch Sylvester's presence in Iași.[73]

The Patriarch presented to the monastic community of Saint Sava in Iași twelve volumes of the *Menaion* printed in Venice in 1731–1732 as a token of gratitude for the constant hospitality he had received there every time he resided in the capital of Moldavia.[74] In the volume for the month of June (now lost), two

69 "The typographer was well respected by the people of those times", states Tit Simedrea with respect to the times of Antim the Iberian; see Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 882. Then, on p. 899, the author mentions a couple of clerics whom printing elevated to high ranks in the Church: the hieromonk Macarios, metropolitan of Wallachia during the rule of Neagoe Basarab, and Antim the Iberian.

70 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 270.

71 "Nea Sion", 5, 1907, p. 859, cf. "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 26, n. 4.

72 Mīḫā'īl Brayk, *Tārīḫ al-Šām*, Ḥarīṣā, 1930, p. 27.

73 Nicolae Iorga, *Documente grecești privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. XIV, *Partea a II-a din Colecția Hurmuzaki, 1716–1777*, Bucharest, 1917, p. 1118, Doc. no. 1083. A translation of this act is included in the Codex no. 124 of Jerusalem.

74 Only eight volumes survive, now at the Central University Library of Iași. They were thoroughly described for the first time by Archim. Policarp Chițulescu, who corrected the erroneous details given by authors who had previously surveyed these volumes and their notes. See Arhim. Policarp Chițulescu, "Patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei și dania sa de carte către mănăstirea Sfântul Sava din Iași. O reevaluare necesară"/ "The Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch and his book donation for the Saint Sava monastery in Iassy. A needed reconsideration", in Mariana

notes were handwritten, one in Greek, the other in Arabic.[75] The Greek note mentions 'May 1744' as the time the Patriarch was in Iași and dedicated the books. An Arabic note, possibly written by the patriarch himself (as well as the Greek one), indicates the year 1745. Having carefully studied these notes, Archim. Policarp Chițulescu concludes that the Patriarch Sylvester was in Moldavia both in 1744 and 1745.

Testimonies contemporary to Patriarch Sylvester's travels to the Romanian Principalities and the dates of the books that he printed in Iași also indicate that he was there in 1747, while in 1747–1749 he travelled to Bucharest.[76] Considering the ordinations recorded in the annals of the Patriarchate of Antioch, he was in Damascus during the spring of 1746, appointing bishops for various dioceses. An echo of his Moldavian journeys is also present in a letter addressed on April 13, 1747, from Izmir, by the Beirut-born Dimitrios Șabbāġ to Mūsā Ṭrabulsī, asking him if the rumor that the patriarch had left for Moldavia was true.[77] In fact, in 1747, Sylvester left Moldavia and headed to Wallachia. There is a note in a local chronicle that he served the Divine Liturgy in the great church of the town of Urziceni and, on this occasion, pronounced a prayer against an invasion of locusts. Later, he fulfilled a boyar's wife request for a memorial service dedicated to her deceased relatives.[78] In reporting on the rule of Constantin Mavrocordat, Konstantinos Dapontes mentions that at this time, the Patriarch Sylvester came to Bucharest from Moldavia and the prince, out of his great love for him, dedicated the Monastery of Saint Spyridon to the Patriarchate of Antioch.[79] The decision to leave Iași for Bucharest was supported by the welcoming attitude shown to the Syrian patriarch by Constantin Mavrocordat, who was one of the most enlightened and educated sons of the Phanar to rule the Romanian Principalities in

Lazăr (ed.), *Mărturii de istorie și cultură românească*, t. I, Bucharest, 2022, p. 52–64 (with an English abstract).

75 The page with Greek and Arabic notes was first published in facsimile and translation by Constantin Bobulescu (with an Arabic translation by Vasile Radu) in "Iașii la 1402 în legătură cu aducerea moaștelor sfântului Ioan-cel-Nou de la Suceava", on p. 75. See also Constantin Bobulescu, "Din trecutul cărții bisericești. Colportajul", *București. Revista Muzeului și Pinacotecii Municipiului București*, t. I, 1936, p. 84–85; Gheorghiță, "Tipografia arabă din Mănăstirea Sfântul Sava", p. 420.

76 The dates were briefly presented by Dan Simonescu in "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis", p. 61.

77 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 282–283.

78 Gabriel Ștrempel, *Catalogul manuscriselor românești*, t. II, Bucharest, 1983, p. 104.

79 Daponte, *Catalogul istoric al oamenilor însemnați din secolul al XVIII-lea*, p. 183–184.

Ottoman times. The chroniclers of the time maintained that "he loved learning and corresponding with people from all foreign countries".[80]

Sylvester was still residing in Bucharest in April 1747, according to the inscription placed on the icon of Saint Spyridon that he presented to the monastery dedicated to the Patriarchate of Antioch. Later, on July 15, 1748, the patriarch signed a title in Bucharest concerning two pieces of land destined for housebuilding that the *vornic* Constantin Strâmbeanu sold to him.

In 1745–1746, while Sylvester was travelling, his competitor Cyril VI succeeded in occupying for a short while the patriarchal see of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch.[81] During this period, he sent to the Sublime Porte a plea against Sylvester to inform that he left for Wallachia and Moldavia ("countries of the infidel enemies", according to Mīḫā'īl Burayk) without notifying the Ottoman administration and leaving the Antiochian Orthodox see empty.[82] Cyril declared himself a resident of an Orthodox monastery at the time Sylvester had left, and claimed that the Syrian Christians, without a pastoral direction, addressed him, and asked him to take over the see and defend them against his mistreatment of them. The plea included Cyril's pledge to pay for the *berat* of investiture 10,000 *akçe* more than Sylvester had paid, i.e., a total *peşkeş* of 20,000 *akçe*. Three months later, having secured the document, Cyril was nevertheless deposed by Sylvester, who secured for himself a new *firman* on November 7, 1747, supported by the Ecumenical Patriarch Paisios, Parthenios of Jerusalem, thirteen metropolitans, and the entire Greek Orthodox community of Damascus. To be reconfirmed, Sylvester had to pay a *peşkeş* of 20,000 *akçe*, the same amount as Cyril, but double the sum requested for his first validation.[83] Having studied this file in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, Hasan Çolak concluded that, in the end, the Ottoman court preferred the competitor who

80 Ibid., p. 867, cited by Enaki Kogălniceanu, *Letopiseţul Ţerei Moldovei*, în *Cronicele României*, ed. Mihail Kogălniceanu, t. III, Bucharest, 1874, p. 203.

81 Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 198, citing M. Brayk (Burayk), *Tārīḫ al-Šām*, 2nd ed., Damascus, 1982, p. 27, where this brief period is described as one of terrible persecutions against the Orthodox.

82 For Patriarch Sylvester's journeys to Moldavia, his relations with the local princes, and the estates granted by them to the Church of Antioch, see the comprehensive account included by Archim. Luca Diaconu in his outstanding work *Mănăstirea „Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc" Popăuți. Importantă ctitorie a Moldovei închinată Patriarhiei de Antiohia*, vol. II. *Mănăstirea „Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc" Popăuți în perioada 1750-2018*, Iași, 2018, especially p. 13–30.

83 Cf. the document labelled BOA.D.PSK.15/16, cited by Çolak, *The Orthodox Church in the Early Modern Middle East*, p. 200.

proved able to maintain the social order by controlling the majority of the Christian population of the province of Syria.[84]

Joseph Nasrallah suggests that Patriarch Sylvester remained in the Romanian Principalities until 1750.[85] There is no information on his presence in the Romanian lands after 1749, the last news being that the Archimandrite Vasile of the Poiana Mărului skete conversed with the patriarch at the court in Bucharest in 1749 about fasting rules, in the presence of Prince Constantin Mavrocordat. This report was given by Archimandrite Vasile in the foreword that he composed for the book *Questions and Answers* [...] *about the Food to Be Avoided by Monks According to Their Monastic Vows*, printed at the Monastery of Neamţ in 1816.[86]

As I mentioned, while residing in Bucharest, Patriarch Sylvester received the Monastery of Saint Spyridon as a *metochion* of the Patriarchate of Antioch. The document issued by the Prince Constantin Mavrocordat bears the date of December 8, 1746, the same date that he signed the tax exemption for the Patriarchate of Alexandria.[87] However, the Antiochian grant must have been decided earlier, since on October 26, 1746, the patriarch wrote from Syria to the hegumen that he was expecting the 300 thalers that the monastery was supposed to contribute yearly to the patriarchate's treasury.[88] Ever since the beginning of the 18th century, the Monastery of Saint Spyridon had received princely endowments that generated profits: Ioan Mavrocordat donated to it a shop in Bucharest, backed by a document issued on July 5, 1718, Grigore I Ghica granted it a part of the princely estate on the outskirts of Bucharest,[89] Grigore II Ghica signed off an adjoining piece of land,[90] Mihail Racoviță allowed the hegumen to seize the house of a person who had not paid his dues to the administration,[91] etc.

The monastery dedicated to Saint Spyridon in Bucharest was first mentioned in a document signed by the Prince Șerban Cantacuzino on March 9, 1680.[92] In

84 Ibid.

85 See *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 85, where he mistakenly refers only to Wallachia.

86 *Întrebătoare răspunsuri* [...] *pentru depărtarea de bucatele cele oprite făgăduinții călugărești*; see *BRV* III, p. 148, nr. 908.

87 See the facsimile and description of this document in Turcitu, *Istorie în documente. Mavrocordații (1711–1786)*, p. 220–221 (Doc. nr. 100).

88 Letter in the ANR collections.

89 A copy of this document, dated June 25, 1718, is preserved at the ANR.

90 Document of June 25, 1748, at the ANR.

91 Stan Bărbierul ('the Barber') had had an understanding with the monastic community, which he had not observed. See a copy of this document dated September 1, 1742, at the ANR.

92 It was stated that this was the foundation of the Florescu family of boyars, who owned houses nearby, on the left bank of the river Dâmbovița. See Gheorghe Vasilescu, *Biserica Sfântul Spiridon Vechi din București*, Bucharest, 1996, p. 3–4.

1732, the church of this monastery was rebuilt in brick by the Prince Constantin Mavrocordat, at his own expense, on the foundations of a wooden church. In the absence of precise information, we may presume that, since in the early 18th century the neighboring houses were built of bricks, the wooden church had already been replaced by a sturdier structure. Works on the church progressed under the supervision of Patriarch Sylvester, who consecrated the building in 1748 and dedicated it to Saint Spyridon, the Bishop of Trimythous, Miracle-Worker and Protector of the Sick. Among the few material traces conserved from the passage of Middle Eastern patriarchs on Romanian soil, the most famous is the Greek and Arabic inscription set in stone on the front wall of the Church of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, above the Western door, at the time of its reconsecration. The text states that the Prince Constantin Mavrocordat rebuilt the church and all the surrounding buildings in memory of his parents and for his own salvation, presenting it to "the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal See of the Great City of God Antioch," the "city of Peter's residence."[93] The Patriarch Sylvester resided there for a long time, and this place would become essential in his printing activities, especially after the arrival of his disciples from Syria. Moreover, it was there that the story of the Beirut press founded in 1751 at the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Saint George began.

The patriarch of Antioch presented to the church an icon of its protector, Saint Spyridon of Trimythous, painted on wood, 127 x 92 cm, which was initially placed in the right side of the narthex.[94] All around an older icon placed in the center, Patriarch Sylvester painted fourteen scenes of the saint's life, which then received Romanian inscriptions and was partially covered in silver. In the lower part, the icon was inscribed in April 1748 with a long Arabic text, with red ink on a golden background, by the Syrian monk Buṭros Nawfal, who calls himself, when signing, "the son of George of Tripoli, a scribe in the service of the holy monastery".[95]

93 Nicolae Iorga, *Inscripții din bisericile României*, Bucharest, t. I, 1905, p. 267ff.; Nicolae Iorga, "O biserică siriană la București", *Buletinul Comisiei Monumentelor Istorice*, 22, 1929, 61, p. 97; Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și Patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 11–31; George D. Florescu, "Din istoricul bisericii Sfântul Spiridon Vechi din București", *Glasul Bisericii*, 21, 1962, 1–2, p. 139–140.

94 Presented in the exhibition *Icônes melkites* of the 'Nicolas Sursock' Museum in Beirut in 1969 and returned to the monastery in Bucharest, the icon disappeared around 1990 from the Museum of the Cernica Monastery, where it was placed when the Church of Saint Spyridon was demolished by the Communist regime in 1987. See Virgil Cândea, "Une icône melkite disparue", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art. Série Beaux-Arts*, 28, 1991, p. 59–61.

95 Iorga, "O biserică siriană la București", p. 100 (photo); Radu, "Mănăstirea Sf. Spiridon și patriarhul Silvestru al Antiohiei", p. 20–22; Florescu, "Din istoricul bisericii sfîntului Spiridon cel

The text attests that the Prince Constantin Mavrocordat rebuilt the church of the Saint Spyridon Monastery "in his parents' memory, and his, and presented it to the Arab upper clergy and the monks". The information is also provided that the patriarch was in Bucharest while the works progressed, supervising until the end the repair of the main building, the *kellia*, and other edifices around the church.[96]

The buildings were damaged by several earthquakes, the first in 1802, and then most of them remained untended for a long time.[97] The 1838 earthquake demolished the cupola over the narthex and damaged the porch dome and ceiling. In 1847, the hegumen was asked to see to the necessary repairs. The establishment was preserved as a monastery until the secularization of monastic assets by the state in 1863. At an unknown date, the *kellia* and other buildings inside the monastery walls were demolished.

After his return home, in 1752–1753, the Patriarch Sylvester continued to receive donations from the Romanian princes for the Church of Antioch, as well as their political support at the Sublime Porte. His requests and gratitude are expressed in the Greek letters conserved in Damascus.[98] The Patriarch Sylvester repeatedly asked for valid documents reflecting the ownership rights of the Patriarchate of Antioch in the Romanian Principalities, so he could confirm the grants received, such as estates and assets. In 1751, Constantin Racoviță, the prince of Moldavia, granted to the Patriarchate of Antioch as a *metochion* the Church of Saint Nicholas in Popăuți (near the city of Botoșani in Northern Moldavia), a foundation of Stephen the Great in 1496.[99] While keeping an eye on this *metochion*, the Patriarch Sylvester surveyed the situation in Bucharest, where

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Vechiu din București", p. 140–141. The inscription was transcribed in Latin characters and (poorly) translated into Romanian in Alexandru Elian (gen. ed.), *Inscripțiile medievale ale României*, vol. 1. *1395–1800*, Bucharest, 1965, p. 396–398.

96 After the old building was demolished on August 27, 1987, the church was rebuilt in 1992–1997, with the support of Patriarch Teoctist, who secured a state allowance for it. It was rebuilt using contemporary photographs, in the same place, near the bridge of the Operetta Hall (today, 5–7, Bd. Națiunile Unite). In the new church, all the items that were salvaged by the parish priest, Fr Alexandru Zaharescu, and stored at the monastery of Cernica were placed where appropriate: the stone-carved entry door frame, the interior pillars, the porch pillars, the window frames, the Greek and Arabic inscription, icons of the old iconostasis. The program of the interior frescoes was composed by Archim. Sofian Boghiu, who had painted churches in Lebanon and Syria between 1972 and 1992. See Vasilescu, *Biserica Sfântul Spiridon Vechi din București*, p. 15ff.

97 Vasilescu, *Biserica Sfântul Spiridon Vechi din București*, p. 13.

98 Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 31–55, 57–82. Another section of the manuscript was published by Ghenadios M. Arabazoglu in *Fōetieios Vivliothīkī*, t. II, Constantinople, 1935, p. 167ff.

99 Iorga, *Textes post-byzantins*, p. 74; Pr. prof. dr. Mircea Păcurariu, "Legăturile Țărilor Române cu Patriarhia Antiohiei", *Studii teologice*, 16, 1964, 9–10, p. 614.

the first hegumen of the Monastery of Saint Spyridon passed away in the fall of 1747. A new hegumen was appointed on December 11: Archimandrite Nicodemus, who was charged with sending a sum of 300 lei to the patriarchate in Damascus every year.[100] His constant connections with the Prince Grigore II Ghica were beneficial for the patriarchate's *metochia*: on October 1, 1748, the prince issued an order that the tenants of the khan at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest were not to be disturbed by authorities, and later he granted two other buildings to the Patriarchate of Antioch.[101]

In 1863, when the Romanian administration repossessed all the domains and buildings that had been granted as *metochia* by Moldavian and Wallachian rulers to monasteries and patriarchates abroad, over several centuries, the assets controlled by the Patriarchate of Antioch were prosperous. The Monastery of Saint Spyridon owned two estates in the nearby county of Ilfov, a khan and twenty shops in Bucharest, while the Monastery in Popăuți controlled three estates in the county of Vaslui and a vineyard in the famous wine region of Nicorești.[102] In his memoirs published in 1869, Ulysse de Marsillac, a French intellectual who visited Bucharest repeatedly and finally decided to settle there in 1852, described the Church of Saint Spyridon as follows:

> It is located in the neighborhood of the Saint Sava College and is built in the center of a courtyard surrounded by sheds that host poor people. Looking from the Brâncoveanu Street, you might think they are prison walls. There is nothing gloomier than this church and everything around it.[103]

Patriarch Sylvester died on March 13, 1766. He was buried at the Church of the Saint Archangel Michael in Damascus, located at the time outside the city walls. An inscription preserved in Damascus indicates the period of his pastoral tenure: 41 years, 5 months and 26 days.[104]

As far as we know, no other patriarch of the Church of Antioch came to Romania until 1951, when Patriarch Alexander III Ṭaḥḥān (1931–1958), the successor of Gregory IV Ḥaddād, was invited to Bucharest by Justinian (Marina), the

100 The appointment letter is preserved at the ANR, in the collection of the Monastery of Saint Spyridon.

101 Documents in the ANR, same collection.

102 On the income of the assets granted to the Patriarchate of Antioch, see Marin Popescu-Spineni, *Procesul mănăstirilor închinate*, Bucharest, 1936, p. 143ff.

103 Ulysse de Marseillac, *Bucureștiul între Orient și tentația modernității*, ed. by Adrian Majuru, transl. by Elena Rădulescu, Bucharest, 2021, p. 130.

104 *Nea Sion*, 5, 1907, p. 864.

patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church (1948–1977).[105] Nevertheless, during this long period, priests, archimandrites, and monks from the Church of Antioch came to Romania to teach and take courses or doctoral programs at the faculties of theology, mostly in Bucharest and Iași. They kept alive the relations between the two churches and created literary works here, conserving and further developing the historical connections between Romanians and the Arabic-speaking Christians of present-day Syria and Lebanon.[106] Among them was the priest Emil Murakade, who spent thirteen years in Romania and, returning home to Damascus, became a 'cultural ambassador of Romania' in his country through literary translations and radio broadcasts.

4.2 ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir's Press, a Beacon for the Greek Catholics of Greater Syria

The earliest information on ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir's life and works originates in several written sources: a brief story of his life, presumed to be autobiographic;[107] letters exchanged by him with Athanasios Dabbās and Fr Pierre Fromage;[108] the chronicle of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra;[109] passages of the journal composed by the Comte de Volney, who was hosted in this monastery for a time while visiting Mount Lebanon and recorded the stories of the monastic community there about their press;[110] finally, a biography written by Zāḫir's disciple Yuwākīm Muṭrān (1696–1766), published (unsigned) in a special issue dedicated to him in 1948 in the journal *al-Masarra*.[111] The last work, however, contains

105 Păcurariu, "Legăturile Țărilor Române cu Patriarhia Antiohiei", p. 616–620, where he discusses the renewed close connections between the Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox Church and that of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch after 1899.

106 Ibid., p. 490–493.

107 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 26–27, n. 1–2.

108 Letters to Fr Fromage preserved in a manuscript in Ḥarīṣā and published by Timothy Jock in *Jésuites et Chouéirites ou La Fondation des religieuses basiliennes chouéirites de Notre-Dame de l'Annonciation à Zouq-Mikail (Liban) (1730-1746)*, Central Falls, R.I., [s.d.], and the correspondence between the Propaganda Fide and Athanasios Dabbās.

109 The information in this chronicle was presented a century ago by Paul Bacel, Antoine Rabbath, and Cyrille Charon in their articles published in *Échos d'Orient*, *Al-Machriq* and *Al-Masarra*. They were then repeated by Joseph Nasrallah in *L'imprimerie au Liban* and, from his book, by other historians.

110 Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, p. 78–79.

111 *Al-Masarra*, Special Issue, 34, 1948, 7, p. 385–397. Joseph Nasrallah contributed to this volume a study devoted to "The Melkites' Presses" ("Maṭābiʿ al-Malakiyyīn", p. 437–462), accompanied by

a great number of exaggerations.[112] These sources were used by Joseph Nasrallah and other historians who researched ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir's literary and printing activities. In 1998, under the direction of Archimandrite Bulos Nazhā, the head of the monastic community of Ḫinšāra, a richly illustrated booklet of 48 pp. in Arabic was published in memory of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir. His life and works are recollected there based on the most reliable sources, with a comprehensive list of the 33 books printed in the monastic press in his lifetime and after his death (p. 25–27).[113] Another chronological list, with titles given in full, was prepared by Almaza Sfeyr based on the rich collection of the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik. Additionally, Ronney el Gemayel composed for *Christian-Muslim Relations* (*CMR*), vol. 12 (2018), an accurate biography of Zāḫir, with a list of his works, a comprehensive bibliography, and a commentary on his epistle *al-Burhān al-ṣarīḥ fī ḥaqīqat sirray al-Masīḥ, wa-humā sirr al-tathlīth wa-sirr al-tajassud al-ilāhī* (1721).[114]

Born in 1680 in an Orthodox family of Ḥamā, the son of Zakāriyā al-Ṣā'iġ ("the Goldsmith"), ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir learned from a young age, in the family workshop, the craft of jewelry-making.[115] After 1701, he was in Aleppo, where he worked at the press of Athanasios Dabbās, founded after he returned from Wallachia in 1705. According to his own reports, he was tutored, alongside his cousin Niqūlā al-Ṣā'iġ,[116] by Fr Yūḥannā Bağaʿ,[117] who taught them theology and philosophy. Rare for a Christian of those times, Zāḫir studied Arabic with a Muslim *šayḫ*, the scholar known as Sulaymān al-Naḥwī al-Ḥalabī, 'the grammarian of Aleppo'. He later collaborated with Germanos Farḥāt, the Maronite bishop of Aleppo, who

more illustrations than his French-language book published later that year. See also, in the same issue, Yūsuf al-Ṣā'iġ, "Tarğamat ḥayāt: al-faylasūf al-šammās ʿAbdallāh al-Zāḫir", p. 385-396.

112 An unreliable biography of Zāḫir was published by Joseph Elie Kahalé: *Abdallāh Zakher, Philosophe, théologien et fondateur de l'imprimerie arabe en Orient. Son époque, sa vie, ses oeuvres*, Paris, 2000.

113 On his life and works, see also Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 191–201; Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 26–45; John-Paul Ghobrial, "The Ottoman World of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir. Shuwayr Bindings in the Arcadian Library", in Giles Mandelbrote and Willem de Bruijn (eds.), *The Arcadian Library: Bindings and Provenance*, Oxford, 2014, p. 193–231. On the congregation of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Zāḫir's time, see also Walbiner, "Monastic Reading and Learning in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Šām", p. 464ff.

114 Ronney el Gemayel, "ʿAbd Allah Zakhir", in *CMR 12*, p. 101–107.

115 Aboussouan, "À Grenade et à Gênes", p. 112.

116 See Walbiner, "Monastic Reading and Learning in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Šām", p. 472, 475; Mona Karam, *Al-Ḫūrī Nīqūlāwus al-Ṣā'iġ*, Ğūniya, 2007.

117 A descendant of the Greek Catholic deacon Mīḫā'īl Bağaʿ of Aleppo.

had also improved his knowledge of Arabic with the same *šayḫ*.[118] However, his most productive connection was that with the Jesuit scholar Pierre Fromage, Superior General of the Jesuit missions in Syria and Egypt: together they translated together three books from Latin into Arabic.

Under the influence of the Jesuits, and especially that of Buṭrus al-Tūlāwī,[119] Zāḫir embraced the Latin creed. Soon, he became well-known for his polemical talent, which he put to work for the benefit of this community. Among his works there is an adapted Arabic text of the *Monastic Rules* composed by Saint Basil the Great, the central figure of the Greek Catholic Basilian Order.

At the Aleppo press, ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir was an engraver and a typographer, earning a modest wage, which forced him to also work as a copyist.[120] It seems that during this period he was also involved in tutoring future priests. Around 1710, Zāḫir was directing the entire work done at the press.[121] While residing in Rome, Gabriel Farḥāt was asked to convey to him an invitation to go work at the press of the Propaganda Fide, but he declined.

In 1711, as a consequence of doctrinal differences with Athanasios Dabbās (and, possibly, a financial disagreement as well), Zāḫir left and spent some time at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, where he had been hosted several times. There is no precise information as to the reason why Zāḫir left Aleppo for good in November 1722. His cordial relation with the Metropolitan Athanasios is documented at least until around 1720, when Zāḫir became a fervent defender of the Latin Church. After the Synod of Constantinople in 1722, Dabbās became more assertive of his Orthodox convictions, which had always been strong, as his Wallachian hosts – the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, bishop Antim the Iberian, clergy, and boyars – undeniably witnessed while he resided in Bucharest.[122] Back from Constantinople, he adopted certain measures against

118 Farḥāt mentioned Zāḫir among his close friends in his poetry *Dīwān*; see I. Kratschkowsky and A. G. Karam, *Farḥāt*, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, *Second Edition*, Brill online, *s.v.*

119 On this scholar, see Antoine Moukarzel, "Buṭrus al-Tūlāwī et son *Traité sur la Logique*", *Parole de l'Orient*, 2002, 27, p. 263–280.

120 According to a letter that he addressed to Fr Fromage, cf. Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 21.

121 El Gemayel, "Abd Allah Zakhir", p. 102.

122 A different opinion has been expressed by several biographers of Zāḫir. Nasrallah considers that at the time, Dabbās had not yet declared himself against Catholicism. See Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 26–27; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 112–113. Ronney el Gemayel states that: "'Abd Allāh entered the service of Athanasius Dabbās, who was still undecided between Romanophilism and its opponents until he attended the Synod of Constantinople in late 1722 (El Gemayel, "Abd Allah Zakhir", p. 102). After that date, when Athanasius started to oppose Romanophilism, collaboration between the two men became impossible and ʿAbd Allāh had to leave Aleppo for Mount

the pro-Latin priests and openly favored the Orthodox-leaning believers. As Zāḫir had recently declared publicly his attachment to the Latin creed, he felt endangered by the patriarch's new measures. Therefore, on July 20, 1723, Zāḫir took residence for a brief time at the Maronite Monastery of Luwayza (Louaïzé) in Zūk Mosbeh (Lebanon). Joseph Nasrallah portrays Zāḫir as 'a refugee from Syria' and notes that, at first, he did not wish to go to the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, as he wanted to avoid directing the wrath of the Patriarch Athanasios III against this monastic community.[123] They would soon be attached to the Greek Catholic order, which became in the 18th century an intellectual hub of Greater Syria, with an influence mostly limited, nevertheless, to their own faithful.[124]

In 1721, ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir composed a treatise on the Holy Trinity and the Lord's Incarnation, meant to explain the Christian Holy Mysteries to a Muslim readership. In 1723–1730, Zāḫir, a gifted polemist and fervent Catholic by now, wrote several epistles against the Protestants, Armenians, and Jacobites, which he considered equally heretical.[125] Of the fourteen epistles that he authored, six are directed against the Orthodox, one against the Armenians, and one against the Protestants. Other works that he authored contain comments in opposition to Jewish beliefs.[126]

A few days before Athanasios Dabbās left for the Synod of Constantinople of 1722, Zāḫir finished his first polemical work, *al-Tiryāq al-šāfī min samm al-Fīlādelfī*, *The Curing Antidote to the Poison of the Philadelphian* [*Archbishop*]. This was a refutation of the first part of the trilogy *Ekthesis* composed by Gabriel Severus, which addressed the main diverging points between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Latin Church.[127] As I mentioned above, this part was translated into Arabic by Dabbās together with Elias Faḫr (d. 1758) and the English merchant Rowland Sherman[128] supported its printing in England and its distribution

Lebanon". See also Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 439; Aurèlien Girard, "Quand les 'Grecs-Catholiques' dénonçaient les 'Grecs-Orthodoxes': la controverse confessionnelle au Proche-Orient arabe après le schisme de 1724", in Chrystel Bernat and Hubert Bost (coord. ed.), *Énoncer/dénoncer l'autre. Discours et représentations du différend confessionnel à l'époque moderne*, Turnhout, 2013, p. 159.

123 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. XII, 27.

124 Walbiner, "Monastic Reading and Learning in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Šām", p. 462.

125 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 123–124.

126 Ibid., p. 125.

127 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 476; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 115–116.

128 See Di Pietrantonio, "Le *Kitāb fī ṣināʿat al-faṣāḥa* du patriarche Athanase III Dabbās", p. 137–139.

in the Middle East.[129] He also sponsored the publication of the *Rock of Scandal*. Sherman was the author and translator of several polemical books composed from a Protestant perspective, which he distributed in the Holy Land and Ottoman Syria.[130]

In 1723, already at the monastery of Ḫinšāra, Zāḫir wrote the epistle *Muḫtaṣar al-tafnīd li-l-maǧmaʿ al-ʿanīd* (*Brief Refutation of the Hostile Council*), in reference to the Synod of Constantinople of 1722. Here, he opposed the Orthodox dogmas formulated at the Synod, which he declared "schismatic," and commented the disputed articles: papal primacy, rejection of the *Filioque*, beatification of saints, Purgatory, issue of the unleavened bread, age required for baptism ("confirmation"), holy communion for the infants, last myrrh anointment, fasting on Saturdays, etc.[131] After this anti-Orthodox epistle was distributed, Athanasios Dabbās, who would return to the Antiochian see the next year, banned its reading and excommunicated Zāḫir. On August 7, 1724, Zāḫir wrote a letter to the patriarch where he explained his views in detail. He received a reply written by Elias Faḫr in defense of the Orthodox position on all these issues. Then, in his epistle *al-Muḥāwara al-ǧadaliyya ʿalā al-kalimāt al-Rabbiyya* (*Clear Explanation of the Lord's Words*), Zāḫir contested the statements of Sevastos Kimenites, the archbishop of Trabzon (d. 1702), in his work *Dogmatike didaskalia tēs hagiotatis anatolikes kai katholikes Ekklesias*,[132] which had been translated into Arabic as *Burhān al-'asrār fī taqdīs al-'asrār* (*The Secret Proof of the Holy Mysteries*).[133] These pro-Orthodox explanations were repeated by Elias Faḫr in his work *al-Munāẓara al-ǧāliya fī daʿwat al-Rūḥ al-Qudsiyya* (*A Clear View on the Descent of the Holy Spirit*).[134] In another epistle composed the same year, Zāḫir condemned the asser-

129 See Simon Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge: Trade, Religion, and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1600–1760*, Oxford, 2020.

130 The Catholic general superior of Jerusalem wrote on August 28, 1730, that "Chairman" (i.e., Sherman) was unstoppable, and he spreads the poison of heresy *come demonio uscito dall'inferno* ("as a demon coming out of hell"). Sherman finally ceased his anti-Catholic actions by order of the king of England. See Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 476.

131 The epistle was published twice: see *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 117, where the entire episode is reported, and Aurélien Girard's enlightening comments in "Quand les 'Grecs-Catholiques' dénonçaient les 'Grecs-Orthodoxes'", p. 157–170.

132 *The Dogmatic Teaching of the Eastern and Universal Holy Church*. The book was printed by Antim the Iberian in 1703 at Bucharest, in the prince's press.

133 Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 136, 138–139. In other soucres, its title is *Kašf al-'asrār fī taqdīs al-'asrār* (*Revelation of the Holy Mysteries*).

134 Written in 1728, the text survives in several manuscripts; see Paul Sbath, "Les manuscrits orientaux de la bibliothèque du R. P. Paul Sbath (suite)", *Échos de l'Orient*, 23, 1924, 135, p. 339–340;

tions made by Eustratios Argentis about the Holy Mystery of Eucharist in his book *Syntagma kata azimōn* (*Epistle against the Unleavened Bread*), which he had read in Mas'ad Našū's translation (a book later printed in Iași, as I shall explain below).

Basile Aggoula remarked that Zāḫir made an undecided, "semi-nomadic" journey from 1722 to 1726 between three monasteries on Mount Lebanon, successively residing in Ḫinšāra, Zūq Mikael (Ḍūq Mikā'yil) and ʿAynṭūra (a monastery of the Jesuits), for no clear reason. His dedicated biographer does not clarify this issue either. Aggoula supposes that his presence and skills were simultaneously required by the Greek Catholics of Ḫinšāra and the Jesuit missionaries of ʿAynṭūra. In any case, he left Ḫinšāra in 1728, when the monastery was temporarily taken over by the Orthodox. Residing for a time in Zūq Mikael, he planned there the opening of his own press, which he finally set up in Ḫinšāra in 1731. He was helped by the Jesuit missionaries who provided him with books printed in Rome and Paris and a good part of the texts that were to be printed at his new press.

In Ḫinšāra, printing started in 1733, several years after the necessary tools and implements were prepared in ʿAynṭūra. Two simple presses of unequal size are on display in the museum of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist, allegedly from Zāḫir's time (Fig. 14). A contemporary traveler learned from the monastic community that they had been adapted on site from olive oil presses.[135] To underline the Western assistance that Zāḫir enjoyed throughout his printing activity, Joseph Nasrallah mentions that the main press (the large one) is not "devoid of resemblance to that shown in an engraving in a book printed in 1507 at the press of the Parisian typographer Josse Bade."[136] Nevertheless, Zāḫir's exceptional role as a pioneer of printing in Lebanon is thus presented by Nasrallah:

> Nous arrivons ensuite aux temps héroïques de l'histoire de la typographie au Liban; ils embrassent le XVII[e] et le XVIII[e] siècles. Une imprimerie se fonde dans la Sainte Qādīša.[137] Un

Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 197; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 120, 122; Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 476.

135 Tit Simedrea commented on the manufacture of a press: "It is a very simple work: carved from oak wood (or sometimes pear wood), without requiring much skill, the printing press was easy to manufacture"; see Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 879–880.

136 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 144. On Josse Bade, see Annie Parent-Charon, "La pratique des privilèges chez Josse Bade (1510–1535)", in *Bibliologia 21, Printers and Readers in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 15–26.

137 He referred to the press of the Monastery of Saint Anthony in Qozhaya, where a Psalter book was printed in 1610, as I explained above.

> refugié de Syrie apporte en hommage au pays qui le protège le fruit de son talent et de son esprit inventif et le dote de la première imprimerie arabe.[138]

While visiting the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra in 1908, the Russian orientalist Ignatiĭ Iu. Krachkovskiĭ notes:

> Mais il n'y avait pas beaucoup de livres, et j'examinai avec beaucoup plus d'attention qu'ils n'en méritaient les pauvres restes de la bibliothèque, naguère bonne, d'un monastère ou, autrefois, on avait réussi a fonder une des premières typographies arabes de l'époque.[139]

The printing workshop installed at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist produced over the entire period of its activity, from 1734 to 1880, thirty-three titles, whereas twenty-two had second editions, or more. Between 1734 and 1748, while Zāḫir headed the press, seven books were printed.

The first book printed by Zāḫir in 1734 was *Kitāb mīzān al-zamān wa-qiṣṭās 'abadiyyat al-insān*, *Book of the Balance of Time and Man's Transient Nature* (262 pp.). This is the translation of the book composed by Johannes Eusebius Nieremberg[140] *De la diferencia entre lo temporal y lo eterno*, printed at Madrid in 1640. The Arabic version, a text comprising 370 pp. in the printed book, was prepared by Fr Pierre Fromage with ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir. The book had a print-run of 800 copies.[141]

Next, in 1735, a Greek Catholic version of the Arabic Psalter, *Kitāb al-Zābūr al-Ilāhī li-Dāwūd al-Nabī* (X + 254 pp.), was published, containing the text of the 1706 Psalter of Aleppo and ten hymns at the end.[142] The most requested book in Eastern Christian communities, the Psalter was reprinted again and again in Ḫinšāra, in a total of fifteen editions. The Horologion of Bucharest (1702) was first reprinted in Ḫinšāra in 1779 (752 pp.), and by 1879 six editions of this book were printed there.

Zāḫir translated in collaboration with Fr Pierre Fromage, and printed in his press, two other books besides the *Mizān al-zamān*: Philippe d'Outreman, S. J.,

138 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. XII.

139 Ignatiĭ Kratchkovsky, *Avec les manuscrits arabes (Souvenirs sur les livres et les hommes)*, transl. from Russian by M. Canard, Algiers, 1954, p. 17.

140 Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, S. J., d. 1650.

141 De Sacy, *Bibliothèque*, t. I, p. 412, no. 1378; Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 180; Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of BookPrinting in the Arab World", p. 26.

142 Copies of this particular book are held by the INALCO library in Paris, the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC (Hyvernatt Fund), the London Library (14, St John's Square), and the Arcadian Library of London.

al-Muršid al-masīḥī, *The Christian Guide* (1738), and Paolo Segneri, *Muršid al-ḫāṭi' fī sirr al-tawba wa-l-i'tirāf*, *The Sinner's Guide to the Mystery of Repentance and Confession* (1747). After Zāḫir's death, another book by Paolo Segneri was printed in Arabic in Ḫinšāra: *Muršid al-kāhin*, *The Priest's Guide* (1760). A Catholic catechism in two successive versions, an abbreviated form and a standard one, were printed in 1756 and 1768. Among the other Arabic books translated or authored by Zāḫir and printed at the Saint John the Baptist monastery there were: in 1739 and 1740, Diego de Estella, *Iḫtiqār 'abāṭīl al-'ālam* (*Contempt for the Vanities of the World*), Parts 1 and 4; in 1753, Pierre Arnoudie, S. J., *Kitāb tafsīr sab'a Mazmūrāt min Mazāmīr Dāwūd al-Nabī* (*Interpretation of Seven of David the Prophet's Psalms*); in 1768, Joachim de la Chétardie, *'Īḍāḥ al-ta'līm al-masīḥī* (*Clarification of the Christian teaching*); in 1769, Giovanni Pinamonti, *Ta'ammulāt ǧahannam al-marī'a wa-ḥamāqat al-ḫaṭ'a l-faẓī'a* (*Meditations on the Horrendous Hell and the Sinners' Terrible Folly*); in 1772, Francesco Rainaldi, S. J., *Kitāb qūt al-nafs* (*Book of Food for the Soul*). This list of authors reveals the fact that the constant focus of the Ḫinšāra printing program was the Catholic literature selected and distributed by the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide in support of the mission of the Jesuit fathers sent to teach and spread the Latin creed in the East. As Bernard Heyberger has noted: "une grande partie de leurs parutions a un caractère catholique militant marqué".[143]

John-Paul Ghobrial explored "The Ottoman World of 'Abdallāh Zāḫir", describing the collection of books printed in Ḫinšāra held by the Arcadian Library in London. Here are his conclusions as to the topics they cover, which are applicable to the entire production of this press, in Zāḫir's lifetime and after his death:

> The Arcadian collection of Shuwayr books can be divided into three main categories: (1) translations of European works into Arabic, (2) 'original' texts written by Zakher or other Melkites, and (3) liturgical books, Psalters and editions of the Gospels for devotional use by the Melkite community.[144]

It is therefore probable that this was another reason for the dissensions between 'Abdallāh Zāḫir and Athanasios Dabbās around 1710: while the former was interested in printing pro-Catholic literature, most of these titles were unacceptable to the latter, who was struggling at the time to keep the Church of Antioch together and to avoid the division that would occur in 1724. Dabbās had no intention to

143 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 440.

144 Ghobrial, "The Ottoman World of 'Abdallāh Zāḫir", p. 200. He described several of these books on p. 200–207 and the Annex, with illustrations. Among them, only three were printed by Zāḫir himself. The others are dated after 1748.

print in Aleppo books of teachings about the Latin creed, nor to fuel the disagreements that smoldered between the Catholic-inclined and the Orthodox. Books such as those later printed in Ḫinšāra would have ended up in the possession of the Western missionaries, whose task was to attract the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Ottoman territories into union with the Church of Rome. Basile Aggoula suggests that the main reason for Zāḫir's transfer to Mount Lebanon was his aspiration, in harmony with that of Pierre Fromage, to have the freedom to print whatever they wished, beginning with the above-mentioned titles that they translated together.

It is worth mentioning that the texts they printed were either translations from Latin that the Jesuit fathers brought with them or translated with him, or his own compositions in Arabic. He seems to have revised some of the texts printed in Aleppo that were republished in Ḫinšāra, but only by improving the Arabic language, as, according to Charon, he did not know Greek:

> La version des péricopes des Épitres en usage chez les Melkites dérive de la traduction arabe de la Bible faite ou revue sur le grec par le célèbre ʿAbd Allah Ibn el Faḍl, au onzième siècle. Au dix-huitième, le clerc alépin ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir, qui s'était attaché aux Chouérites sans faire pour cela partie de leur congrégation, corrigea cette traduction dont le style laissait par trop à désirer, mais en se basant uniquement sur les règles de la grammaire arabe, car il ne savait pas le grec.[145]

In a will dictated on August 20, 1748, Zāḫir left the entire press, with all the printing implements, and his library to the monastic community in Ḫinšāra, indicating the person who was going to head the printing activity: Suleymān Qaṭṭān (d. 1799), a disciple of his who had also followed his lead in composing several polemical works.[146] After Zāḫir died, the press was at a standstill for two years because of disagreements between the Greek Catholic order and the new printer, who finally left the monastery for a time. After his return, he created new Arabic type and kept working until he died in 1775. He trained three apprentices who learned how to cast type, to typeset, and to bind printed sheets. The Melkite Greek Catholic bishops of the time paid close attention to the press, where seven workers were active in the last quarter of the 18th century. A document preserved in the archive of Dayr al-Šīr, signed on January 1, 1776, by the superior, Paul Qassār, and other clerics, and confirmed by Theodosius Daḥdāḥ, the Melkite

145 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 122.

146 On Zāḫir's apprentices, see Joseph Nasrallah's article in *Al-Masarra*, 1948, p. 431–435, and Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 472.

Greek Catholic Patriarch, Germanos Adam, the bishop of Aleppo, and the bishop of Diyarbakır, comprises the rules for the work and wages of the typographers.[147]

While travelling across Mount Lebanon in 1783–1785, Volney found at the press of Ḫinšāra only four workers, who were still printing Christian books (dogmatic, patristic, and mystical) but at a slower pace than in Zāḫir's times. The Psalter was the only book in demand, while other titles failed to secure sufficient income for the press. Volney expressed his opinion that if the fathers had accepted to also print Western books of a more practical content (*d'une utilité pratique*), they would have encouraged an interest of the Arab readership in the sciences and arts, thus securing a larger profit from the sales.[148]

Between 1797 and 1802, the press stopped working. It was closed for good in 1899, when the competition with other more modern presses could no longer be faced. The last book printed in Ḫinšāra was the 15th edition of the Psalter.

Virgil Cândea notes that this was the Arabic press with the longest activity in the Middle East, considering that it functioned 165 years, from 1734 to 1899, longer than any press in Syria and Lebanon. Moreover, it worked with technology and expertise inherited from the presses of Wallachia – Snagov, 1701, and Bucharest, 1702.[149]

Information on ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir's press in Ḫinšāra is also presented in the correspondence between Fr Fromage and M. Truilhier of Marseilles, the commercial resident of France in Sidon, who shared it with another traveler to the Levant, Jean de la Roque, as he mentions in a letter dated December 21, 1735. Thus, de la Roque credits Fr Fromage with the founding of the press on Mount Lebanon, and the financial support to Truilhier.[150] Indeed, after 1726 the financial needs of the new press were covered, at least in part, by the French commercial resident in Sidon, who was exchanging letters with Fr Fromage and backed the Jesuits in their missions to the Middle East.

Basile Aggoula, who studied all the sources mentioned above, concludes that the Annals of Ḫinšāra and the biography of Zāḫir are "closer to the *hagiographic* style than that of *chronicles*." Thus, for the monk who recorded Zāḫir's death on August 30, 1748, he was:

> [...] l'astre de l'Orient, modèle des savants, unique à son époque, sans pareil dans son pays...
> [...] En effet, grâce à sa pénétration d'esprit, il excelle dans toutes les branches de la science,

147 Nasrallah, *Al-Masarra*, p. 463.

148 Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, p. 80–82.

149 Cândea, "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumanolibanais par le livre et l'imprimerie", p. 288 and 293, n. 30.

150 The letter was published in the *Mercure* of May 1736, cf. De Sacy, *Bibliothèque*, t. I, p. 412.

> notoirement dans la langue arabe qui n'avait pour lui aucun secret. Il était surtout maître en logique, en théologie, en philosophie et en sciences naturelles. Mais ce qui le mit au premier rang des savants, ce fut, sans contredit, l'habileté avec laquelle in maniait l'art de la controverse.[151]

The image of Zāḫir depicted by Nasrallah, based on the same sources, was not far from this style either: "Zāḫir est l'un de ces hommes universels à qui tout réussit. Il excelle à la fois dans l'orfèvrerie, la gravure, l'horlogerie, la peinture, la littérature dans ses diverses branches enfin".[152]

The most intensely debated aspect of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir's printing activity was the source of the Arabic type used in producing his books and the extent of the help that he received: From whom? From where? Joseph Nasrallah states that Athanasios Dabbās had acquired in Wallachia knowledge of manufacturing and casting type and then transmitted this expertise to Zāḫir, who, being more skilled than the metropolitan, succeeded in becoming a better printer. This is the theory that was formulated in the biography probably composed by Zāḫir's disciple Yuwākīm Muṭrān (1696–1766), who claimed that his master manufactured all the necessary Arabic type without any previous training, just looking at books printed in Rome that circulated in Ottoman Syria. In Nasrallah's translation of this passage from the special issue of *al-Masarra*:

> Il fit une imprimerie à Alep avec son frère. In en grava les matrices, les caractères et tous les instruments. Ils y imprimèrent plusieurs livres et cela sans qu'ils eussent vu d'imprimerie et sans être guidés par quelqu'un dans ce travail.[153]

Based on this assessment, Nasrallah contradicted the idea that Arabic type was brought from Wallachia to Aleppo, claiming that the type used in Dabbās's press was manufactured right there by Zāḫir, based solely on the Arabic printed books that Dabbās had in his press (probably from Wallachia). This conclusion is supported by an incorrect interpretation of a passage in Dabbās's foreword to the Psalter of Aleppo (1706, the first book), where Nasrallah saw a reference to Zāḫir's contribution, without real support:

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151 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 303, and Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 28, citing a '*Ms. de Harissa*', p. 365–366. This is most likely MS Ḥarīṣā 209, 3°, edited in *Al-Masarra*, 4, 1913, p. 201–209. See El Gemayel, "Abd Allah Zakhir", p. 102.

152 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 28.

153 [Yuwākīm Muṭrān], in *Al-Masarra*, 1948, p. 387, also cited by Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 18–19.

> Pourquoi Athanase dédie-t-il les prémices de son œuvre à Constantin [Brâncoveanu] et pourquoi le remercie-t-il de ses bienfaits insignes envers les chrétiens des pays arabes? Les bienfaits précédents du voïvode ne justifient pas pareils éloges, surtout dans la préface d'un premier livre sorti d'une imprimerie nouvelle, si réellement le voïvode n'avait pas aidé à la création des nouvelles presses d'Alep. Quant a en déterminer les détails, cela nous est difficile pour le moment: secours matériels, envoi de la presse elle-même, peut-être. Zāḫir se serait charge de fonder les caractères et de fabriquer tout le matériel. C'est à lui que fait allusion Dabbās en disant dans la préface de son édition du *Psautier*:
> حيث انه (الله) وفقنا الى عمل طبع الحرف العربي.[154]
> Nous pouvons ainsi toujours regarder Zāḫir comme le créateur de la première imprimerie d'Orient. Tous ce que nous savons de son habilité artistique confirme le témoignage de la *Biographie*.[155]

Reading carefully the entire foreword and other texts composed by Dabbās where he reports on the circumstances that allowed him to print the first Orthodox liturgical books for the Arabic-speaking Christians, it becomes clear that he always refers to the support granted by Constantin Brâncoveanu. Moreover, Nasrallah himself states in the conclusions to his chapter dedicated to Zāḫir in vol. IV.2 of *HMLÉM* (1989): "La *Biographie* fait un éloge dithyrambique de l'œuvre de Zāḫir."[156] It is worth noting that this reevaluation was presented forty-two years after his first comments published in 1948 in *L'imprimerie au Liban*.

The assertions of Zāḫir's biographer were earlier contradicted by the Romanian historian Virgil Cândea, who comments in his contribution to *Le livre et le Liban*:

> [...] nous nous demandons comment il était possible que quelqu'un eut pu fonder une imprimerie de toutes pièces, depuis la gravure des matrices jusqu'à la presse, sans en avoir jamais vu une (ʿAbdallāh n'ayant jamais voyagé en Europe), et sans qu'on lui eût au moins décrit cette installation tellement sophistiquée pour les non-initiés.[157]

In his study published in the same volume, Basile Aggoula opposes the opinion expressed by Zāḫir's biographer that the Arabic type of Aleppo could have been created by the latter alone. Moreover, he considers that the press could only have been set up with direct help from typographers coming from Wallachia, who must have manufactured the Arabic printing implements as well.[158]

154 "For Him [i.e., Allāh – *my note*] allowed us to print with Arabic type."
155 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 19–21.
156 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 136.
157 Cândea, "Dès 1701: Dialogue roumanolibanais par le livre et l'imprimerie", p. 286.
158 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 301.

Nevertheless, the role of the Jesuits missionaries residing in Lebanon must have been very significant in the activity of Zāḫir's press, as proven by the fact that he sent Fr Pierre Fromage a gift of twenty-eight elegant copies of four of the books printed there, with a gilded binding, i.e., 'deluxe' or 'protocol' versions. He also sent and a similarly elegant copy of the *Mizān al-zamān* to Fr Truilhier in Sidon.[159]

Indeed, it is hardly plausible that without any models and training by an experienced typographer Zāḫir could have turned, in a short time, from a talented apprentice goldsmith to an expert printer capable of cutting punches, carving complicated woodblocks, and casting the elegant Arabic type and page-ornaments of his books, a selection of which was published by Joseph Nasrallah in *L'imprimerie au Liban* (*Gravure sur bois de Abdallāh Zāḫer* on p. III, the title page, then on p. 17, 45–47, 142, 143, 152, 158, and the back cover of the book).

One of the most far-fetched opinions expressed on this subject was formulated by Joseph Elie Kahalé in his book dedicated to Zāḫir's life and works:

> Quant à nous, nous nions tout cela et nous disons que, lors de sa visite en Roumanie [*sic*], le patriarche Dabbās a visité une imprimerie dont il a observé le fonctionnement et noté les instruments. De retour à Alep, il la décrivit à Abdallah Zakher qui, par son ingéniosité et son imagination, créa la première imprimerie arabe en Orient.[160]

These statements may have originated in a brief note written by an anonymous person, in an 18th-century style script in the opening of a copy of the Psalter printed by Zāḫir (probably, the first edition), which Basile Aggoula evokes in support of the "total confusion" of the sources in Ḫinšāra: "Ce psautier arabe a été imprimé par un Syrien, qui sur la seule inspection de quelques caractères d'imprimerie a fondu des caractères et établi à lui seul une imprimerie au commencement de ce siècle XVIII."[161]

Nevertheless, the idea that Zāḫir was the first ever to print in the Middle East is so entrenched in Lebanese intellectual circles that it was possible for the Psalter printed in 1706 by Athanasios Dabbās in Aleppo to be described as follows: "Aleppo 1706, *The Psalms*, translated by ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭāki, Zāḫir's press, printed with type cast in Europe."[162]

159 Ibid., p. 306.

160 Kahalé, *ʿAbdallāh Zakher, Philosophe, théologien et fondateur de l'imprimerie arabe en Orient*, p. 66.

161 Cf. Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 303.

162 "Alep, 1706, *Les Psaumes*, traduits par ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭāki. Imprimerie Zāḫir, avec des caractères fondus en Europe", cf. Fouad E. Boustany, "Les Libanais et le livre", in Aboussouan (dir.), *Le livre et le Liban jusqu'à 1900*, p. 153, n. 1.

The theory that Zāḫir initiated the Arabic-type printing by himself has been convincingly disproved by Middle Eastern historians as well. Historical testimonies prove that the new press of Ḫinšāra borrowed type and other implements from the Aleppo one, probably leaving the remaining type sets incomplete.[163] ʻĪsā ʼIskandar al-Maʻlūf states that he found at the monastery of Balamand (Lebanon) typographic wooden tools that could have come from the Aleppo press, perhaps copies of those presented to Dabbās by Antim the Iberian. Joseph Nasrallah opposed this possibility:

> On a prétendu que l'imprimerie d'Alep a été transportée à Balamend, et de là, les religieux catholiques qui quittèrent le monastère en 1697 l'acheminèrent avec eux à Šueïr. Prétention gratuite, sans aucun fondement et qui ne mérite pas qu'on s'y arrête. L'imprimerie de Šueïr est l'œuvre exclusive du *šammās* Abdallah Zāḫir.[164]

Indeed, in 1740, writing angrily to Fr Fromage, Zāḫir declared that the press at Ḫinšāra was entirely his work. Nasrallah extracted from Zāḫir's biography information on the models of the type that he manufactured, which seemingly came from books printed in Rome by the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide and are closer in style to the "*kanasi* (ecclesiastic)" calligraphic script.[165] Therefore, Nasrallah states that Zāḫir manufactured punches and type and woodcuts at the Monastery of Zūq Mikael, where he prepared the essential typographic tools and implements for the new press. Zāḫir's type is elegant and harmonious. The lines on each page are generally separated by small decorative elements, more significant pages are adorned with borders and vignettes of stylized flowers. The text is set within single or double frames.

As with the Arabic books printed in Wallachia and Aleppo, in Zāḫir's books woodblocks are used for printing the significant or recurring phrases and words, such as *kitāb*. Joseph Nasrallah published in *L'imprimerie au Liban* several words printed with woodblocks presumably created by Zāḫir: a title for Chapter One, *al-Maqālat al-ʼūlā* (p. XXV), and the word *muqaddima* (foreword) with a *šadda*, the sign of a double consonant, above the *rasm* and the final *tanwīn*, the mark of the indefinite state (on p. XV). Nasrallah states at the closing of his foreword that he was granted the approval to reproduce, at the above-mentioned pages of his book, the woodcut images (*les clichés gravés sur bois*) for the icons and ornamental elements allegedly carved by Zāḫir, which are still preserved in the

163 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 21.
164 Ibid., p. 25.
165 Ibid., p. 29. Correct: Adj. *kanāʼisiyy* < Ar. *kanāʼis*, Pl. < *kanīsa*, 'church'.

museum of Ḫinšāra.[166] Aggoula maintains, however, that the plates and matrices are mostly made of metal, not wood, and dated from a later period. Indeed, one can notice the presence of vignettes with medieval symbols specific to Western Europe, such as the 'Green Man', a frequent decoration in the books and architecture of the Anglo-Saxon lands, known to have spread all across Europe (Fig. 37).[167] Having visited the museum of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in 2022, I can confirm that there are a few woodcut matrices among the exhibits and sensibly more metal-cast material. It is difficult to draw a conclusion on the dates and the entire heritage of Zāḫir's period of activity without access to the entire museum collection.

Aggoula goes further in his analysis of the Ḫinšāra books, expressing his opinion that the beauty of the type forms and the distinctions between them and those used in Aleppo prove that they were manufactured with punches created in the West, in a press where such artistic works were already mastered by experienced typographers, since printing in non-Latin type had become a common activity in Western Europe.

> L'examen du *mizān al-zamān*, le premier livre imprimé à Šueir en 1733–1734, montre une mise en page presque parfaite et des caractères d'une grande beauté. Il est impossible d'attribuer de telles matrices à un alépin qui n'avait pas vu d'autres caractères en dehors de ceux d'Alep. La différence entre les deux est frappante. Ceux de Šueir trahissent des matrices en acier gravées par des typographes professionnels, c'est-à-dire venus d'Europe. [...] Nous préférons accorder à ces matrices une origine européenne.[168]

According to Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper, when moving forward from Dabbās's press, "the next stage in the history of Arabic typography in the Middle East was demonstrably a continuation of the Aleppo venture."[169] Based on the findings of the Arab historians [Salaheddine] al-Bustānī and [Yūsuf al-Ṣā'iġ] al-Būlusī,[170] the authors believe that Zāḫir's role in manufacturing the printing implements of his press was essential:

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166 Ibid., p. XIII. More ornamental elements, undated, were reproduced in Ghobrial, "The Ottoman World of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir", p. 216.

167 See the reproduction with Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 17, and Ghobrial, "The Ottoman World of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir", p. 216. For the motif of the Green Man, a useful source is the book of Clive Hicks, *The Green Man. A Field Guide*, Fakenham, 2000.

168 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 306.

169 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 179. As I mentioned before, they had just mentioned on the previous page, referring to the Aleppo workshop, that: "After 1711, however, it disappeared without trace".

170 They often cite their works, both printed in 1948: Salaheddine al-Boustani, *The Press During*

> Instructed in the goldsmith's art by his father, he later taught himself additional arts such as engraving, painting and woodcarving. Using these skills he drafted elements of book design, often evidently inspired by European originals. But Az-Zāḫir's indisputably greatest contribution was that he supplied the Šuwayr workshop with his own Arabic types and thereby gave the monastery its really valuable asset.[171]

An interesting aspect that was not explored before the survey of the Arcadian Library collection done by John-Paul Ghobrial is that of the similarities of the book-bindings from Antim the Iberian's presses with those of Ḫinšāra.[172] Based on the three books printed by Antim that are preserved at the British Library in London, which include the Greek Psalter of 1699, Ghobrial reached these conclusions:

> When Dabbas returned to Aleppo from Bucharest in 1704, he brought with him some parts of a printing press, tools and perhaps even actual craftsmen. It is very likely that he also brought binding tools. For the Arcadian Library's copy of the last work to be printed on Dabbas's press, his treatise on the confession of 1711, also suggests a continuity with the border tooling of the Bucharest binding. More importantly, it carries the central cross medallion that would become so typical of most Shuwayr bindings. While in Aleppo, ʿAbdallāh Zakher must have participated in the operation of the Aleppo press: if Bucharest craftsmen were present, he would have been working and learning alongside them. This would help to account for the close similarities between the tooling on the Shuwayr bindings and that of the Greek Psalter printed in Bucharest. Given that Zakher requested parts from the Aleppo press while he was working to create his own press at Shuwayr, he might also have obtained binding tools that had first been used in Bucharest. Alternatively, considering Zakher's reputation for engraving and woodcarving, he may even have created his own set of binding tools based on the ones he had seen in Aleppo.[173]

I have mentioned before the theory that Dabbās was accompanied to Aleppo by one or more apprentices sent by Antim the Iberian to assist him in starting his own press. John-Paul Ghobrial's findings also point in this direction, although, as he notes, Zāḫir may as well have done it all in Aleppo by copying models from Wallachian presses, both for books and bindings.

Ghobrial is also, as far as I know, the first historian in Europe who mentions the "characteristic 'Shuwayr' cross" when describing the books printed in

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the French Expedition in Egypt, 1798–1801, Cairo, 1954, and Yūsuf al-Ṣāyeġ al-Būlusī, "Tarğamat ḥayāt: al-Faylasūf aš-Šammās ʿAbdallāh az-Zāḫir", *Al-Masarra*, cited above.

171 Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 179–180.

172 According to his own statement (*The Ottoman World of ʿAbdallāh Zāher*, p. 213, n. 37), he was helped in examining the bindings by Nicholas Pickwoad, professor with the University of Oxford, an expert in bookbinding and book conservation.

173 Ghobrial, "The Ottoman World of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir", p. 213.

Ḫinšāra.[174] This cross has become a 'trademark' of the Ḫinšāra books, useful in identifying the origin of copies scattered all over the world – even in Bucharest, where the Library of the Romanian Academy holds a copy of the 1776 Gospel with commentaries from this press, as proven by this ornamental element on its covers (Fig. 15).[175]

Unlike the books printed in the Romanian Principalities for Arabic-speaking Christians, the books produced at Ḫinšāra were sold to churches, monasteries, and private people. Bernard Heyberger also mentions this fact: the two books printed in Snagov and Bucharest (as well as those of Iași, I should add), were "works meant to be distributed to the clergy for free,"[176] while "these books [of Ḫinšāra] are not distributed for free."[177]

Here, books were printed to be retailed, as revealed by a letter addressed by Zāḫir to Fr Pierre Fromage where he mentions the prices of the books that he was sending him for various monasteries and missionary schools.[178] The main center of sales for the books printed at Ḫinšāra was the city of Aleppo, where the Greek Catholic community, like the Maronite one, had adopted Arabic in a larger proportion and earlier than the Christians of Mount Lebanon. From about 1750 on, the Greek Catholic bishops employed, for acquisitions and sales of monastic produce, a *wakīl* ('agent') among those who operated in Aleppo, Damascus, Tripoli, Homs, Baalbek, Acre, Rome, or in Egypt. In the suppliers' commercial records, books printed in Ḫinšāra are listed among the merchandise they traded.[179]

The press at Ḫinšāra answered the Christians' needs of the moment in that part of the Ottoman world: on the one hand, the need of the Maronites and the Melkite Greek Catholics (similar to those of all denominations across Greater Syria) to read and serve the Divine Liturgy in Arabic; on the other, the energetic activities of the Western missionaries to draw the churches of the East closer to

174 See ibid., p. 209, and the reproduction of an upper cover where this cross appears, on p. 208.
175 Ioana Feodorov, "O carte arabă rară în colecțiile B.A.R.", *Tezaur*, 2, 2021, 3, p. 10–11. Incidentally, the copy of the IMO in Saint Petersburg comes from the same source, as shown by the mark on its front and back covers. See Frantsouzoff, "Le premier lectionnaire arabe orthodoxe imprimé", p. 468, Fig. 11.
176 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 439: "C'est ainsi que parait à Bucarest l'*Horologion* de Malātyūs Karma, que Rome avait refusé de publier, ainsi qu'un *Liturgicon*, en arabe et en grec, ouvrages destinés à la distribution gratuite dans le clergé."
177 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 440: "Ces livres ne sont pas distribués gratuitement" (referring to the Ḫinšāra books).
178 Aggoula, "Le livre libanais de 1585 à 1900", p. 318, n. 39.
179 Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique*, p. 114, 440.

the Latin creed. It is worth noting that the opening of a press at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist on Mount Lebanon required the collaboration between ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir and Fr Pierre Fromage, superior of the Jesuit Order of the East, large expenses, and six years of preparing the typographic material (1728–1733).

Recently, while conducting field research in Lebanon, the Brazilian anthropologist Rodrigo Ayupe Bueno da Cruz witnessed the importance of Zāḫir's press for the identity of the contemporary community of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist. He reports on several interviews with the residents of Ḫinšāra who expressed their pride of the outcomes of "the first Arabic press in the Middle East, located in the central Chouerite convent" and described the printing of Arabic books for the Melkite Greek Catholics as formative for the local people, who learn about it in school.

> A 30-year-old Greek Catholic resident of Khenchara defined *dayr mar yūḥannā* as a touristic and religious place belonging to the Greek Catholic community. In his interview, he states that the importance of this monastery in Lebanon is due to the 'presence of the oldest Arabic press in the Middle East'. He also mentioned learning about the historical importance of the printing press in school. Teachers emphasised this in history classes and organised tours and summer camps in Choueirite's central convent. [Like the teachers, monks and priests have usually emphasized the importance of the printing press in their speeches. During an interview with a former Chouerite monk, Priest Charbel Maalouf (2014), of the Julien le Pauvre Church in Paris, reinforced the importance of the Chouerite printing press. According to him, this institution played a fundamental role in the history of Eastern Christians. Another priest, at *dayr mar yuhanna*, made a similar speech when he knew I never visited the museum: 'I cannot believe that you have not visited our printing press yet, it is very important for the history of our church, everyone wants to come here and visit the press [...]. The same priest also reinforced the importance of the Chouerite printing press to other Christian communities. In his words, 'everyone wants to come here and visit the press', suggesting that it served as a multi-confessional attraction. In this sense, the museum has received visitors from other regions of the country and Christians of other traditions, mainly Maronites and Greek Orthodox.[180]

All the above reveals the significance of the efforts – in time and money spent – of those who jointly carried out the ambitious project of installing the first Arabic-type press in Aleppo: Constantin Brâncoveanu, Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās. Without their initiative and efforts, none of the subsequent developments of Arabic printing in the 18th century Greater Syria would have been possible.

180 Ayupe Bueno da Cruz, "The Greek Catholic Community and its Collective Memories", p. 42.

4.3 Patriarch Sylvester's Response: The Arabic Press of Iași in Moldavia

In 1725, soon after he was installed as patriarch, Sylvester asked the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide to print in Rome new editions of the Book of the Divine Liturgies and the Horologion that his predecessor had printed in Wallachia. His request was rejected, as the texts were considered non-compliant with Catholic dogma. The situation did not improve with time. In the foreword to the *Neos Epistolarios* printed at Leipzig in 1764, a report was included about the realities of the day in the Middle East, as the editor perceived them: Orthodox priests were living in misery, the Eastern Patriarchates were oppressed by the Ottoman governors, and several metropolitan and episcopal sees were removed.[181]

Following the refusal he received from Rome, Sylvester resumed the connections that Patriarch Athanasios III had enjoyed with the Romanian Principalities. He wrote around 1730 to the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia, Ioan and Constantin Mavrocordat, who came from a family of the Phanar and had received a solid Greek and Orthodox education. Soon, the patriarch of Antioch secured the approval of Ioan Mavrocordat to print several books in Arabic at the Monastery of Saint Sava in Iași, a *metochion* of the Holy Sepulcher: in 1745, *Kitāb al-Qundāq*, a new edition of the Arabic text in the Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov (1701); in 1746, the Arabic translation of a book written by Patriarch Nektarios of Jerusalem against the papal primacy, in Arabic: *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq* (*Book of the Rule of Justice and the Transmission of Truth*), and, bound in the same volume, the Arabic translation of Eustratios Argentis's *Brief Epistle against the Pope's Infallibility*, in Arabic: *Risāla muḫtaṣara fī l-radd ʻalā ʻadam ġalaṭ bābāwāt Rūmiyā*; in 1747, *Kitāb alʻ-ašā al-Rabbānī* (*Book of the Lord's Supper*), the translation of Eustratios Argentis's work *Sintagma kata azymon*, and the *Resolutions of the Church Councils convened at Constantinople concerning the Catholics' advent among the Antiochian Christians* (Arabic title: *ʼAʻmāl al-maǧmaʻayn al-kanīsiyayn al-munʻaqidayn fī-l-Qusṭanṭīniyya bi-šaʼn ẓuhūr al-kāṭūlik bayna ṣufūf al-masīḥiyyīn al-anṭākiyyīn*), accompanied by five brief polemical epistles concerning the divergent points of the Orthodox and the Catholic dogmas, and a *Confession of the Orthodox Faith*.

As for Patriarch Sylvester's contribution to the *content* that was being printed, he states in the forewords to the books produced in Iași that he revised and

181 Constantin Erbiceanu, *Bibliografia greacă sau Cărțile grecești imprimate în Principatele Române în epoca fanariotă și dedicate domnitorilor și boierilor români. Studii literare*, Bucharest, 1903, p. 104.

improved all the re-edited Arabic texts, such as the Book of the Divine Liturgies in 1745. This was the way any patriarch of an Orthodox church would proceed when addressing texts printed by his predecessors. The Romanian theologian and historian of the Orthodox Church Fr Ene Branișteˇ states that in Romanian printing culture "every edition was generally improved in connection with its language features. Texts were compared with the Greek originals specially to remove the translation errors present in old editions, so that phrases were expressed with more clarity, while a new form of the Typicon indications was adopted".[182] Revising the text that Athanasios Dabbās had printed, Patriarch Sylvester worked in the same spirit, intending to adapt it to the ecclesiastic language of his time and bring it closer to the Arabic vernacular of the mid-18th century.

The fact that Patriarch Sylvester printed in Iași only the Arabic version of the Book of the Divine Liturgies is proof enough that Greek had vanished from liturgical use. Undoubtedly, the patriarch could have asked the skilled typographers of Iași to include the Greek version in his new edition, placing the two versions on parallel columns as Antim had done in 1701. But Sylvester was printing for the priests of his time. Although he was a native speaker of Greek, the clergy and the flock were Arabic-speakers, in their vast majority. For this reason, certain words and phrases that had a Greek form in the 1701 edition were changed to an Arabic form in 1745. For example, the text for the order of the *Proskomidia* (ترتيب الذبيحة المقدسه), which also gives the prayers uttered during the priest's dressing in liturgical vestments (طقس لبس البدله), is printed in the Snagov edition as a continuous Arabic text, with insertions of Typikon indications in Greek, some translated into Arabic (p. 41–78, 1st seq.).[183] In the 1745 edition, the same text is printed only in Arabic (ff. 17–22r).

Wahid Gdoura had expressed his opinion that the Patriarch Sylvester secured from the church authorities who controlled the press in Iași the publication of Arabic translation of certain polemical works as a priority.[184] It was easier to do this in Moldavia, because the presses there had already printed Greek books written by anti-Catholic scholars, especially after the year 1700, when the Emperor Leopold I forced union with Rome on the Orthodox Christians of Transylvania.

Several texts were also printed in other languages at the request of Patriarch Sylvester: in 1745, seemingly in Bucharest, a letter of pardon in Romanian, on a flyer,[185] and, in 1748, several *antimensia* with Greek inscriptions, which he subse-

182 Pr. Ene Branișteˇ, *Liturgica generală cu noțiuni de artă bisericească, arhitectură și pictură creștină*, 2nd ed., Bucharest, 1993, p. 652.

183 Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 91–92.

184 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 183.

185 Today, in the collections of the B.A.R. See Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria

quently consecrated. In the Romanian presses of the time, printing *antimensia* was a separate activity.[186]

Although Sylvester had wished to print earlier, procuring Arabic type proved difficult and required much time. There is no information on the source of the Arabic type that was used in Iași. The available historical information mostly concerns the patriarch's printing activities of Wallachia after 1747. After these books were printed, Sylvester left for Bucharest, where a press functioned at the Monastery of Saint Sava, dependent on the Văcărești monastery, a *metochion* of the Holy Sepulcher, and a second one at the Metropolitan palace. While still in Iași, moving in the printers' circles, the patriarch undoubtedly learned that the metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia, Neophytos of Crete, had endowed the press at the Monastery of Saint Sava "with 180 new matrices, two printing presses, six bundles of paper, and various tools."[187] Moreover, Constantin Mavrocordat, the new prince of Wallachia, was obviously interested in book production, since he pleaded with the Metropolitan Neophytos to pardon the typographer Popa Stoica Iacovici, the best typographer of Bucharest at the time, who had printed theological books without asking for His Holiness's approval. Among the Mavrocordat princes, possibly this Prince Constantin was the firmest supporter of printing, as Tit Simedrea portrays him, based on the chronicles of the day:

> When he moved to be a prince in Iaşi (1741), he encouraged the Moldavian upper clergy to set up in their dioceses presses to print church books; and he brought with him from Bucharest Romanian printed books, the Gospel, the Apostolos, and Book of the Divine Liturgies, and he ordered they be read at church. And again, he would perhaps have spent money from his own purse to print a book or other, had he not had a big house packed [...] with mouths to feed.[188]

Commenting the expression 'by order of Nicolae voivod Mavrocordat' mentioned in the foreword of the *Catavasier*[189] printed in 1724 at Bucharest, Tit Simedrea

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tipografiei în România", p. 146; *BRV* II, p. 84; Păcurariu, "Legăturile Țărilor Române cu Patriarhia Antiohiei", p. 612.

186 Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740-1750", p. 858. See also p. 907, where he explained that *antimensia* were often the victims of raids and riots and, in their aftermath, the metropolitan of the country was requested to have them replaced.

187 Ibid., p. 860, 873.

188 Ibid., p. 867.

189 *Catavasier*, or *Anastasimatarion*, is a service book of the Orthodox Church that contains the hymns of the Vespers (Anastasima or Resurrectional hymns), Sunday Orthros, and other hymns celebrating the Resurrection of Christ.

explains what the prince's order meant at a time when 'neither the prince's court nor the church had their own presses':

> [...] a princely 'order' of this sort implied: a) the approval granted by the prince to a 'typographer' who owned a press to carry out the art of printing; b) an exemption from taxes for him and the 'apprentices' in his workshop and the exemption from custom dues for the tools and materials brought from abroad, as required by the press; c) the agreement to sell the books printed by him, and d) quite often, even a payment by the prince of all expenses incurred in printing a certain book.

Predictably, soon after Constantin Mavrocordat took over the Wallachian throne, the master typographer Popa Stoica Iacovici obtained a license for the prince's printing workshop. The Bucharest printers' activity was, in mid-18th century, very important both for the upper clergy and the ruler: presses were opened or transferred, type sets were acquired or manufactured, presses that were no longer used were sold to the highest bidder, etc.[190] That was the appropriate environment to procure the necessary typographic material for an Arabic-language printing press.

The first query about Sylvester's printing venture refers to the source of the Arabic type used in Iași. One of the possible answers is that he brought it from Syria, having learned, in his correspondence with the Moldavian boyars and clerics, that there was none at the presses there and no Arabic printing had ever been done in their principality. It is hard to ascertain today whether there was a connection between the Aleppo press – and the Arabic typographic material manufactured by Antim the Iberian – and that of Iași. There is no documentary proof in this respect and a rigorous survey of the relevant Syrian archives (in Aleppo and Damascus, firstly) has not yet been conducted.

An episode connected to this topic brings to the foreground the interest of Silvestre de Sacy for the Arabic books printed in the Romanian Principalities. Baron Silvestre de Sacy held many offices, such as 'Président de la Société Asiatique' and 'Conservateur des manuscrits orientaux de la Bibliothèque Royale'. In 1811, among his other tasks, de Sacy was in charge of the press of the French court. He wrote on July 30, 1811, to Théodore Ledoulx, the French vice-consul in Bucharest, asking him to inquire and respond what Arabic books were printed there by Athanasios Dabbās and Sylvester of Antioch.[191] He had recently received from the

190 Simedrea, "Tiparul bucureștean de carte bisericească în anii 1740–1750", p. 864–865.

191 This correspondence is preserved in a large folder of letters received by Silvestre de Sacy (and copies of some of his own) at the Institut de France in Paris, in de Sacy's archive (MS NS 377, with a catalogue, *Correspondance et papiers divers de Silvestre de Sacy*, II). The Romanian historian Teodor Holban partially published the two letters, with a commentary, in his article

French consul in Aleppo, Mr [Jean-François Xavier] Rousseau,[192] a Psalter printed by Sylvester, apparently dated 1747.[193] De Sacy, who was not informed about the situation in the Romanian Principalities, did not understand the Syrian patriarchs' interest in printing Arabic books there. Undoubtedly, to him, the books printed in Rome and Paris for Arabic-speaking Christians were enough to cover their needs. He expressed his theory about Sylvester's probable reason for printing in Arabic in Wallachia and Moldavia as follows:

> Sans doute il y a dans la Moldavie et la Valachie un assez grand nombre de chrétiens qui parlent arabe et ne font point usage de la langue grecque dans leur liturgie, puisque le patriarche a jugé nécessaire d'imprimer pour leur édification et pour l'instruction de leurs enfants des livres purement arabes.[194]

Ledoulx replied to de Sacy in a letter dated February 12, 1812, after he consulted Ignatios (the Greek), the metropolitan of Wallachia,[195] who conveyed to him the following information. to which Ledoulx added explanations required by his correspondent's unfamiliarity with the situation of this country.

> Il n'y a jamais eu en Walachie d'imprimerie arabe établie sous les auspices du gouvernement & à l'usage des gens du pays, a qui cette langue absolument étrangère & inconnue.

"Tipografii și cărți armenești [i.e., arabe] în Țările Românești", *Arhiva. Revistă de istorie, filologie și cultură românească. Organul Societății Istorico-Filologice din Iași*, 1936, 43, p. 111–115. I have studied the entire folder in 2023 in Paris, on a research trip for the TYPARABIC project.

192 On the two generations of scholars and diplomats in the Rousseau family, see: [Jean-Baptiste Louis Jacques Rousseau], *Éloge historique de feu Jean-François-Xavier Rousseau, ancien consul-général de France à Bagdad et Bassora, Mort à Alep le 12 Mai 1808, Précédé de quelques détails curieux et intéressans sur le voyage de son père à la cour de Perse, au commencement du dix-huitième siècle*, [Paris], 1810; Henri Dehérain, "Jean-François Rousseau, agent de la Compagnie des Indes, consul et orientaliste (1738–1808)", *Journal des savants*, August-October 1927, p. 355–370; Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, *Tagebücher*, 2. *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo 1803–1805*, ed. by Judith Zepter, with Carsten Walbiner and Michael Brauner, Hildesheim, 2011, especially p. 198, 253, 305–306; Serge A. Frantsouzoff, "Les vieux livres imprimés en écriture arabe dans la collection des Rousseau, père et fils, conservée à Saint-Pétersbourg", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 251–285.

193 This may be the copy that Émile Picot later declared he owned. See Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 544. I shall return to this topic below.

194 MS NS 377, *Correspondance et papiers divers de Silvestre de Sacy*, no. 196, letter dated July 30, 1811, sent from Paris to "Mr. Ledoulx, vice consul de France en Valachie à Bucharest."

195 Elected on January 15, 1810, installed on May 5, Ignatios the Greek was patriarch until August 10, 1812. He reformed the Princely Academy during the rule of Ioan Gheorghe Caragea, requesting the assistance of acknowledged scholars of the time, such as Grigore Brâncoveanu.

> Elle leur est si étrangère, si inconnue qu'on ne trouverait pas un seul individu dans toute la Walachie qui fut en état d'en entendre un seul mot. Il y a dans le pays plusieurs couvents dépendants des différents Patriarches du Levant, & entre autres, il y en a qui dépendent du Patriarche d'Antioche. Ces couvents sont quelques fois visites par leurs Patriarches respectifs. Celui d'Antioche nomme Sylvestre a été en Walachie & il y a résidé quelque temps dans un des couvents de la juridiction. On présume que pour remédier à l'extrême pénurie des livres saints dans le Levant, et pour faire une chose qui ne pouvait manquer de lui rapporter beaucoup d'argent [*sic*], il avait fait venir des caractères arabes de Dadone ou de Mome, & avait établi dans son couvent une imprimerieàses propres frais. Les livres sortis de cette imprimerie doivent, d'après les intentions du Patriarche, avoir été répandus dans tout le Levant. Le Psautier dont vous parlez doit nécessairement être de ce nombre-là. [...] Le couvent dans lequel le patriarche Silvestre avait établi son imprimerie n'est point dans la ville de Bucharest, mais à 20 lieues d'ici.[196]

From this incomplete and somewhat inaccurate information an assumption was born, unconfirmed by documentary sources, that the press at the Monastery of Snagov had started printing Arabic books again in the mid-18th century, beginning with this Psalter. However, Ledoulx was undoubtedly referring to the workshop set up at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, which was granted as a metochion to the Patriarchate of Antioch, and thus could be named "the monastery of [Sylvester]," unlike the monastery of Snagov. According to the Arabic inscription on the icon of Saint Spyridon that Patriarch Sylvester presented to the monastery, the church was "placed to the east of the river that crosses the city [Dâmbovița] and it is beyond the bridge."[197] Therefore, it was possible to regard it as being outside the city.[198] In 1716, in one of the houses inside the Monastery of Saint Spyridon walls lived the typographer Metrophanes.[199] Moreover, several disciples of the Patriarch Sylvester worked in 1747–1749 on the manufacture of Arabic type, a fact that the upper clergy of Wallachia apparently still remembered in de Sacy's time.

One of the confusions that this letter created is the reference to 'Dadone et Mome'. This raises the question if the Metropolitan Ignatios had perhaps heard of the city of Modone in the Peloponnesus, where the Armenian monk Mkhitar ('the Comforter') had briefly taken refuge. He was the one who later succeeded

196 MS NS 377, *Correspondance et papiers divers de Silvestre de Sacy*, no. 197.
197 Also called the Senate Bridge, it crosses the Dâmbovița River at the start of Calea Victoriei.
198 Since about 1880, the church lies on the right bank of the river. See George D. Florescu, *Din vechiul București. Biserici, curți boierești și hanuri între anii 1790–1791 după două planuri inedite*, Bucharest, 1935, p. 33; Vasilescu, *Biserica Sfântul Spiridon Vechi din București*, p. 4.
199 Ibid.

in printing with Armenian type in the workshop he installed on the island of San Lazzaro near Venice, where the Mkhitarist Order has resided since 1717.[200]

Information about an Arabic Psalter printed at Bucharest can be found in an 18th-century manuscript preserved at the Patriarchate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch in Damascus and has been duly repeated by historians of early Arabic printing.[201] Today, there is no trace of this Psalter. The entire discussion may in fact have referred to a Psalter printed in Beirut in 1752, at the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Saint George, to which I shall return in the next chapter.

After the Patriarch Sylvester's return to Syria in 1749, there is no further evidence of Arabic printing in the Romanian Principalities. Nevertheless, the Patriarch kept following up his typographic project and succeeded in having Arabic books printed in Beirut after 1749.

200 Interestingly, Holban's article mistakenly refers to "Armenian" printing activities: "Tipografii și cărți armenești în Țările Românești", "Armenian [correct, Arabic] presses and books in the Romanian Principalities". Could it be that the information gleaned by Ledoulx from his Wallachian informers was, in fact, connected to the Armenian printing done in Bucharest?
201 The information on this book was first given by Julius Theodor Zenker, *Bibliotheca Orientalis. Manuel de bibliographie orientale*, t. I, Leipzig, 1846.

5 The Second Transfer of Printing Expertise to Greater Syria

5.1 Arabic Type Made in Bucharest: A 'Secret Weapon' of the Antiochian Orthodox

On the reasons for Patriarch Sylvester's travels to the Romanian Principalities, we have information from that period both in Romanian sources and an unedited Arabic one: the collection of letters exchanged by the deacon Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, the patriarch's secretary, with clerics and scholars of the Church of Antioch. From the patriarch's letters, Mūsā selected some that were copied, by him and by others, to form the first section (f. 4r–52r) of a miscellany, MS no. 9/22, preserved today in the library of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus (formerly in Homs). The manuscript comprises several other Arabic texts on various topics, some Christian and some Islamic: educational stories, the *Life of Saint Simon the Stylite* by Theodoret of Cyrrhus, a brief story on the fall of Constantinople in 1453, a homily for the Feast of Transfiguration, an incomplete chronicle of the Omayyad and Abbasid caliphs, medical recipes, etc.[1] The manuscript was surveyed in 1968 by Rachid Haddad, who published a commentary on this section in a volume dedicated in 2006 to Mgr. Joseph Nasrallah, based on a selection of passages of the original manuscript, which he translated into French for this purpose.[2] Haddad arranged the letters in sections, according to the sender[3]. He principally followed Mūsā Ṭrābulsī's entourage and connections and mentioned many correspondents and events in Damascus, Tripoli, and Acre (Ar. ʿAkkā). MS nr. 9/22 also contains abundant information on Patriarch Sylvester's activities in the Romanian Principalities and especially on his interest in the Wallachian and Moldavian printing. Having acquired in 2018 a digital copy of this section of the manuscript (97 pages – high-quality scans), I was able to comment on the content of the letters based on their original Arabic version, alongside Rachid Haddad's excellent commentary of them.

1 See the description in Dolabani, Lavenant, Brock and Samir (eds.), "Catalogue des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Patriarcat Syrien Orthodoxe à Homs (auj. à Damas)", p. 597.

2 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 257–288. Haddad presented some of the information provided in these letters in volume IV.2 of *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'église melchite du V*ème *au XX*ème *siècle* (*HMLÉM*), to which he substantially contributed.

3 He referred to page numbers in a different system than the actual numbering of the manuscript.

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Mūsā Nawfal Ṭrābulsī ('from Tripoli', Lebanon) was a deacon of the Church of Antioch and secretary of the Patriarch Sylvester, working at the latter's residence in Damascus. Some said that he was a relative of Patriarch Sylvester on the male line of the family, which would mean that Sylvester had family in Tripoli.[4] Mūsā's letters, copied by five different hands, include some that the patriarch or he himself received from friends and acquaintances, and some replies, all dated between 1732 and 1787, going beyond the period of Sylvester's term (he died in 1766). Mūsā's selection was directed by the literary quality of the messages: their authors were all acknowledged Arabic-speaking scholars who wrote elegantly, using rhymed and rhythmed prose (*saǧʿ*), according to the oriental literary taste of the 18th century. Mūsā wished to keep a copy of the letters that were interesting for their literary style and the connections they reflected within the upper clergy, as well as with his closest friends, Syrian scholars with elaborate writing skills. Date and signature are often missing, and letters end with the expression *wa-bāqī l-qawl*, the Arabic version of *et cetera*. Rich in information about the Patriarch Sylvester and his entourage, these letters also provide details of a personal nature, such as the fact that he was "moody and suspicious".[5]

Mūsā's most cherished correspondent was the Syrian Yūsuf Mark, also born in Tripoli (d. ca. 1773). *Protosyncellos* of the Patriarchate of Antioch, Mark was an apprentice and spiritual son of the Patriarch Sylvester, whose rejection of the Catholics' proselytism he embraced.[6] Among others, he wrote an epistle against the papal primacy, *Collection of Chapters on the Battle against Madness with the Help of Light*.[7] A letter from Yūsuf Mark to Mūsā on August 21, 1737, begins with two verses about friendship, while another, on June 29, 1740, begins with these verses: *Šifā al-qulūb / liqā al-maḥbūb*, "Your heart is healed/ when you meet your friend". Yūsuf Mark's letters number thirty-one in all, most of them addressed to Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, and many from Bucharest.

Another purpose was also considered when copying these particular letters: both Yūsuf and Mūsā taught Classical Arabic to children born in Greek Orthodox families. Yūsuf first taught in Lattakia in 1730–1740, to support his family. In 1742, after he was ordained a priest and moved to Tripoli, he wrote to Mūsā that he was teaching Arabic to some Christian children at the metropolitan residence, supervised by the Patriarch Sylvester, who took care of his salary from the funds

4 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 281.

5 Habib Ibrahim (CEDRAC, Beirut) is currently studying Mūsā Ṭrābulsī's letters, aiming to publish a commented translation.

6 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216.

7 Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 148; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216–217.

of the diocese. He reports in a letter sent from Bucharest in 1747: "His Holiness [...] entrusted Mark with four Wallachian children to whom he is teaching the Arabic grammar *al-'Aǧurrūmiyya*".[8] Until Yūsuf Mark arrived, Mūsā's brother Buṭros had been responsible for the education of the Wallachian pupils; but after he arrived, four of the most diligent of them were entrusted to him. According to Rachid Haddad,

> En Roumanie, on assiste, à cette occasion, à un échange culturel important. D'une part, Yūsuf Mark et le diacre Parthenios fréquentent les écoles roumaines; d'autre part, des jeunes Roumains sont poussés vers des études arabes. C'est dans ce but, sans doute, que le Patriarche tenait à la présence de Mark.[9]

Teaching Greek and Arabic is a recurrent topic in the letters copied under Mūsā's supervision. The Antiochian church leaders, as well as those of Wallachia, wanted young Christians to learn foreign languages that would be useful to them in their future as servants of the church. As part of their Arabic education, children were required to copy simple texts. This is probably the reason why sometimes the writing is shaky, uncertain or faulty. On ff. 8v–9v, for example, a letter of December 1743 is copied, uncompleted, with two blank pages at the end. This is a letter sent by Yūsuf Mark to Mūsā Ṭrābulsī from Damascus, to let him know that the Patriarch Sylvester had left for Moldavia, where the weather was too cold for him to accompany His Holiness, much to Yūsuf's regret. A section of a letter dated July 29, 1748, seems to have been copied by a beginner in the art of Arabic script, who left an entire phrase out at the end and copied it later, clumsily, in the margin. Another letter sent by Yūsuf to Mūsā in early October 1748 is copied unevenly, again, most likely by a pupil.

The letters exchanged by Yūsuf Mark and Mūsā Ṭrābulsī reflect the high esteem that the Patriarch Sylvester enjoyed in the Romanian Principalities and

8 The Maghrebi grammarian Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Sanhaǧī (1273–1323), also known as Ibn al-'Aǧurrūm, 'the Dervish', was the author of a Classical Arabic manual called *Muqaddimat al-'Aǧurrūmiyya* (*Preliminary Discourse*), widely used in the Middle East for centuries. It was printed at the Būlāq press in Cairo in many editions; see B. Dorn and R. Rost, *Catalogue des manuscrits et xylographes orientaux de la Bibliothèque impériale publique de St. Pétersbuourg*, Saint Petersburg, 1852, p. 169–170 (MS CLXXIX). On the popularity of *Al-'Aǧurrūmiyya* in the Christian Arabic-speaking communities (more precisely, among the Greek Catholics), see Walbiner, "Monastic Reading and Learning in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Šām", p. 475. As I mentioned above, it was the Maronite bishop Germanos Farḥāt who first composed a grammar of the Arabic language, *Baḥṯ al-maṭālib*, where, unlike in Muslim handbooks, passages from Christian texts were the basis for teaching Arabic.

9 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 275.

his efforts to obtain the printing of Christian books in Arabic. While in Iași and Bucharest, he was often visited by boyars and notables, men and women who came to ask for his blessing and prayers. Both in Moldavia and Wallachia, princes showed him deep respect and affection. On Sundays and feast days, they invited him to serve the Divine Liturgy wherever they were present – at court or travelling across the country. Besides these events that he witnessed himself, Mark also relays a story told to him by a local. When the Patriarch arrived in Wallachia, the country was under a dreadful invasion of locusts. The voivod asked him to bless water and they sprinkled all the places that the locusts had covered. Spread all over the place for one month, the holy water miraculously drove away the pest and succeeded in ridding the entire country of them. Afterwards, the Wallachians believed even more that the Patriarch's prayers worked.

An explanation for the fact that early in 1747, not long after the Patriarch Sylvester's printing activity had started at the Monastery of Saint Sava in Iași, it ceased for good, is suggested in letters of MS no. 9/22: the Arabic type used there was completely worn out after printing several books in large print runs. On November 21, 1747, Mūsā Ṭrabulsī replied to his friend Yūsuf Mark, who was at the time at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest where the patriarch had been residing for some time, intent on securing a new set of Arabic type. According to Mūsā, the Syrian typographer Ǧirǧis Abū Šaʿr, who had been well paid both by the Patriarch and by his lordship the Prince Ioan Mavrocordat, had cast lead types for a new Arabic set, but they were larger than the old ones used in Iași. The patriarch was not satisfied with this new set of type manufactured in Bucharest and, in October 1746, he left to look for Arabic type in Constantinople. His visits there are documented over several years of his pastoral rule. In his above-mentioned article of 2022, Archim. Policarp Chițulescu presents proof that the Patriarch Sylvester was in the Ottoman capital in 1748 and 1749.[10]

In Istanbul, Ibrahim Müteferrika had been printing with Arabic type since 1729 Turkish scientific books on geography, language, and state policy. By 1743, he had printed seventeen titles in 500 to 1,000 copies each. In 1743, he retired from the workshop on account of his poor health,[11] but the printing activity there did not stop all at once. The Patriarch Sylvester thought that perhaps he could find new Arabic type in Constantinople. It is not unlikely that even the first Arabic type-font had been obtained from the Ottoman capital.[12] Once acquired, the type

10 Chițulescu, "Le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche et son disciple spirituel Constantin César Dapontes et l'histoire de leurs icônes", p. 164.

11 He died two years later, in 1745, and was buried in the Okmeydanı cemetery.

12 There is no similarity, as far as I can ascertain, between the Müteferrika and the Iași typefaces.

would have been taken to Syria, away from the center of the Sultan's authority and the danger of being accused of conspiracy.

Before leaving Bucharest, the Patriarch Sylvester entrusted the management of the emerging printing press of Saint Spyridon Monastery to Yūsuf Mark. Yūsuf informed Mūsā in several letters of 1748 that the Patriarch had finished his affairs in 'these countries' (*i.e.*, the Romanian Principalities) and that his lordship Grigore Bey would see him upon his departure the third day after the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God (*i.e.*, on August 18).[13]

The deacon Yūsuf reached Bucharest in 1747, with some delay, and he stayed there until 1750, i.e., for nearly three years. He reported that upon his arrival he found the Patriarch Sylvester at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon, occupied with making Arabic type.[14] Yūsuf informed his friend that he would stay on at Saint Spyridon after the patriarch left for Constantinople,[15] as the monastery had recently been granted as a *metochion* by Constantin Mavrocordat, the prince of Wallachia, to the Patriarchate of Antioch.[16] In another letter, Mark names other residents of the monastery in Bucharest: Mīḫā'īl of Kūrat al-Ḍahab (Lebanon), to whom he had referred in a previous letter as being a disciple of Mūsā Ṭrabulsī, the deacon Parthenios of Adana, kyr Makarios, the bishop of Akhaltsikhe in Georgia,[17] and a Romanian servant. The deacon Theophanes, who had been ordained a priest, was the hegumen of the monastery.

According to his report to Mūsā, Yūsuf Mark was preparing to cast Arabic type, so that the press would be ready to work after Easter; he was doing his best so that the press would turn out as well as possible, hoping that it would be installed in a safe place, where it would work undisturbed.[18] Therefore, the task that Yūsuf had received from the Patriarch Sylvester was to assimilate as much knowledge as possible from the Bucharest printers to become capable of later installing in Syria an Arabic press in Syria, like the one founded by the Patriarch

13 This information is presented in a fragment of a letter dated July 29, 1748 (f. 20r).

14 Letter to Mūsā, dated November 21, 1747 (f. 21r).

15 In the beginning of October 1748 (ff. 38r-v).

16 In the Arabic text: *waqf*, a word equally used by Muslims and Christians when referring to donations and bequests to religious establishments.

17 Therefore, around 1747–1748 the Georgian bishop of Akhaltsikhe, Makarios, lived in the Antiochian community settled at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest. The see of Akhaltsikhe was one of the Georgian sees under the authority of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch. Called in Turkish Ahıska, this city lies on the road linking Tbilisi to Batumi, 15 km from the present-day border between Turkey and Georgia. See Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 276, n. 20; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 26 (where the city is not identified).

18 MS no. 9/22, ff. 20r-v.

Athanasios III in Aleppo. An additional point in support of this premise is the presence at the Saint Spyridon Monastery of the hieromonk Mīḫā'īl Bizzī of Kūrat al-Ḍahab, who had been a young apprentice in Dabbās's printing press. There is a suggestion in some letters that Patriarch Sylvester strongly insisted on his return to Bucharest, where he had worked in Antim the Iberian's workshop.

The letters sent in 1732–1777 by Sophronios of Kilis (*al-Kilislī*, c. 1700–1780) to several correspondents, including Patriarch Sylvester and Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, whom he calls 'his spiritual son', are a useful source not only for the topic that I am addressing here, but also for anyone interested in the history of the Eastern Christians. A deacon in Aleppo, Sophronios was ordained to the priesthood in March 1741, became the secretary of the Patriarch Sylvester, and then, in November, a bishop of Acre.[19] Sophronios refused appointment to the Antiochian see, but he accepted in 1771 to be elected Patriarch of Jerusalem. His term lasted until December 24, 1774, when he was elected Patriarch of Constantinople as Sophronios II. From this position, he was being called to solve the conflicts that emerged in the Church of Antioch, as reflected in the correspondence discussed here. In a letter dated October 5, 1777, the answer to a letter addressed to his old friend Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, Sophronios promised to inform the Holy Synod about the Antiochian Christians' discontent with their patriarch, Daniel of Chios, and to support their point of view. However, his endeavors did not succeed.[20]

Born in the Arab-Turkish milieu north of Aleppo,[21] Sophronios knew Arabic and Turkish from childhood, and, due to the education he had received in his Orthodox family, he also knew Modern Greek. Nevertheless, he had a fervent desire to learn Ancient Greek. With this aim in mind, he decided to leave for Constantinople, writing to the Patriarch Sylvester on January 30, 1732: "Pray God for me, so that He helps me acquire the knowledge of Greek."

Among the patriarchs and bishops of the Church of Antioch there were many Greeks born in Constantinople, Chios, or Cyprus;[22] in Levantine ecclesiastic circles, in the first half of the 17th century, Greek was still an important language of

19 For his life and works see, among other sources, *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 95–99; Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", pp. 260-269.

20 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 269, explains this by the autonomy that the Eastern Patriarchates enjoyed at the time, in relation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople.

21 Kilis (Ar. *Killiz*) is located on the border between Syria and Turkey, close to Gaziantep and Antakya.

22 Walbiner, "Bishops and Metropolitans of the Antiochian Patriarchate in the 17th Century", *ARAM*, 9–10 (1997–1998), 1998, p. 577–587; Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "The relations between the Greek Orthodox of Syria and Cyprus in the 17th and 18th Centuries", *Chronos*, 16, 2007, p. 113–128.

culture and communication. To learn Classical Greek was one of the purposes of Levantines who left for Constantinople, and later for Bucharest and Iași, aiming to take courses at the Princely Academies (in Bucharest after 1694, in Iași after 1707). The Eastern Church leaders, and among them the Patriarch of Jerusalem Chrysanthos Notaras (1707–1731), learned or taught there, and composed the curricula of these high colleges, which soon became famous and sought after.[23] In 1704, Patriarch Dositheos II Notaras, eager to improve the education of the clergy and common people of the Holy Land, founded, with money granted by the princes of the Romanian lands born in the Phanar neighborhood of Istanbul and from wealthy people there, several schools in Jerusalem, Ramla, and Kerak, in Gaza, etc. These schools offered Greek and Arabic courses based on a syllabus conceived by the Patriarch Dositheos.[24]

On January 5, 1735, Sophronios asked Nektarios, the metropolitan of Tripoli, to take care of the works that he had left with him, his translations from Greek to Arabic, "lest they are lost, and I need to translate them a second time" (f. 7v). In August 1747,[25] Sophronios, bishop of Acre at the time, wrote to Mūsā that he wished he had the time and leisure to translate a book of Orthodox apologetics (*fī al-mahāmāt 'an al-'īmān al-mustaqīm*), which he would then give to his Holiness the Patriarch [Sylvester] for the new printing press that he had recently established. He had heard about it from their common friend Ḥaǧǧ Mīḫā'īl Ṭūmā, the Patriarch's secretary, who praised Mūsā highly for his exemplary service to the Apostolic see of Antioch, which, in his words, saved the vicar of the metropolitan of Damascus half the trouble.

In the second quarter of the 18th century, the preoccupation of the leaders of the Antiochian Church with countering the Catholics' theses was manifested through the translation of several polemical works from Greek into Arabic and their aspiration to print these new versions. A letter dated April 1740 refers to Sophronios's efforts to translate soul-enriching books and to his joint work with Elias Faḫr of Tripoli, who had also worked with Athanasios Dabbās, translating

23 For the aspiration of the Arab bishops to bring the Middle Eastern Christian communities closer to the Greek culture, whose influence was still significant in the Levant in the 17th century, see also Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 410ff.

24 In the same spirit, he printed in Bucharest, in 1715–1719, *The History of the Patriarchs of Jerusalem* (Ιστορια Περι᾽ Τω῀Ν Ε᾽ν Ι῾Ερουσολυ῾Μοισ Πατριαρχευσα῾Ντων), a large Greek-language in-folio book of 1,429 pp., rich in book art elements, including a splendid portrait of the Patriarch Dositheos. See Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 207–211. This is a rare book, with only two copies preserved in Romania, one at the B.A.R., the other at the Library of the Holy Synod of Bucharest.

25 Letter addressed by Bishop Sophronios to Mūsā on August 11, 1747 (ff. 44 r-v).

the treatise *al-Tiryāq al-šāfī min samm al-Fīlādelfī*, *The Curing Antidote to the Poison of the Philadelphian* [*Archbishop*]. Elias then revised the Arabic translation made in 1732–1733 by Sophronios of the Patriarch Nektarios's work *Qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq* (*The Rule of Justice and the Transmission of Truth*), printed in Iași in 1746. The Greek original, *Peri tīs arhīs tou papa antirrīsis* (*Περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ πάπα Ἀντίρρησις /Discourse against the Pope's Primacy*) had been printed by Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem in July 1682 at the monastery of Cetățuia in Iași, with the title *Tou Makariōtatou patriarhou Nektariou, Pros tas proskomistheisas theseis para tōn en Ierosolymois fratorōn dia Petrou tou autōn maistoros peri tīs arhīs tou papa antirrīsis*. Dositheos added to it several Greek texts: a eulogy of Emperor Iōannēs VIII Palaiologos, composed by Constantinopolitan bishops; several texts written by the Patriarchs Philotheos of Alexandria, Dorotheos of Antioch, and Joachim of Jerusalem against the Council of Florence, etc.[26]

In the foreword to the book printed in 1746, Sylvester asserts (perhaps for his own protection) that the Arabic version had been achieved at the request of Ioan Mavrocordat, the prince of Moldavia, during the term of the Metropolitan Nikeforos of Moldavia ('the Greek', or the 'Peloponnese', 1739–1750).

Elias Faḫr states in his correspondence that he revised the Arabic version of Sophronios before printing, and, very proud of the outcome, he considered himself the actual translator. Rachid Haddad notes that the revision work on a translation from Greek into Arabic was so strenuous that the revisor sometimes assumed the paternity of the completed version as much as the translator.[27] Faḫr also states that he had translated another of the Patriarch Nektarios's works, the *Kitāb ǧālā' al-'abṣār min ġiša' al-'akdār* (*The Book that Clears the Eyes from the Mire of Trouble*), another refutation of the papal primacy.

Writing to Yūsuf Mark in the spring of 1740, soon after he finished working on *Qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq*, Elias Faḫr asks if this text would not be helpful in Aleppo, as a weapon in the controversy that had recently intensified. On July 27, 1740, Yūsuf Mark wrote to Mūsā that he is working on two copies of this translation, one for Elias Faḫr and one for himself.

The conflict was so intense that Greek Orthodox scholars were afraid of becoming a laughingstock if the copies of their Arabic versions of Greek works that circulated were found to be faulty. In a letter addressed by Elias Faḫr to Mūsā

26 See *BRV* I, p. 251–258; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 149–150; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 97. A Latin translation of Nektarios's book was published in 1729 in London: *De Artibus quibus missionari latini, praecipue in Terra Sancta degentes, ad subvertendam Graecorum fidem utuntur, et de quamplurimus Ecclesiae Romanae erroribus et corruptelis libri tres*.

27 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 282, 288.

Ṭrabulsī, his sister's son, in May 1740, he urges Mūsā to take care of the Arabic version of *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq*, and make a copy of this precious manuscript, but with all diligence, so that the content was not corrupted, on account that their opponents, especially 'Ibn Zāḫir al-Ḥalabī' (ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir), „who is well versed in the Arabic language and would mock us if this happens".[28] On June 29, 1740, Yūsuf Mark wrote to his friend Elias Faḫr that the Arabic version of Patriarch Nektarios's work, *Kitāb ǧālā' al-'abṣār min ġiša' al-'akdār*, was too important to be left in the hands of pupils, so he intended to copy it personally. Faḫr wrote to his nephew Mūsā Ṭrābulsī[29] that their pupils made a lot of orthographic mistakes, "for they are completely ignorant, and they do not even know the degree of their ignorance".[30] Therefore, Mūsā was required to follow them closely when they copied such texts. Elias offered examples of mistakes that pupils usually made, a true witness to the defective education of the young Syrians of the time, who could speak the local language (the colloquial speech of Aleppo or Damascus) but were less proficient in literary Arabic and its classical orthography. Yūsuf Mark wrote to Mūsā that he had worked for a month and a half (probably during his stay at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest) on an epistle that backed the text written by Sophronios of Kilis which was criticized by a Catholic of Aleppo.[31] He also states that he was afraid of the enmity of the Latin faithful of Aleppo, which made him hide his paternity of certain works where he defended Orthodoxy. In 1743, as a Bishop of Acre, Sophronios addressed two letters to the Patriarch Sylvester in which, after lengthy expressions of praise and admiration, he asks him to reach an agreement with the patriarchs of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Constantinople so that they form a common front against "God's enemies", "the despicable faction of the Pope's servants", i.e., the Jesuits, who preached the union with Rome to Arabic-speaking Greek Orthodox communities. Thus, the wide picture of inter-confessional conflict, equally familiar to the Wallachians and Moldavians at the time, is revealed in the letters exchanged by the high and low clergy of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch.

28 Ibid., p. 282.

29 This is the last letter in the collection (f. 49r), undated, but written most likely in June 1740. It begins with the phrase: *'Ilā ḥaḍarat al-walad al-'azīz al-šammās Mūsā*, "to my beloved son, the honorable deacon Mūsā".

30 Litt.: *Li-'anna-hum ǧuhhāl wa-ǧahlu-hum murakkab, 'ayy 'inna-hum ǧāhilūna ǧahla-hum*. This is an undated letter on ff. 48r-v.

31 This is a letter copied on ff. 39v–40r, missing its introduction. It was apparently written after 1750, since Yūsuf had left Bucharest.

5.2 Beirut 1750, the Final Frontier of Arab Orthodox Book-Printing

Sophronios of Kilis mentions in his letters addressed to the Patriarch Sylvester in 1747 a press that the patriarch had recently installed, suggesting this was in Damascus. The first letter where this press is mentioned dates from August 11, 1747. As I mentioned before, Sophronios expressed his wish to be released of his functions so that he can devote his time and energies to translating edifying Greek works and hand them in for printing.[32] No book printed in a Damascus press in the 18th century, or any other information about a Syrian print shop at the time, other than the one of Aleppo, is available to us.

In the string of letters in MS nr. 9/22 there is a hiatus of several years. Then follow letters from Yūsuf Mark to Mūsā Ṭrābulsī sent from Beirut in 1754, around Pentecost, and one dated 1758, not mentioning the place of dispatch. We know from other sources that Yūsuf returned to Syria in 1750. He soon moved to Beirut, where he opened a school of Arabic and theological studies.[33] In an ecclesiastical chronicle of Beirut, Yūsuf Mark is called "the book-loving teacher", "the first among priests, the light of theological science, and the glory of Arab writers".[34]

In the second half of the 18th century, outstanding historical works would be composed in Beirut, whose dissemination required the opening of a printing workshop. This was made possible by Yūsuf Mark's important activities as a printer and a scholar, and the importation of the Arabic type manufactured by him and other monks, under his supervision, at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, the Wallachian *metochion* of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. This new Arabic type for which the Syrian monks had toiled and the Patriarch Sylvester had spent time and money was not used anywhere else. Moreover, it remained in Yūsuf Mark's care after he left Bucharest in 1749–1750. No other destination was possible for them but a press to be opened in Ottoman Syria, as the patriarch desired. A happy coincidence of events allowed the foundation of the first Arabic-type press in Beirut.

The city of Beirut had a livelier intellectual environment than that of Damascus. Many Syrians who had travelled to Europe chose, when back home, to continue their work in Beirut, a metropolis that had turned into "a magnet for the

32 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 267.

33 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 216–217.

34 See "Iz beirutskoi tserkovnoi letopisi XVI–XVIII vv.", p. 88; Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 472.

Orthodox intellectual elite".[35] There is no certainty as to the date the monastery of the Greek Orthodox dedicated to Saint Georges was built, but Western travelers of the 17th century and an Ottoman manuscript of 1661 (1080 AH) mention its existence.[36] At the time, it only had one altar, but in the early 18th century two more were added to it, dedicated to Saint Nicholas and Saint Elias. The monastery buildings comprised the cathedral, administrative buildings, a garden, and a cemetery.[37]

A learned *šayḫ* of the city, Yūnus Nīqūlā al-Ǧebeylī, also known as Abū 'Askar and 'al-Bayrūtī' (d. 1787), who was a trustee (*epitropos*) of the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Saint George in Beirut, installed in 1750 a press in a hall of the administrative building of this monastery. There is little information about this press.[38] The *šayḫ*'s mother was related to the emir Ḥaydar al-Šihābī, member of one of the great families which ruled Mount Lebanon. *Šayḫ* Yūnus also made important donations to the Monastery of Mār Elias Šuwayya, the Orthodox patriarchs' summer residence in the mountains. After al-Ǧebeylī's death in 1787, the Beirut press did not do that well, until 1881, when new equipment was acquired.[39] Based on all the available sources, Joseph Nasrallah wrote a few phrases in *al-Masarra* about *šayḫ* Yūnus Nīqūlā al-Ǧebeylī (whom he calls "Yūsuf") and the printing press that he established for the Orthodox at the Monastery of Saint George. Here, Nasrallah expresses his conviction that *šayḫ* Yūnus had manufactured the required Arabic type by copying Zāḫir's typefaces (*wa-ṣabba ḥurūfa-hā ʿalā namaṭ al-ḥurūf al-zāḫiriyya*).[40] No proof is provided in support of this assumption. Later, Nasrallah included in his book *L'imprimerie au*

35 Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 475.

36 May Davie, *Atlas historique des Orthodoxes de Beyrouth et du Mont Liban (1800–1940)*, Balamand, 1999, p. 28ff.

37 May Davie, "Le couvent Saint-Georges de Bayroût al Qadîmat", *Chronos*, 1, 1998, p. 7–31.

38 *Al-Masarra*, 6, p. 253; Lūwīs Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", 3, 1900, 8, p. 501–502; Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of Book-Printing in the Arab World", p. 12; Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 126–129. The entry on 'Maṭbaʿa' of *Encyclopaedia of Islam – 2*, signed by G. Oman, G. Alpay Kut, W. Floor, and G. W. Shaw, does not mention this press. Basic information is given on the personal website of the Syrian historian Joseph Zeitoun, https://josephzeitoun.com, relying on the article of al-Maʿlūf published in 1911 and the book authored by A. Q. Dabbās and N. Raššū.

39 Partington, "Arabic Printing", p. 65. I find, however, inappropriate the author's assertion in this passage that: "The first press in Beirut was established [...] for the benefit of the Melkite sect" [*sic*].

40 Nasrallah, "Maṭābiʿ al-Malakiyyīn", p. 462.

Liban a brief chapter (ten lines) with the title *Imprimerie Saint Georges*, with no comment about the Arabic type used there.[41]

Badly damaged by the earthquake of 1759, the Church of Saint George started to be repaired in 1767 but collapsed during the works. Eighty-seven people were buried under the debris, together with the whole printing workshop. The repairs continued and were completed in 1780. It was afterwards described by people who visited it as 'la grande église des Grecs' and 'le plus beau temple chrétien de l'Empire Ottoman".[42]

Another reason for the inactivity of this press after 1753 circulated in Russia. Beirut was besieged twice during the Russo–Turkish war, in 1772 and 1773.[43] The press was said to have been destroyed by a Russian bombardment of the city, from warships on the Mediterranean Sea. In 1772, a Russian squadron bombarded and then occupied the city of Beirut, governed at the time by the Druze emir Yūsuf, an ally of the Ottomans. Then, having reached an agreement with the local Arab forces, the Russians withdrew. The blockade and the bombardment a year later, which were more intense, led to a new occupation of Beirut by the Russians. However, in 1772–1773, the press had already been non-functional for two decades, therefore the Russo-Turkish war could not have played a role in its shutting down.[44]

It was later asserted that the press was recovered from the rubble and started working again, taking the name *The Saint George Press*. It seems that several books were printed there before 1878, when the workshop stopped working, as several modern Catholic and Protestant presses had opened in Beirut, created by Western missionaries. In the following century, presses multiplied in Beirut, especially because of the arrival of printers from the West. In 1834, the American press of Malta was transferred to Beirut, and in 1848 the Catholic Press (*Imprimerie catholique*) was founded there.[45] This became the most productive Lebanese

41 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 46.

42 Cf. H. Guys, *Beyrouth et le Liban*, Beirut, 2nd ed., 1985, p. 31, and Davie, *Atlas historique des Orthodoxes de Beyrouth et du Mont Liban*, p. 30, citing Giovanni Mariti, *Viaggio da Gerusalemme per le coste della Siria*, vol. 2, Livorno, 1787, p. 16.

43 The Russo-Turkish war of 1768–1774, which ended with the peace of Küçük Kaynarca of July 21, 1774, was the first conflict where the Russian fleet entered the Mediterranean Sea. See Michael F. Davie and Mitia Frumin, "Late 18th Century Russian Navy Maps and the First 3D Visualization of the Walled City of Beirut", *e-Perimetron*, 2, 2007, 2, p. 52–53.

44 Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 473.

45 Glass, *Malta, Beirut, Leipzig and Beirut again*, p. 9–34; Glass and Roper, "Arabic Book and Newspaper Printing in the Arab World", p. 187ff.; Caesar E. Farah, "Awakening Interest in Western Science & Technology in Ottoman Syria", p. 23–24; G. Roper, "The Arabic Press in Malta,

editing house and printing workshop. Between 1850 and 1900, fifteen presses would be opened in the Lebanese capital.[46] The first concern of the printers who worked in Lebanon in the second half of the 19th century was to print, in 1865, the entire Bible in a Protestant version. This translation was initiated in 1847 by Eli Smith and completed under the direction of Cornelius Van Alen van Dyck, assisted by major Lebanese intellectuals: Buṭrus al-Bustānī, Nāṣīf al-Yāziğī, and Yūsuf al-ʿAṣīr.[47] The Bible was also published at this press in 1876 in a Catholic translation prepared by Fr Augustin Rodet and Ibrāhīm al-Yāziğī under the care of the Jesuit order, which was approved by the Holy See.

In a letter addressed to the Patriarch Maximos Maẓlūm in 1840, Fr Augustin Maqṣūd reported that he had seen in Beirut two books printed in 1751: a Psalter and a Horologion.[48] He also asserts that the Patriarch Sylvester transferred the press from Aleppo to Beirut to be able to print anti-Catholic works, which did not happen. Other sources mention a second edition of the Psalter, in 1753,[49] and a Book of the Divine Liturgies.

I mentioned in my work published in 2016[50] an Arabic Psalter printed in Beirut in 1752, with no copies recorded in public catalogues, as far as I knew at the time. I later located a rare copy of this book at the Library of the University of Uppsala (Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek).[51] I describe this Psalter of Beirut below, in the final section of Chapter VI.

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, a German physician and scientist who journeyed through Syria, Palestine and Yemen in 1803–1811,[52] was the first to mention

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1825–1842: Its Influence on the Nineteenth-Century Arab Renaissance", *ARAM*, 25 (2013), 2016, 1 & 2, p. 307–319.

46 Boustany, "Les Libanais et le livre", p. 146.

47 The 'Van Dyck Bible' is accessible in PDF format: The Van Dyke Arabic in PDF Format - Arabic Bible Outreach Ministry.

48 The letter was published by Fr Aṭanāsiyūs Ḥāğğ in *Al-Rahbāniyya al-Bāsīliyya al-Šuwayriyya fī tārīḫ al-Kanīsa wa-l-bilād*, t. I, Ğūniya, 1973, p. 549–550. It is also mentioned in Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 126–129, and Walbiner, "The Christians of *Bilād al-Shām* (Syria): Pioneers of Book-Printing in the Arab World", p. 12.

49 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 46.

50 Feodorov, *Tipar pentru creștinii arabi*, p. 258.

51 I am grateful to Geoffrey Roper for indicating to me the Uppsala Library catalogue entry on a book printed in Beirut, which I found to be this Psalter of 1752.

52 Born in 1767, Seetzen travelled extensively in Syria and Palestine, where he learned Arabic, became familiar with the Arab way of life, and was the first to make a scientific survey of the Dead Sea. He did not return to Germany and died in Yemen in 1811. See Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phonicien, die Transjordan-Lander, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, edited and commented by Professor Dr. Fr. Kruse, Berlin, 1854–1859, 4 vols.; Carsten

a Book of the Divine Liturgies. In his commented list of acquisitions from Aleppo, he mentions three books printed at a press in Beirut, which he connects to the press of Ḫinšāra. According to him, the latter was active for a brief time and, under the direction of the bishop of the non-united Greeks (*Bischof der nicht-unirten Griechen*), printed a Greek Catholic [*sic*] Horologion (which he names *Breviarium*), a "*Kundák*, ein *Missale*", and the Psalms in two editions. He then states that, of all these books, he only succeeded in acquiring a copy of the first edition of the Psalms.[53]

The information provided by Seetzen was repeated by Schnurrer and Nasrallah,[54] but data is always scarce, since only Seetzen actually saw these books. In 1811 Schnurrer recorded a copy of the Beirut Psalter with the same details given by Seetzen.[55] In 1846 Zenker repeated the same description, originally gleaned from Seetzen's list.[56] Schnurrer also gives on p. 515a)–517a) of his *Addenda* an excerpt of the title page of a Psalter printed at Bucharest in 1747.[57] The copy he describes in this *Addenda*, most likely available to him later than Seetzen's notes, belonged to Silvestre de Sacy, who believed that this was the only existing copy in Europe ("hoc exemplar Bucharesto ad me missum, *unicum* esse in Europa…").[58] This book seems to have been later in the possession of Émile Picot, who mentions it in his *Notice*.[59] Apparently, it ended up in Yale University's Beinecke Library, where it was recently identified by Samuel Noble. The first page of this unique book mentions *Būḫārist*, 1747, and Sylvester, the Patriarch of Antioch, as editor. An image of David the King and Prophet is present, printed with a woodblock and decorative elements created in the Metropolitan press of Bucharest, found by Archim. Policarp Chiţulescu in a Slavonic Psalter of 1735. This means that in 1747, having created new Arabic type

Walbiner, *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen [in Aleppo (1803–1805)]*, in Neil Cooke and Vanessa Daubney (eds.), *Every Traveler Needs a Compass. Travel and Collecting in Egypt and the Near East*, Oxford, 2015, p. 197–204.

53 Seetzen, "Nachricht von den in der Levante befindlichen Buchdruckereyen von U. J. Seetzen in Haleb 1805", col. 648.

54 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 383–384; Nasrallah, "Maṭābiʿ al-Malakiyyīn", p. 462; Narallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 46.

55 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 383–384, nr. 354.

56 This information was repeated by other historians of early printing. In Bucharest, Dan Simonescu used, in order to describe this hypothetical book, the data provided by Zenker.

57 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 515a)–517a) (*Addenda*), and p. 522, recorded as *Liber Psalmorum Davidis CL una cum 10 Canticis. Prima editio facta in urbe Buccuresch, anno Christi MDCCXLVII. Quart. min.* [*in 4o*]. […] *Sylvester misericordia Dei summi Patriarcha Antiochiae omnisque Orientis*. Schnurrer transcribed part of the Arabic foreword and translated it into Latin.

58 Daonou (ed.), *Bibliothèque de M. le Baron Silvestre de Sacy*, t. I, 1842, p. XLI–XLII and 289.

59 Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 544.

at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon, Sylvester printed a Psalter, also using typographic material from the Metropolitan press, possibly helped by Wallachian printers. He then transferred the type to Damascus, and later to Beirut. By comparing this type with that of the Beirut Psalter of 1752, we may find that the material used for printing both Psalters was manufactured in Bucharest. Al-Maʿlūf mentioned in 1911 that he had seen a Psalter at the Patriarchal Monastery of Mār Elias Šuwayya (Lebanon), with the first page dated earlier, which could be another copy similar to De Sacy's.[60] Aware of the Patriarch Sylvester's presence in the capital of Moldavia in 1747, al-Maʿlūf expresses his opinion that he had printed the Psalter in Iași. However, more research is required before 'Bucharest 1747' is placed on the map of early Arabic-type presses in the East. In any case, a *de visu* examination of the intriguing copy held at the Beinecke Library is mandatory for a clear understanding of the Patriarch Sylvester's printing activities at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest.

An unpublished source that I am fortunate to have in my possession is a letter sent on November 2, 1992, by Mrs Liliane Kfoury of Beirut[61] to Virgil Cândea in Bucharest,[62] where she makes an account of her research in the financial records of the former press of the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric. According to Mrs Kfoury, only fourteen accountancy records for 1921–1923 are preserved, and only these records and a few scattered notes about the press attest that it ever existed in the 18th century, as nothing of a material kind is left of the initial workshop. The archive that she surveyed refers to the publication of the daily newspaper *al-Hadiyya* of the Greek Orthodox community. Her preliminary conclusions were that an essentially religious press turned, in the early 20th century, into a commercial venture, in social and cultural circumstances that she was planning to further discuss in a paper that she intended to write.

As for the type used by this new press of Beirut, predictably, Joseph Nasrallah declares that its founder "took as a model the type of Šuwayr".[63] As revealed by the collection of letters of Mūsā Ṭrābulsī, the source of the printing tools used in Beirut, not mentioned in the foreword of the Psalter (possibly, to avoid the Ottoman authorities' suspicions) is the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, where Yūsuf Mark supervised the cutting of punches and casting of Arabic type that he took with him in 1748 to Damascus and later to Beirut. Here, new sets of type could be cut

60 Al-Maʿlūf, "Maṭbaʿa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 55.

61 Liliane Kfoury defended her PhD thesis *Le commerce rural au Mont-Liban de 1894 à 1933 à partir de la comptabilité du magasin de Elias Kfuri à Khenchara* in 1997 with Université Paris VIII.

62 Preserved in my father's archive, now with me.

63 "Il prit pour modèle les caractères de Šueïr", ibid.

after their model, as had happened before in Aleppo, in 1705–1706, when Antim the Iberian's Arabic type and woodcuts were used as models for new ones created by Dabbās's apprentices. Ornamental elements in the Beirut Psalter are almost identical to those present in Romanian books. It seems impossible for the printing tools that Athanasios Dabbās took from Bucharest to have been preserved and reused in Beirut after four decades. Nevertheless, the common figurative and decorative elements shared by Antim's books and the Beirut Psalter reflect a direct connection, which is another outcome of the Syrians' typographic work in Wallachia.

Except for the brief mentions evoked above, there is no information on other books printed in Beirut. At this time, there are no known copies of a Horologion, a second edition of the Psalter of 1750, or a Book of the Divine Liturgies that were printed there.

On the other hand, an unknown book has recently turned up in Paris that could be a production of the Beirut press, if not of that of the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest. The book was brought to my attention in 2017 by its owner, a book collector who subsequently sold it in a Paris auction.[64] This is an Akathist to the Mother of God printed in Arabic, which follows the standard Arabic version. This text was included in the final part of the Horologion printed by Athanasios Dabbās in 1702 at Bucharest, only the one printed individually lacks the Greek references and the titles of the chanted sections. Arabic manuscripts of the Akathist are known to exist in Levantine libraries, but no text was known to have been printed separately in the 16th–18th centuries. As a section of the Byzantine Kontakion, it was, and still is, particularly appreciated by the Orthodox and the Greek Catholics.[65] As far as we know, the first Arabic Akathist to have been printed as a separate book is dated to 1857, at the press of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, and the next edition was the one of Beirut in 1863.

I have included the description of this puzzling Arabic Akathist in Chapter VI, as I am convinced that future research will show its origin at the Beirut press of the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch. A single element in its description is worth

64 A collection of rare books sold by Binoche et Giquelle at an auction on December 7, 2021, at Hôtel Druot in Paris. The Arabic Akathist, described in the catalogue based on the information published in my article "New Data on the Early Arabic Printing in the Levant and Its Connections to the Romanian Presses" (*RESEE*, 56, 2018, 1–4, p. 197–233, duly cited in the catalogue), sold for 29,066 euros. See the auction catalogue, directed by Dominique Courvoisier, expert of Bibliothèque nationale de France, item 92, on p. 59.

65 See, for example, Névine Toutounji-Hage Chahine and Leina Bassil-Tanios (eds.), *Acathiste. Hymne à la Mère de Dieu*, French, Arabic, and English versions, Patriarcat Grec-Melkite Catholique, Raboueh, 2013 (with exceptional reproductions of Arab icons).

discussing here, as it is connected to the historical background of Arabic printing after the 1724 split in the Church of Antioch.

In order to establish the identity of the printer, editor, and sponsor of this book, the press, and the year of publication, several elements need to be considered. Among them, an important detail is the bishop's insignia (emblem, arms, *armoiries*) on the last page of the book. Examples of emblems used in creating this one could be the models of the bishops of Kyiv, Târgoviște and Bucharest, but those of patriarchs and bishops of Jerusalem or Constantinople were also a possible source.[66] Doru Bădără noticed that this is a heraldic construction which does not observe the rules of armorial composition as established by the conventions of European heraldry. Moreover, bishops' emblems from Eastern Europe show a certain freedom of design. He concluded that this particular emblem had been created in Eastern Europe or the Middle East, following European models.

Special-purpose woodcuts are a separate domain in the large area of studies of book art. Here, the true mastery of an engraver or typographer is revealed. As Waldemar Deluga pertinently remarks, while commenting on the woodcuts of the Pechersk Lavra in Kyiv:

> Individual woodcuts can be placed somewhere between fine art and folk art. In some cases they are of better artistic standing than prints from Eastern Europe [and Western Europe – *my note*]. As in the Latin sphere, the engraver's technical and artistic abilities limited these works which were often resemblant of a story in pictures typical of book graphics. [...] Even while the first copies of medieval woodcuts are well valued by experts and very closely studied, the prints from the Orthodox Church milieu are difficult to date and to attribute to particular workshops, due to the scarcity of material available for study and the primitiveness of the workshop. The first woodcuts that are closely connected with a book have never raised much interest in theological discussions. Along with printing as a process, so the Orthodox religion took over devotional forms otherwise unknown to the Orthodox Church.[67]

Emblems of patriarchs and bishops appear in the Romanian Principalities in the 17th century, mostly in printed books. Those of Petru Movilă (Mohyla) evolved chronologically, taking on several forms, as he was changing his status in the Orthodox hierarchy of Ukraine. If in the beginning several Polish-style elements were present, later the heraldry gained personal touches, proper to the Orthodox

66 The Ukrainian art historian Alina Kondratjuk, a member of the TYPARABIC project team, is currently studying the possible models, influences, and alterations of this emblem, and others printed in Eastern European Orthodox presses.

67 Waldemar Deluga, "The Ukrainian Prints from the Lavra Pecherska Monastery in Kyiv (17th and 18th Centuries)", *Acta Musei Apulensis, L. Series Historia & Patrimonium*, 2013, p. 18.

world. As Petru Movilă became a *mitrofor*[68] archimandrite of the Pechersk Lavra in Kyiv, an Orthodox miter is printed in the books that he supervised there, instead of a Catholic-style miter (Fr. *couvre-chef*). This heraldic composition was also present on the metal plate placed on his coffin on December 2, 1646, when he was buried in the church of the Lavra, dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God. The cross on the bishop's staff and the Orthodox crozier (*pateritsa*), which replaced the Latin-style crozier, were elements of Movilă's emblem after he was elected metropolitan of Kyiv in 1633. The Romanian historian Sorin Iftimi surveyed in detail several printed heraldic arms of Wallachian bishops that reflect the influence of Movilă's successive emblems:[69] those of the Metropolitan Ştefan of Hungro-Wallachia,[70] the one attributed to the Metropolitan Varlaam,[71] and that of Antim the Iberian, dated to 1713, when he was metropolitan of Wallachia.[72] A large part of the printing implements of Moldavia and Wallachia came from the Pechersk Lavra press in Kyiv (Fig. 16). Therefore, the matrices, molds, and dies that were used for Petru Movilă's emblems[73] could have been reused in creating new ones for the Moldavian and Wallachian bishops, having been adapted to the local style and personal preferences of each one of them.[74]

For a patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch in open conflict with the Latin Church around 1740, a Catholic bishop's miter was not a symbol to include in a patriarch's emblem. In the Arabic Akathist, the Orthodox crozier and the cross are placed in an X shape under the Orthodox miter. Other decorative elements, such as the lambrequins and the crowned characters, are baroque in

68 In Orthodoxy, an archpriest or archimandrite who has the right to wear the miter, like a bishop (< Ngr. *mitrofóros*).

69 See Sorin Iftimi, "Influența lui Petru Movilă, Mitropolitul Kyivului, asupra heraldicii eclesiastice din Țările Române", in *Sinodul de la Iași și Sf. Petru Movilă (1642–2002)*, Iași, 2002, p. 190–199 (with illustrations).

70 One in *Sacramentul* (*Mystirio*) printed at Târgoviște in 1651, another in *Îndreptarea legii*, Târgoviște, 1652, cf. Ioan Bianu, Nerva Hodoș, and Dan Simonescu, *Bibliografia românească veche*, vol. I: *1508–1716*, Bucharest, 1903, p. 191.

71 In *Cheia înțelesului*, Bucharest, 1678.

72 See Dan Cernovodeanu, *Știința și arta heraldică în România*, Bucharest, 1977, p. 179 and ill. no. CXIV/3.

73 Some of them are still preserved in the outstanding Museum of the Book and Printing at the Pechersk Lavra.

74 Referring to Western and Central European heraldry, Sorin Iftimi notes that "the heraldic elements, established centuries ago, consisted of symbols that were specific to the Latin Church. Some of these elements were adapted according to the Orthodox symbolism"; see Iftimi, "Influența lui Petru Movilă, Mitropolitul Kyivului, asupra heraldicii eclesiastice din Țările Române", p. 191.

style, influenced by Western, or perhaps Ukrainian heraldic art. In the center of the emblem, one can read 'Silvestros' printed in Greek initials. Besides Sylvester of Cyprus, no other patriarch of Antioch is known to have held this name in the 18th century or later. In the Romanian lands, the monogram was included in the bishops' emblems precisely in the 18th century, when a trend was set. We have, therefore, strong support for the hypothesis that the design of this particular bishop's emblem was influenced by examples from Eastern European Orthodox lands, with novel elements resulting from the requirements of the confessional environment in Ottoman Syria. There are no documented contacts between the Patriarch Sylvester and the Orthodox Church of Kyiv, or any Ukrainian master printers. Therefore, we may posit with some degree of certainty that the press where this emblem was designed was located in the Romanian Principalities, at one of the Greek printing presses.

Finally, puzzling information that could refer to an Arabic book printed in Beirut in the mid-18th century comes from a German source, published in Leipzig in 1782: the *Repertorium für biblische und morgelandische Litteratur*.[75] Here, Joseph Friedrich Schelling states that "the knight [Johann David] Michaelis[76] expressed his wish to find more information on an Arabic Bible [i.e., Old Testament] that had presumably been printed in Bucharest in the year 1700", but "professor Aurovillius of Upsal" (Pehr Fabian Aurivillius)[77] mentions in a dissertation an edition of this book containing a title page indicating 1753 as the printing date. This text contained sections of the Old Testament: the five Books of Moses, the Books of Joshua, the Judges, Ruth, four Books of the Kings, the Second Book of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Tobit. The book that Aurovillius described would require a thorough survey to place it – or not – alongside the books printed by the Greek Orthodox in Beirut.

Thus, Yūsuf Mark, a Syrian disciple of Sylvester, the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch, who had worked in the incipient press of the

75 Joseph F. Schelling, "Joseph Friedrich Schelling über die arabische Bibelausgabe von 1752", *Repertorium für biblische und morgelandische Litteratur*, 1782, 9, p. 154–155.

76 Born in Halle to a Lutheran family, Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791), having received a solid religious education, became a theologian and translator of religious works in the field of biblical and oriental studies. He taught oriental languages at the University of Göttingen. Among other scholarly activities, he translated English commentaries on the Bible and composed text-critical studies of the Peshitta. He remains famous for having promoted the study of Hebrew antiquity for a deep knowledge of the ancient Eastern cultures. He was awarded the Knighthood of the Polar Star, a Swedish order of chivalry.

77 Pehr Fabian Aurivillius (1756–1829), a Swedish librarian active in Uppsala, member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities.

Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, headed the first Arabic-type press of Beirut, the first printing workshop for Orthodox books in present-day Lebanon, and the only one for a long time after 1711. Mark continued in Beirut the creative typographic activity he had begun in Bucharest, applying the knowledge that he had acquired in contact with Wallachian printers. Thus, a circle closed that embraced the aspirations of several patriarchs and bishops of the Arabic-speaking Christians in the 17th and 18th centuries to freely disseminate the holy books of Orthodoxy, united in this mission with princes and bishops of the Romanian Principalities.

6 Christian Arabic Books Printed between 1701 and 1753, Snagov to Beirut

6.1 Books Printed in Wallachia in 1701–1702 by Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās

General remarks

The two books printed in Greek and Arabic in Snagov and Bucharest have catchwords on every page, in the lower left corner, and are richly adorned with book art elements.

The text columns were placed so as to allow reading the Arabic text from the right margin (to the left) and the Greek text from the left margin (to the right), observing the direction of writing in both languages. No intention of priority given to one or the other text is present in these books.

A common feature of the title pages in the two books is the use of the same woodblock for the first word, in red ink, and of a larger size than the printed text.

The label "CRV" and specific number is mentioned for each book present in the collections of the B.A.R. in Bucharest.

According to a handwritten note dated February 1702, preserved on a Greek book issued from the same press, the Arabic type cast by Antim the Iberian was to be used the same year for printing a third Arabic text: Ioan Cantacuzino's translation, made at the request of the prince of Wallachia Constantin Brâncoveanu, of the *Commentaries on the Holy Gospel* composed by Theophylact, the Orthodox archbishop of Ohrid (d. after 1107).[1]

As for the content of the Arabic Christian liturgical books, further research is necessary before attributing these texts to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī.[2]

1 Nicolae Iorga, *Documente „Hurmuzaki"*, t. 14, I, Doc. no. DCCXL, p. 757.

2 The descriptions of the books printed in Ḫinšāra, currently under survey by several members of the TYPARABIC project team, will be included in the comprehensive catalogue to be published in 2024 in the EAPE series dedicated by De Gruyter to the TYPARABIC project outcomes.

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1. *Kitāb al-quddāsāt al-talāta al-'ilāhiyya ma'a ba'ḍ iḥtiyāǧāt 'uḫrā ḍarūriyya li-l-ṣalawāt al-'urtūduksiyya, qad ṭubi'a al-'ān ḥadīt[an] fī al-luġa al-yūnāniyya wa-l-'arabiyya / Ai theiai leitourgiai ton en agiois Pateron imon Ioannou tou Chysostomou, Basileiou tou Megalou kai e ton Proegiasmenon), Book of the three Divine Liturgies accompanied by other [texts] required for the Orthodox prayer, newly printed now in Greek and Arabic*, Snagov, Monastery of the Dormition of the Mother of God, 1701, [14] ff., 56 + 253 pp.

The text is printed in black and red ink on two columns, left in Greek and right in Arabic, except the introductory texts composed by Athanasios Dabbās, which are printed in Arabic on the entire page. The pages are numbered in Greek numerals. The text is enclosed in a black frame.

The title page is given only in Arabic (Fig. 17). Page 2 (back of the title page) presents the Wallachian coat of arms, an engraving by Antim the Iberian, and below, Constantin Brâncoveanu's princely title in Greek (Fig. 9). On page 5, there is a Greek stanza composed by Ioannis Komnenos, a physician at the court in Bucharest,[3] who praises the prince and explains the symbols of the coat of arms. The next pages (p. 6–17), in Greek on the right-hand page and Arabic on the left, contain a foreword which is an ample eulogy addressed to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, followed by a report on the miserable situation of the Christians in Ottoman Syria and the circumstances in which the Book of Divine Liturgies was printed. In the second text (p. 20–28), a letter addressed by Athanasios Dabbās to the clergy of the Church of Antioch, he praises Brâncoveanu's munificence and Antim the Iberian's contribution, by cutting the punches for the Arabic type at the prince's press in Snagov. He also mentions the intentions that he and the prince had to freely distribute the books printed in Wallachia to the Antiochian priests.

The liturgical text, printed in two columns (right – Arabic / left – Greek), starts on p. 29. It comprises the text of the Arabic Divine Liturgy translated from Greek and Syriac, which had been preserved in old manuscripts revised by Meletios Karma, who had compared it with Byzantine versions of the three liturgical texts.[4] The Greek text in this book is the one of the Euchologion printed in Venice in 1663.[5]

3 Later, having become the bishop Ierotheos of Dristra, he dedicated a Greek biography of the Byzantine emperor Ioannis VI Kantakouzenos to the *stolnic* Constantin Cantacuzino. See Virgil Cândea, "Une version roumaine de l'Apologie contre Mahomet", *RESEE*, 4, 1966, 1–2, p. 236.

4 For a comprehensive comment in terms of the history of Liturgy, see Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 67–88, 124.

5 Archim. Polycarp Chițulescu, a member of the TYPARABIC project team, will contribute to the volume of *Proceedings* of our first conference (Bucharest, 2022) an essay dedicated to the

After the prayers dedicated to consecrating the *collybes*, on p. 343, a comment is printed on the utility of encouraging, in the Arabic-speaking Christian communities, the custom of consecrating and distributing *collybes* as they do in the lands of the Orthodox.

On the last page, 346, the information about the book's printing is repeated first in Greek, then in Arabic, in *saǧ'* verses (i.e., rhymed prose). Here, an indication is made that the Greek text of the book was revised before printing by the hieromonk Ignatios the Chaldean (in the Greek text, Φιτυάνου, Phityanou, from the diocese of Chaldea),[6] who had accompanied Athanasios Dabbās to Bucharest.

The book contains book art elements, vignettes, and icons of saints, printed from woodblocks manufactured in Antim the Iberian's press, some signed: 'Saint Basil the Great', signed 'Dimitrios, 1698' in Greek alphabet (Fig. 12); Saint Gregory, signed 'Ioanichie [Bacov]'; 'Deisis', 'Holy Altar Table', etc.[7] The other illustrations are: Saint John Chrysostom, the Holy Disk (Fig. 18), and Jesus Christ the Living Bread.

In the middle of the 18th century, the Book of the Divine Liturgies was, for the Arabic-speaking Byzantine-rite Christians, just as for Romanian ones, the most needed liturgical book. In the Romanian lands, this title was published the most frequently and in the largest number of copies, in Greek, Slavonic, and, especially from the 18th century on, in Romanian: Gr. *Λειτουργικόν*, Sl. *Slujebnic*, Rom. *Liturghier* or *Condac*[8] (Gr. *κοντάκιον* > Ar. *Qundāq*).[9]

It was the dream of Patriarch Makarios III ibn al-Zaʿīm to see it printed while he was journeying in Eastern Europe in 1652–1657. As I mentioned, Fr Charbel Nassif has studied the MS 1049 at the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos, which contains the Greek and Arabic versions of the *Liturgikon*, a copy made in 1637 by

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comprehensive study of the Book of Divine Liturgies, compared with several other similar service books printed in Greek and Romanian. The title of this contribution is "Le texte gréco-arabe du Hiératikon imprimé à Snagov en 1701. Une analyse comparative" (forthcoming with De Gruyter).

6 According to Charon (ibid.), this was an eparchy of the Church of Antioch located south of Trabzon, with the center at Gümüşhane.

7 I commented on the use of woodblocks and ornamental engraved plates created in Antim's workshop for the Arabic books printed in Wallachia in my article "Beginnings of Arabic Printing in Ottoman Syria (1706–1711). The Romanians' Part in Athanasius Dabbās's Achievements" published in *ARAM*, 25 (2013), 2016, 1 & 2, p. 231–260.

8 Braniște, *Liturgica generală cu noțiuni de artă bisericească, arhitectură și pictură creștină*, p. 650–652.

9 The copyist Ṭalǧa al-Ḥamawī refers to the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great as a *qundāq* in the first colophon (f. 100v) of the manuscript described by Charbel Nassif in his article "Le Liturgicon arabe de Vatopedi (Mont Athos, Vatopedi 1049)", cf. p. 71–72. For the word *qundāq* used by the Arabic-speaking Christians, see also Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats melkites*, p. 101.

the scribe Ṭalǧa al-Ḥamawī, brother of Patriarch Efthimios II Karma. The manuscript ends with a text signed by the patriarch.[10] The road that this manuscript took from Damascus to Vatopedi is proposed by Fr Charbel thus: "À notre avis, il serait fort probable qu'un certain diacre qui s'appelle Ġrīġūriyūs ait emporté avec lui ce manuscrit de Damas lors de son pèlerinage au Mont Athos, peut-être avant 1860, et l'a déposé au monastère de Vatopedi".[11] Fr Charbel's conclusions on the connections between this manuscript copy and the version printed by Dabbās in Snagov are extremely important for the understanding of the significance of this first book resulting from the cooperation between the Wallachians and the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Church of Antioch.

> Une étude comparative ultérieure portant sur les manuscrits melkites syro-arabes médiévaux et ce Liturgicon pourrait mieux juger de l'apport de la réforme liturgique entamée par Malātiyūs Karmah et déceler les spécificités antiochiennes que Karmah a omises lors de son travail de traduction. Ce Liturgicon a été imprimé par les soins d'Athanase Dabbas au monastère de Snagov en Roumanie en 1701 avec le soutien du voïvode de la Valachie, Constantin Basaraba Branconveanu, et grâce au célèbre typographe Antime l'ibérien (Feodorov 2016: 14–16; Charon 1908: 69–88). Comparer cette version imprimée avec le manuscrit de Vatopedi permet de mieux juger de la réception du Liturgicon de Karmah dans le patriarcat grec orthodoxe d'Antioche au début du XVIII[e] siècle.[12]

The Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies seems to have been printed in a large number of copies. It circulated widely in the Middle East and a considerable number of copies ended up in European collections. The TYPARABIC team has located twenty copies so far, with more possibly in collections still under scrutiny for the comprehensive catalogue to be printed in 2024. The Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest holds four copies of this book (labelled as CRV 130). One of them has the stamp of the Șaraga Brothers Antiquarian Shop in Iași (on the last page but one). A second copy came from the donation of Iosif Naniescu, the metropolitan of Moldavia (1894).[13] Another copy was found "in the catalogue of the Central Seminary in Bucharest".[14] One book is held by the National Library of Romania in Bucharest and one by the 'M. Eminescu' Central University Library of Iași.[15] Schnurrer mentions a copy that he bought in Leipzig, for a modest price,

10 Nassif, "Le Liturgicon arabe de Vatopedi (Mont Athos, Vatopedi 1049)", p. 57–82.
11 Ibid., p. 80.
12 Ibid.
13 Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", p. 140, 145.
14 Ibid.
15 The latter was recently located by Nicholas Bishara, a junior member of the TYPARABIC project team.

at a public book sale of the library of a certain Breitkopf (probably the typographer and editor Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf).[16] Other copies are known to exist at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, the Central Library of the Holy Spirit University in Kaslik, the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, the library of the Antiochian Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus, the Orthodox church of Holy Virgin Mary in Zahle (Lebanon), the Library of the Academy in Kyiv, Ukraine, the Library of the Academy in Vienna, the IMO in Saint Petersburg,[17] etc.

This book was recorded by Ch. Fr. von Schnurrer in his work *Bibliotheca Arabica*, where he mentions that this was a rare book and that he had bought a copy at an auction in Leipzig, for a small price, the copy that he described.[18] Julius Theodor Zenker repeated from Schnurrer the information and text of the title page.[19] The book was then mentioned by Émile Picot[20] and Émile Legrand.[21] The first Arabic source mentioning this book is seemingly ʻĪsā Iskandar al-Maʻlūf's article of 1911.

The Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov was recorded by Ioan Bianu in *BRV* I, on p. 423–433, with an image of the title page, its translation, and a cursory bibliographic description. This was the first Romanian description, achieved by Bianu based on fragments translated from Arabic by Cyrille Charon and the Greek forewords translated by Constantin Erbiceanu.[22]

The Arabic text included in this Book of the Divine Liturgies was reprinted by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch in Iași in 1745 (as I shall explain below).

16 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 270. I thank Ioana Munteanu for helping me ascertain this information, which was later repeated by Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne*, col. 1183, and Papadopol-Calimach, "Un episod din istoria tipografiei în România", p. 144.

17 Described by Sergey A. Frantsouzoff in "Pervaia arabografichnaia kniga, napechatannaia v mire islama, v sobranii Instituta vostochnykh rukopiseĭ RAN", *Vestnik PSTGU, Seriia III: Filologiia*, 2019, 61, p. 104–122.

18 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 266–272, no. 266.

19 Zenker, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 196, no. 1608.

20 Picot described the copy held by the BnF in his "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir, Métropolitain de Valachie", on p. 537–538.

21 Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des grecs au dix-huitième siècle*, p. 1–9. The Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov, 1701, is the first printed work recorded in the catalog. At the end, it is indicated that the author of the description of the Greek texts inside was Prof. I. Pomialowsky of Saint Petersburg, owner of a copy of the book.

22 First published in *BOR*, 13, 1889, p. 531–539.

In 1839, using the text of the 1701 Snagov Book of the Divine Liturgies, another edition was printed in Rome, after a comparison and improvement of the text according to the Greek *Euchologion* of Pope Benedict XIV, printed in 1754.[23]

Papadodopol-Calimach cites the praises that this book received, which he found in Henri Ternaux-Compans, *Notice sur les imprimeries qui existent ou ont existé en Europe et hors d'Europe*, Paris, 1849, p. 119, and in Pierre Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne à l'usage du libraire et de l'amateur de livres*.[24]

As I have explained, no comprehensive and accurate description of the Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov, 1701, has been published until now. The exception is the Romanian description that I contributed to the catalogue of Antim the Iberian's printed works coordinated by Arhim. Policarp Chițulescu, *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*.[25] The methodology applied there, more complex than the one I adopted for this book, will be followed in the descriptions of the entire corpus of the TYPARABIC project that will make up the catalogue to be published with de Gruyter in 2024.

2. *Kitāb al-'Ūrūlūğiyūn 'ayy al-ṣalawāt al-mafrūḍa ma'a bāqī al-ṭuqūs al-marsūma 'alā madār al-sana qad ṭubi'a al-'ān ḥadīṯ[an] fī al-luġa al-yūnāniyya wa-l-'arabiyya / Book of the Horologion (Book of the Hours), or of the required prayers and the other services all through the year, newly printed now in Greek and Arabic*, Bucharest, at the prince's press, 1702, [21] ff., 729 pp.

The title is given only in Arabic (Fig. 19). The text is printed in black and red ink, in Greek and Arabic, with Greek on the right-hand page and Arabic on the left-hand page, text within a black border, all pages numbered. Many pages are printed only in red ink. Page 2 (back of the title page) shows the Wallachian coat of arms, the same as the one in the Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov, 1701 (previous record). On page 3, the same stanza composed by Ioannis Komnenos is printed in Greek. In the two introductory texts, signed by Dabbās, the same ideas as in the Book of the Divine Liturgies are repeated.[26] The version of the Horologion

23 Cf. Korolevskij, "Antioche", col. 692.

24 Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne*, cols. 1182–1183.

25 Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 87–96.

26 See *BRV* I, p. 442–447. In his description of this book, Ioan Bianu took into consideration the information in Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 541–544 (illustrated with the title page of the BnF copy).

printed in Bucharest is that revised around 1630 by Meletios Karma.[27] Dabbās declares that he made some improvements before print. After the second foreword, also composed by Athanasios Dabbās, the text of the Horologion is printed with the two texts of a full page, all through the first 168 pages. The Troparia, on p. 169–549, are printed on two columns, Greek on the left – Arabic on the right. The subsequent prayers, on p. 550–578, are printed on a full page, followed by the Akathist to the Mother of God in two columns, only in Arabic.

At the end of the book, on p. 732, there is a note in Arabic, translated from Greek, which was composed by Antim the Iberian. Here, he apologizes to the Arabic-speaking readers for any mistakes he may have made in printing this book, because "he is a stranger to the Arabic language" (*bi-mā ʾannī ġarīb min al-luġa al-ʿarabiyya*). He also thanks God for the completion of the book.[28]

The book contains illustrations: the Wallachian coat of arms, the icon of Jesus Christ Pantokrator in the adornment of a frontispiece, the Deisis, the Mother of God Platytera ("in Prayer"), also in an ornamental frontispiece.

The Greek version in the Bucharest 1702 Horologion was reprinted in Venice in 1759, 1777, 1869 and 1877, with the indication that this edition followed the one of Bucharest, assessed as the best Greek version of the Horologion.[29]

A manuscript of the version that Dabbās printed, MS Arabe 1581, is preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. As I mentioned before, the Horologion had been sent by Meletios Karma to Rome to be printed, but it did not receive the approval of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, which requested it to be modified.

The B.A.R. Bucharest holds two copies (CRV 137). The second, which is incomplete, was bought in Istanbul in 1945 by the Romanian historian of the Ottoman Empire Aurel Decei. According to a handwritten note on this copy, it once belonged to the library of the Melkite Greek Catholic Archdiocese in Aleppo, and to Gabriel Farḥāt of Aleppo, the future Maronite bishop of Aleppo. In Romania, another copy of the Greek and Arabic Horologion is held by the 'M. Eminescu'

27 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 59–60. Research is under way to understand the historical development of the text.

28 The Romanian translation of this note by Antim the Iberian is taken, in Râpă-Buicliu, *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*, p. 220, from the version made by the well-known Turkish studies expert Aurel Decei ("Din tipăriturile orientale la București, în sec. al XVIII-lea", *Revista istorică română*, 15, 1945, fasc. II, p. 365–371), because Decei had found errors in the translation given in *BRV*.

29 See Antōnios Sigalas, *Apo tēn pneumatikīn zōēn tōn hellēnikōn koinotētōn tēs Makedonias*, t. I, Thessaloniki, 1939, p. 118–119, no. 35–36, 39–40; Virgil Cândea, "Mărturii româneşti necunoscute din Grecia de Nord", *Studii şi articole de istorie*, New Series, 60–61, 1993, p. 106, n. 21.

Central University Library of Iași.[30] At this time we know of thirteen copies of this book, preserved both in the Middle East and Europe. Among them, one is in the BnF – Lorette Branch,[31] others in the Central Library of the Holy Spirit University in Kaslik, the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus, etc.[32]

A manuscript copy of the Arabic foreword by Athanasios Dabbās is preserved at the RGADA in Moscow (Fond 191, G. J. Kehr, no. 19, ff. 2–5, and no. 31, ff. 2–4).[33]

The Horologion was not recorded by Schnurrer in his *Bibliotheca Arabica*. It was described by Silvestre de Sacy in *Magasin encyclopédique*[34] and then by Émile Picot.[35]

Ioan Bianu recorded the book in *BRV* I based on a survey of the first copy in the collections of the B.A.R. He published the Romanian translation of the title page (also printed in the book), an abstract of Picot's description, the translation of the two forewords signed by Dabbās (the first one, incomplete), and that of Antim's concluding note addressed to the Arabic-speaking readers. At the end of *BRV* I, Bianu added a note after he found the second copy in the collections of the B.A.R., with a Romanian translation of the opening part of the first foreword, missing from th first copy.

Cyrille Charon describes the Greek and Arabic Horologion in his book *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites* (1911) using the information given by Bianu in *BRV* I.

Based on the copies held by the B.A.R. in Bucharest, I described the Greek and Arabic Horologion of 1702 in the catalogue *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*.[36] Again, a more elaborate description of this book is part of the catalogue in preparation for 2024 with De Gruyter.

30 Also located recently by Nicholas Bishara.

31 Described by Picot in his "Notice".

32 A copy that existed in the 1970s in the collection of Mgr Neophytos Edelby was mentioned by Virgil Cândea in "Sources roumaines et grecques dans les bibliothèques du Proche-Orient", on p. 75. On this great scholar and leader of the Greek Catholic community, see Ignace Dick, "Néophytos Edelby, Métropolite grec catholique (1920–1995)", in PP. Nagy Edelby and Pierre Masri (eds.), *Mélanges en mémoire de Mgr Néophytos Edelby (1920–1995)*, Beirut, 2005, p. 17–28.

33 The copy is recorded in the manuscript catalogue of the collection, under no. 137. I am grateful to Dmitri Morozov for this information.

34 De Sacy, *Magasin encyclopédique*, p. 198–201.

35 Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 541–544, no. 21.

36 Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 105–110.

6.2 Books Printed at Aleppo in 1706–1711 by Athanasios Dabbās

General remarks

Between 1701 and 1711, at the metropolitan residence of the Church of Antioch in Aleppo, Athanasios Dabbās supervised the printing of ten books, one with a second edition, and two – bound in two steps. All the books contain only Arabic-type text, with the exception of very brief passages or words in Greek type in the second-phase canonical Gospel bound in 1708 and the Oktoechos of 1711. Inside the woodcut icons in several books, the names of saints are printed in Greek type. As a rule, black and red ink was used in printing, and catchwords are present on every page, as mentioned before. Most books contain book art elements in a similar style as the ones described above. The Aleppo press was the initiative and project of the Metropolitan Athanasios Dabbās, who used the expertise acquired in Snagov and Bucharest and the printing implements he was presented with in 1704, when leaving Walachia for good.[37]

1. *Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Šarīf al-manṭūq bi-hi min al-Rūḥ al-Quds ʻalā fam al-Nabiyy wa-l-Malik Dāwūd wa-ʻiddatu-hu miʾat wa-ḫamsūna mazmūr*^{an}*, […] qad ṭubiʻa ḥadīṯ*^{an} *bi-maḥrūsat Ḥalab al-maḥmīya fī sanat ʾalf wa-sabʻamiʾa wa-sitta masīḥiyya / The Holy Book of the Psalms composed by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David the Prophet and the King, and their number is one hundred and fifty, […] newly printed now in the city of Aleppo the well-protected and well-guarded, in the Christian year one thousand seven hundred and six*, Aleppo, 1706, [7] + 296 pp.[38]

The text on the title page is printed in black, except for the word *kitāb*, imprinted with red ink using an elegantly carved woodblock (Fig. 20). On the back of the title page, the coat of arms of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia, resembles the one printed in 1701 in the Snagov Book of the Divine Liturgies (see Fig. 11). The book includes an icon of David the King and Prophet (Fig. 21), book

37 Al-Maʻlūf mentioned that he had the intention of presenting the printing press of Aleppo and the books printed there in a subsequent article, which he did not publish; see Al-Maʻlūf, "Maṭbaʻa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʻarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 54.

38 Schnurrer, followed by Nasrallah, who did not see a copy of this book, mentions VIII + 276 pp. See Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 371; Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 23.

art elements, and catchwords on all pages, on the lower left, a feature present in all the Aleppo books.

The Psalter follows the liturgical order and includes the 151 Psalms of the Septuagint and the ten biblical "Odes of Moses" (the *taṣābīḥ*, including the prayers to Hannah, Habakkuk, Isaiah, Jonah, etc.). The text published here is an early version translated from Greek into Arabic and later revised by the deacon ʻAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī, with kathismata revised by Athanasios Dabbās, in the Melkite tradition.[39] In his commentary on the Arabic Psalter prepared by Ibn al-Faḍl, Alexander Roberts states that his version of the Psalms became very popular among Arabic-speaking Christians, Chalcedonians as well as Coptic Miaphysites. Without mentioning the Aleppo Psalter printed by Dabbās, he concludes that "while very few of Ibn al-Faḍl's translations have appeared in print, his Psalter was included in the Arabic Bible printed in Rome in 1671".[40] Evidently, manuscripts circulated in the Arabic-speaking Christian communities of the Middle East and based on them, Dabbās prepared the version that he intended to print.

It is likely that the Psalter was prepared for printing while Dabbās was still in Bucharest, but in 1704 circumstances forced him to leave for Cyprus and then Syria. He achieved two years later, at his new press of Aleppo, the printing of this book that was in great demand with the clergy – and the common people – of the Church of Antioch, as he states in the opening of this book.

The book has two forewords, the first unsigned, addressing Athanasios Dabbās in the 2nd person, the second signed by Dabbās and addressed to his readership. Here, the metropolitan of Aleppo explains his reasons for printing the Arabic Psalter – for the first time – and his choices in preparing the text. As I mentioned above, the first reason was its usefulness in educating the youth.

> I decided then to print this Holy Psalter for the benefit of the Christians' sons' teaching in schools, so it would be equally easy to be found by the rich and the poor. [...] We have thoroughly improved the Arabic form of this Psalter before printing it (*'aṣlaḥnā 'i'rāb haḏā al-Mazāmīr qabla ṭab'i-hi 'iṣlāḥ*^{an} *mutawassiṭ* ^{an}) except for its structure, and we have not changed anything in it except the twenty kathismata, which we have improved in structure and Arabic expression.[41]

After the book was printed, Dabbās did not stop revising the text and worked together with Salomon Negri until a new edition was published in England in

39 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 146.
40 Roberts, *Reason and Revelation in Byzantine Antioch*, p. 37.
41 Psalter, Aleppo, 1706, second foreword, p. 3.

1725, as I already explained. The interventions applied to the Psalms printed by the efforts of Athanasios Dabbās and his scholarly entourage may be assessed only through a careful comparison of the surviving pre-1700 manuscript copies with the texts published in 1706 and 1725.

The 1706 Psalter of Aleppo was recorded by Schnurrer in his *Bibliographia arabica* on p. 371.[42]

At this time, six copies of the 1706 Psalter are known to exist: one in the Library of the Romanian Academy (CRV 154),[43] two (incomplete) in the collections of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in Saint Petersburg (IMO),[44] one in the National Library of Austria, one at the BULAC in Paris, and one at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra. al-Ma'lūf mentioned that he saw a copy at the Monastery of Mār Elyās Šu'ayya in Lebanon. A manuscript copy of the printed Psalter of Aleppo is held in the B.A.R., Cluj-Napoca Branch.

Also at the end, on a blank page (the second of a four-pages group of lined, large copybook sheets inserted in the book), a note in Romanian, elegantly penned in blank ink, gives a translation of the *basmala*, the Gospel title, a reference to Cyrille Charon's mention of this book, and the colophon. It is most probable that the Romanian translation was done by Emile Murakade.

A second edition of this book was printed in Aleppo in 1709 and a reprint was achieved by the Greek Orthodox of Beirut in 1752 (described below).

The Aleppo Psalter of 1706 was reprinted in Göttingen in 1876, with the title *Psalterium Job Proverbia arabice*, by Paul de Lagarde, who revised the form of the Arabic text from an orthographical point of view. It seems that he also used the first Greek Catholic edition printed in 1735 at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra by 'Abdallāh Zāḫir.

The Greek Orthodox reprinted the 1706 Aleppo Psalter in 1752, at the Monastery of Saint George in Beirut (see below). As for the Greek Catholics, after a first reedition of the 1706 Psalter in Ḫinšāra in 1735, they reprinted it in fifteen successive editions until 1899.

42 The information in his bibliography was repeated by Joseph Nasrallah, who did not see the book. See Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 23.

43 Described in *BRV* I, p. 469–477.

44 See Frantsouzoff, "Les vieux livres imprimés en écriture arabe dans la collection des Rousseau, père et fils, conservée à Saint-Pétersbourg", p. 255–257. P. 3–4 of the foreword and 1–50 of the Psalms are missing from the first copy, and the title page and first two pages of the foreword from the second.

2. *Kitāb al-'Inǧīl al-šarīf al-ṭāhir wa-l-miṣbāḥ al-munīr al-zāhir, ṭubi'a ḥadīṯ[an] bi-madīnat Ḥalab al-maḥmīya sanat 'alf wa-sab'ami'a wa-sitta masīḥiyya / Book of the Holy and Pure Gospel, or the resplendently shining Lamp, newly printed now[45] in the city of Aleppo the well-protected, in the Christian year one thousand seven hundred and six* (Tetraevangelion), Aleppo, 1706, 243 pp., text printed in Arabic.

Nicely ornamented, the title page is printed in black ink, with the same woodblock used for the first word, *kitāb* (Fig. 22), but no red ink. The book contains headpieces, vignettes, square stamps, and floral ornaments.

In the foreword (p. 2–6), after praises to the Lord and a eulogy for Athanasios Dabbās (by a different author), the Antiochian metropolitan declares that he revised the text based on a Greek work, that he corrected 'phrase-for-phrase' (*ǧumla fa-ǧumla*) and he improved 'word-for-word' (*lafẓa fa-lafẓa*) the Arabic form previously used in the Church of Antioch, which circulated in countless manuscripts. He is referring to the earlier translation revised by Meletios Karma. Athanasios Dabbās calls himself at the end 'Patriarch of Antioch and All the East'. The book title is repeated on p. 7, with an addition: [*Kitāb al-'Inǧīl…*] *'allaḏī kutiba bi-'ilhām al-Rūḥ al-Quds min al-'arba'a al-'Inǧīliyya Matī wa-Murqoṣ wa-Lūqā wa-Yuḥannā al-zumra al-salīḥiyyīn…*, i.e., [*Book of the Gospel…*] *written under the care of the Holy Spirit by the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the bearers of good tidings…* An indication is also included that texts follow the liturgical (or church) order: *murattab[an] tartīb[an] kanā'isiyy[an]*. Thus, the Gospel text (p. 7–212), arranged as *Matthew – Mark – Luke – John*, presents the succession of Gospel pericopes (not chapters),[46] for Sunday, Saturday, and the great feasts over the course of the year, opening with Easter Sunday. From page 213 to page 243 the Gospel pericope to be read on every Sunday, Saturday and feast of the year is indicated, starting with Easter Sunday and ending with Easter Eve (Holy Saturday). On the last page (243) there are ornamental stamps and a final phrase: "This was newly printed in the well-protected and guarded city of Aleppo in the year 1706" (Fig. 23). The year was stamped in black ink with a woodblock carved with the words: *1706 sana masīḥiyya*.

45 A typical Arabic phrase, synonymous with "for the first time", which was used by Christian writers both for books and religious institutions – like, for instance, the numerous occurrences in Paul of Aleppo's *Journal*.

46 For this reason, the copy preserved at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C., is recorded as: *Bible. Gospels. Selections. Arabic. 1706*. See the description of this copy at: http://lccn.loc.gov/2013415563.

Joseph Nasrallah briefly mentioned this book and described its structure: "Nous devons en outre au patriarche la révision du texte arabe de l'Évangéliaire. Sa recension, comprenant les quatre Évangiles, est précédée d'une préface. Une table pour déterminer les péricopes à lire durant la Liturgie termine l'ouvrage".[47]

This book was recorded by Zenker (*Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 76) and Schnurrer (*Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 266–272). It was also mentioned by Cyrille Charon in *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites* (p. 124–125).

The unique copy owned by the B.A.R. (CRV 154A) was presented to the director, Ioan Bianu, by Cyrille Charon, who had found it in Aleppo. As I already mentioned, this book was first mentioned in Romania by Bianu in a brief presentation before the members of the Romanian Academy.[48] Emil Murakade translated the Arabic ownership notes for the purpose of that presentation.

On the fourth blank page from the end, the copy of the B.A.R. has a manuscript note written in black ink, certifying that the book entered the possession of the Church of Our Lady of the Greek Catholics (*al-rūm al-kāṭūlīk*) in Aleppo through an acquisition "from its funds and for herself", on May 1, 1853 (Fig. 24). Above it is the name of a former owner of 1796: *al-Maqdīsī Ḥanāniyā ibn qissīs Ǧirǧis Ḥanūn*, also mentioned as an owner on other ma nuscripts and books in the collections of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church Archdiocese of Aleppo.[49]

We also know of one copy of this Gospel in the Vatican Library, one in the Library of the University of Gotha, one in the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), one at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in Saint Petersburg,[50] and eleven copies in Lebanon – seven at the Monastery of Ṣarba, three in Ǧūn and one in Ḫinšāra.[51]

Although printed in 1706, this work continued to be copied until the middle of the 18th century and is still preserved in several manuscripts, including some that contain miniatures.[52]

47 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 144.

48 See *BRV* IV, p. 32–33; Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", p. 15–16.

49 As indicated to me by Habib Ibrahim (CEDRAC, Beirut), to whom I am very grateful.

50 Frantsouzoff, "Les vieux livres imprimés en écriture arabe dans la collection des Rousseau, père et fils, conservée à Saint-Pétersbourg", p. 256–264, 267.

51 All identified by Fr Charbel Nassif, one of the Lebanese members of the TYPARABIC team.

52 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 144.

3. *Kitāb al-ʾInǧīl al-šarīf al-ṭāhir wa-l-miṣbāḥ al-munīr al-zāhir, ṭubiʿa ḥadīṯ*[an] *bi-madīnat Ḥalab al-maḥmīya sanat ʾalf wa-sabʿami'a wa-sitta masīḥiyya* / *Book of the Holy and Pure Gospel, or the resplendently shining Lamp, newly printed now in the city of Aleppo the well-protected in the Christian year 1706* [i.e., a liturgical Gospel], [2] + 566 pp., text printed in Arabic.

This version of the Gospels contains commentaries useful to priests in the liturgical service, which double the book's number of pages, somewhat resembling a Catholic Lectionary. The foreword of this book is identical to the one in the previously described Tetraevangelion. The text is arranged for liturgical use, following the liturgical year, and starting with the Gospel of John, read at Easter time. Each Gospel reading is followed by a commentary introduced by *Qāla al-mufassir*, 'The commentator said', with no mention to the identity of the author.[53] While surveying the copy of this book held by the B.A.R. in Bucharest, Fr Cyril Charon told the director, Ioan Bianu, that these were comments composed by Saint John Chrysostom.[54]

At the beginning of every Gospel, there is placed an engraving of an icon of the Evangelist, signed by an (unidentified) engraver named Simon. An ornamental cartouche placed below the engraving contains the Evangelist's name in Arabic, printed with a woodblock, rather than typeset, such as, *al-Qiddīs Yūḥannā al-Tā'ulūġus* (Saint John the Theologian). Due to their aesthetic qualities, in some of the surviving copies the Apostles' icons are missing, torn out by passionate lovers of religious art.

For a long time, the two versions of the Gospel printed successively in 1706 were mistaken for one another, as well as with the other two very similar versions of 1708 (discussed below), in catalogue descriptions and other published sources. The Russian Oriental scholar Dmitri A. Morozov commented on the inconsistency of the descriptions of several Gospel books preserved in European libraries.[55] Additionally, copies of the second, longer version are quite rare. There is none in Romania. Three copies are known to us today, one in Saint Petersburg,

53 A discussion of this commentator's identity and other aspects relative to the contents of the 1706 Aleppo Tetraevangelion and Gospel for liturgical use is being prepared by Fr Rami Wakim for publishing in the volume of *Proceedings* of the 1st TYPARABIC project conference held in Bucharest on September 5–6, 2022, forthcoming with De Gruyter: "Patriarch Aṭanāsiyūs III Dabbās' Gospel. Origin and Characteristics", in Dipratu and Noble (eds.), *Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond*, Berlin, 2023 (forthcoming).

54 Ioan Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 32, 1909–1910, p. 19.

55 Dmitriĭ A. Morozov, "Arabskoe Evangelie Daniila Apostola (K istorii pervoĭ arabskoĭ tipografii na Vostoke)", in *Arkhiv russkoĭ istorii*, Moscow, t. 2, 1992, p. 193–203.

a second in the Gotha University library, and a third at the Bibliothèque Orientale in Beirut. It was only after a hands-on comparison of the two books that I was able to ascertain the particularities that differentiate them.

The copy in the Gotha branch of the Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt, which bears an earlier ownership stamp of a library of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, was brought to Germany by Ulrich Jasper Seetzen from his journeys across the Middle East, together with many other manuscripts that he acquired for the duke of Gotha's library.[56] It was briefly presented by Carsten Walbiner,[57] who later commented on its contents as well,[58] suggesting that the Gospel was meant for church service, which could explain the need for more copies than the print-run of 1706 had provided.

Apparently without any knowledge of the existence of this book in the Library of Gotha, Seetzen's published list of acquisitions,[59] or Walbiner's research devoted to this book, Sergey Frantsouzoff published a description of the copy that he discovered in 2018 in the collections of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of Saint Petersburg.[60]

As I mentioned before, the B.A.R. in Bucharest holds a copy of a later edition of the Gospel with commentaries, printed in 1776 at Ḫinšāra (Fig. 25). Here, all the icons of the Four Evangelists are present (Fig. 26). Appreciated for their elegance and rich details, these images have been exhibited by all the libraries who own a copy of this, or a later edition of the Gospel with comments, produced in Ḫinšāra (Fig. 27). Two copies of the Gospel with comments have recently been identified in Ḫinšāra,[61] but they are missing a considerable number of pages and all infor-

56 See El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*, p. 11–12.

57 Walbiner, "The Christians of Bilād al-Shām (Syria): Pioneers of BookPrinting in the Arab World", p. 24–25. See also the brief description and the title page of the same copy, published in Hanebutt-Benz, Glass and Roper (eds.), *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution*, cat. no. 81, p. 491–492.

58 Walbiner, "Melkite (Greek Orthodox) Approaches to the Bible", p. 55–56, 58–61. He also described the icon of Saint John the Evangelist placed on f. 4v.

59 Seetzen, "Nachricht von den in der Levante befindlichen Buchdruckereyen von U. J. Seetzen in Haleb 1805", cols. 641–650.

60 Frantsouzoff, "Le premier lectionnaire arabe orthodoxe imprimé", p. 459–468. He was convinced, at the time, that his was the first mention of this book. See also Frantsouzoff, "Les vieux livres imprimés en écriture arabe dans la collection des Rousseau, père et fils, conservée à Saint-Pétersbourg", p. 260 and 265.

61 By Fr Charbel Nassif.

mation on the date of printing. Therefore, we do not know (yet) if these belong to the *editio princeps* or to a later reedition.[62]

Several manuscripts available in the vHMML database are copies of the printed version of the Gospel with commentaries (For example, HMML project no. SAJL 00011, a manuscript of the Sainte-Anne Seminary of Jerusalem).[63] Establishing the original edition that was copied by hand is among our team's tasks.

4. *Kitāb al-durr al-muntaḫab min maqālāt al-Qiddīs Yūḥannā Famm al-Ḏahab / The Book of the Chosen Pearls from the Sermons of Saint John Chrysostom*, Aleppo, 1707, 524 pp.

The text is enclosed in a narrow double frame incorporating an ornamental motif. After a brief foreword composed by Athanasios Dabbās, the book gives his own translation from Greek into Arabic, completed before 1700, of thirty-four sermons of Saint John Chrysostom. The topics of these sermons are repentance, the Christian virtues, heresies and false prophets, signs of the Apocalypse, etc. The text was revised in 1706 by the Maronite scholar Gabriel Farḥāt.

This title was recorded by Schnurrer (*Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 23), Zenker (*Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 72), and Graf (*GCAL* III, p. 129).

Two copies, first mentioned by Louis Cheykho, are preserved in the Bibliothèque Orientale of Beirut. Another copy is in the Vatican Library, one in the library of the IMO in Saint Petersburg,[64] and the Library of Congress in Washington DC holds one.

The book was reprinted in 1872 and 1877 in Beirut (Imprimerie Dār al-Ma'āref), edited by Gabriel Ǧebāra and supplemented with a foreword composed by him, and in Cairo, in 1888. A fifth edition, in 1928, is mentioned in Graf, *GCAL* III, p. 130–131.

62 This information, obtained on site by Fr Charbel Nassif, is currently under scrutiny by the Lebanese members of the TYPARABIC project team.

63 I am grateful to Feras Krimsti for bringing this manuscript to my attention.

64 Frantsouzoff, "Les vieux livres imprimés en écriture arabe dans la collection des Rousseau, père et fils, conservée à Saint-Pétersbourg", p. 265–266, 268–269.

5. *Kitāb al-'Abraksīs wa-huwa 'aʿmāl al-Rusul al-Qiddīsīn ṯumma al-Rasā'il al-muḫtaṣṣa bi-Būluṣ al-Rasūl ṯumma Yaʿqūb wa-Buṭrus wa-Yūḥannā wa-Yahūdā/Book of the Apraksis, which is The Acts of the Holy Apostles and the Epistles of Paul the Apostle, Jacob, Peter, John, and Jude* [*Apostolos*], Aleppo, 1708, 452 pp.

The book is printed, like all those before it, in black and red ink, with nice calligraphic frontispieces printed from woodblocks, and catchword on every page. The text border is made of a simple line, but elaborate decorations, the same as in previous books, are placed on many pages. The texts of the passages to be read every Sunday and at every major feast and Sunday, beginning with Easter Sunday, are printed in red ink. Before the Epistle reading, Typicon indications are given in red: for example, *brūkīminūn bi-l-laḥn al-ṯāmin* ('*prokeimenon* in Tone Eight').

The printed version is that revised by 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl in the 11th century from a Greek version of the Holy Scriptures.[65] In his commentary on this book, Charon does not mention the *editio princeps* of Aleppo, but only the later editions of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra: 1759, 1770, 1792, 1813, and 1859. According to Charon, 'Abdallāh Zāḫir revised an existing Arabic text for the first edition of this book, printed after his death.

Two copies are known, both in Lebanon: one at the monastery of Ǧūn, the other in Ḫinšāra.

6. *Kitāb al-'Inǧīl al-šarīf al-ṭāhir wa-l-miṣbāḥ al-munīr al-zāhir al-mansūb 'ilā al-'arba' Rusul al-'Inǧīliyyīn al-Lāhiyyīn wa-hum Mattī wa-Marquṣ al-Bašīrāni wa-Lūqā wa-Yūḥannā al-Nadīrāni qad ṭubi'a al-'ān ḥadīṯ[an] bi-maṣraf al-sayyid al-'amǧad Yuwānī Māzābah al-ǧatmān*[66] [...] *wa-ḏalika fī sana 'alf wa-sabʿami'a wa-ṯamāniya masīḥiyya fī šahr kānūn al-ṯānī / Book of the Holy and Pure Gospel, or the Splendidly Shining Lamp, written by the four holy and divine Evangelists, who are the bearers of good tidings Matthew and Mark, and the precious Luke and John, newly printed now [...] at the expense of the mighty lord Ivan Mazepa the Hetman [...], in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, the month of January*. Aleppo, 1708, 244 pp.

This book contains the same block of printed sheets as the 1706 version in 243 pages. As I mentioned, in 1708, left without resources to bind the remaining copies of the book, Dabbās first approached Constantin Brâncoveanu, asking for

65 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 121–122.
66 Correct: *al-ḫatmān*.

money to bind and distribute all the copies of the Gospel that he had printed two years before. The prince of Wallachia could not help, but recommended a companion in arms, the Cossack Hetman Ivan Mazepa. The remaining stock of books printed in 1706 was bound with his financial support and his coat of arms was duly added on the back of the newly printed title page (p. 2).[67]

The title page is different from the one in the first edition of 1706 (Fig. 28). On p. 3 there is a eulogy to Mazepa in Greek verse, with an Arabic version on the verso, possibly composed by Athanasios Dabbās (Fig. 29). The foreword (p. 5–8), which has a slightly different headpiece, begins with praises to Hetman Mazepa (Fig. 30). Then follows the text of the first edition, identical with the one of the version bound in 1706. In this version of the Gospel, the page numbers are different, because of the insertion of the new title page and the texts that refer to Mazepa. On p. 246, the date indicated in the final note was changed into 1708 by carving the woodblock that indicates the year of publication: "This was newly printed in the city of Aleppo the well-guarded, in the Christian year one thousand seven hundred and eight" (Fig. 31). The handmade alteration of the year '1706' into '1708' on the woodblock is clearly visible.

Some copies contain the engraved icons of the Four Evangelists. They are not present in the copy of the B.A.R. (CRV 155A), which, however, is beautifully bound (Fig. 32).[68] Ioan Bianu, who presented this book at a meeting of the Romanian Academy on May 18, 1917,[69] and later in *BRV* IV, remarked that this copy "had undoubtedly been sent by the Patriarch to the Voivode [Constantin] Brâncoveanu as a token of esteem, since the small smoke seal of Grigorie Brâncoveanu[70] was applied in two places, dated 1762."[71] Cyrille Charon commented on its contents based on this copy of Bucharest.[72]

The book belonged for a time to the Deacon Coresi, one of the major printers of Transylvania, then to the book-collector Constantin Oltelniceanu, whose autograph is present on it. It later entered the library of the military historian Lt. Col. Dimitrie Pappazoglu, from whom it was acquired by the B.A.R. in 1882, at the request of Grigore Tocilescu, who was, at the time, a general secretary at the Min-

67 See the detailed description of the heraldry by Râpă-Buicliu, *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*, p. 224.

68 See also Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", p. 17–18; Nasrallah, "Les imprimeries melchites au XVIII[e] siècle," p. 232.

69 Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 39, 1916–1919 [1921], p. 72.

70 Grigore Brâncoveanu (1767–1832), great *ban* (local governor) of Wallachia.

71 *BRV* IV, p. 33–34.

72 Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites*, III, p. 98.

istry of Education.[73] Pappazoglu's signature (in various styles) and his ownership stamp are visible on several pages of this book.

Pappazoglu's offer to sell the book to the library for "only 600 new lei" (approx. 600 French, Belgian, or Swiss francs),[74] recorded on January 25, 1882, and the negative report of the librarian are placed inside this book, between the front cover and the front page. The owner stated that: "It is said that he [Mazepa] was buried in the city of Galați, at one of the churches there, and perhaps in the forewords of this well-preserved Gospel the truth that our history seeks will be discovered". He added to his written offer a note that he had written in 1862, possibly when he himself acquired the book. The librarian, who was against the acquisition, concluded that:

> This is a Gospel printed in Arabic in Egypt in 1708 at the expense of the Cossack Hetman Mazeppa and has no historical value for our country, even if the famous Hetman was buried in Galați, as they claim. The only interest, but a secondary one, that this book could present is its age and the language it is printed in, but this can in no way justify the exorbitant price requested by Mr Papazoglu, on account that it is a translated Gospel and, as such, of no use for the Library; were it at least requested by readers; but this, I do not believe it would happen either, Minister, judging by other much more important books written in this language, which sit without anyone searching them.[75]

In spite of this report, the ministry ordered the acquisition of the book, to the benefit of later generations (who should be grateful to Tocilescu for this).

Another copy of this book is preserved at the National Library of Ukraine in Kyiv. It was republished in a full-size facsimile in 2019 by the efforts of Dr Igor Ostash, Ambassador Extraordinary of Ukraine in the Republic of Lebanon, who composed a foreword rich in historical information.[76] This is, for the time being,

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73 Grigore George Tocilescu (1850–1909) was a Romanian historian, archaeologist, epigrapher, and folklorist, and a member of the Romanian Academy. He studied in Paris, at the Collège de France and the École Pratique des Hautes Études.

74 The numismatist Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu, director of the National Museum of History of Romania, informed me that after the Law of 1867 that established a national monetary system, a new *leu* (Pl., *lei*) was equal to a French, Belgian, or Swiss franc, an Italian lira, a Greek drachma, and a Spanish peseta. In terms of value, 600 new *lei* were equal to the salary of an average employee for three months, or half a government member's salary for one month.

75 Anonymous report no. 5/January 27, 1882, sent by the "Direction of the Central Library to the Ministry of Education", addressed to the Minister and signed "Biblioteca" ("The Library").

76 *Kitāb al-'Inǧīl al-šarīf al-ṭāhir wa-l-miṣbāḥ al-munīr al-zāhir*, facsimile of the 1708 version of the Aleppo canonical Gospel, Kyiv, 2021, with an Arabic and a Ukrainian introduction by Ihor Ostash (on p. 1–74 and 1–90, respectively, starting from either end).

the only facsimile edition of an 18th-century book printed for the Arabic-speaking Christians in the Middle East.

The fact that only two copies of this book are known to be preserved may indicate that there were not many blocks of sheets left in 1708, the rest having been bound and distributed when the book's printing was completed in 1706.[77]

7. *Kitāb al-'Inǧīl al-šarīf al-ṭāhir wa-l-miṣbāḥ al-munīr al-zāhir, ṭubi'a ḥadīṯ[an] bi-madīnat Ḥalab al-maḥmīya sanat 'alf wa-sab'ami'a wa-sitta masīḥiyya*, Aleppo, 1708, 584 pp.

This book resulted from the same circumstances as the previous one: in 1708, at the Aleppo press, some blocks of sheets of the Gospel with comments were still preserved. In his search for a sponsor to help bind and disseminate them, Dabbās was introduced to a brother in arms of the Hetman Ivan Mazepa – the colonel Daniel Apostol, who kindly financed this operation. The title page, Apostol's coat of arms and a short Greek poem are the only differing elements, as compared to the 1706 version of the Gospel with commentary. To acknowledge colonel Daniel Apostol's contribution, the verses praise his generous assistance to the poor Arabic-speaking Orthodox. The Gospel pericopes follow (p. 9–212), arranged in the same way as in the first edition and accompanied by the same commentary.

We do not know how many of these newly bound volumes there were. Only three copies of the expanded version of the Gospel are known to exist today, one each, in the IMO in Saint Petersburg, the Russian Archive of Old Documents in Moscow (RGADA), and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.[78]

77 Because the 1706 Gospel of Aleppo presented by Charon to the B.A.R. is missing some pages in the beginning, when informing his colleagues of the Romanian Academy in 1917 about the acquisition of the book bound at Mazepa's expense in 1708, Ioan Bianu, who did not master Arabic, confused it with the earlier version, declaring that the B.A.R. held two copies of the same book; cf. Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 39, 1916–1919 [1921].

78 For the last one, see Dmitriĭ A. Morozov, "Vifleemskij ekzemplar arabskogo Evangelija Daniila Apostola", in *Arkhiv russkoi istorii*, Moscow, t. 8, 2007, p. 645651.

8. *Kitāb al-Nubū'āt al-šarīf, ṭubiʿa ḥadīṯ[an] bi-maḥrūsat Ḥalab al-maḥmīya sana 'alf wa-sabʿami'a wa-ṯamāniya masīḥiyya bi-htimām al-'āb al-mufaḫḫam wa-l-sayyid al-muʿallim kīriyū kīr Kīrillūs al-mukarram al-baṭriyark al-'anṭākiyy / Holy Book of the Paremia, newly printed now in the well-protected city of Aleppo in the Christian year one thousand seven hundred and eight, by care of the noble father and revered lord kyriu kir Cyril, the righteous patriarch of Antioch*, Aleppo, 1708, 252 pp.

The book contains an Arabic version (attributed by Louis Cheikho to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl)[79] of pericopes of the Holy Scriptures for the Vespers on the eve of the great feasts, at Lent – for the service of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts and the Hours at Nativity, Epiphany, and on Good Friday.

The text is printed in Arabic, in black and red ink, on two columns. The section titles are printed with woodblocks in larger, calligraphic characters, and a thicker black stroke. At the end of the sections, vignettes and other ornamental elements specific to the Aleppo press, of Wallachian influence, are often present. According to the foreword, the sponsor of this book was Cyril V, the Patriarch of Antioch. Therefore, his name is mentioned in the front matter as editor of the book: *bi-ihtimām al-'āb al-mufaḫḫam wa-l-sayyid al-muʿaẓẓam kīriyū Kīrillus al-mukarram*.

The book of *al-Nubū'āt al-šarīf* was reprinted at Ḫinšāra in 1775, 1810, and 1833.

The first edition of 1708 was recorded by Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica* (p. 272–273), and Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites* (p. 141–142). It was also mentioned in t. I of *Bibliothèque de M. le Baron Silvestre de Sacy*.[80] De Sacy received this book from Jean-François Xavier Rousseau, the French consul in Aleppo.[81]

We know of two copies for now, one preserved in the library of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, the other at the Gennadius Library in Athens.

The title page of this book was published by Dabbās and Raššū in *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, possibly from a copy owned by the Dabbās family.[82]

79 Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", *al-Mašriq*, 9, 1906, p. 947. Nasrallah is cautious about this attribution: "'Abdallah aurait fait la version arabe de ces péricopes toujours d'après les Septante"; cf. Nasrallah, *HMLÉM* III.1, p. 220. Graf, in *GCAL* I, p. 187, states that there is no basis for this attribution.

80 Daonou (ed.), *Bibliothèque de M. le Baron Silvestre de Sacy*, t. I, p. 286, no. 1341.

81 As mentioned by Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur l'imprimeur Anthime d'Ivir", p. 544.

82 Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 104.

9. *Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Ilāhiyy* / *The Holy Book of Psalms*, Aleppo, 1709.
This is the second edition of the 1706 Psalter of Aleppo.

A copy of the Psalter of 1709 is preserved at the British Library.[83] Dabbās and Raššū claimed that this version was reprinted by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch in 1725 at Aleppo. Although there is no indication, this information could have come from Ellis, *Catalogue of Arabic Printed Books in the British Museum* (p. 328). A new version of the Psalms, based on Dabbās's edition of 1706, but revised and supplemented by Salomon Negri, was printed in 1725, *in London*.[84]

10. *Mawāʿiẓ ʾAṯanāsiyūs* [*al-Baṭriyark al-Ūrašalīmiyy*] / *Sermons of Athanasios* [*the Patriarch of Jerusalem*], Aleppo, 1711, [7] + 421 pp.

This book contains: a foreword composed by Chrysantos Notaras, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (1707–1731), who commanded, financed, and supervised the printing; one sermon composed by Saint John Chrysostom; sixty-six sermons composed by the Patriarch Athanasios IV of Jerusalem (1460–1468?), translated from Greek into Arabic by Athanasios Dabbās. The presence of the Patriarch Chrysantos in Syria is confirmed by a letter addressed to him on February 4, 1709, by Constantin Brâncoveanu, in response to his letters sent from Damascus on November 23, 1708, and January 19, 1709 (and two other letters sent from Jerusalem on December 24, 1708, and January 19, 1709).[85] Notaras declares on p. 5-6 of his foreword:

> I appreciated that this was a precious book, judiciously written, containing a collection of brief teachings that are helpful to the soul, and they cover all the year, Sundays and feasts. This is one of the great works of Athanasius, Patriarch of Jerusalem [...]. Then we also understood rightly, from some who are proficient in this language, that this fine and useful translation must necessarily [be printed], especially since it is [the achievement] of a lofty and devoted Patriarch of the Great City of God (Antioch), his Beatitude Patriarch Athanasius Dabbās [...], who is highly proficient in Arabic.[86]

83 Ellis, *Catalogue of Arabic Printed Books in the British Museum*, p. 12, *s.v. ʿAbd Allah ibn al-Faḍl*. In the current catalogue of the British Library, the book is still recorded under the name of ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Faḍl (as author).

84 See Ellis, ibid., p. 375; Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 150–151; Roper, "England and the Printing of Texts for Orthodox Christians", p. 437–438.

85 Paul Cernovodeanu, *În vâltoarea primejdiilor. Politica externă și diplomația promovate de Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714)*, p. 126–127.

86 Notaras also mentions the agreement expressed by the Patriarch Cyril V ibn al-Zaʿīm: "[...] as Patriarch Cyril, who sits now in the Antiochian Seat, also believes"; see Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 147.

After the title page, there is an illustration of the Holy Sepulcher, its name written in Greek above, and below a stanza that evokes Christ's Tomb. The poem continues on the next page, mentioning the Patriarch Athanasios and the circumstances in which this book was printed. The following twelve pages contain a bilingual foreword, Greek on the first page, Arabic on the next, and so on, in alternating versions. This foreword provides information on the editor, sponsor, and reasons for deciding to print this collection of sermons. The colophon indicates the date '1711 of the Christian era'. The pages are numbered. The typographic ornaments are the same as in previous books printed in Aleppo.

Starting on page 13, a *Fihris* gives the sermons in their chronological succession beginning with Easter Sunday. The text starts on page 1 with the *basmala* followed by the title: "Easter Sunday. Sermon of our father most elevated among the saints John Chrysostom, patriarch of the city of Constantinople". The second text contains the series of sermons composed by the Patriarch Athanasios of Jerusalem.

The book was recorded by Schnurrer.[87] A complete copy is preserved in the Library of USEK, in Lebanon. A copy in the library of the University of Balamand is missing the first 11 pages, the front matter, first sermon, and beginning of the second. The last passage, on p. 213, is the beginning of Chapter 10, the pericope for the feast of the beheading of Saint John the Baptist, which ends abruptly. Another copy is held by the Bibliothèque Orientale in Beirut, and a fourth by the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

87 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, 273. See also Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 105.

11. *Kitāb al-Bāraklītīkī, ʾayy al-Muʿazzī al-ḥāwī ʿalā al-ṭamāniya ʾalḥān wa-qānūnī al-bāraklīsī wa-l-iksābūstulāriyāt wa-l-ʾiyūṭīnā ṭubiʿa al-ʾān ḥadīṯ[an] bi-madīnat Ḥalab min ʾaʿmāl Sūriyā bi-saʿī wa-iǧtihād al-ʾab al-mukarram kīr ʾAṯānāsiyūs al-baṭriyark al-ʾAnṭākī sābiq[an] sana ʾalf sabʿami'a wa-ʾiḥdā ʿašar masīḥiyya / Book of the Paraklitiki (Oktoechos), or 'the Comforter',*[88] *containing, in the Eight Tones, the Canon of the Paraklisis, the Troparia (Gr. Exaposteilarion) and the Canons for Orthros, newly printed now in the city of Aleppo, following [written] works of Syria,*[89] *with labor and toil, by the righteous father kir Athanasios, former Patriarch of Antioch, in the Christian year one thousand and eleven*, Aleppo, August 1711, [6] + 806 pp.

The book is divided in two parts of 314 pp. and 492 pp., respectively, numbered from 1 to 806, with a catchword in the lower left corner. According to Nasrallah, it contains a translation from Greek revised by Athanasios Dabbās.[90] Greek text is inserted in many passages, which means that, at the time, the Aleppo typographers mastered the skill of printing in two alphabets – Arabic *and* Greek – and had also procured Greek type.

On p. 1, the title page, there is a floral frame and within it, there are icons of saints: the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, Saint John the Baptist, Saint John Damascene, Saint Kosmas, Saint Joseph, and others (Fig. 33). The introductory text (p. 2–4) contains thanks given to God, a eulogy to Athanasios Dabbās (by another author) and a foreword composed by Dabbās. He reports on the miserable condition of the Christian communities in Syria and declares that he revised himself the text of the Oktoechos by comparing it to the Greek original, "part for part and word for word" (*qiṭʿa fa-qiṭʿa bal lafẓa fa-lafẓa*), so that in future it is never altered or misinterpreted again by anyone (probably referring to an attempt to adapt it to Catholic dogmas). The first page of text is also nicely adorned with icons. (Fig. 34).

On p. 7–12, an *Errata* list was inserted ("Rectification of the mistakes found in this book"), which is not the *Contents*, as mentioned in previous descriptions (Fig. 35). The section ends in two beautiful floral ornaments followed by an explanation from the printer who oversaw the Arabic part (perhaps Athanasios Dabbās

88 Schnurrer translates the Arabic term *al-muʿazzī* with *Consolatorium*, cf. his *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 273. Charon notes that the Greek verb παρακαλῶ, the origin of the Arabic word (here in masculine form), can be read also as "to pray" or "to intercede", cf. Cyrille Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 142.

89 This is most likely a reference to manuscripts that circulated in Syria.

90 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 144, 146.

himself) concerning the form of certain printed characters: the appearance of *lām ’alif*, the occurrence of *dāl* instead of *ḏāl*, *tā’* instead of *ṯā’*, etc. On several pages that give the Arabic text of the Oktoechos placed in two columns, from 14 to 783, the beginning of the text is also given in Greek.

The book is decorated with headpieces and vignettes. According to a note in the text, it was printed also at the expense of Patriarch Cyril V: “The hand of God touched me and, answering our plea, the Patriarch kyr Cyril printed this book”.

It seems that two versions of this book were printed, because Fr Cyril Charon, who saw another copy than the one preserved in Bucharest, stated that the title on the first page was *al-Bāraklītīkūn*. He also comments that there is a mistake in gender here, in the noun that was borrowed from Greek.[91]

The book was first recorded by Julius Theodor Zenker.[92] Apparently, the antiquarian Samonati of Rome temporarily owned a copy that bore the seal of a “Monastery of Târgoviște”,[93] as recorded in his catalogue for 1911, p. 20, no. 351.[94]

A copy of this book is held by the B.A.R. in Bucharest (CRV 161A). An elegantly handwritten note on p. 6 (blank page), in black ink, reveals that the book was donated to the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Greek Catholic in Aleppo on June 1, [18]51, “when it was headed by Kyr Dīmītriyūs”, i.e., Dimitrios Anṭākī (1844–1863), the Greek Catholic bishop of Aleppo.[95] (Fig. 36)

Three copies of this book are preserved at the Monastery of the Savior in Ǧūn and one in Ḫinšāra.

The Oktoechos is one of the liturgical books also printed in Ḫinšāra, with a somewhat different title: *Kitāb al-Uktū’īḫūs al-muštamil ʿalā al-ṭamāniya ’alḥān li-l-Qiyāma li-yurattal fī ’ayyām al-’āḥād ʿalā dawr al-sana ṭumma tallā al-’alḥān al-maḏkūra al-iksābūstlāriyāt wa-diyūmālāt al-’iyūṭīnā wa-l-’anāǧīl al-muḫtaṣṣa bi-l-Qiyāma* (*Book of the Oktoechos, Containing the Eight Tones of the Hymns of Resurrection to be Sung on Sundays All the Year Round, then the Hymns Called Troparia (Gr. Exaposteilarion) and the Canons for Matins (Orthros), and the Gospels for Resurrection*). This large book of 955 pp. was published in no less than seven editions: 1767, 1784, 1816, 1827, 1840, 1856, and 1866. A comparison of the 1711 edition of Aleppo with the editions of Ḫinšāra would shed light on the simi-

91 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 142.

92 Zenker, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 88. See also Charon, *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites*, p. 142–143; Nasrallah, “Les imprimeries melchites au XVIII^{e} siècle”, p. 233.

93 Archim. Policarp Chițulescu suggested to me that this was either the Metropolitan see of Târgoviște, or the Stelea Monastery in the same city.

94 *BRV* IV, p. 38.

95 I am grateful to Habib Ibrahim (CEDRAC) for this identification and his help in deciphering the date.

larities and variances between these versions, revealing the interventions on the text – if any – when later reprinted. It would also be useful to compare manuscript copies of the Oktoechos, from its earliest Syriac and Arabic versions,[96] with the one printed by Dabbās in 1711. This would go in the same direction of studying the Arabic liturgical texts in their historical evolution.

12. *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-iʿtirāf […] wa-fī-mā yalzamu al-muʿtarif wa-l-muʿarrif (ʾaw) Silk al-durr al-naẓīm fī sirr al-tawbat wa-l-iʿtirāf al-qawīm / Brief Epistle on how to repent and confess, which specifies what the repentant and the confessor have to do, [or] The String of well-strung pearls of the great mystery of repentance and confession*, Aleppo, 1711, 170 pp.[97]

This is an anthology of texts by Greek scholars, including Agapios Landos (but mostly unidentified), translated and adapted into Arabic by Athanasios Dabbās. A note in the text states that the author collected these texts from the 'teachers' garden' (*bustān al-muʿallimīn*). The book includes several sections: Foreword; On repentance; On confession; On the qualities required of a confessor; Conclusion.

Three historians of Oriental book-printing mentioned this book in the 19th century. The first description was published by Ulrich Jasper Seetzen. As I mentioned above, one of his tasks was to collect Oriental books and manuscripts for the duke's library in Gotha. These precious Arabic books, among the first that were printed in the Ottoman world, are preserved to this day in the Gotha Branch of the Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt. Seetzen published a brief commented list of his acquisitions in Aleppo.[98] Placed on p. 170–171 and scarcely described, item 4 is a copy of the *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-ʾiʿtirāf* of Aleppo, printed in 1711. After the Arabic title, the only data provided by Seetzen is that the book has 170 pp., and it is an 8°-format. Seetzen states that he could not find in the book the place and the year of its printing, but he was assured by locals that it was produced in Aleppo. He also found that the paper and printing features were similar to those of the first books listed in his catalogue, which comprised the indication "Aleppo".[99]

96 See Natalia Smelova, "Syro-Melkite Liturgical Books and the Lost Stage in the Formation of the *Oktoēchos*", *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Newsletter*, 3, 2012, 1, p. 4–5.
97 Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 146, n. 103.
98 Seetzen, "Nachricht von den in der Levante befindlichen Buchdruckereyen von U. J. Seetzen in Haleb 1805", cols. 641–650.
99 I am grateful to my colleague Oana Iacubovschi for translating from German this passage of Seetzen's list.

Christian Friedrich von Schnurrer repeated Seetzen's description of the *Risāla waǧīza* in his *Bibliotheca Arabica*, on p. 273–274, under the cat. no. 271. He mentions the identical data provided by U. J. Seetzen and gives the precise reference to his published acquisition list. Schnurrer added a description of the book contents, which he might have composed himself: *Tractatus brevis de recta ratione Pœnitentiæ et Confessionis et quid confessarii et confitentis, nunc prima vice impressus in usum Christianorum* (*Brief treaty on repentance and confession, and what the confessor and the penitent should do, now printed, for the first time, for the Christians' use*). It is possible that Schnurrer did not see the copy of the Gotha library, but he was, as always, well informed on the sources concerning early printing and book collections that were available in Western Europe at the time.

Julius Theodor Zenker recorded this book under no. 1613 of his *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, giving only the Arabic title and the indication "(impr. à *Aleppo*)".[100] More than a century later, Georg Graf, in his *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (III, 1949, p. 129), having recorded two manuscripts of this text, briefly mentions that it was printed: "Gedruckt [Aleppo 1711] (16°) ".[101]

In *HMLÉM* IV.1, after he provides a list of six copies preserved in Lebanon and Syria and their descriptions,[102] Joseph Nasrallah mentions that a printed version was made in 1711 at the Aleppo press.[103] His description of Dabbās's work is based on the manuscript copies, not on the printed book, which he apparently did not see, but read about in Schnurrer's bibliography.[104] He mentions a handwritten note on one of the manuscripts (not indicated precisely) stating that this work was "collected and compiled from the Garden of the Fathers."[105]

A rare copy of the printed *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-ʾiʿtirāf* is preserved at the Bibliothèque Orientale in Beirut (shelf-mark 203.133).[106] It is an in-8° sized book of 171 unnumbered pages, later numbered in pencil (possibly

100 Zenker, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 197.

101 There is no knowing where he took from the information that this is a 16°-format book.

102 *Šarfe 8/74* (1711), *Deyr eš-Šīr N.C. 711* (1758), *Al-Maʿūnāt 41* (1797), *Balamand 177* (1770), and two at the Antiochian Orthodox Patriarchate of Damascus, *Patr. Orth. Damas 1581* (1870) and *Patr. Orth. Damas 1581 1575, 3*; cf. *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 135.

103 This information is repeated ibid., p. 146.

104 See also Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 146, n. 103.

105 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 135, n. 286. The anonymous writer of the note may have been referring to the Coptic collection *Apophthegmata Patrum* or *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, whose versions (some in Ethiopic and Greek) were translated and circulated widely all across the Arab East.

106 I express my thanks to Stefano Di Pietrantonio for drawing my attention to the presence of this book at the Bibliothèque Orientale and Fr Ronney el Gemayel for confirming this information to me.

by a librarian). Deteriorated by usage and badly eaten by bookworms (the same as the printed text inside), the book's cover is made of brown leather stuck over thick cardboard, with a non-figurative stamp pressed on both the front and back covers. The shape of this stamp, a polygonal medallion, was widespread in binding workshops all over the Ottoman East.[107] The inside sheet of the front cover holds a modern rectangular stamp: "Université St.-Joseph, *al-Maktaba al-Šarqiyya*, Bibliothèque Orientale".

The first page, on the left of the front cover inside-sheet, holds an identical title to the indicated by Nasrallah as present in manuscripts of this work: *Risāla waǧīza tūḍiḥu kayfiyyat al-tawba wa-l-ʾiʿtirāf wa-fī-mā yalzamu al-muʿtarif wa-l-muʿarrif*, i.e., *Brief epistle that explains how repentance and confession are done and what the one who confesses and the confessor have to do*. Next come the words: *ṭubiʿat ḥadīṯ[an] li-manfaʿ al-masīḥiyyīn*, "recently printed for the benefit of the Christians". The title page is richly decorated, with an elaborate vignette on top, above the title, followed by a smaller portion of the same vignette and a seraph. Written in pencil, the date 1711 (Ar.١٧١١) appears, and, to the lower left, the word *Rūmiyya*, probably to be read as 'Rome'.[108] As the title page does not provide any information on the place where the book was printed, the bibliographer might have proposed this city, the main source of Arabic printed books that reached the Middle East. Two round ownership-stamps are visible: a small, faded one, and a larger one, belonging to "Université Saint-Joseph".

Page 2 begins with the Christian *basmala*: *bi-smi l-ʾĀb wa-l-Ibn wa-l-Rūḥ al-Muqaddas Allāh al-Wāḥid*. This is followed by thirteen lines of praises addressed to God, ending in the upper part of page 3. The twelve lines that follow, composed in the third person, are occupied by the titles of, and praises to, the former Patriarch Athanasios Dabbās, ending with the word *ʾamīn* in the middle of page 4. Immediately after, a text written in the first person, seemingly composed by the author of the book, Athanasios Dabbās, reports on the chief reason for writing this work: his awareness of the lack of knowledge of the Christians in his eparchy about repentance and confession. Thus, the author felt compelled to right this wrong and collected in this Epistle, from the "garden of the teachers' books", some of its overflowing flowers (*ǧanaytu la-hum min riyāḍ kutub al-muʿallimīn*

107 Luminița Kövari (B.A.R. Bucharest) indicated to me that this polygonal form was used also quite extensively in Romanian book binding workshops of the 17th–18th c., in many versions, but this specific center-model is not a familiar one here.

108 The reading *rūmiyy* is also an option, if the bibliographer intended to mark the Greek Orthodox, Byzantine-rite tradition of the book-content, but the position of this word at the end of the title page, after the year (1711), indicates that this was intended to be the presumed city of the press.

ba'ḍ 'azhār fawā'idi-hi). The structure of the book is presented afterward (p. 6): it is divided into three parts, with an Introduction and an Ending. The main text divisions are Part One, "On repentance altogether"; Part Two, "On total repentance, which is the secret confession"; Part Three, "On what the confessor needs to do". The rest of this opening text, i.e., 16 lines on p. 6–7, contains advice and recommendations to the reader, to study this epistle and observe all its teachings, for the benefit of his soul and God's forgiveness. The phrase ends in the customary request to the reader: *wa-min-ka al-du'ā al-mustağāb*, "I call for your prayers." All across the text, the author will address *al-mu'min*, "the believer".

From p. 8 to p. 19, the Introduction, *al-Muqaddima*, "explains who should repent, what are the requirements of repenting, and the advice to proceed to it."

Part One, "On repentance altogether", beginning on p. 19, line 4, is divided into four chapters: "On the definition of repentance", p. 19–20; "What is repentance", p. 20–21; "On the two kinds of repentance" (inner and outer), p. 21–23; "On soul-searching (*faḥṣ al-ḍamīr*, *faḥṣ al-nafs*), which is the reason and sign of repentance", p. 23–31.

Part Two, beginning on p. 31, is divided into five chapters: "On the definition of confession, how to make it, and its requirements", p. 31–40; "On contrition" (*Insiḥāq*),[109] p. 40–42; "On determination", p. 42–51; "On obeying of the canons", p. 51–58. This chapter is followed on p. 59–69 by a note (*tanbīh*) discussing the case of someone who did not confess his sins before dying.

Part Three, beginning on p. 73, has a slightly different title than the one first indicated: "On what the priest who receives the confession needs to do". This part is made of five chapters too: "On how he needs to be and behave", p. 73–82, starting with "On how he has to be"; "On what the priest must do and what his task is, to achieve this holy sacrament", p. 83–112; "On the sins that the confessor needs to know about, to examine them when confessed, and the one who confesses must know about, to search his soul", p. 113–166.

The ending, *al-ḫātima* (p. 167–171), begins with the explanation: "This is about what the spiritual and the bodily parents need to teach their children." The last four lines, typeset in a *cul-de-sac* shape, provide information about the book: "The year one thousand seven hundred and eleven of the Christian era. To our Lord, eternal glory and everlasting gratitude, Amen." On the lower third of the page, after the text ends, is printed the smiling head of an angel, with a halo and wings underneath (an Italian-style *putto*).

109 *Insiḥāq* = contrition, penitence, repentance, cf. *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J.M. Cowan, 4th ed., 1994, Ithaca, NY, p. 466, *s.v. saḥaqa*.

A definite factor of closeness is its decoration.[110] The book is poorly decorated, with only a few ornaments that complement the text. Several ornamental elements are common to books printed in Wallachia and those of Dabbās's press in Aleppo. We recognize easily, several times on each page, the complex star that separates lines and paragraphs that is also present in all the Aleppo books, as well as in those printed in Beirut during Sylvester's patriarchal tenure. The element that forms the vignette on the title page is identical to one of the elements in Antim's presses, and also one present in books printed in Iași before 1700. The Seraph on the same page is also found in the Aleppo Gospels of 1708 and in two Romanian church-books printed in Iași in 1747.[111] Its source could be common, possibly a book printed in Venice or Moschopoli. The Baroque appearance of the Angel on the final page, which is also present in the 1711 Oktoechos or Paraklitikon of Aleppo,[112] may suggest the involvement of ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir, Dabbās's disciple at the Aleppo press, who was in favour of the Western-style illustration of the books printed in Italy.

The Arabic type is identical to that used at the Aleppo press for the 1708 Apostolos, and quite different from the first type used in books printed in 1706–1707, which had a nicer, more regular shape, and showed a greater resemblance to the Arabic type cast at the press of Antim the Iberian at the Monastery of Snagov. Having surveyed several copies of the books printed in Aleppo, I can safely state that there was a change in the type between 1707 and 1708. As happened in the Romanian presses as well, when a set of type became too worn-out to be used for further printing, it was replaced with a new set of types. This one, the last one made in Dabbās's press, is considerably less elegant than the one used in his first books of 1706, which still reflected the influence of Antim the Iberian's printing style.

Moreover, differences are visible in the typesetting of this book, as compared to earlier ones. This reveals the option of the typesetter for a text version closer to the pronunciation of the Arabic-speaking readers of Ottoman Syria. For example, the letter *ḏāl* is frequently replaced by *dāl* and *ṯā* has become *tā* (especially in numerals), reflecting a Middle Arabic reading. This occurs not only in frequent words such as *allaḏī*, but also in verbs: *ʿaḏuba* (to be pleasant, agreeable) > *ʿaduba* (p. 72), or *haḍḍaba* (to educate, instruct, correct, set right) > *haddaba* (p. 73). On the other hand, the typesetter of the 1711 book correctly typesets *ʾilā* with *ʾalif maqṣūra*, not *yāʾ*, as the one of the 1708 book had done.

110 For the ornamental elements mentioned here, see Feodorov, "Recent Findings Regarding the Early Arabic Printing in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces", p. 104–105.

111 *Liturghier* (*Book of the Divine Liturgies*), CRV 255, and *Triodion*, CRV 262.

112 The copy at the B.A.R. has the indicative CRV 161A.

A comparison between the content of this book and the *Kitāb muršid al-ḫāṭi' fī sirr al-tawba wa-l-i'tirāf*, *The Sinner's Guide to the Mystery of Repentance and Confession*, printed at Ḫinšāra in 1747,[113] is worth considering in future research.

6.3 Books printed in Moldavia in 1745–1747 by the Patriarch of Antioch Sylvester I

1. *Kitāb al-Qundāq* (*al-Fallāḫī*) / *Book of the (Wallachian) Condac*, *or Book of the Divine Liturgies*, Iași, completed on July 19, 1745, 126 pp.[114]

The book contains the three Divine Liturgies followed by readings and *apolisis* (final prayers, priest's blessing) for vespers and matins. This is a re-edition of the Book of the Divine Liturgies of Snagov, printed in 1701 in Greek and Arabic, but it contains only the Arabic version of the text. In the foreword, Sylvester declares that in 1744 he revised the version accomplished by Meletios Karma,[115] which Athanasios Dabbās had also used for his edition and amended the mistakes that had crept into the Arabic text of the 1701 edition. As acknowledged by the Patriarch Sylvester, the book was printed at the expense of Ioan Mavrocordat, the Prince of Moldavia.

A printed copy of the Book of the Divine Liturgies is comprised in a manuscript codex preserved at Dayr Sayyidat al-Balamand (Tripoli, Lebanon), with the shelfmark MS 15.[116] The text is available in the Virtual Reading Room of the Hill Museum and Manuscripts Library (vHMML), as an item in the manuscripts collection scanned at Dayr Sayyidat al-Balamand and concisely described for the purpose of the HMML project (i.e., focusing on the manuscript sections). An older stamp on the cover spine gives the no. ٤٨٥ (485). In the HMML catalogue, MS 15 is described as a *Qundaq Gospel Commentary*, i.e., a *Qundāq*, or Book of the Divine

113 This book, an in-8^{0} size, has VIII unnumbered pp. (Introduction) + 286 pp.

114 I published a preliminary commentary on this book in my article "The Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies Printed in 1745 in Iași by Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch" (*Scrinium*, 2020, 16). For my survey, I relied on the unique incomplete copy accessible on the vHMML database, at https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/107680 (HMML Project Number BALA 00010). Here, the folio numbers of MS 15 are indicated at the bottom of each image, preceded by the HMML project number, labelled "bala 00010".

115 Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 55–59.

116 This codex was brought to my attention by Dmitri Morozov and Nikolay Seleznyov. I am very grateful to both of them for having given me the opportunity to survey it in depth and ascertain its contents, as presented below.

Liturgies, accompanied by comments. It covers 142 pages (= 71ff. r/v), numbered in pencil in Arabic numerals, as a manuscript, on the recto page (one digit for every two pages).[117] The catalogue description indicates the folio dimensions 19.5 x 29.5 cm and a volume thickness of 2.2. cm.

In fact, the codex is made of two texts with no connection between them, one a manuscript text and the other a printed book, with missing pages. The first section, a manuscript, covers 10ff. and envelops the second section like a cover. It originally formed a 4-ff. quire + 2 separate ff. at the end: in the current numbering, ff. 001[r/v] to 002[r/v] and 070[r/v] to 071[r/v] + 2 pages indicated as "00010 – b p" and "00010 – f p". The manuscript folios show an original Arabic numbering, seemingly in the same hand and ink as the text, starting with ٧٢ (72). The text is handwritten for the greater part in Syriac and the rest in Arabic. This section presents a commentary about the Pharisees' hypocrisy, the story of Jesus walking on water, Peter's original belief and later disbelief.[118] The author cites several passages of the *Gospel of Mark*, all in Syriac, except one, given in Arabic. By the looks of it, the manuscript folios, a section of a long text, were bound around the second section (described below) to protect it. In support of this theory is also the position of the two manuscript folios at the end, right after the end of the second section (070[r/v] to 071[r/v] + 00010 – b p): they were bound in bottom-up position, as if reading these five pages of text was not considered a priority by the binder.

The second section of the codex, covering f. 3r to f. 65v, contains an Arabic liturgical book printed with Arabic type: the Book of the Divine Liturgies, the first book that the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch printed in Iași, in 1745. The text covers 126 pages (= 63ff. r/v). In MS 15 the title page is missing. The printed text has a signature in Cyrillic script (digit-value characters) placed under the frame of the printed text, center-bottom, and visible only on some pages, quite irregularly.[119] I compared this text with the Arabic section in the 1701 Snagov Book of the Divine Liturgies and concluded that the 1745 version is a re-edition of the Arabic text printed by Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās on parallel columns with the Greek Liturgikon.

The Patriarch Sylvester asserts in his foreword to the Iași edition that in 1744 he had improved the text of the 1701 Arabic version printed by Athanasios Dabbās

117 In the description below, this penciled numbering is not taken into consideration.

118 I owe the description of the Syriac text to Dr Ephrem Aboud Ishac, an expert in Syriac studies (The VESTIGIA Manuscript Research Center, University of Graz and Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Yale University), to whom I am very grateful.

119 For example, 010r, 013r, 018r, 025r, 037r. The irregularity may be accountable to the poor state of some pages, where the bottom area, below the frame of the printed text, is not visible.

in Snagov and corrected certain language mistakes. As far as we know from the foreword of the Snagov edition, the manuscript copy that Dabbās had brought with him to Bucharest hoping to have it printed, was an Arabic version revised by the metropolitan of Aleppo Meletios Karma before being elected as Patriarch of the Church of Antioch (Euthymios II, 1634–1635).

In the 1745 edition the text begins with a *Foreword* composed by the Patriarch Sylvester, covering four pages (ff. 3r–4v). The text ends with:

سيلبسترس برحمة الله تعالي البطريرك الانطاكي وساير المشرق

"Sylvester, by the grace of God Patriarch of Antioch and All the East".

Then follows the introductory text of the *Book of the Divine Liturgies*, preceded by the usual *basmala*:

باسم الاب والابن والروح القدس الله الواحد

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God."

The printed text ends on f. 065v, close to the completion of the last section, the *Metalēpsis*, which gives the prayer before receiving the Eucharist.[120] The last line is the beginning of an additional indication to the celebrating priest: "And when you go to partake [of the Eucharist], secretly say (//end of the f. 065v//, continuing by hand – see below) these verses by Simeon Metaphrastes: "I now strive to approach the Holy Communion. Do not consume me, O, my Fashioner,[121] at [the time of my] partaking – for You are Fire consuming the unworthy – but rather purify me of all filth."

In the 1701 edition, where this passage is missing, there are four pages of prayers of thanksgiving after partaking of the Eucharist (only in Arabic), and the final chapters, in Greek and Arabic: a ten-pages section of "*Apolyseis* for the whole week, to be uttered at Vespers, Matins, and the Divine Liturgy", then the prayer over the *collybes* (< Gr. κόλλυβος), on three pages, and a final note, on one page, with details about the printing work: its financing by the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, the printers' names, the place and year of printing. In *MS 15* the text resumes, copied by hand on seven folios, from f. 66r to f. 69v. After the above-mentioned additional text, the final section is identical to the 1701 version; the copyist probably followed it in a copy of the *editio princeps*.[122] The last three

120 In the 1701 edition, the corresponding page is 235 (2nd seq.).

121 Textually: *ğābil* < *ğabala* = 'to mold, form, shape, fashion something'.

122 The other possibility is that the copyist had access to one of the manuscript copies of Sylvester's revised versions, mentioned in *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 87.

words indicate that this book was a donation (*waqf*) to the Monastery of Balamand (وقف دير البلمند). The note probably dates from the time when the printed section was whole, and an independent book, not part of *MS 15*.

The book is printed in black ink and, to a lesser extent, in red: Typikon indications for the priest and the deacon, the first word of certain phrases uttered by them, explanations of important liturgical moments. The printed text is included in a simple black frame, doubled at the top to encompass a running title. Under the frame, at the lower left bottom of all verso folios, a catchword is placed, in black or red ink. This element seems to have followed the model of Antim the Iberian's books, but the richness of typographic ornaments in his works is absent from this book. In the 1745 edition, the type is in two sizes, small for the text, large for titles and introductory words, the latter probably printed with engraved woodblocks. The chapter titles are part of the text lines. The pages were printed in two successive movements, first the black text was printed, then the red one. Often, black and red lines are not aligned, as if the second movement was not done with great precision. The Snagov printers' superior skill is quite visible: they had no trouble perfectly aligning the black text with the red one.

An important aspect is that of the printed engravings of icons and ornaments in the 1745 Book of the Divine Liturgies. The *Deisis* icon that was present in the 1701 edition is missing here.[123] Three Saints' icons are present, with their names printed in Greek type: Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian, each placed before the onset of the Liturgy that he composed. I have not been able to identify the origin nor the model of these icons. On the other hand, the icon of the *Proskomidia* is identical with the one in the 1701 edition of Snagov. Therefore, a new woodblock was carved for it, with a different shape of characters, but the same design and graphic elements.

In 1745 there are vignettes only at the end of the main sections. The art historian Oana Dimitriu identified almost all these vignettes in other books printed in Iași between 1743 and 1757, besides one in the Gospels printed by Athanasios Dabbās in Aleppo, in 1708. Apparently, one of the vignettes was designed at the press of Duca Sotiriovici, a Greek private printer of Iași (who signed "The Printer of Thassos"). He used this vignette again in a Book of the Divine Liturgies that he printed in Romanian in 1747. Some vignettes in Sylvester's book may have been made especially for him, and then remained at the presses of Iași to be used again later, in Romanian books. One of the vignettes appeared before Sylvester's Book of the Divine Liturgies, in a book printed in Moschopolis[124] in 1742: *The Service*

123 Chițulescu (coord. ed.), *Antim Ivireanul. Opera tipografică*, p. 93 (reproduction).

124 Alb. Voskopojë, Gr. Μοσχόπολις, today a village in southeastern Albania, was a flourishing

of Saint Clement of Ohrid, printed by Hieromonk Gregorios Constantinidis.[125] If Sylvester obtained ornamental woodblocks from Moschopolis, could that have been also the source of the icons of saints? Moreover, could the Arabic type have also come from Moschopolis?[126] These are intriguing directions of investigation, worth following up.

Remarkably, a similar typographic tool was apparently used to print one of the ornamental elements: the complex four-ray star, or square cross, ending in three leaf shapes, which is present both in the 1745 Book of the Divine Liturgies of Iași and the *Psalter* printed in Beirut in 1752.[127] This printing tool could have travelled from Iași to Bucharest and then to Beirut, together with the Arabic types made at the Monastery of Saint Spyridon under the supervision of Yūsuf Mark.

This book was first recorded by Zenker[128] and was also mentioned by Kesarios Dapontes in his *Katalogos historikos*.[129] Subsequent comments were made based on these sources, as this became a rare book.

No copy is preserved in Romania. This is probably the reason for not including its title in the *BRV*,[130] where the authors recorded, as a rule, the books that they were able to study.

In addition to the copy contained in MS 15 of Balamand, four copies of this book were preserved in Syria, two at the Monastery of Saint Thekla in Maʿlūla,[131] one in Ṣaydnāyā,[132] and one in the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch

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Ottoman city during the 17th century (ca. 60,000 inhabitants in 1760), and home to the first printing press of the Balkans. See Max Demeter Peyfuss, *Die Aromunische Frage. Ihre Entwicklung von den Ursprüngen bis zum Frieden von Bukarest (1913) und die Haltung Österreich-Ungarns*, Vienna and Köln, 1974.

125 *Dumnezeeştile şi Sfintele Liturghii, a celor dintru Sfinţi Părinţilor noştri, a lui Ioan Zlatoust, a lui Vasilie cel Mare şi a Prejdesşteniii*, Iași, 1747, 246 pp. I owe this remark to Archim. Policarp Chițulescu.

126 The Greek press of Moschopolis was active in 1731–1769. See Constantin C. Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, vol. III/2, Bucharest, 1946, p. 914–915; Max Demeter Peyfuss, *Die Druckerei von Moschopolis, 1731–1769*, Vienna and Köln, 1989.

127 See Feodorov, "New Data on the Early Arabic Printing in the Levant and Its Connections to the Romanian Presses", p. 220, Fig. 2 and 13.

128 Zenker, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, p. 88. See also Sévérien Salaville, *Liturgies orientales, notions générales, éléments principaux*, Paris, 1932, p. 46.

129 Erbiceanu, *Cronicari greci*, p. 103.

130 Neither in vol. II. *1508–1830*, under the year 1745, nor in vol. IV. *Adăogiri și îndreptări* (*Additions and Corrections*).

131 The latest news involving these two books is that the terrorists who attacked the church of Maʿlūla in the recent war destroyed the book collection there, so the books are lost.

132 These copies were recorded by Al-Maʿlūf, "Maṭbaʿa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 55.

in Damascus. In one of the copies of Maʿlūla there was a note stating that the book entered the library "during the term of Sylvester, the Patriarch of Antioch".[133] Until any of these books is found, the only extant copy, contained in MS 15 of the Monastery of Balamand, though incomplete, allows for further research.

2. Nektarios of Jerusalem, *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq, taʾlīf al-ʾab al-fāḍil wa-l-faylasūf al-ǧazīl al-ḥikmat al-kāmil kīriyū kīr Naktāriyūs al-baṭriyark al-Ūrašalīmiyy al-kulliyy al-ġibṭa fī l-radd ʿalā ruhbān al-lātīniyyīn* […] *mutarǧim*^{an} *min luġatay al-yūnāniyya wa-l-lātīniyya ʾilā al-luġa al-ʿarabiyya ṭibqa nusẖati-hi al-ʾaṣliyya fī sanat 1733 masīḥiyya wa-l-ʾān qad ṭubiʿa ḥadīṯ*^{an} *bi-maṣraf wa-mušārafat al-ʾab al-ṭūbānī kīriyū kīr Sīlbistrus al-baṭriyark al-ʾAnṭākī al-kulliyy al-ġibṭa bi-ltimās al-sayyid al-ʾamǧad al-rafīʿ al-šaʾn mutaqallid ḥukm bilād al-Buġdān Yuwānī Bak Ibn Niqūlā Bak al-muḥtaram* […] *fī maḥrūsat Yāš al-maḥmīya* […] *fī sanat 1742 masīḥiyya / Book of the rule of justice and the transmission of truth, written by His Beatitude the devoted Father Kyriu Kyr Nektarios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, the great philosopher and accomplished sage, to answer to the Latin monks* […]*, translation into Arabic from two languages, Greek and Latin, after the original manuscript, in the Christian year 1733. It is newly printed now at the expense and under the care of the devoted Father Kyriu Kyr Sylvester, His Beatitude the Patriarch of Antioch, at the request of the great and lofty Prince Ioan-Bey*,[134] *the son of the righteous Nicolae-Bey, who is the ruler of Moldavia […], in the well-protected and well-guarded city of Iaşi* […]*, in the Christian year 1742* [*sic*],[135] Iași, completed on February 25, 1746, [11] + 239 pp.

The printed text measures 21 x 16 cm. On p. 3, the coat of arms of Moldavia is present, enclosed in a flower garland that contains the Slavonic initials of the prince's title, 'І. І. Н. В. Б. М. Г. З. МЛ', meaning: "Io Ioan Nicolae Voevod domn Ţării Moldovii" ("I, Ioan Nicolae, Voivode and Prince of Moldavia") (Fig. 38). On p. 4 is printed the Patriarch Sylvester's title and a eulogy to him, unsigned. Then follows the foreword (p. 4–7) (Fig. 39), which was composed by the Patriarch Sylvester, and then the Contents (p. 8–11). Sylvester reports on his travel to

133 Ibid.

134 Ioan Mavrocordat, the Prince of Moldavia.

135 This is a confusion by the printer between the Arabic digits 2 and 6, which are somewhat similar in handwriting. At the conclusion of the book, the year is printed correctly: '1746'. See *BRV* IV, p. 63, n. 2, and Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIII^{e} siècle", p. 74, n. 76.

Moldavia in 1735 and the circumstances in which he obtained the printing of books necessary to the Christians of the Antiochian Church, from "Ioan-Bey, son of Nicolae-Bey, Prince of the whole country of Moldavia" (p. 5). The first part of the book (p. 12–265) contains a translation from Greek into Arabic, achieved in 1733 by Sophronios of Acre, of *Peri tīs arhīs tou papa antirrīsis...* (*Περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ πάπα Ἀντίρρησις*, *Against the Pope's Primacy...*), a book composed in 1671 by Nektarios, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (1661–1669), in three parts, comprising twenty-seven chapters (Fig. 40). The final pages of this text contain a colophon where the date of printing, 1746, is indicated, alongside the printers' names and a series of elegant ornamental motifs that cover the last page, before the next text begins (Fig. 41). Obviously, the editor of this double-text book wished, as editors nowadays would, that the following text begins on a left-hand page, or to simply leave a space (ornamental-elements page) between the two texts.

In this book, Patriarch Nektarios presents a firm refutation of the Roman Catholic Church and papal authority, in his capacity as head of the Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem. The Greek original was printed by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem at the Moldavian Monastery of Cetățuia near Iași, in July 1682. The book contains general arguments against the Catholic doctrines, focusing on those preached by the Franciscan Order and disseminated by a certain father Peter. The topics include those usually discussed in polemical texts: unleavened bread, te Catholic baptism, papal primacy, the celibacy of the priests, the Gregorian calendar, etc.[136] The report on the Latin missionaries' actions in the Levantine provinces of the Ottoman Empire is very important as a historical witness for understanding of the relationship between the Roman Church and the Eastern Churches in the 17th century. According to Ferdinand Kattenbusch, "in his doctrine of the Eucharist Nektarios was strictly orthodox, and a zealous opponent of Cyril Lukaris and the 'Calvinistic' movement".[137]

For the first time, the size of the print run, 1,500 copies, is mentioned in an Arabic book printed in the Romanian Principalities, on the back page of the first foreword. These copies were meant to be distributed freely to the faithful: *Wa-qad ṭabaʿnā min haḏā al-muǧallad ʾalf wa-ḫamsamiʾat kitāb li-kay tatawazzaʿa ʿalā al-masiḥiyyīn*.

136 On the significance of Patriarch Nektarios's criticism of papal primacy, see Frédéric Gabriel, "Tradition orientale et Vera Ecclesia: une critique hiérosolymitaine de la primauté pontificale. Nektarios, de Jassy à Londres (v. 1671–1702)", in Blanchet and Gabriel (eds.), *Réduire le schisme?*, p. 197–236.

137 Samuel Macauley Jackson et al. (eds.), *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, t. VIII. *Morality – Petersen*, Grand Rapids, 1910, p. 98.

The Arabic version circulated in manuscripts before being printed: Nasrallah mentions six handwritten copies in private as well as monastic libraries in Syria.[138]

The B.A.R. holds one copy of this book (CRV 250C + 250D, see below),[139] presented to the library by Cyrille Charon, who had brought it from Rome for this purpose.[140] Its description in *BRV* is especially thorough, presenting almost in full the translation of the forewords and a list of chapters. At the end, a note in Latin, dated to the 18th century, was probably transcribed from an Italian catalogue of early printed books, thus cited by Simonescu: *Silvestri Patriarchae Antiocheni et Nectarii Patriarchae Hierosolymitani Justi*[*ti*]*a et Veritas adversus Latinos. Iassy in Regno Babyloniae* [*i.e., Bogdaniae*][141] *in Monasterio S. Sabbae*[142] *die 13 Julii 1746. Editore Michaele Bezi Monacho*.[143] On the inner cover of the book, Ioan Bianu wrote in black ink: „1746 Jassy – arab. Justitia et veritas adversus latinos. Silvestru Patr. Antiochiei. Nectarie – " [Patr.] – Ierusalimului. Eustratie Argentis, Manual în contra infailibilității Papii, Iași 1746." The association between the name of Sylvester and that of Nektarios may have led Simonescu to the conclusion that the Antiochian patriarch had translated this work from Greek into Arabic. Nasrallah states, however, that the Patriarch Sylvester only initiated and supervised the printing of this book.[144]

3. Eustratios Argentis, *Risāla muḫtaṣara fī al-radd ʻalā ʻadam ġalaṭ bābāwāt Rūmiya* / *Brief Epistle against the Pope's Infallibility*, Iași, completed on February 25, 1746, [2] + 58 pp.

This text is bound in the same volume with the previous work. It has no title page. The text starts after two blank pages (numbered in pencil 250 and 251).[145] A

138 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 97.

139 See *BRV* IV, p. 61–67; Ioan Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 35, 1912–1913, p. 113–114; Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIII-lea", p. 21–26; Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIIIe siècle", p. 73–75.

140 Having acquired two copies of this book, Charon probably presented one of them to Bianu, to receive in exchange another book that the BAV did not hold.

141 Simonescu notes (ibid.) that the author of this note made a mistake in writing the name 'Bogdan' (Ar. *Al-Buġḍān*), which was commonly used for Moldavia in Ottoman historians' works.

142 Added at the end.

143 Libreria Antiquaria S. Bocca, Roma, Catalogo num. 256, p. 32, no. 523; cf. Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIIIe siècle", p. 64, n. 53. It is possible that the note was copied in the book by Ioan Bianu.

144 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 87–88, n. 151, and p. 97.

145 The book was described in *BRV* IV, p. 66–67, then in Simonescu and Muracade, "Tipar românesc pentru arabi în secolul al XVIIIl-lea", p. 21–26. Simonescu took the book title from *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 221.

two-page unnumbered foreword explains the benefit of reading this book for the faithful of the Church of Antioch. This foreword, written in the 1st person, but not signed, seems to have been composed by the Patriarch Sylvester, who strongly condemns here the Catholic propaganda in the Levant and the Latin missionaries' attempts to lure the Christians of the Middle East into union with Rome.

After the foreword, the pages are numbered from 1 to 58 with Arabic numbers and there are catchwords in the lower left corner of the page. There is an ornamental headpiece on p. 1, before the customary prayer to God (Fig. 42). Page 57 only contains decorative elements, while on p. 58, the last one of this composite volume, there is a note indicating that printing was completed on July 13 in Iași, at the Monastery of Saint Sava.

The book contains a translation from Greek of the anti-Catholic work *Peri tis psevdhous apsevdhias tou Papa Romis* (*Περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ πάπα Ἀντίρρησις/A Handbook against the Roman Pope's Infallibility*) composed by Eustratios Argentis. The Arabic version was achieved in 1740 by the priest Mas'ad Našū.

Born in Damascus to an old Coptic family that subsequently embraced Greek Orthodoxy, Našū left for Egypt and became the *oikonomos* of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. In addition to several other translations from Greek, including almost the entire corpus of Saint Athanasios the Great, he is also the author of original works: a history of the early centuries of the Church, a polemical treatise on the Council of Florence, a large number of homilies, etc. Našū was in Cairo when he achieved this translation.[146] In 1754, Našū was asking Yūsuf Mark, in a letter sent from Cairo, for a list of the Patriarchs of the Church of Antioch, which he needed for a historical work that he had started to write.[147]

The book begins with praises to God, then follow an unsigned presentation of the author and its work translated into Arabic and printed here, the text, and an epilogue.

The Syrian printers who worked on these books are also mentioned: *Miḫā'īl bi-zayy* [*Bizzī*?] *rāhib min bilād Kūrat al-Ḍahab min mu'āmalat Ṭarābulus al-Šām wa-l-šammās Ǧirǧis al-ḥalabiyy tawābi' al-baṭriyark al-'Anṭākiyy kīriyū kīr Sīlbistrus al-kulliyy al-ġibṭa*, i.e., "Michael, in the habit of a monk (Bazzī?) from the city of Kūrat al-Ḍahab, county of Tripoli in Syria, and deacon George of Aleppo, companions of the Patriarch of Antioch, His Beatitude Kyriu Kyr Sylvester".

As I mentioned before, on May 3, 1913, Ioan Bianu, the director of the B.A.R., informed his colleagues of the Romanian Academy about Charon's present of this

146 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 219–223.
147 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 278.

book (CRV 250C + 250D), which he declared to be a true revelation, since "of the existence of an Arabic press in Iași we had no knowledge until now."[148]

Under the decorative elements of the last page of text (second text), there is a stamp inscribed with the words: "Exlibris Bibliotecæ Petri ad Vincula". Therefore, this book previously belonged to the Roman Catholic parish of Sanctus Petrus ad Vincula ('Saint Peter in Chains'). This church, known today as San Pietro in Vincoli, is a minor basilica in Rome, known for hosting Michelangelo's statue of Moses (an element of the tomb of Pope Julius II). The church had an associated convent which probably owned a library.

This is an extremely rare book. The National Library of Austria owns a copy, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana another.[149] Al-Maʿlūf mentions that a copy was preserved in the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Damascus, but today it is not to be found.[150]

4. Eustratios Argentis, *Kitāb al-ʿašā al-Rabbānī* / *Book of the Lord's Supper*, Iași, completed on February 25, 1747, 240 pp.

This book contains a translation from Greek into Arabic of *Syntagma kata azimōn* (*Pronouncement against the unleavened bread*) by Eustratios Argentis, concerning the Holy Mystery of Eucharist and the controversy between the Orthodox and the Catholic about the unleavened bread. The Greek original was printed posthumously in Leipzig, in 1760, under the supervision of the hieromonk Gedeon of Cyprus. A part of this work was also translated by Sophronios of Acre, but his version only circulated in manuscripts.[151]

The book was printed at the expense of Ioan Mavrocordat, the Prince of Moldavia. The Arabic version was mostly achieved by Masʿad Našū. The Patriarch Sylvester contributed to the translation of the third part and wrote the foreword, where he related the circumstances of his travel to the Romanian Principalities, his presence in Iași in 1745, and his success in printing this book, despite opposition from the Catholics. A copy of the Arabic manuscript of Masʿad Našū came

148 Bianu, note in *AARPAD*, S. II, t. 35, 1912–1913, p. 114.

149 See its description in Tatay and Andriescu, *Carte românească veche și modernă la Roma, în Biblioteca Apostolică Vaticană (sec. XVII–XIX). Catalog*, p. 352–353. Charon probably found a second copy and presented it to Ioan Bianu in exchange of a title that was missing from the Vatican Library.

150 Al-Maʿlūf, "Maṭbāʿa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʿarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 56.

151 *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 97–98.

into the ownership of ʻAbdallāh Zāḫir, who wrote in 1745 a refutation of Argentis's opinions, preserved in several copies.[152]

This is an extremely rare book. We know of a single copy today, in the collections of the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.[153] Al-Maʻlūf declared that he saw a copy of *Kitāb al-ʻašā al-Rabbānī* in Damascus, in the library of the Melkite Greek Catholic Cathedral of the Dormition of Our Lady (not to be found).

5. *ʾAʻmāl al-mağmaʻayn al-kanīsiyayn al-munʻaqidayn fī-l-Qusṭanṭīniyya bi-šaʾn ẓuhūr al-kāṯūlik bayna ṣufūf al-masīḥiyyīn al-ʾanṭākiyyīn / Acts of the two Church Synods held in Constantinople concerning the advent of the Catholics amidst the Antiochian Christians*, Iași, 1747.

This book, which is enigmatic, presumably contains the Acts of the Synod of Constantinople convened by Patriarch Jeremiah III in 1723, and of those of the Synod of 1727, presided over by Patriarch Paisios. Among other issues, both synods discussed the status of the Church of Antioch. In the final part of this book, five brief doctrinal works were included, which contain the reasons for rejecting the five "novelties" or "inventions" (Ar. *mustaḥdiṯāt*) introduced by the Catholics to the original Christian dogmas. They are followed by an Orthodox Creed.[154] Assad Rustum, in his *Kanīsat madīnat Allāh ʾAnṭākiya al-ʻUẓmā*, reproduced the last pages of this book.[155]

We know of no surviving copy of this book.

6.4 Books Printed at Beirut after 1750

I have included here only the books that I have surveyed (4.1. and 4.2.) or have found information about in trusted sources, i.e., the above-mentioned Arabic book records and catalogs (4.3.). Additionally, a second edition of the Psalter, a Horologion, and a *Book of Christian Teachings*, apparently printed in 1753, were

152 Ibid., p. 122.

153 Recently identified by Samuel Noble. My attempts to obtain a scan of this book for research purposes has been unsuccessful so far.

154 Al-Maʻlūf, "Maṭbaʻa rūmāniyya al-urtūduksiyya al-ʻarabiyya al-anṭākiyyā", p. 56; Simonescu, "Impression de livres arabes et karamanlis en Valachie et en Moldavie au XVIII^{e} siècle", p. 62.

155 Rustum, *Kanīsat madīnat Allāh ʾAnṭākiya al-ʻUẓmā*, t. 3, p. 146–148.

also mentioned in Arabic sources over the last century, but no details are given about them and no copies are available in the public domain.[156]

1. *Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Šarīf al-manṭūq bi-hi min al-Rūḥ al-Quds ʿalā fam al-Nabiyy wa-l-Malik Dāwūd wa-ʿiddatu-hu miʾat wa-ḫamsūna mazmūr*^{an} / *The Holy Book of the Psalms inspired by the Holy Spirit, speaking through the mouth of David the Prophet and King, and their number is one hundred and fifty*, Beirut, 1752, 25 pp. + [3] + 367 pp.

The comments that I present below are based on the copy preserved at the Uppsala University Library.[157] This is a reedited version of the Psalter printed by Athanasios Dabbās in Aleppo in 1706, which had a wide circulation in the Levant.

The title recorded in its catalogue is: "Brief Book on the Christian teaching; The Book of the Divine Psalms inspired by the Holy Spirit, speaking through David the Prophet and the King; concluded in ten chants." It was catalogued under the name of ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī ('the Antiochian'), the eminent scholar and translator active in the 11th century,[158] who had revised an earlier Arabic version of the Book of Psalms.[159] The unexpected fact that a book printed in the mid-18th century was recorded under the name of an 11th century translator, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, could be explained by its connection to the *editio princeps* of Aleppo, 1706. According to the opening pages, the text was revised by Sophronios of Kilis

156 Prof. Joseph Zeitoun, on his website https://josephzeitoun.com, mentions that these books are still preserved in Syrian monasteries and churches. Hopefully, the TYPARABIC team will be able to survey them while the project is still under way.

157 On the University of Uppsala, Pierre Deschamps wrote in 1870: "L'Université d'Upsal est encore l'une des plus importantes d'Europe; c'est pour tous les pays du Nord le véritable '*Emporium Scientiarum*'. Plusieurs de ses professeurs jouissent d'une réputation méritée; mérite et renommée qui doivent être bien réels, puisque les Français eux-mêmes, si dédaigneux de ce qui n'est pas la France, ont été forces de saluer leurs beaux travaux littéraires et scientifiques". See Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne et moderne*, col. 1287.

158 It is somewhat unexpected for the researcher of Arabic printing in the 18th century to find a book placed under the name of an 11th century translator. Nevertheless, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's version is precisely the one that was printed uninterruptedly until late in the 19th century, its last edition being probably that of 1888, in the Franciscan press of Jerusalem. See Charon, *Le Rite byzantin dans les Patriarcats melkites*, p. 132; Graf, *GCAL* I, 1944, p. 116–119; *HMLÉM* III.1, p. 217.

159 See Alexander Treiger, "From Theodore Abu Qurra to Abed Azrié: the Arabic Bible in Context," in Miriam Hjälm (ed.), *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, Leiden, 2018, p. 11–57, at p. 18–21 and 43.

and Elias Faḫr at the request of Yūsuf Mark, who aspired to print an improved Arabic text.[160]

The text comprises the 150 canonical Psalms divided into twenty kathismata, then Psalm 151 and the ten odes (*taṣābīḥ*) traditionally added at the end. Deacon ʻAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl followed the Septuagint version in his translation. The kathismata were revised by Athanasios Dabbās for his Aleppo edition.[161]

The title on the first page of the Psalter of 1752 is identical to that of Dabbās's version of 1706 (Fig. 43). The foreword placed after the title page opens with praises to God and concludes with brief prayers (Fig. 44). Pages 41 to 43 contain a text attributed to Sophronios of Acre where details about the coming into being of this book are provided.

> The humble Sophronios, metropolitan of Acre, stated the following: 'When the honourable Yūsuf Mark of Tripoli asked my advice on the *Book of Psalms inspired by the Holy Spirit*, translated from Greek into Arabic a long time ago by the late deacon ʻAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, having surveyed the said book I noticed that it contained errors that occurred later because of copyists, for they did not know the meaning of certain words that resemble each other when they are hand-written and then copied, but vary in their meaning and their correct and precise understanding. Thus, [in the Arabic version] the desired meaning can turn out differently than the original one in the Greek form, such as it was composed or written in the text. And even if certain predecessors of ours[162] corrected some of the mistakes by comparing the text with the Greek one, others remained uncorrected, as they were not well-versed in Classical Arabic writing. […] Therefore, I started carefully to correct the text in order to make it match the old original, as much as I was able, and this under the supervision of Deacon Elias Faḫr, the secretary [logothetes] of the Antiochian Apostolic See; I preserved the phrases and words that people used years and decades ago, *i.e.*, the way they were written in the old copies. […] This Arabic version is similar to the Greek original, after the revision of the Arabic texts and phrases, word for word. I have discarded whatever had been added and I put back whatever was missing from it.

Indeed, the text of the 1752 Psalter differs from the one printed by Dabbās. The foreword is a different one than that composed by ʻAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, and the one in the Aleppo edition. In that edition we see the title: "The Ninth Chant to the Lady, *Theotokos* (*li-s-Sayyida al-Thāwuṭūkus*)", while in 1752 (p. 361) it goes: "The Ninth Chant to the Lady, Mother of God" (*li-s-Sayyida Wālidat Allāh*). This alteration could have occurred because of the new editor's wish to "Arabicize" the text, leaving aside the Greek loan words previously used by Arab Christians,

160 As noted also by Panchenko, *Arab Orthodox Christians under the Ottomans*, p. 489.

161 *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 146. On the Beirut books, see also Šayḫū, "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", 3, 1900, 6, p. 501–508.

162 This is probably an allusion to Athanasios Dabbās.

which were not comprehensible anymore – to the common reader, at least. Therefore, while revising the *Psalter* for a new edition, he had in mind not only the clergy but also the common people.

Next, the title mentions the ten odes that conclude the book and the year 1751 of the Christian era, "in the time of His Holiness Father Kīriyū Kīr Sylvester, the blessed and great Patriarch of Antioch, under the care of his honorable and revered vicar, *šayḫ* Yūnus Nīqūlā."[163]

Pages have fifteen lines each, enclosed in a double frame, and text printed in black ink, with red ink for titles; ornamental elements appear inside the text: stars, friezes, vines, vignettes, etc.

Before the Psalter text, on p. 1–36, there is a section that contains texts absent from previous Psalter books. The first three lines are filled with the Arabic alphabet in the standard order of the letters, while lines 4 and 5 give the alphabet in an unusual arrangement: two by two letters in one direction, until the middle of the alphabet, and then the other half of them, similarly arranged (Fig. 45). This was probably a method for pupils to practice the correct order of the Arabic alphabet. Here is a testimony to the teaching function of the *Psalter* in Arab Christian communities: this was a handbook and an exercise-book for learning the Arabic language and script.

The text continues with a *Brief Teaching on the Christian Faith* opening with the title: *On the Christian's Way and the Sign of the Holy Cross*.

Lines 6 to 13 comprise: the Trisagion or Angelic Hymn; the Orthodox Evening prayer;[164] the invocation "God have mercy on us", three times; "Glory to God, and so on". On the last line, the prayer "Our Father Who art in Heaven" starts, and it continues on page 2. These are all prayers that Christians read at home, privately.

Between two ornamental vignettes on page 2 we see: "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit". Below, in red ink, is the title: "Brief teaching on the Christian faith", and then, in black ink: "On the Christian's way and the sign of the Holy Cross." From line 9 on there are questions and answers introduced by letters printed in red ink: *s* for *su'āl*, „question", followed by *ǧ* for *ǧawāb*, 'answer' (Fig. 46). The first question is: „Are you a Christian?" and the answer is: "Yes, glory to the Holy God". Then the chain of questions and answers goes on,

163 The trustee of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Beirut, sponsor of the press at the Saint George Monastery.

164 "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy SpiritGhost, both now and ever and to the ages of ages, Amen! All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, be merciful on our sins. Master, forgive our transgressions. Holy One, visit us and heal our infirmities, for your name's sake."

as customary in an Orthodox Christian catechism: "What is the meaning of being a Christian?" – "A Christian is the person who confesses the faith in Jesus Christ and His Law."[165] There are forty-five questions followed by answers – some brief, some 1–3 pages long. At the end there is a vignette that completes the final page of the text, 26, erroneously printed 25. Placing this catechism as an introduction to the Psalter confirms the educational purpose of the book; it also goes to show that the Patriarch Sylvester, who supervised the printing of this book, followed an Eastern European model: in the Romanian Principalities,[166] Ukraine, and Russia, the Orthodox catechism was used as a textbook in church schools.

The library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch in Damascus preserved a miscellany, MS nr. 221,[167] where the first text is a *Teaching of the Orthodox Christian faith, translated from Greek into Arabic* by Sophronios of Kilis. The text is divided in three parts that contain 128 questions and their answers. As for the questions, Sophronios's version is similar to the one printed in the Psalter of Beirut. A work with the same content had circulated in manuscript form in present-day Lebanon and Syria at the end of the 17th century.[168]

In 1675, Christodulos, the bishop of Gaza and Ramla,[169] prepared the first Arabic translation of the Greek version of the Metropolitan Petru Movilă's *Orthodox Confession*.[170] Petru Movilă, the Metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia, presented to a council of metropolitans and bishops in Kyiv, on September 8–18,

165 Lit., Ar. *šarī'a*.

166 Between 1508 and 1830, ninety-six editions of the Psalter were printed in the Romanian Principalities, cf. Doru Bădără, "O ediție necunoscută a *Psaltirii în versuri* a lui Dosoftei", *Revista de istorie*, 41, 1988, 3, p. 282.

167 This miscellany is described in *al-Maḫṭūṭāt al-'arabiyya fī maktabat Baṭriyarkiyyat Anṭākiyya wa-Sā'ir al-Mašriq li-l-Rūm al-'Urṯūḏuks*, Beirut, 1988, p. 38. Its third section is a foreword to the *Book of Psalms* composed by 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl.

168 This text is preserved at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Damascus in MS 188, a 19th century copy of 99 folios r/v, cf. *al-Maḫṭūṭāt al-'arabiyya fī maktabat Baṭriyarkiyyat Anṭākiyya*, p. 32. In 1905 it was in the possession of Gregory, the metropolitan of Tripoli, later, the Patriarch Gregory IV of Antioch (seal of 1906). The Ukrainian diplomat and orientalist Yuriy Kochubey, who obtained a copy of this manuscript, described it in his article "Pour une histoire des contacts entre l'Orient Orthodoxe et l'Ukraine", published in Petrova and Feodorov (eds.), *Europe in Arabic Sources: The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch*, p. 110–112.

169 He seemingly succeeded Paisios Ligaridis on this See.

170 See the edition of Movilă's "Orthodox Confession" in Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-huitième siècle*, posthumous work completed and published by Mgr Louis Petit and Hubert Pernot, t. 2, Paris, 1928, p. 68–75; *HMLÉM* IV.1, p. 198–199. On the reedition of the Greek version, in February 1699, and its consequences for the anti-Latin discourse of the time, see Olar, *La boutique de Théophile*, p. 334–339.

1640,[171] a *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* in Latin: *Expositio fidei Ecclesiae Russiae Minoris*. Translated into Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Romanian, English, Dutch, German, and Hungarian, as a catechism for pastoral teaching,[172] this text had a wide outreach, granting the Metropolitan Petru Movilă eminence and fame across the Orthodox world. Between 1691 and 1932, it was printed in the Romanian lands in seventeen editions: ten in Bucharest, two in Neamț, three in Sibiu, one in Buzău, and one in Iași.[173]

An Arabic-speaking bishop of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Christodulos translated several Greek theological works, including the book of Meletios Syrigos against the Calvinists, *Orthodoxos antirhissis kata ton calvinikon kefalaion…* (printed at Bucharest in 1690 by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem).[174] His version bears the title: *Kitāb i'tirāf al-ra'y al-mustaqīm*, "The Book of the Confession of the Orthodox Faith" and it is made up of three parts, on *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*.[175] The author of the Greek text is named *Mūgīlās*. The Arabic version comprises

171 Reporting on the council convened in May 1640 in Kyiv by Parthenios I, Émile Picot suggests that Peter Movilă wrote the *Orthodox Confession* during the course of the council's activity; see Émile Picot, in Émile Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-huitième siècle*, t. I, Paris, 1918, p. 73. See also Antoine Malvy and Marcel Viller, S. J. (eds., introd., and notes), "La Confession orthodoxe de Pierre Moghila, Métropolite de Kyiv (1633–1646), approuvée par les patriarches grecs du XVII[e] siècle. Texte latin inédit," *Orientalia Christiana*, 10, 1927, 39, p. I–CXXXI, 1–178, and p. XLVI, n. 2.

172 Peter Movilă's reasons for composing this text were connected by early commentators to a reaction against Cyril Lukaris's earlier printed *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* (dated March 1629, in Constantinople, and printed in Latin and Greek in Geneva in 1633), which allegedly contained Calvinist beliefs. See Malvy and Viller, "La Confession orthodoxe de Pierre Moghila, Métropolite de Kyiv (1633–1646)", p. XXIX.

173 The first Latin edition was printed in Amsterdam in 1662: *Orthodoxa Confessio catholicæ atque apostol. ecclesiæ orientalis a Pet. Mogila compos., a Meletio Syrigo aucta et mutata, gr. c. præf. Nectarii*. The original Latin text was translated into Romanian (the first translation into a national language) by Radu and Ștefan Greceanu: *Pravoslavnica mărturisire*, printed in Buzău in 1691. A new critical edition was published by Nicolae M. Popescu and Gheorghe I. Moisescu (eds.), in Petru Movilă, *Mărturisirea ortodoxă: text grec inedit (Ms. Parisinus 1265), text român (ed. Buzău 1691)*, foreword by Tit Simedrea, Bucharest, 1942–1944; 2[nd] ed., Iași, 2001. Other editions and Romanian translations: *Mărturisirea de credință a Bisericii Ortodoxe*, Romanian translation by Alexandru Elian, Bucharest, 1981 (reprinted at Chișinău, 1996, and in *Sinodul de la Iași și Sf. Petru Movilă, 1642–2002*, Iași, 2002); Petru Movilă, *Împăcarea Bisericii ortodoxe*, Ștefan Lupan (trans.) and Vlad Chiriac (ed.), Iași, 2002. See also Dragoș Mârșanu, "Old News Concerning Petru Movilă's 'Orthodox Confession': The First Edition Revisited", *Archæus: Études d'histoire des religions*, 10, 2006, 1–2, p. 273–286.

174 In Modern Greek, a second version, done by the author himself; see ibid.

175 The text was revised by the priest (*qass*) Leontius, a nephew of the bishop of Hamā, who would also become a bishop of this city, in 1733.

a foreword reporting on the approval of the text in Iași and Constantinople, a note composed by the translator, an opening word by Patriarch Nektarios of Jerusalem that he had written in 1662 in Constantinople, and the Arabic translation of the approval issued by the Holy Synod on March 11, 1643, also signed by the Eastern Patriarchs. This document was also signed by Makarios III Ibn al-Za'īm, the Patriarch of Antioch at the time. Sophronios of Kilis may have used Christodulos's Arabic version as well, leaving aside the foreword and abridging the text of the *Confession*. A comparison between the two Arabic versions could result in a record of common elements.[176]

The Psalms start on page 40,[177] with the first title inside a frame made of vignettes. The number of the Psalm[178] and its title are printed in red ink, as well as the words *li-l-Sayyida*, "To the Holy Lady", within the kathismata. A prayer to the Mother of God always follows these words. At the end of certain Psalms is present the word *Doksa*, "Glory", in red ink. After Psalm 150 the twentieth kathismata is given, then Psalm 151, with the title: "Psalm outside the number sequence, uttered by David when he fought and defeated Goliath." Starting with page 335, the ten odes follow: two of the Prophet Moses, one of the Prophet Samuel's mother, then those of the Prophets Avvakum, Isaiah, Jonas, of the Three Holy Youths, the Holy Mother of God, and Zachariah.

From page 364 to page 367, there is a *Final Word* containing explanations on: the origin of the Psalms, their translation from Hebrew to Greek, then the translation of the other included texts from Greek, with citations from the Old Testament indicated in red ink ("Jacob, 3", "Jeremiah, 13", etc.) placed vertically outside the text frame. Finally, some details are provided regarding the way the translation from Greek to Arabic was done. This text, absent from the Aleppo edition, is probably due to the editor, Yūsuf Mark, and it was written especially for the new edition of Beirut.

The text ends on p. 400 with two phrases, the first one in red ink: "Glory to the One God", the second, in black ink: "Completed on 21 of the month of May, the year 1752 of the Christian era." Underneath this last phrase, a librarian (probably) wrote in French, in black ink: "Fini le 21 May l'année 1752" (Fig. 47).

176 For a detailed discussion of Peter Movilă's work as a source for this section of the Beirut Psalter, see Ioana Feodorov, "Was Peter Movilă's *Confession of the Orthodox Faith* a Source for the Teachings on the Orthodox Faith Printed in the 1752 Beirut Psalter?", in Feodorov, Heyberger and Noble (eds.), *Arabic Christianity between the Ottoman Levant and Eastern Europe*, p. 193–223.
177 But the numbering restarts from page 1.
178 This number is sometimes expressed both with letters and figures.

The continuity of the circulation of Antim the Iberian's typographic material in the Arab Christian communities of the East Mediterranean lands is noticeable in the Beirut Psalter. On page 1 of the Beirut Psalter there is an engraving of the *Deisis* icon derived from the one created at Antim the Iberian's press but clumsily copied, and then printed as a mirror image (Fig. 48). The original image was printed by Antim the Iberian at Snagov in the Akathist of 1698 (Fig. 49) and the *Proskynetarion of the Holy Mount Athos*, in 1701 (Fig. 50). The same woodblock was used again in the 1701 Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies (Fig. 51).[179] It was included afterwards in several other books printed in Antim's workshops:

- *Ceasoslov slavonesc*, Bucharest, 1703.
- *Învățătură pe scurt pentru taina pocăinții*, 1705.
- *Învățătură besericească*, Târgoviște, 1710.
- *Ceasoslov*, Târgoviște, 1715.[180]

For the Beirut Psalter, the matrix was cut by a beginner's hand, which resulted in a clumsy appearance of the new image. Moreover, it was set in the wrong position on the page (right way round), leading to a reversal in the position of the two Divine Persons near the Christ, *i.e.*, the Mother of God and St John the Baptist. This unusual and non-canonical representation would have been avoided by an experienced printer (such as those of Iași and Bucharest). Apparently, the Arab printer was not aware of the fact that when using an image copied from a book the new matrix or printing plate created should be reversed or flipped across its horizontal axis (as a mirror-image) to obtain a correct printed image, similar to the original. Reversed images are also present in early books printed in Europe, before this skill of reversing images when making woodcuts or printing plates was properly developed.

On page 38, between the opening section (p. 1–36) and the beginning of the Psalter, an engraving of an icon of David the Prophet is printed, facing in the other direction than customary, for the same reason explained above (Fig. 52). The correct representation, which was obviously the model followed by the Beirut Psalter master engraver of the Beirut Psalter, was printed by Antim the Iberian in 1694 in his Psalter of Bucharest (Fig. 53) and again in the Psalter of Snagov, 1700. In the Beirut Psalter, the inscription above the image, "PRO DAVID", in Cyrillic

179 See the reproduction in ibid., p. 259, Fig. 6, and Chițulescu, Bădără, Croitoru, Dumitrescu and Feodorov, *Antim Ivireanul, Opera tipografică*, p. 93.

180 See the reproductions in Ioana Feodorov, "Beginnings of Arabic Printing in Ottoman Syria (1706–1711)", p. 260, Fig. 7 (illustration of Bucharest, 1703) and *Antim Ivireanul, Opera tipografică*, p. 115, 133, 158, and 194 (respectively).

script (and a Romanian form), was printed in reverse, most likely by setting the woodblock in an incorrect position. It seems that the printer did not use the mirror image technique consistently while typesetting.[181] The frame of the engraving has a more complicated model than the first engraving: it is decorated with the thistle pattern typical of Ukrainian presses – and the Romanian ones that borrowed it. There are some similarities of composition with the icon of *David the Prophet and King* engraved at Antim's press.[182] In the Aleppo Psalter of 1706, David's icon, signed by a Greek engraver, follows a different pattern. We do not know what model was used for the engraving included in the Psalter of Beirut, but it was presumably obtained by copying a printed model, in the same technique as the first icon.

For the time being, all elements lead to the conclusion that the woodcuts for engravings contained by the Beirut Psalter were carved in Bucharest by a less skilled master and used in printing, possibly in Beirut, by an unexperienced typographer.

Nasrallah is among the few to have mentioned a second edition of the Beirut Psalter, without indicating a year.[183] A second edition printed in Beirut was also mentioned in the magazine *al-Hilāl* edited by Ǧirǧī Zeydān, possibly with Nasrallah as a unique source.[184] No copy of this book is known to exist today.

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen was in the possession of a copy of this book when he drew his list of acquisitions of Aleppo in 1805. He describes it as an in-8°, XXXII + 367 p., printed in 1751, and adds that the printing quality was better than that of Aleppo, but poorer than that of the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra.[185]

Schnurrer recorded in 1811 the information given by Seetzen about the Beirut Psalter that he had brought from his travels east.[186] Zenker repeated in 1846 Schnurrer's description, as mentioned in Seetzen's list.[187] It seems that neither

181 Luminița Kövari pointed out to me that the inscription below, "IOAN TIP" (perhaps < Rom. *tipograf*, "printer"), is correctly printed except for one letter, A, which is reversed.

182 See the reproductions in *Antim Ivireanul, Opera tipografică*, p. 49 and 77.

183 Nasrallah, "Maṭābiʿ al-Malakiyyīn", p. 462.

184 Louis Cheikho cites *al-Hilāl* in "Tārīḫ fann al-ṭibāʿa fī al-Mašriq", *Al-Machriq*, 3, 1900, 6, p. 253.

185 Seetzen, "Nachricht von den in der Levante befindlichen Buchdruckereyen von U. J. Seetzen in Haleb 1805", col. 648.

186 Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica*, p. 383–384, nr. 354.

187 This information was repeated by other historians of early printing. In Bucharest, Dan Simonescu used, in order to describe this hypothetical book, the data provided by Zenker.

Schnurrer nor Zenker saw the Psalter of Beirut. Nor did Joseph Nasrallah, who cites Schnurrer (and Seetzen) when commenting on the production of the Beirut press.[188]

2. *Akathist*, Beirut [?], [ca. 1752], 53 pp.

As I mentioned before, I was shown in 2017 by its owner, an antiquarian and book-collector, an Akathist to the Mother of God printed in Arabic, in a small format, sized 10.5 x 16 cm, close to an in-16^{0} (10 x 17 cm), with no front matter and no closing page, printed in black ink with Arabic type, 15 lines per page, with catchword on every page, below on the left (Fig. 54). The binding is made of leather and cardboard, with a triangular clasp, sewn with silk thread, and the spine is decorated with a nice pattern.

The text is a translation put in writing after many centuries of oral circulation, based on the Greek original attributed to Saint Romanos the Melodist, a son of Syrian Christianity (Homs, end of the 5th century – Constantinople, ca. 555–565).[189]

To discover which was the press that produced this book, I compared the Arabic types with the ones used for books printed in Snagov, Bucharest, Aleppo, Beirut, Istanbul, and several printed earlier, in the 16th century, in Venice. I could not find anywhere the same set of type as in the Akathist. A few of the types look similar to some in the colligate volume holding the works of Nektarios of Jerusalem and Eustratios Argentis that was printed in Iași in 1746 by the Patriarch Sylvester. But if this book is one of his printed works, then newly made type was added to the initial set of Arabic type, possibly worn out.

On the first page of the Arabic Akathist, before the text starts, there is an engraving of the *Annunciation*. The fact that the page was numbered '4' (٤) in pencil may suggest that there originally *existed* a front matter. The same engraving of the *Annunciation* is present in several books printed in the Romanian Principalities between 1698 and 1745 (Fig. 56). The first occurrence is in the Romanian Akathist printed by Antim the Iberian in 1698 at Snagov, which is, however, an in-8^{o} size (Fig. 57).

188 Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban*, p. 46, n. 2 and 4.

189 See Samuel Noble, "The Development of the Akathist Hymn in Arabic", in Dipratu and Noble (eds.), *Arabic-Type Books Printed in Wallachia, Istanbul, and Beyond*, Berlin, 2023 (forthcoming).

The engraving was printed again in Romanian workshops:[190]

- *Ceaslov slavonesc și românesc*, [Bucharest], [1703], printed by Antim;
- *Ceasoslov* [Horologion], Târgoviște, 1715, printed by Gheorghe Radovici (Fig. 58);
- *Acatist cătră Prea Sfânta Născătoare*..., [Buzău], [1743], printed by Ioan Stoicovici (Fig. 59);
- *Ceasoslov*, Râmnic, 1745, printed by Dimitrie Pandovici;
- *Ceaslov*, Râmnic,1753 (an almost identical replica, signed 'Pop. Costandin);
- *Ceaslov*, Bucharest, 1767;
- *Ceaslov*, Bucharest, 1777.

However, it is not present in the Horologion printed by Antim and Athanasios Dabbās in Bucharest in 1702, nor in the Aleppo books of 1706-1711: presumably, it was not brought to Syria by Dabbās. Nevertheless, it was created in a Romanian press to which the Patriarch Sylvester and his Syrian apprentices had access, in Iași or Bucharest.

At the end of the text, on the last page of the book, an Orthodox bishop's insignia (emblem) is included (Fig. 60). As I discussed above, the Orthodox crozier and cross are placed in an X shape under the Orthodox miter. Lambrequins and crowned figures are baroque, influenced by the Western style, or perhaps Ukrainian heraldry. In the center of the emblem are clearly visible the consonants of the Greek name 'Silvestros'. This is an element that I consider decisive in placing this bewildering book among the Arabic books printed by the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch.

In all probability, some decorative elements of the Arabic Akathist that are identical to those created by Ukrainian masters also came from Romanian presses. It is the case of a typographic sign placed above and below the *Annunciation*, a pattern used in various graphic combinations and positions since the first half of the 17th century. It is also present in books printed at the Pechersk Lavra, from where it migrated to Moldavia and Wallachia. Another element is repeated in a frieze: the thistle flower or burgeons, common in Ukrainian and Romanian printed books of the 17th–18th centuries, visible on the first page and many others (Fig. 54). It was also included in the Beirut Psalter of 1752. The third decorative element shared by the Arab Akathist and the one of Antim the Iberian (1698) is a frieze made up of a sequence of oval and round shapes (Fig. 55). The complex four-ray star, or small cross, is absent from the books printed in the Romanian Principalities, but we find it in the Beirut Psalter

190 The following list was drawn for me by Luminița Kövari.

of 1752. This shape could have been created by Yūsuf Mark and his team, either in Bucharest or in Beirut. In any case, the Arabic Akathist and the Beirut *Psalter* share several decorative elements. This makes it highly probable that they were printed by the same team, or in the same printing press.[191]

Another clue that can help find the press where the *Akathist* was produced is the watermark of the paper. It is barely visible, difficult to reconstruct, since to obtain an in-16° format the paper folio needed to be folded many times, and thus the contour of the filigree shape was hidden to a large extent. Tudor Tiron, a Romanian expert in heraldry, suggested to me that this is a '*lion rampant*'. One of the most common watermarks applied to paper produced in Western and Central Europe, it could have travelled to Eastern Europe and even to the Levant, as the same paper was used both for manuscripts and for printing books.[192] A *lion rampant* shape that is quite close to the watermark under scrutiny is recorded in Edward Heawood, *Watermarks Mainly of the 17th and 18th Centuries. Monumenta chartae papyraceae historiam illustrantia*.[193] The reference is to a book printed in 1732,[194] which matches the period of the Patriarch Sylvester's printing activities. The subject, though, is vast and requires the expertise of a watermark specialist.[195]

A hand-written note at the end of the book states that it was printed in Wallachia, cf. Schnurrer's catalogue, no. 266. Actually, as far as Arabic books printed in Wallachia go, Schnurrer only recorded in his *Bibliotheca Arabica* the

191 For the illustrations of these visual art elements, see Feodorov, "Beginnings of Arabic printing in Ottoman Syria (1706–1711)".

192 The website of the International Association of Paper Historians, a body that connects the members of a large community of paper specialists, provides an extensive list of watermark catalogues from all over the world.

193 In t. 1, Hilversum, 1950, p. 19, nr. 12. Vera Tchentsova indicated it to me.

194 F. Petis de la Croix, *Istoria del Gran Genghizchan*, Venice, 1737, cf. Edward Heawood, *Watermarks Mainly of the 17th and 18th Centuries. Monumenta chartae papyraceae historiam illustrantia* (reprint), Hilversum and Amsterdam, 2003, p. 63.

195 I have tentatively searched some sources, including the ones referring to paper that circulated in the Romanian Principalities, basically used for manuscripts: Alexandru Mareș, *Filigranele hîrtiei întrebuințate în Țările Române în secolul al XVI-lea* (Bucharest, 1987). Nothing close came up. As for the paper that circulated in Central Europe and the Ottoman Empire, several works can prove useful in a future search for this watermark: Asparouh Velkov and Stefan Andreev, *Les Filigranes dans les documents Ottomans*, Sofia, 2005; Stefan Andreev, *Les Filigranes dans les documents Ottomans: couronne*, Sofia, 2007; A. Zonghi, *The Watermarks*, *Monumenta chartae papyraceae historiam illustrantia*, vol. 3, Hilversum, 1953; D. and J. Harlfinger, *Wasserzeichen aus Griechischen Handschriften*, vol. 1, Berlin, 1974; E. Laucevičius, *Popierius Lietuvoje XV-XVIII a. Atlasas*, Vilnius, 1967. I am grateful to Vera Tchentsova for the information and bibliographic suggestions that she provided to me.

Book of the Divine Liturgies printed by Antim the Iberian in Snagov (1701), in Arabic and Greek.[196]

Some information on the circulation of this book can be gleaned from elements added to it in the course of time. A paper stamp fixed on the interior of the back cover indicates that the book belonged to Frederick North, 5th earl of Guilford (no. 122 in the catalogue of his collection). This is the same person who in 1824 acquired in Aleppo a copy of the manuscript containing Paul of Aleppo's *Travels of Patriarch Macarius III of Antioch*, which was later in the care of Francis Cunningham Belfour, who translated it into English.[197] Frederick North, the son of the prime minister of Great Britain during the American Revolution, was a member of the House of Lords, where he replaced his brother in 1791. He travelled to Syria, Greece, and the Island of Corfu, where, in 1824, he founded the Ionian Academy.[198] On his return home, he brought to London many manuscripts and books that he had acquired in Oriental bazars and antiquarians' shops. Since Frederic North died in 1827, the Arabic Akathist must have been printed before that date; therefore, it could not have come from one of the presses installed in Beirut by the Catholic or Protestant communities, which only started working in the second half of the 19th century.

What we can ascertain for now, based on the information presented above, is that the Arabic Akathist was printed in the 18th century using typographic implements that were created in Wallachian or Moldavian printing presses, or recreated based on models from books printed there, and that the Patriarch Sylvester was involved in this either by commissioning the book, or by paying for its publication – possibly both.

3. *The Book of the Divine Liturgies*, Beirut, ca. 1753.

This book was apparently printed around 1753 in Beirut, at the press established at the Saint George Church with the financial support of *šayḫ* Yūnus Nīqūla al-Ǧebeylī (or Abū 'Askar, d. 1787). Information about this book is scarce.

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen was the first to mention a Book of the Divine Liturgies printed in Beirut and is apparently the only one to have examined it. The information that he offered was repeated by Chr. F. Schnurrer in his *Bibliotheca Arabica* (p. 383–384), by Pierre Deschamps, *Dictionnaire de géographie ancienne*

196 This is recorded on p. 266–272, no. 266. He did not mention the Horologion of Bucharest, 1702.
197 See Ioana Feodorov, "Chapter 12: Paul of Aleppo", in Noble and Treiger (eds.), *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World 700–1700. An Anthology of Sources*, p. 252–275.
198 Lucy Braggiotti (ed.), *Icons Itinerant. Corfu, 14th–18th century*, Corfu, 1994, p. 191.

et moderne à l'usage du libraire et de l'amateur de livres (cols. 1182–1183), citing Schnurrer, and by Nasrallah, *L'imprimerie au Liban* (p. 46).

In the absence of any known copies, it is difficult to ascertain the model and specifics of this new edition. However, we may presume that it was based on the *editio princeps* of Snagov, 1701, printed by Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās, since in the same period a reedition was made of the Arabic text in their other joint work, the Horologion (*Kitāb al-'Ūrūlūğiyyūn*, Bucharest, 1702, originally in Greek and Arabic).[199]

199 Ioana Feodorov, "Livres arabes chrétiens imprimés par l'aide des Principautés Roumaines au début du XVIII[e] siècle. Répertoire commenté", *Chronos*, 34, 2016, p. 39–41.

7 Conclusions

Arabic Presses of the East, the Fruit of Mixed Feelings

As I explained above, Western historiography of the early Arabic printing mentions only as a minor episode, and not entirely clear, the joint work of Antim the Iberain and Athanasios Dabbās that allowed the printing of two books in Wallachia with Arabic type and Arabic texts and twelve titles afterwards in Aleppo. However important for the history of printing in general, and that of printing in the Middle East in particular, this topic was not researched much before the year 2000. The main reason for this neglect was the seemingly small impact that printing Arabic liturgical, theological, and polemical books for the Arabic-speaking Christians had in the 18th century, if considered in the greater picture of the cultural evolution of the Middle East under Ottoman rule. The Arabic presses of the 18th century did not appear to bring about a 'cultural revolution'. This is the conclusion of a recent account of the beginnings of Arabic printing in the East presented very briefly by Geoffrey Roper in his contribution to *The Book. A Global History*, edited by Michael F. Suarez, S. J., and H. R. Woudhuysen: "Their output was too small and intermittent to bring about any revolutionary change in book culture [...]".[1]

However, the effort to bring modernity to the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean on the eve of the 18th century and the correct understanding of the benefits of knowledge dissemination and learning improvement by means of the printed book should be appreciated for their real value in the history of civilization. They brought together Greek and Arab patriarchs, bishops, priests and monks of several Churches of the Middle East, princes and upper clergy of the Romanian Principalities, commanders of Ukraine, not to mention the innumerable printers, typographers, engravers, and binders of various nations who contributed, knowingly or unknowingly, to this joint effort.

The patronage work of the prince of Wallachia Constantin Brâncoveanu had significant consequences for the Arabic-speaking Christians in later centuries. The books that Athanasios Dabbās printed were reedited several times and laid the foundations for other versions published up to the end of the 19th century. The first editions of Aleppo were repeatedly used in revising the liturgical texts they contained. The Psalter of Aleppo was reprinted in several editions, as there

1 Geoffrey Roper, "The Muslim World", in Michael F. Suarez, S. J., and H. R. Woudhuysen (eds.), *The Book. A Global History*, Oxford, 2013, p. 543. Printing in Arabic in the 18th-century East (the Romanian Principalities, Syria and Istanbul) is addressed on p. 540–543.

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was a high demand for it in the Arabic-speaking communities of the Middle East, both Orthodox and Catholic-inclined. A copy of the Horologion once preserved in Istanbul was in the possession of the Maronite bishop Gabriel Farḥāt, according to a handwritten note inside. The copy of the Oktoechos of 1711 held by the B.A.R. was once in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Greek Catholics of Aleppo. Al-Maʿlūf states that he found three copies of the Book of the Divine Liturgies printed by the Patriarch Sylvester in monasteries of Syria, a Psalter printed in Beirut at the Patriarchal Monastery of Mār Elias Šuwayya (Lebanon), and, in Damascus, two copies of the *al-ʿAšā' al-Rabbānī* (*The Holy Supper*) of Eustratios Argentis published in 1747 in Iaşi (Moldavia). Other copies, now in libraries and collections across Europe and the United States, were brought from the Middle East by diplomats and traveling scholars, especially in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Athanasios Dabbās's printed books had a wide circulation after 1724, in both Greek Orthodox and in Greek Catholic communities, despite the tensions generated by the Western missionaries' efforts to attach the Christians of the Ottoman Empire to the Latin Church. It was noted that his entire editorial program comprised liturgical books that observed the Byzantine tradition and did not reflect any polemical intention. In the Gospel printed in 1706, he addressed the readers with a conciliatory expression: "To the devout brethren who are priests and laypeople living in the Arab lands." There is no proof that any of the books printed in his workshop was ever used as an instrument in the anti-Catholic or anti-Protestant disputes.[2] The only exception, for which he should not be held accountable, is the Patriarch Chrysanthos Notaras's assertion in the foreword to the *Sermons of Athanasios* (*Mawāʿiẓ ʾAṯanāsiyūs*, Aleppo, 1711) that the "enemies of the faith" (probably, the Jesuit missionaries) were spreading in the Middle East "false and dishonest beliefs".[3] After 1724, as a consequence of the division in the Church of Antioch, the Patriarch Sylvester's activities as head of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch were deeply marked by his anti-Latin views, revealed, among other things, in the editorial program that he conceived for the presses where he published Arabic books.[4]

2 Nasrallah, "Les imprimeries melchites au XVIIIe siècle", p. 231, n. 4; Gdoura, *Le début de l'imprimerie arabe à Istanbul et en Syrie*, p. 146.

3 Foreword, p. 6. Here, Chrysantos Notaras states, in reference to the books printed at the request of his uncle Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem: "These works serve as weapons that can defeat any attack against Orthodoxy, for it can be threatened by teachers who claim they are grace-bearing prophets […]".

4 *BRV* IV, p. 61–67; *HMLÉM* IV.2, p. 85–88; Dabbās and Raššū, *Tārīḫ al-ṭibāʿa al-ʿarabiyya fī al-Mašriq*, p. 121–125.

I have also discussed the fact that the Arabic-language texts printed by Antim the Iberian with Athanasios Dabbās and, later, by the Patriarch Sylvester, helped again by Moldavians and Wallachians, had a different destination than those printed in Western Europe. The typographers who worked in Rome, Venice, London, Paris, etc., produced books destined either for the missionary work in the Arabic-speaking communities, or to be sold as any common merchandise on the Eastern markets. Some became rarities intended for the Western European scholars interested in Oriental languages. On the contrary, the books that the Orthodox printed in Arabic were presented for free to the clergy and monastic communities, to be used for the very purposes they had been created: prayer and celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Thus, Constantin Brâncoveanu and Antim the Iberian contributed beyond their expectations to the spiritual advancement of the Arabic-speaking Christians, the modernization of their society, and an education towards their assuming an Arab identity.

It is worth remembering the acts of patronage of the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia who were natives of the Phanar quarter of Istanbul.[5] Constantin Mavrocordat set out for himself to build a "New Hellada" in the lands of the Gets, i.e., a country of elevated culture.[6] The generous acts that the bishops of the Romanian Principalities performed for the Eastern Churches confirms the validity of Marcu Beza's remarks in 1947:

> It is therefore a belatedly erroneous idea still persisting among British historians that the Phanariot epoch was one of ignorance and spoliation. The Ghicas, the Mavrocordatos, the Mavroghenis, the Sutzos, were all enlightened Princes, who cared much indeed for the welfare of the Rumanian provinces. In special Nicolas Mavrocordatos had founded at his own monastery of Vacaresti one of the greatest libraries in Europe, containing rare manuscripts such as the *Demonstratio Evangelica* by Eusebius; Johannes Lydus' *De Magistratibus Respublicae Romanae*, unique, now at the National Library of Paris; *The Psalms of David*, dating from the eleventh century, in white parchment with golden initial

5 Significantly, Michel Blivit commented on the importance of the Phanar quarter for the Orthodox Christians: "Mais c'est bien sur aussi la présence continue à Istanbul, dans le quartier du Phanar, du patriarcat œcuménique dont dépend une grande partie de la *diaspora* orthodoxe (Europe, Amérique etc.) qui fonde l'attachement des chrétiens de rite byzantin envers la grande mégalopole de la Corne d'Or (environ 15 millions d'habitants aujourd'hui!) et qui justifie amplement un dense et enrichissant voyage 'vers la ville', *Is-tin-boli– Istanbul*" (citing, for this etymology, Aristeidēs Pasadaios, *O Patriarchikos oikos tou oikumenikou thronou*, Thessaloniki, 1976), cf. Michel Balivet, "Le pèlerinage de Byzance-Istanbul", in idem, *Autour des Ottomans. Français, Mameluks, Grecs (XIV^e–XIX^e siècles)*, Istanbul, 2011, p. 40.

6 Erbiceanu, *Cronicari greci*, p. 319; Florin Constantiniu, "O nouă Heladă în Țara geților: cultura în timpul lui Constantin Mavrocordat", in *Constantin Mavrocordat, reformatorul*, 2nd ed., Bucharest, 2015, p. 133–146.

> letters and minutely painted headpieces, in my possession. It was partly during the reign of the Phanariots that the seeds of the later movements of Balkan liberation were sown in the Danubian provinces.[7]

As I mentioned before, the outcomes of the TYPARABIC project team's research will be published in a comprehensive catalogue in 2024, under the direction of Archimandrite Polycarp Chiţulescu, director of the Library of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Bucharest. Alongside a descriptive record of Christian books printed in the 18th century in Arabic, with Arabic type, in the Romanian Principalities and the Middle East, the contributors to this catalogue will consider the copy-specifics, as defined by Paul Needham in his study "Copy-Specifics in the Printing Shop" (Berlin and New York, 2010): "binding, rubrication (or lack of it), coloring of woodcuts (or lack of it), ownership marks of all kinds, readers' marks, emendations, and annotations".[8]

The elements of book art present in the Arabic printed texts, from Snagov to Beirut, are currently being inventoried and studied by a group of art historians in the TYPARABIC team. The undeniable influence of artistic models specific to the Eastern European presses – principally Ukraine and Serbia – is the first direction of this investigation. A second direction of research is connected to the Western-printed Arabic books of the 16th–17th centuries, where the printers of Eastern Europe, but also those of Ḫinšāra, looked for models. So far, an evident transfer of ornamental motifs from Italy to Moldavia and Wallachia by way of Poland and Ukraine has been documented. The similarities in visual art features that connect the Arabic books in the TYPARABIC project corpus and those printed in Rome, Venice, or Paris are only one of the fascinating themes surveyed by the art historians of the project team.

The circulation of the books presented above and their presence in libraries and collections worldwide is difficult to ascertain. Catalogues published in the past 30 years in Lebanon, for the most part, revealed their presence in libraries that belong to the various Churches and monastic communities. Beside the copies recorded by al-Maʿlūf in his article published in 1911, the available data mostly comes from catalogues where books are described but their location is not indicated, or the copies they surveyed are no longer available. The Romanian historian Virgil Cândea recorded a few copies in Syria and Lebanon during his trips there in 1968–1990, when he surveyed the collections of monasteries such as Dayr Šārūbīm and the Our Lady of Ṣaydnāyā, Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, Saint

7 Beza, *Heritage of Byzantium*, p. 99.

8 Needham, "Copy-Specifics in the Printing Shop", p. 9.

John the Baptist in Aleppo, Saint Thekla in Maʿlūla, Saint Elian and Saint George in Homs, etc. I have published the outcomes of his research in libraries worldwide in the new series of the work that he initiated, *Romanian Traces Abroad. Romanian Creations and Sources about the Romanians in Foreign Collections* (*Mărturii românești peste hotare. Creații românești și izvoare despre români în colecții din străinătate*).[9] He located such books in libraries in France, Lebanon, Great Britain, Syria, the Unites States of America, the Vatican, etc. Other historians have recorded a few copies held in collections of London (John-Paul Ghobrial) and Lebanon (Carsten Walbiner).[10] One of the tasks of the members of the TYPARABIC project core team which I am heading in Bucharest is to locate more copies and make a comprehensive inventory of the 18th-century books included in the corpus that we are surveying, where forty-six titles are now recorded. We are conducting a 'copy census' starting from the established list of titles of Arabic books printed in 1701-1799 in Eastern presses, and following a similar methodology as the one brilliantly defined by David Pearson in his essay published in 2010, where he also explains the undisputable benefits of this approach:

> I am talking about the copy census, based on the principle of tracking down as many surviving copies of one particular book as possible, recording their copy-specific features, and analyzing the evidence that emerges to show how that particular book has been owned, circulated, bound, annotated and regarded over time. However much specialists in the field of book history may need little convincing of the importance of copy-specific information and the uniqueness of individual copies of books, we all have a job to do in steering the perception of our professional colleagues, our paymasters and the public at large away from the idea that the only value of books lies in their textual content, and anything else is mere frippery. [...] I want to think not only about the copy census as a tool, but also about the implications its increasing adoption might have for the way we catalogue and digitize our books.[11]

9 Virgil Cândea, *Mărturii românești peste hotare. Creații românești și izvoare despre români în colecții din străinătate*, New Series, coord. Ioana Feodorov (with Andrei Timotin), t. I–IV, Bucharest, 2010–2012, t. V–VI.2, Bucharest and Brăila, 2014–2018.

10 Carsten-Michael Walbiner, "Die Bibliothek des Dair Mār Yūḥannā aš-Šuwayr/Libanon", in Peter Bruns and Heinz Otto Luthe, *Orientalia Christiana. Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburstag*, Wiesbaden, 2013, p. 521–535.

11 David Pearson, "The Importance of the Copy Census as a Methodology in Book History", in Wagner and Reed (eds.), *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*, p. 321–328.

* * *

I have strived to present in this book convincing proof, based on documents and reliable testimonies contemporary to the events, that contradict several myths or *idées reçues* and correct a few errors, some a century old, which, repeated again and again in works composed by authoritative historians of book printing, were credited in time with the force of undisputable truths. I review below the main facts that I considered during my research of the topics discussed above, to help formulate the salient points that the reader may take with him.

The books that Antim the Iberian printed in Arabic were neither the first Arabic-text nor the first Arabic-type books ever printed anywhere in the world. A vast typographic activity in Arabic had already occurred in Western Europe by 1701, when the Greek and Arabic Book of the Divine Liturgies was printed in Snagov. From 1514 to the last decade of the 18th century, in Italy, France, England, the Netherlands, and Germany 220 books were printed containing whole or partial texts in Arabic, with Arabic type.

As far as current research allows us to grasp, the first printed books in the Middle East were not in the Arabic language, nor in Arabic type. They were Hebrew religious books printed by the Jews who settled in the city of Safed, in the north of present-day Israel, who printed after 1576, for a short while, in Hebrew type.

Antim the Iberian did not work alone, relying only on his knowledge of Ottoman Turkish. He worked together with Athanasios Dabbās, the metropolitan of Aleppo at the time, a former and future patriarch of the Church of Antioch. Dabbās was accompanied to Wallachia by Arab apprentices who worked side by side with the Wallachians in Antim's workshops, assimilating enough of their knowledge to continue printing in Aleppo after 1705.

The typographic implements that Athanasios Dabbās received from Antim the Iberian were not used for all the books printed in Aleppo and other presses of present-day Syria and Lebanon. Most of the Arabic types of the Aleppo books look different than those manufactured by Antim the Iberian for the two Wallachian books.

As an apprentice in Athanasios Dabbās's workshop, ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir did not cast the first set of Arabic types to be manufactured in the Ottoman Empire without having ever seen such typographic implements, by simply looking at the printed books brought from Europe. The Arabic type, ornamental woodcuts, and typographic tools created by Antim the Iberian and presented to Dabbās when he left Bucharest were there before his eyes. It is only in this way that he was able to copy them and, probably with expertise gleaned from people who effectively worked at the press of Bucharest, he could manufacture new type for the Aleppo press, relying on Wallachian models.

The printers of Ḫinšāra, and especially the founder of the press there, ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir, did not "invent" printing in Arabic type and create from zero all the tools, type, implements, and visual art elements for the books they printed after 1733. A great deal of the typographic material was directly connected to Italian presses and models that they had access to owing to their strong ties to the Church of Rome, through the Jesuit missionaries who assisted them.

Ibrahim Müteferrika was not the first typographer to print books in Arabic type inside the borders of the Ottoman Empire. He started working in 1727, after the Aleppo press, where eleven Arabic books were printed, had already stopped functioning. Müteferrika's books comprised Ottoman Turkish works (with some passages in Arabic), always of a secular character, as required in the approval that he received from the Sublime Porte. Since at the time Ottoman Turkish was written in Arabic script, the type used for his books is, indeed, Arabic.

The Arabic type that the Patriarch Sylvester of Antioch used in Iași did not originate at the presses of Antim the Iberian. The patriarch may have brought them from Istanbul or obtained them by asking a Syrian goldsmith to manufacture type modelled on Dabbās's books, which is, still, highly improbable, considering the difficulty of the task.

At the Monastery of Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, a *metochion* of the Patriarchate of Antioch after 1746, a group of Syrian monks headed by Yūsuf Mark manufactured Arabic type. There is enough proof to support the idea that this type was transferred to Damascus and then Beirut, where it was used in producing, in 1750–1753, an uncertain number of liturgical books under the auspices of the Patriarch Sylvester.

Thus, from my research of several decades that I have summed up in this book I can draw a few conclusions:

1. Antim the Iberian cut punches and cast a complete set of Arabic types, carved woodblocks with images of saints and Arabic words, separate or combined for titles. He printed with them the first two books with Arabic text (and a Greek parallel version) that were produced in Eastern Europe, outside the traditional area covered by the presses that printed in the Arabic language and script in Western Europe. He revealed an extraordinary craftmanship in the arts of engraving and typography, by printing bilingual books – in languages belonging to different families – with a contrary direction of the text flow, different position of the catchwords, etc.
2. The special relationship that was established between Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās allowed the printing of Arabic books in Ottoman Syria, where the Sultan's laws reigned. Far from the empire's capital, Dabbās had the audacity to print liturgical books for the Arabic-speaking Christians, taking advantage of the favorable circumstances in the city of Aleppo.

3. The printing of liturgical books in Arabic in the early 18th century was naturally followed by a standardization relying on texts that had been revised by great medieval scholars who improved the versions that circulated widely in old manuscripts, which conserved the liturgical tradition of the Church of Antioch.
4. Antim the Iberian wished to assist the Syrian Christians also because they were attached to the Church of Antioch, like his Georgian brethren, whose national Church was, in Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, under the jurisdiction of this Church.
5. Dabbās's printing work marked the transfer of the European technology of the press in time and space: his apprentice ʿAbdallāh Zāḫir opened a second press for Arabic books on Mount Lebanon, at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in Ḫinšāra, pursuing there his own earlier activity in Aleppo but following a different editorial program, adapted to the requirements of the Greek Catholic community that he was serving and the Jesuit missionaries who helped him succeed in his projects.
6. All the typographic activities connected to the Arabic book-printing that developed after 1735 in Ḫinšāra and Beirut were possible due to the visionary beginnings laid out by Antim the Iberian with Athanasios Dabbās and carried out with the financial support of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia. I cited before a letter that Antim the Iberian wrote to Brâncoveanu in 1712, when his enemies' conspiracies had created a rift between them. For Antim, the thoughts he shared with the prince sounded like a meditation on the meaning of his life: "And what I worked over the seven years that I resided there [at the Snagov monastery], not so much with the press income as with the sweat of my brow, these are witnesses before all."[12] Thus, for the scholar and bishop, the heritage that he would leave after a life's tireless work was made of the liturgical books that witnessed about him "before all," meaning by this his contemporaries, but also before the Supreme Judge (Fig. 61).

It is clear, from the previous pages, that I have addressed the topic of Arabic printing in Eastern Europe and Ottoman Syria in the 18th century with the tools of a philologist whose focus is the culture of the Arabic-speaking Christians. To reach a comprehensive description of the books that I have mentioned, an entire team of specialists would be needed – historians of early printing and arts of the book, historians of all the regions where printing in Arabic took place, experts in the theology of liturgical texts and book iconography, etc. Only through a large-scale

12 Cazacu, *Cine l-a ucis pe Antim Ivireanul?*, p. 47–48.

cooperation would these complicated matters be clarified, allowing the modern researcher of book-printing to ascertain the essential role that Antim the Iberian played in the transfer of the printing expertise and technologies to the Arab East.

The fate of the information contained in this book depends on the interest that other researchers, with additional competencies, will show in treading further on the many paths that my work has opened and solve some other queries that still await a solution. As Rachid Haddad best expressed it: "Telle est, en effet, la curieuse destinée des écrits historiques qu'à peine parus, ils doivent être sans cesse complétés par des recherches ultérieures." [13]

As I mentioned before, in 2019, aiming to increase the odds of securing far-reaching outcomes and obtaining a comprehensive and detailed catalogue of the Arabic books printed in the 18th century in presses of Eastern Europe and the Middle East, I proposed a project to the European Research Council in the section of Social Sciences and Humanities. The TYPARABIC project will allow our international team to publish by 2025, over five years, six books that will contain the outcomes of our research. Among them, the comprehensive catalogue of the Christian books printed in the Romanian Principalities and Greater Syria will disseminate information on the content and form of various Arabic texts whose research is likely to continue. It is our hope that the evolution and avatars of the liturgical books of the Arabic-speaking Christians will consequently attract, from worldwide academia, the same amount of attention as the early versions of the Arabic Bible.

The Core Team I assembled consists today of 17 researchers (including me, the Principal Investigator), seven Romanian and ten foreign (Lebanon, Turkey, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Belgium, and France). I feel blessed to be able to work together with them and look forward to the next volumes that they will author for the EAPE series of De Gruyter. The fact that I succeeded in bringing together a group of acknowledged researchers who are interested in further surveying the topics that I address in this volume is, for me, proof enough that my book will have a happy fate.

13 Haddad, "La correspondance de Ṭrābulsī", p. 260.

8 Addenda

Mihail Ștefan (Ișstvanovici), Antim the Iberian's Apprentice, the First Printer of Georgian Books

In the first half of 1707, Antim the Iberian sent to Tbilisi, the capital of the kingdom where he himself was born, Mihail Ştefan, one of his closest and most experienced apprentices. In Georgia, his name received a local form: he was known to the Georgians as Mikhael Stephanes shvili Ungrovlakheli, i.e., "Michael, son of Stephen from Ungro-Wallachia." This was soon shortened to 'Stepaneshvili' and 'Ungrovlakheli'. The latter form of his name appears on most of the books that he printed in Tbilisi and the Georgian historical sources that mention him. Nevertheless, he signed the forewords and colophons of the books that he printed with several variants.[1]

The efforts of this cherished apprentice and disciple of Antim were meant to transfer to Georgia the progressive tool of printing, most useful for a country with old Orthodox roots. The ruler of the province of Kartli, King Vakhtang VI ('the Scholar' and 'the Lawgiver'),[2] had asked for help for this project from Chrysanthos Notaras, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, a staunch supporter of the benefits of printing, who in turn had asked the assistance of Constantin Brâncoveanu, the prince of Wallachia. The Georgians had adopted the Byzantine liturgy earlier than other peoples, while adapting it in their national language.[3] In time, the opening of a press for Georgian books in Tbilisi became one of the constant concerns of the local rulers, even after several kingdoms, including Kartli, were conquered

1 As to his real name, see Nicolae Iorga's opinion in his article "Activitatea culturală a lui Constantin Vodă Brâncoveanu şi scopurile Academiei Române", *AARMSI*, S. II, t. 37, 1914–1915, p. 168. See also Pr. Prof. Mircea Păcurariu, "Biserica Ortodoxă Română, sprijinitoare a luptei altor popoare pentru libertate şi independenţă naţională", *BOR*, 97, 1979, 1, p. 1; Eugen Pavel, *Carte și tipar la Bălgrad (1567–1702)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2001, p. 79.

2 An enlightened and scholarly king of the Bagrationi dynasty, born in 1675 in Tbilisi (d. 1737), Vakhtang first ruled as regent for his absent uncle, George XI, and his brother, Kaikhosro, from 1703 to 1712. He then ruled Kartli as a king between 1716 and 1724. In 1727, the Kingdom of Kartli was annexed by the Ottoman Empire and, in 1735, by Persia.

3 It was preserved as such, in spite of the efforts of the Russian Church to impose Slavonic on them. The Georgian Church was engulfed by the Russian Orthodox Church after Georgia was annexed by the Tsarist Empire in 1801 and its patriarchate was abolished in 1811. The Orthodox Church of Georgia regained its autocephaly in 1917, but the patriarch elected by the Holy Synod of Tbilisi was only recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1943 and by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1990.

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by the Shah of Persia. Books in Georgian had been printed since 1629 outside the country, at the press of the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide, with the openly declared purpose of helping the missionary work of the Catholics sent to the Georgian lands.

Born in the province of Ardeal (modern-day Transylvania), possibly to a Serbian father,[4] Mihail Ştefan worked at Antim's presses of Snagov, Bucharest, and Râmnic, publishing books in Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian. The first book that he worked on as an apprentice was the *Order of the Service of the Saints Constantin and Helena* (*Orânduiala slujbei Sfinților Constantin și Elena*), printed in Snagov in 1696.[5] He was ordained a subdeacon in Râmnic and then, in 1698–1699, by order of the Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, he travelled to Alba Iulia (Bălgrad, in the principality of Transylvania), to help the Romanian-speaking Orthodox there print in their language.[6] Mihail notes inside the cover of a financial record of the metropolitan Church of Alba Iulia that, before leaving Wallachia, he had received from the master printer Antim 167 punches.[7] In Bălgrad, Ișvanovici printed in 1699 a Cyrillic writing manual (*Bucoavnă*), which also contained the Orthodox Creed, and a Gospel with Commentary (*Evanghelie învățătoare*, also known as *Cazaniile*, or *Chiriacodromion*).[8]

Back in Wallachia, Mihail Ştefan was soon sent to Tbilisi by his master, at the request of King Vakhtang VI of Kartli, who wished to print books in the language spoken by his people. Mihail reached Georgia during the first half of 1707, endowed with "type and other necessary implements for a printing workshop", according to his statement in the foreword of the first book that he printed in Tbilisi. He was accompanied by other less experienced apprentices, whom Antim was able to do without at his own press, which he had transferred to the Monastery of Govora after he was appointed bishop of Râmnic in 1705. It is worth

4 See Andrei Pippidi's comments on this topic in his study "À propos des débuts de l'imprimerie en Géorgie", in *Impact de l'imprimerie et rayonnement intellectuel des Pays Roumains*, p. 31, n. 23.
5 *BRV* I, p. 341; Doru Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 76.
6 See, among many sources, Pr. dr. Leon Pădureanu, "Adevărul asupra 'unirii' religioase de la 1700", *Ortodoxia*, 4, 1949, p. 47–103, and Pr. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania, încercare de dezmembrare a poporului român*, Bucharest, 1973.
7 Doru Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 53, citing Nicolae Iorga, *Studii și documente*, t. IV, Bucharest, 1902, p. 66.
8 On the Orthodox elements contained in the *Bucoavnă* that generated the issue of a confiscation order on the book in 1701, see Râpă-Buicliu, *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta*, I. *1536–1830*, p. 212–213; Ștrempel, *Antim Ivireanul la 250 de ani de la moartea sa*, p. 102–104; Doru Bădără, *Tiparul românesc la sfârşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, p. 95–97.

noting that sending his most experienced apprentice to Tbilisi must have meant a considerable sacrifice for Antim, who was at the beginning of a new road with his recently transferred press.

The printing workshop opened by Mihail Ștefan in Tbilisi, the first one in the Caucasus region, received the name 'Vakhtang's press', on account of the king who granted the printers his full support. Despite the discontent expressed by the Shah of Persia, who saw this event as an act of disobedience on the part of a king who was supposed to be a Muslim, the press that Mihail set up in Tbilisi functioned without interruption until 1722, when its work was suspended by the Ottoman conquest of the province. Towards 1713, Mihail travelled to L'viv and the Netherlands, leaving management of the press to the apprentices whom he had trained. After 1722, these printers seemingly dispersed in the Middle East – to Damascus, Baghdad, and Tehran – where they resumed their printing activities.[9]

It is worth noting that this disciple of Antim showed an extraordinary mobility. He travelled far and wide, more than any other apprentice at Antim's presses. His craftmanship accompanied him across Wallachia, Transylvania, Georgia, Poland, the Netherlands, and was close to taking him to Jerusalem.

The books that Mihail Ștefan printed in Tbilisi are known through the works of several Georgian historians of early printing who wrote in the 20th century, commenting the Romanian contribution to the initiation of printing in their country.[10] The Georgian experts in typographic techniques remarked that the types and ornaments used in these early printed books are elegant and imitate the traditional calligraphy and the background of old Georgian manuscripts.[11] The type that was used in Tbilisi belongs to two Georgian alphabets, *nuskhuri*, or *khutsuri* (Old Church style), and *mkhedruli* (modern flowing style, military, or secular). The place where the type was cast is not certain, but there are strong elements supporting the hypothesis that Antim the Iberian manufactured the punches of the first set of typefaces in the *nuskhuri* script in Bucharest. Then, Mihail Ștefan

9 Dumitrescu, *Activitatea tipografică a lui Mihail Ștefan*, p. 138, citing Georgian sources.

10 David Karitchashvili, *Kartuli tsignis bechdvis istoria*, Tbilisi, 1929; *Kartuli Tsigni, Bibliographia 1629–1920*, t. 1, Tbilisi, 1941, p. VIII–IX, 9–32; Kristine Sharashidze, *Priveli stamba sakartvelosshi*, Tbilisi, 1955; Shota Kurdghelashvili, *Kartuli stambis istoriidan*, Tbilisi, 1959; Mikhael Kavtaria, *Pirveli kartuli nabechdi tsigni 340 tseli*, Tbilisi, 1972; Otar Gvinchidze, *Antim Iverieli*, Tbilisi, 1973; Otar Kasradze, *Dzveli kartuli nabetchdi tsigni*, Tbilisi, 1973; Avtandil Ioseliani, *Kartuli mtsignobrobis, tsignis da stambis istoriis sakitkhebi uzvelesi droidan XIX saukunis samotsian tslebamde*, Tbilisi, 1990; Nana Targamadze, "Vakhtang VI-is stambis istoriisatvis", in *Mtsignobari*, 2009, p. 9–18; Dali Matchaidze (ed.), *Vakhtang VI-is stambis gamocemebi, erovnuli bibliotekis koleqtsiis agtseriloba, 1709–1722*, Tbilisi, 2009.

11 Fanny Djindjihașvili, *Antim Ivireanul, cărturar umanist*, Iași, 1982, p. 49–50, 53.

cut in Tbilisi the punches for the second type-set, in *mkhedruli* script, which he used for the first time there for printing a Book of the Divine Liturgies in 1710.[12]

The typographic implements presented to King Vakhtang VI of Kartli also included woodblocks for printing decorative elements, vignettes, and engravings designed by Ivan Bakov, which Antim had already used in his books. There was also Greek type, which Antim considered necessary for bilingual editions, as he had printed in Snagov and Bucharest for the Arabic-speaking Christians. This is supplementary proof that Antim the Iberian was aware of the Georgians' devotion to the Byzantine tradition, in Kartli as in the other Georgian kingdoms.

The first printed work completed in Tbilisi was a Gospel (*Sakhareba*) finished in April 1709, in 2°, in *nuskhuri* type, containing five unnumbered pages and 303 numbered ones (Fig. 62). The B.A.R. in Bucharest holds two copies of this book (labelled CRV 157A). In a manuscript note written on page 4, signed by Antim the Iberian, this information is given:

> This Holy Book of the Divine Gospel, which is presented to His Highness with reverence, O dear Lord, is the new fruit that the land of the Iberians, quenching its thirst from the munificence of your princely gifts, has borne this year; thus, this land has also had the fortune to be enriched by printing in its language, as Arabia was enriched with printing in Arabic, Hellada – with printing in Greek, and Ungro-Wallachia – with the Romanian one; and thus, it is presented to Your Highness in gratitude [...].[13]

The book contains engravings that reveal a Georgian artistic influence: they are remastered versions of the Byzantine-style book iconography familiar to the production of Antim the Iberian. The portrait of King Vakhtang VI (Fig. 63) and the Apostles' icons (Fig. 64) in the second edition of 1711 demonstrate Mihail Ștefan's reverence for the aesthetic traditions of his master's home country.

The editorial program observed at the first Tbilisi press was the one customary for the Orthodox presses across the post-Byzantine world: the Gospel was followed by the Psalter (*Davitni*, 1709), Apostolos (*Samotsikulo*, 1709), the Book of the Divine Liturgies (*Kondaki*, 1710), the Horologion (*Zhamni*, 1710, in two editions), Euchologion (*Lotsvani*, 1710), and sections of the Bible (the Book of Prophecies and the Gospel, 1711).[14] This demonstrates that Antim the Iberian

12 Ibid., p. 49–51.

13 *BRV* IV, p. 544.

14 See Ioana Feodorov, "Sprijin duhovnicesc prin tipar pentru creștinii georgieni în vremea Domnului Constantin Brâncoveanu", in *Spiritualitatea mărturisitoare a culturii românești în perioada Sfântului Martir Constantin Brâncoveanu*, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, 2014, p. 47–61; Arhim. Mihail Stanciu, "Sfântul Antim Ivireanul, ipodiaconul Mihail Iștvanovici și începuturile tiparului Georgian", *Ortodoxia. Revista Patriarhiei Române*, 67, 2015, 3, p. 83–100.

not only transferred to Tbilisi expertise and typographic tools, but also a vision of the essential liturgical texts required by the altar servants across the Orthodox world. The same view was embraced by the metropolitan of Aleppo Athanasios Dabbās, a patriarch of the Church of Antioch for two terms, focused on providing the Christian believers with the most appropriate and advanced tools to help them preserve their Byzantine roots and evolve in their spiritual quest.

Abbreviations

AARMSI	*Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, Bucharest.
AARPAD	*Analele Academiei Române. Partea administrativă și dezbaterile*, Bucharest.
BOR	*Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, Bucharest.
BRV I	Ioan Bianu and Nerva Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche*, t. I. *1508-1716*, Bucharest: Socec, 1903.
BRV II	Ioan Bianu and Nerva Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche*, t. II. *1716-1808*, Bucharest: Socec, 1910.
BRV III	Ioan Bianu and Nerva Hodoș, *Bibliografia românească veche*, t. III. *1809-1817*, fasc. 1-2, Bucharest: Socec, 1912.
BRV IV	Ioan Bianu and Dan Simonescu, *Bibliografia românească veche*, t. IV. *Adăogiri și îndreptări*, Bucharest: Socec, 1944.
Chronos	*Chronos. Revue d'histoire de l'Université de Balamand*, al-Kurah.
CMR 9	David Thomas and John Chesworth, with Luis F. Bernabe Pons, Stanisław Grodź, Emma Gaze Loghin et al. (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History, Volume 9: Western and Southern Europe (1600-1700)*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017.
CMR 10	David Thomas and John Chesworth, with Lejla Demiri, Emma Gaze Loghin, Claire Norton et al. (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History, Volume 10: Ottoman and Safavid Empires (1600–1700)*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017.
CMR 12	David Thomas and John A. Chesworth, with Jaco Beyers, Karoline Cook, Lejla Demiri et al. (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History, Volume 12: Asia, Africa and the Americas (1700–1800)*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018.
Graf, *GCAL*	Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, vol. I, 1944; vol. II, 1947; vol. III, 1949; vol. IV, 1951; vol. V, 1953.
HMLÉM III.1	Joseph Nasrallah, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite du V^e^ au XX^e^ siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne*, vol. III, t. 1. *(969–1250)*, Louvain: Peeters and Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1983.
HMLÉM IV.1	Joseph Nasrallah (in collaboration with Rachid Haddad), *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite du V^e^ au XX^e^ siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne*, vol. IV, t. 1. *Époque ottomane: 1516–1900*, Louvain: Peeters and Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1979.
HMLÉM IV.2	Joseph Nasrallah (in collaboration with Rachid Haddad), *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite du V^e^ au XX^e^ siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne*, vol. IV, t. 2. *Époque ottomane: 1724–1800*, Louvain: Peeters and Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1989.
MUSJ	*Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*, Beirut.
RESEE	*Revue des études sud-est européennes,* Bucharest.

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Map 2: Presses that produced Arabic-type books in Wallachia and Moldavia.

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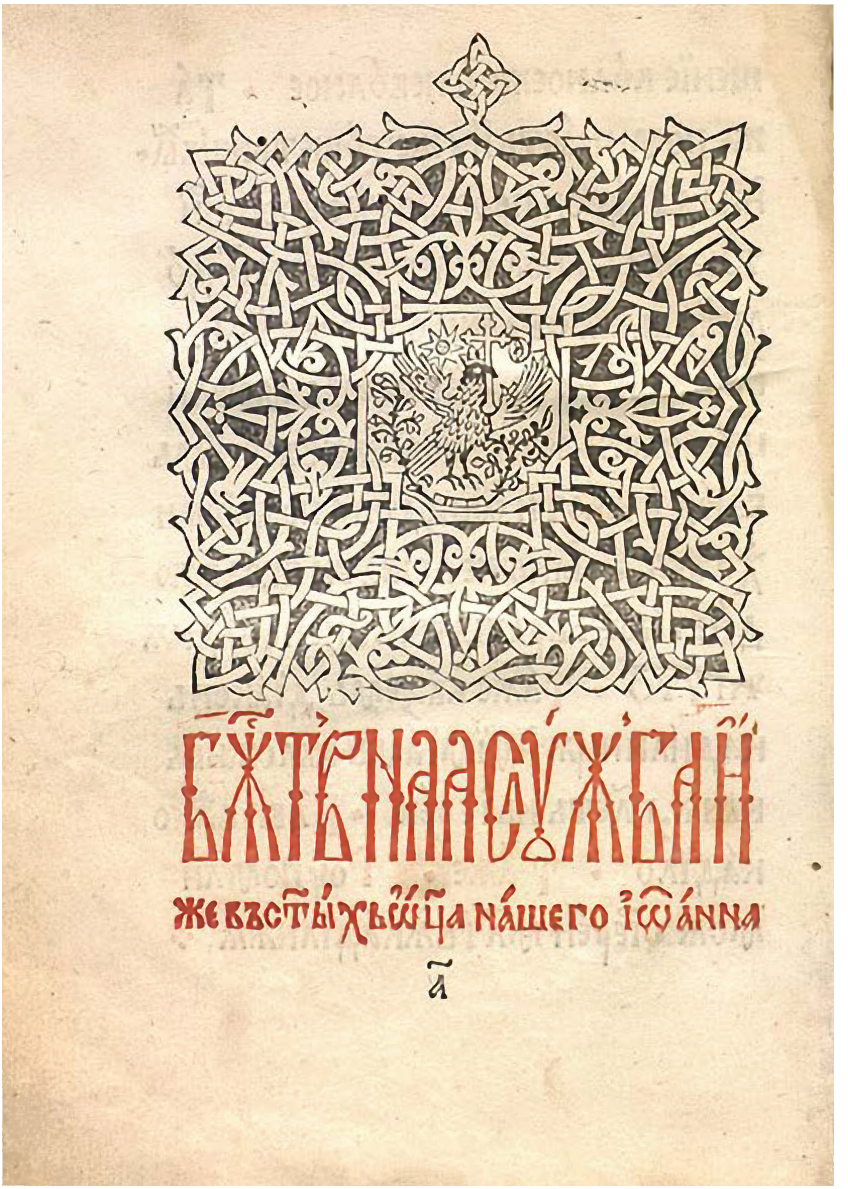

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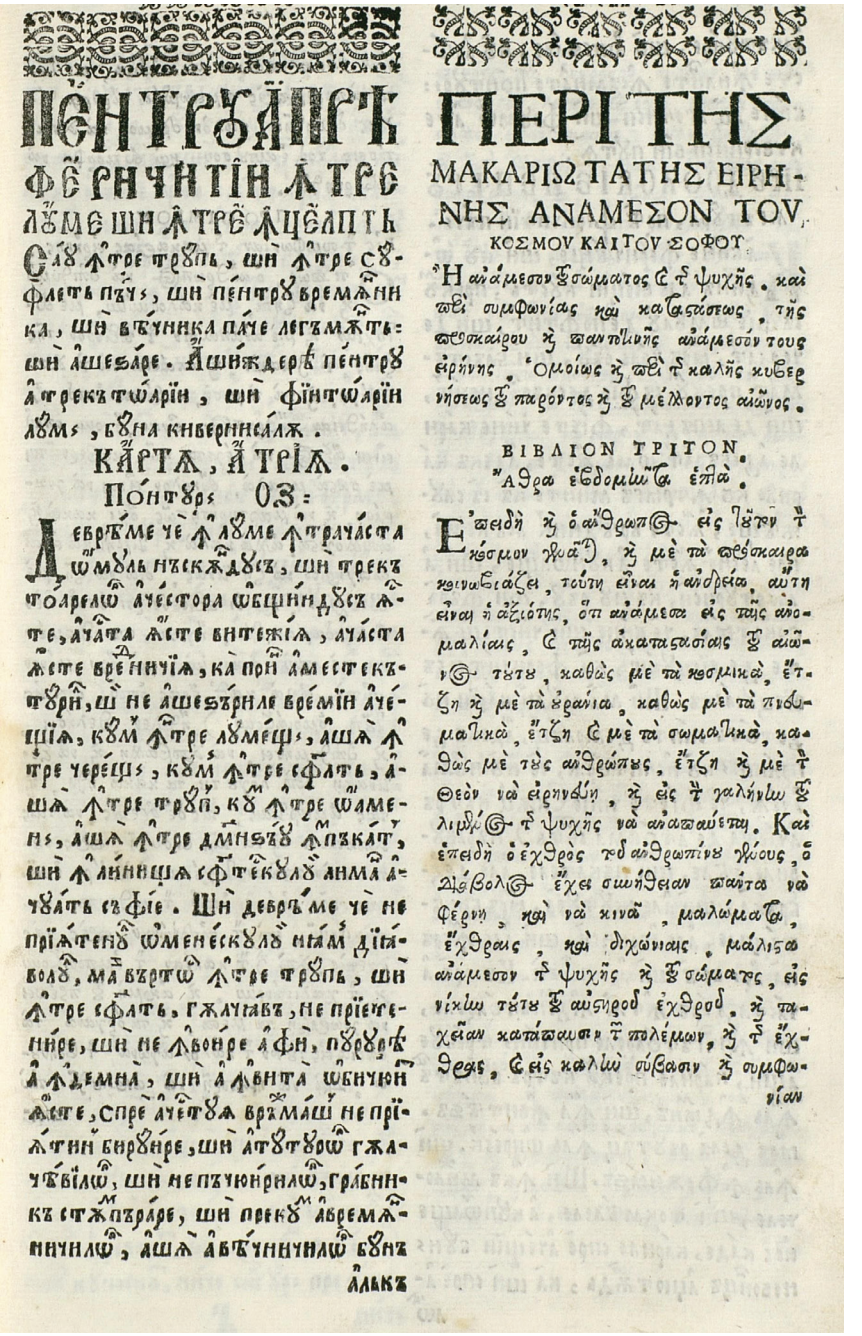

ПЕНТРЪ ЦАРЪ

ФЕ РНЧИТЇН ЛТРЕ

ЛЪМЕ ШН ЛТРЕ ЛЦЕЛПТЬ

Сла́ Лтре тр҃бы, шн Лтре сф҃леть пѣ҃ы, шн пе́нтрꙋ времѣнн ка, шн вѣ҃чнка па́че легѣмѫть: шн ашезаре. Ашиждерѣ пе́нтрꙋ Лтрекѣтѡ́ріи, шн фїнтѡ́ріи лбмы, бжна кнверниса́лѫ.

КАРТА, А ТРІА.

По́нтꙋы 03:

Деврѣ́ме ѵе Лбме Лтраста ѡ҃мбьлнѣскждꙋ, шн трекѣ толарелѡ Лестора ѡбщинждꙋ Лте, Лча́та Лсте внтеѫ́ Лча́ста Лсте бре́нчїа, кн пон Лместекѣтꙋрн, ш не ашезърнле вре́мїн Лчещїа, кꙋм Лтре лбме́щы, ашѫ Лтре черещы, кꙋм Лтре сфлать, ашѫ Лтре тр҃бн, кѫ Лтре ѡ҃менꙋ, ашѫ Лтре дмнезꙋ Лпскат, шн Лнинщѫ сфтѣкꙋлѫ анма Лчꙋ́ать сѫфїе. Шн деврѣ́ме ѵе не прїа́тенѫ ѡ҃менескꙋлѫ нам дїа́волѫ, ма́ вѣртѡ Лтре тр҃бы, шн Лтре сфлать, гжлча́вѣ, не прїетенире, шн не Лвонре Лфн, пꙋрꙋрѣ Лѫдемна, шн Лвнта ѡбнчюн Лѣте, спре Лчетꙋа врѫма́ш не прїа́тин бирꙋ́ре, шн Лтꙋтꙋрѡ гжлчѣвїлѡ, шн не пѫчюрнлѡ, грѣбнкѣ стжпра́ре, шн прекꙋ Лвремѫнчнлѡ, ашѫ Лвѣ҃чнчнлѡ бжнѣ

Лланѣ

ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΙΡΗ-

ΝΗΣ ΑΝΑΜΕΣΟΝ ΤΟΥ

ΚΟΣΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΟΦΟΥ

Ἡ ἀνάμεσον τ҃ σώματος ϗ τ҃ ψυχῆς. καὶ τ҃ εὐ συμφωνίας καὶ καταστάσεως, τῆς εὐσκαίρου ϗ παυπλιῆς ἀνάμεσόν τους εἰρήνης. Ὁμοίως ϗ τ҃ εὖ τ҃ καλῆς κυβερνήσεως τ҃ παρόντος ϗ τ҃ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.

ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΤΡΙΤΟΝ.

Ἄθρα ἑβδομήκοντα ἑπτὰ.

Ἐπειδὴ ϗ ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς τοῦτον τ҃ κόσμον ἦλθε, ϗ μὲ τὰ εὐσκαιρα κοινωβιάζει, τοῦτη εἶναι ἡ ἀνδρεία, αὕτη εἶναι ἡ ἀξιότης, ὅτι ἀνάμεσα εἰς τὰς ἀνομαλίας, ϗ τὰς ἀκαταστασίας τ҃ αἰῶνος τούτου, καθὼς μὲ τὰ κοσμικὰ, ἔτζη ϗ μὲ τὰ πράγματα, καθὼς μὲ τὰ πνευματικὰ, ἔτζη ϗ μὲ τὰ σωματικὰ, καθὼς μὲ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἔτζη ϗ μὲ τ҃ Θεὸν νὰ εἰρηνεύῃ, ϗ εἰς τ҃ γαλήνιον τ҃ λιμένα τ҃ ψυχῆς νὰ ἀναπαύεται. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ὁ ἐχθρὸς τ҃ ἀνθρωπίνου γένους, ὁ Διάβολος ἔχει σωπήθειαν ταύτα νὰ φέρνῃ, καὶ νὰ κινᾶ, μαλώματα, ἔχθρας, καὶ ἀγχώνας, μάλιστα ἀνάμεσον τ҃ ψυχῆς ϗ τ҃ σώματος, εἰς νίκην τούτου τ҃ αὐτεροῦ ἐχθροῦ, ϗ παχεῖαν καταπαυσιν τ҃ πολέμων, ϗ τ҃ ἔχθρας, εἰς καλὴν σύβασιν ϗ συμφωνίαν

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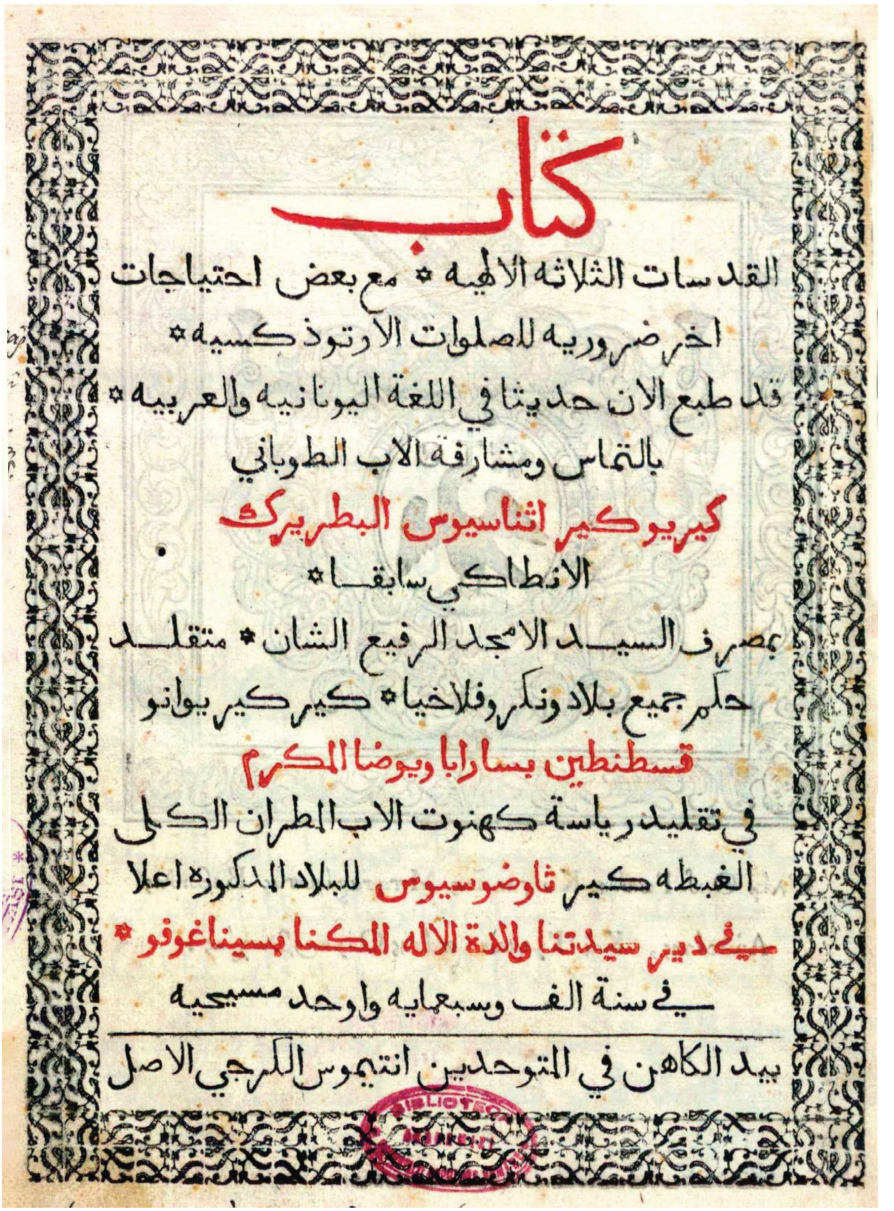

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الاورولوجيون اي الصلوات المفروضه مع باقي
الطقوس المرسومه علي مدار السنه
قد طبع الان حديثا في اللغة اليونانيه والعربيه
بالتماس ومشارفة الاب الطوباني
كير اثاناسيوس البطريرك
الانطاكي سابقا *
بمصرف السيد الامجد الرفيع الشان * متقلد
حكم جميع بلاد ونكرو فلاخيا * كير كير يوانو
قسطنطين باصارابا ويوضا المكرم
في تقليد رياسة كهنوت الاب المطران الكلي
الغبطه كير ثاوضوسيوس للبلاد المذكوره اعلا
في بوكريشت المحميه من بلاد انكرو فلاخيا
في سنة الف سبعمايه واثنين مسيحيه

بيد الكاهن في المتوحدين انتيموس
الكرجي الاصل *

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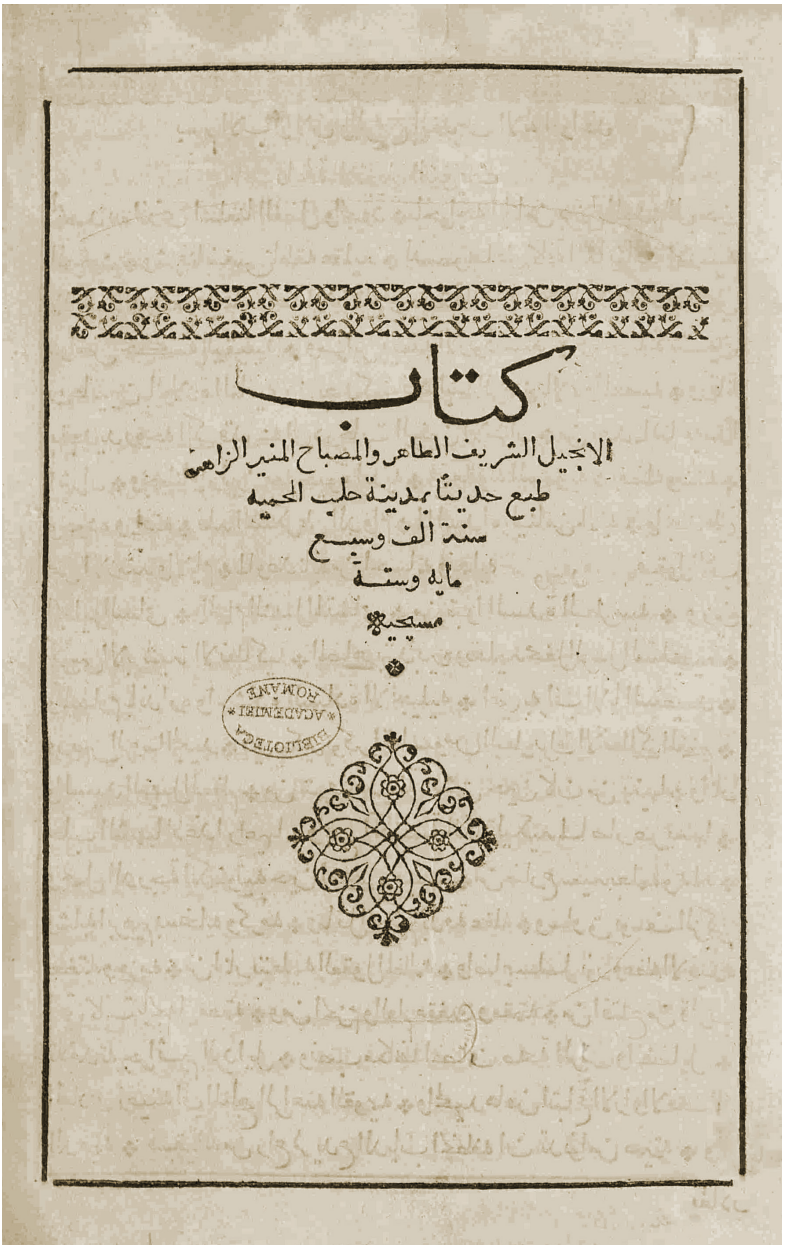

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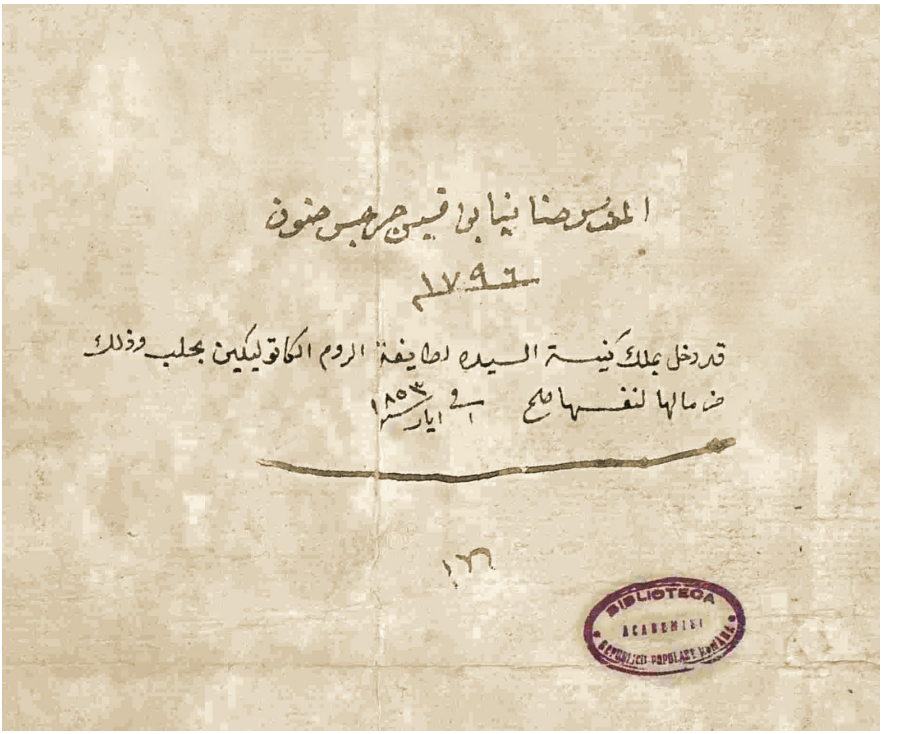

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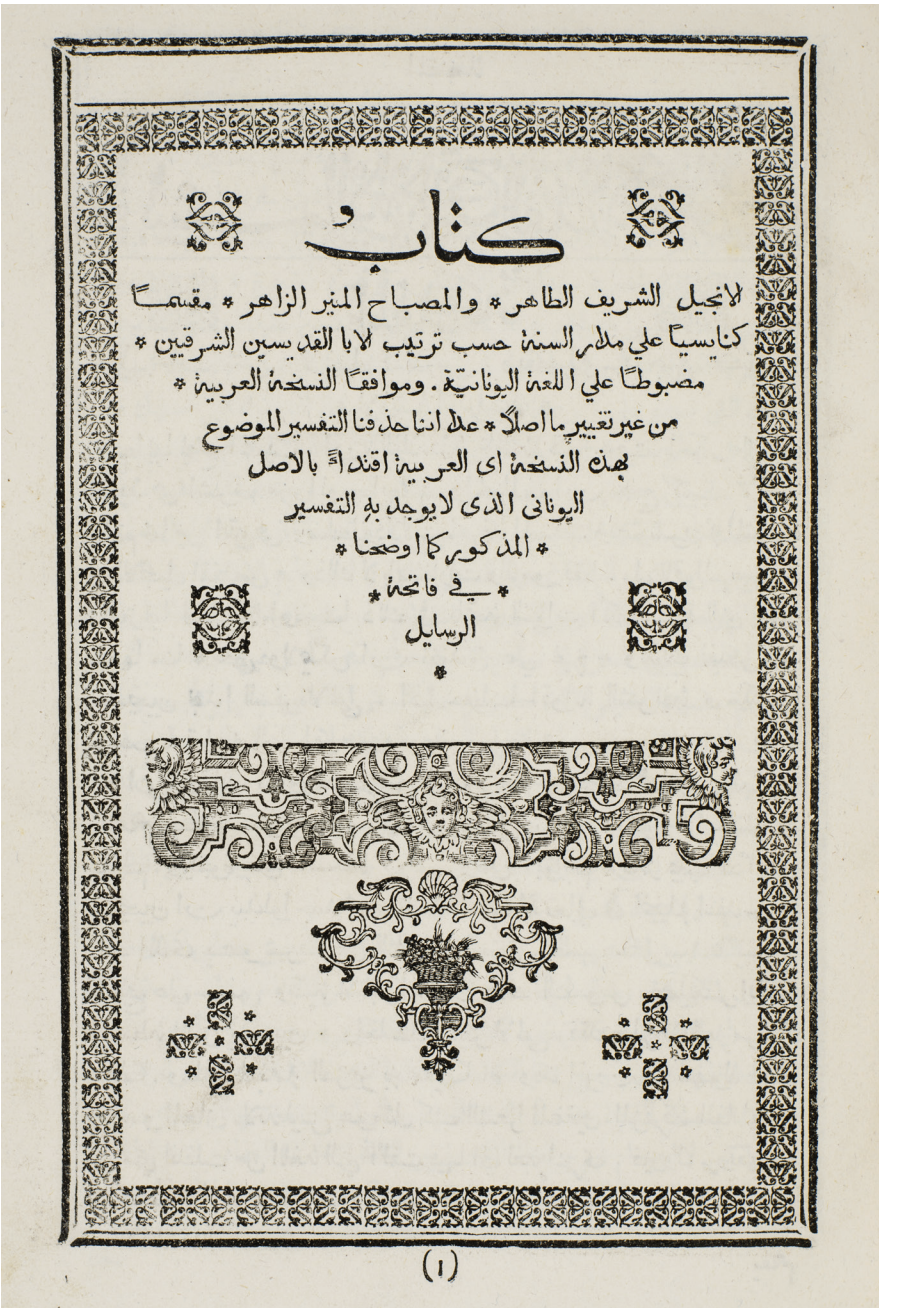

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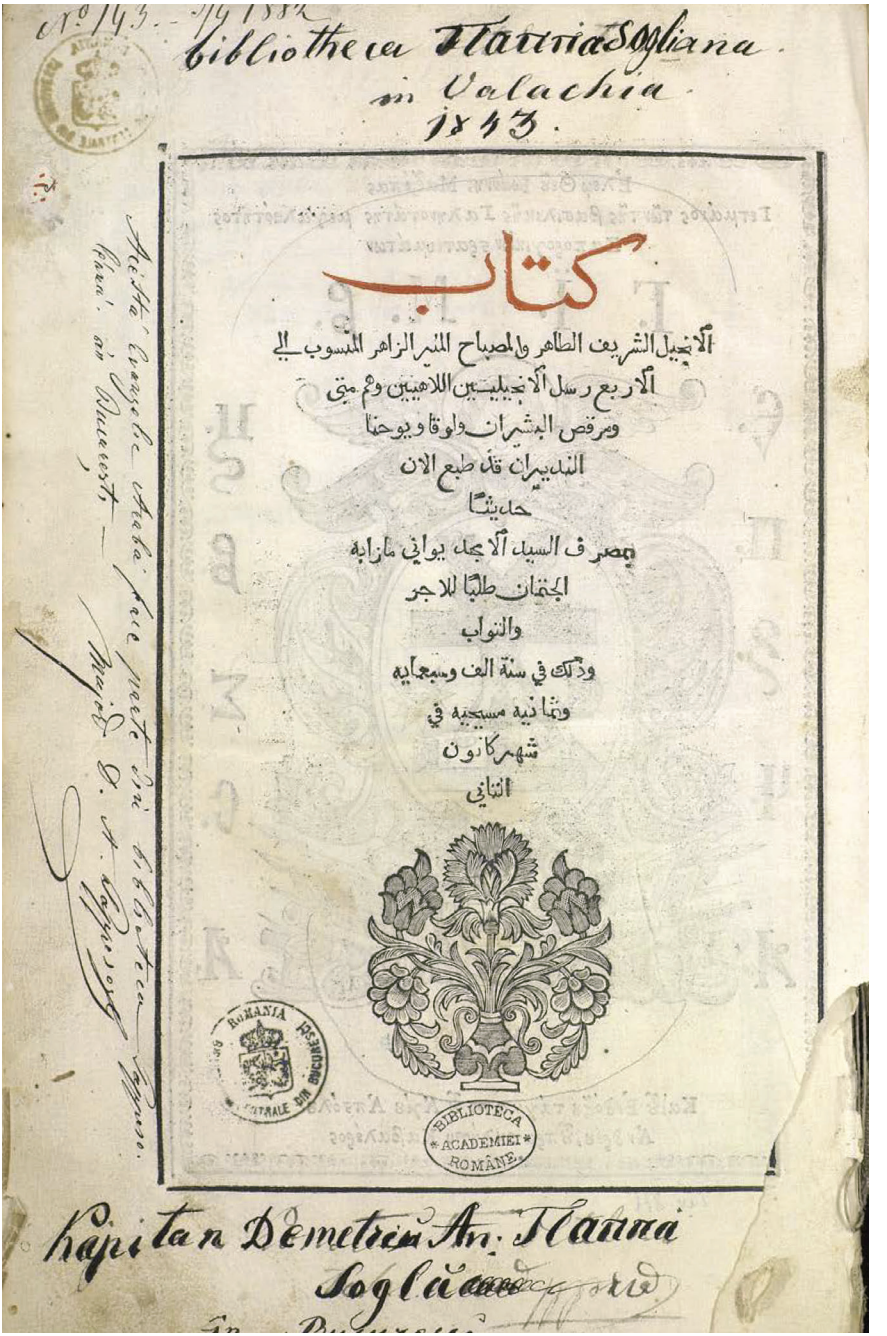

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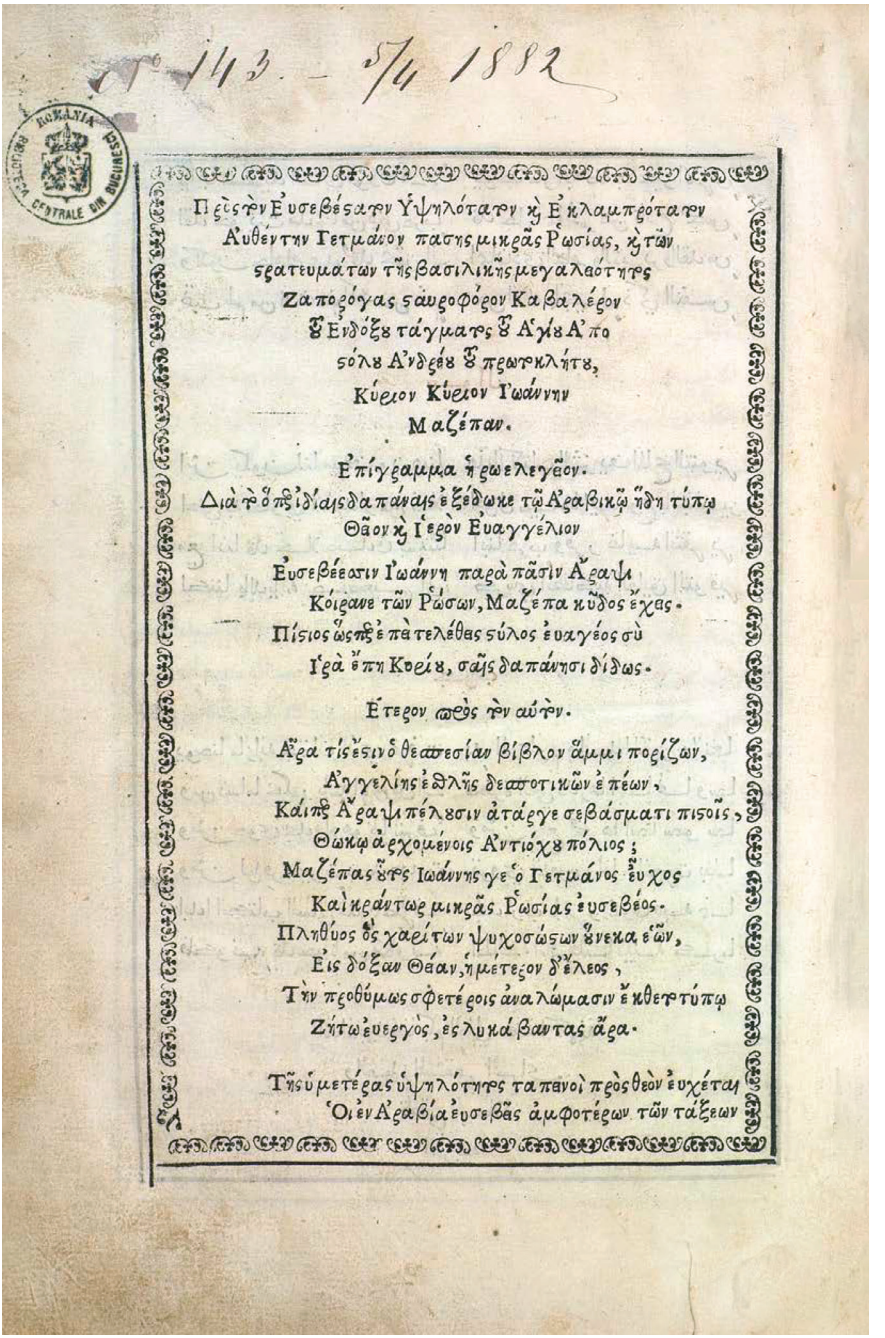

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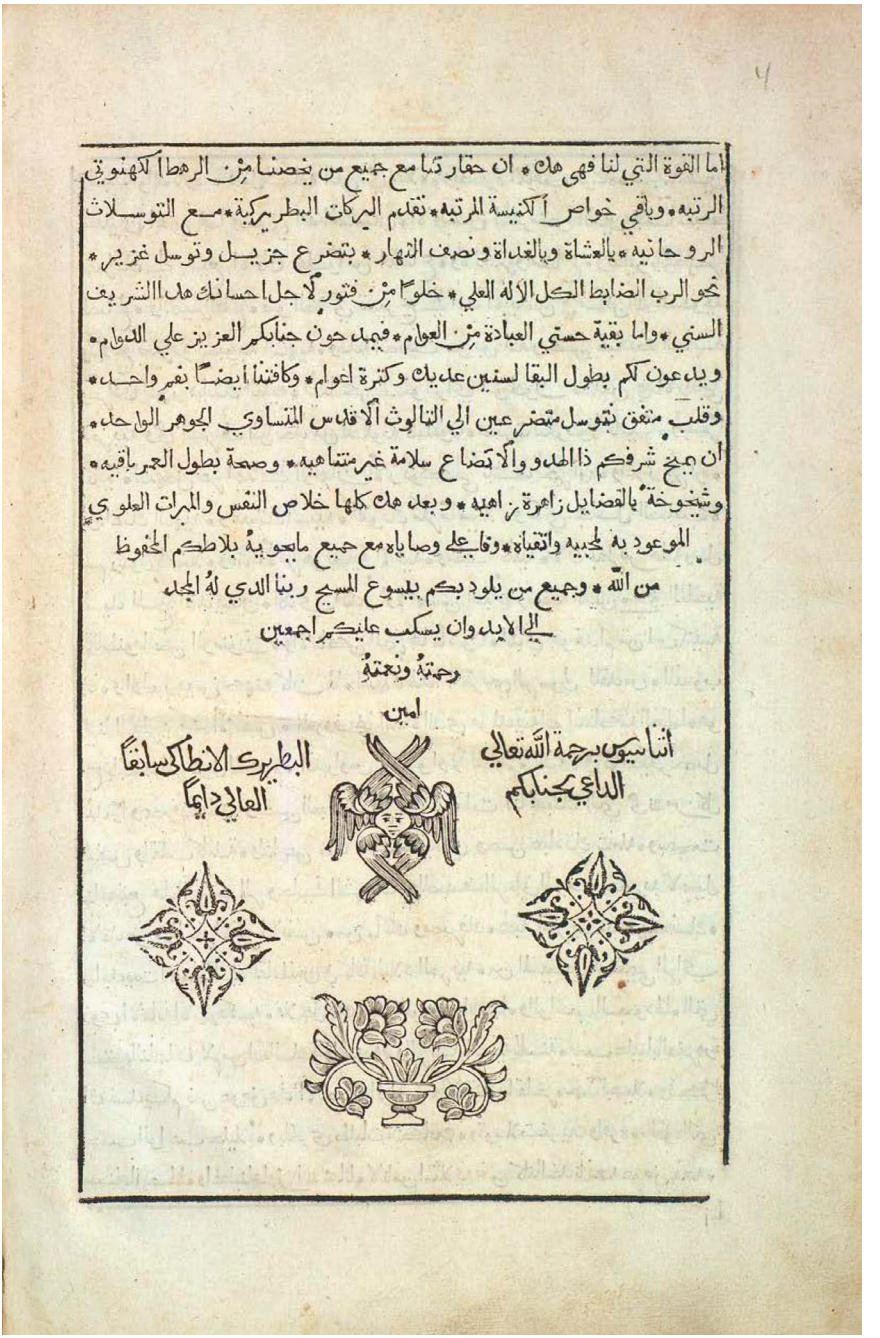
اما القوة التي لنا فهي هذه * ان حقارتنا مع جميع من يخصنا من الرهبانية الكهنوتية
الرتبة * وباقي خواص الكنيسة المرتبة * تقدم البركات البطريركية * مع التوسلات
الروحانية * بالعشاة وبالغداة ونصف النهار * بتضرع جزيل وتوسل غزير *
نحو الرب الضابط الكل الاله العلي * خلوصا من فتور لاجل احسانك هذا الشريف
السني * واما بقية حسني العبادة من العوام * فيمدحون جنابكم العزيز على الدوام *
ويدعون لكم بطول البقا لسنين عديدة وكثرة اعوام * وكافتنا ايضا بفم واحد *
وقلب متفق نتوسل متضرعين الى الثالوث الاقدس المتساوي الجوهر الواحد *
ان يمنح شرفكم ذا الهدو والاتضاع سلامة غير متناهية * وصحة بطول العمر باقية *
وشيخوخة بالفضايل زاهرة زاهية * وبعد هذا كلها خلاص النفس والمبرات العلوي
الموعود به لمحبيه واتقياه * وفاعلي وصاياه مع جميع مايحويه بلاطكم المحفوظ
من الله * وجميع من يلوذ بكم بيسوع المسيح ربنا الذي له المجد
الى الابد وان يسكب عليكم اجمعين
رحمته ونعمته
امين

انا نيوس برحمة الله تعالى
الداعي بجنابكم

البطريرك الانطاكي سابقا
العالي دايما

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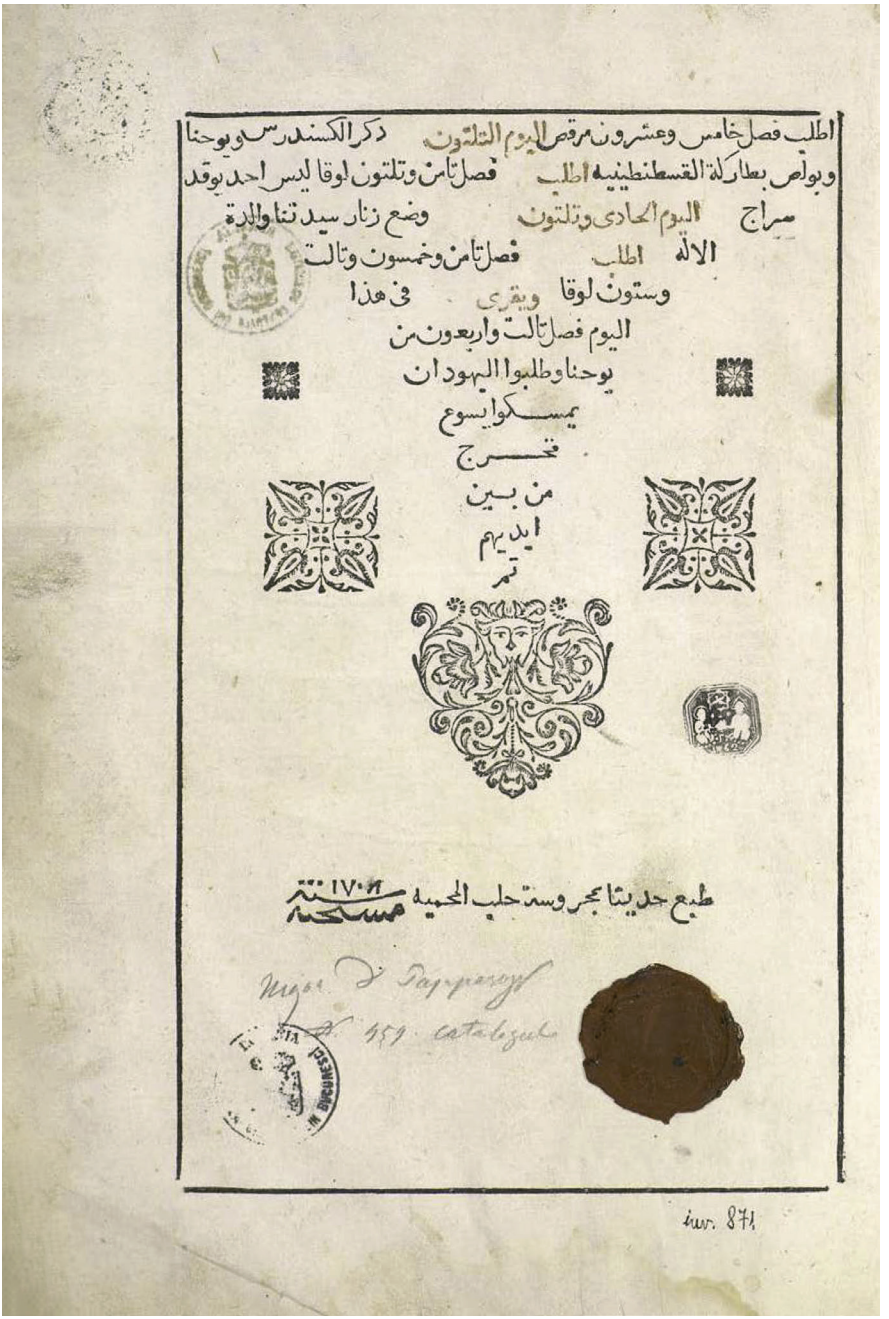

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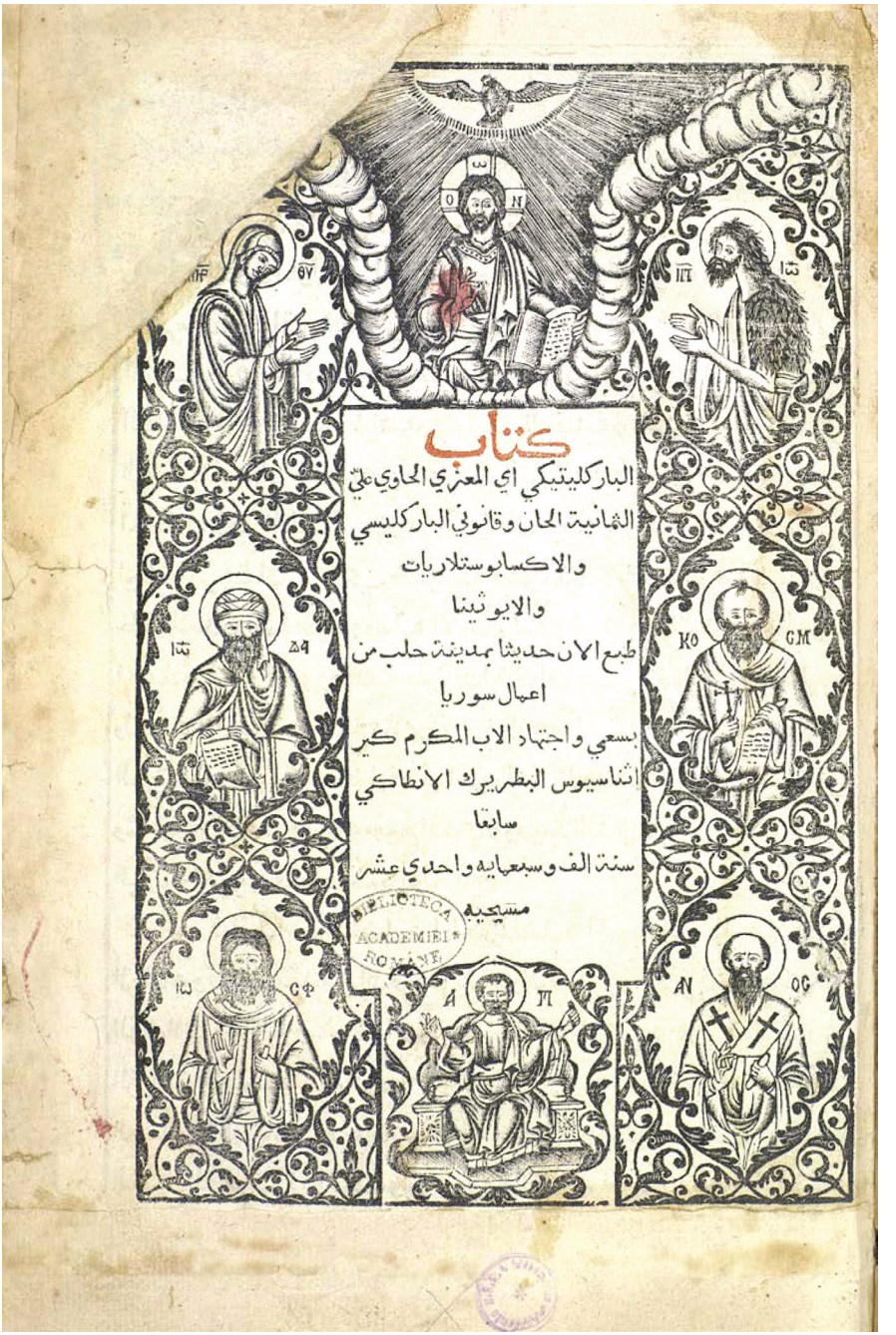

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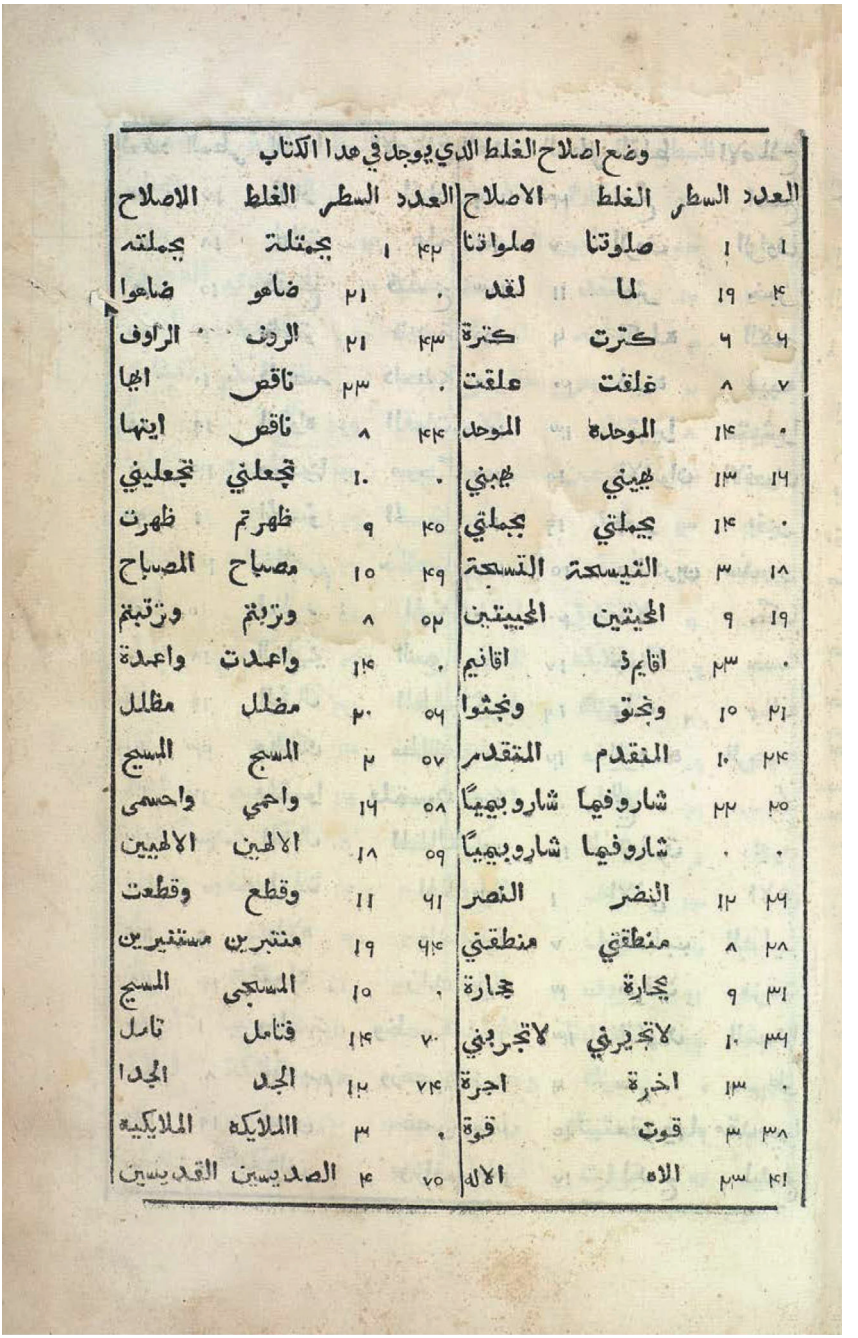
بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس الاله واحد
ثبتدي بايد الله تعالي وحسن
توفيقه وموازرة روح قدسه
بكتابة الباركليتكي اي المعزي
الحاوي الطقوس الواجبة للصلوة يشتمل على الثمانية الحان اول ذلك
اللحن الاول
يوم السبت عشية في صلوة المسا
يا ايها الرب القدوس اقبل صلواتنا المساية وامنحنا غفران المأثم ❖ لانك انت وحدك الذي اظهرت القيامة في العالم ❖
ايها الشعوب احتوطوا صهيون واكتنفوها ❖ واعطوا مجداً للناهض من بين الاموات ❖ لانه الهنا الذي انقذنا من اثامنا ❖
هلم يا ايها الشعوب لنسجد ونسجد للمسيح ونمجد قيامته من الاموات لانه الهنا الذي نجانا وخلصنا وانقذ العالم من ضلالة العدو ❖
ابتهجي ايتها السموات ❖ بوبي يا ساسات الارض اصرخي ايتها الجبال بالفرح لان هوذا عمانوئيل قد اراح خطايانا بصليبه ومنحنا الحيوة ❖ بما انه محب البشر ❖
لنسجد الذي صلب بالجسد طوعاً من اجلنا ❖ وتالم وقبر وقام من الاموات ونضرع اليه هاتفين ❖ ايها المسيح
BIBLIOTECA ACADEMIEI ROMÂNE
ثبت

Fig. 34: Oktoechos, Aleppo, 1711, first page (B.A.R.).

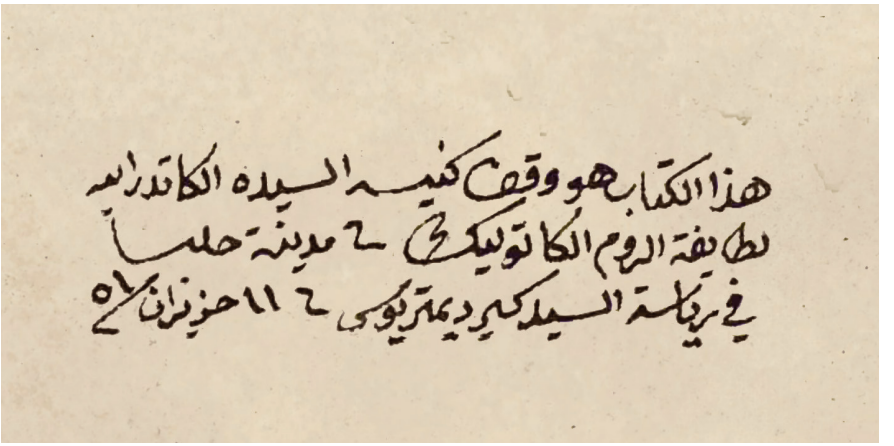


وضع اصلاح الغلط الذي يوجد في هذا الكتاب

العدد	السطر	الغلط	الاصلاح
١	١	صلوتنا	صلواتنا
٤	١٩	لما	لقد
٦	٦	كترت	كثرة
٧	٨	غلقت	علقت
٠	١٤	الموحده	الموحد
١٦	١٣	يهيني	يهبني
٠	١٤	يجملتي	بجملتي
١٨	٣	التيسحة	التسحة
١٩	٩	المحيتين	المحيبتين
٠	٣٣	اقايم ذ	اقانيم
٢١	١٥	وبحثو	وبحثوا
٢٤	١٠	المنقدم	المتقدم
٣٥	٢٢	شاروفيما	شاروبيميًا
٠	٠	شاروفيما	شاروبيميًا
٣٦	١٢	النضر	النصر
٣٨	٨	منطقتي	منطقني
٣١	٩	يحارة	تحارة
٣٤	١٠	لاتجيرني	لاتجربني
٠	١٣	اخرة	اجرة
٣٨	٣	قوت	قوة
٤١	٣٣	الاه	الاله

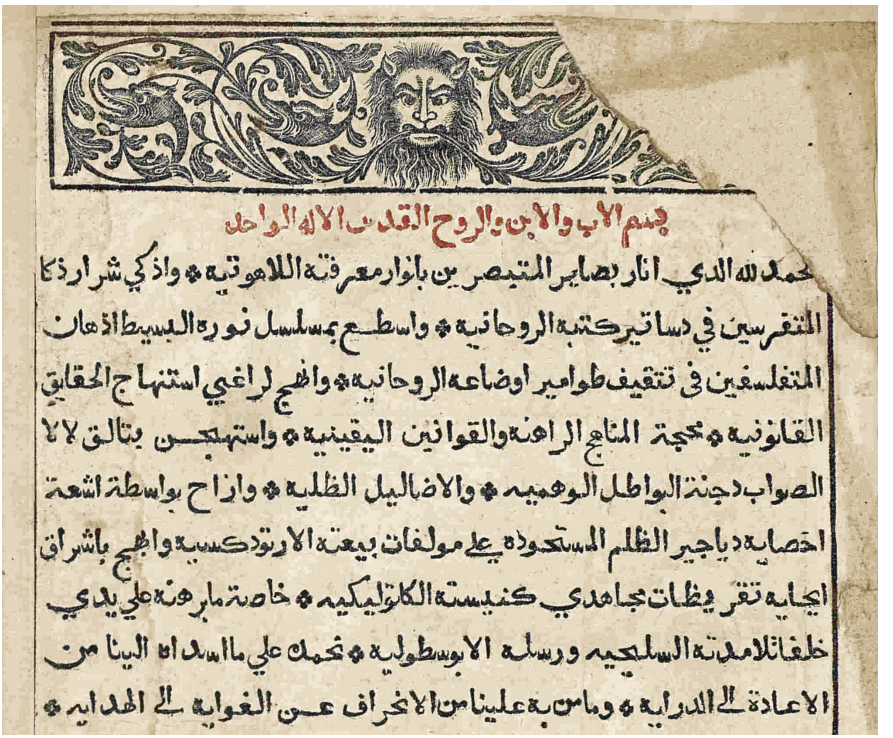
العدد	السطر	الغلط	الاصلاح
٤٢	١	بجمتلة	بجملته
٠	٢١	ضاهو	ضاهوا
٤٣	٢١	الرون	الراوف
٠	٢٣	ناقص	ايها
٤٤	٨	ناقص	ايتها
٠	١٠	تجعلني	تجعليني
٤٥	٩	ظهرتم	ظهرت
٤٩	١٥	مصباح	المصباح
٥٢	٨	وزبتم	وزتبتم
٠	١٤	واعدت	واعدة
٥٦	٢٠	مظلل	مظلل
٥٧	٢	المسج	المسيح
٥٨	١٦	واحمي	واحسمى
٥٩	١٨	الالهين	الالهيين
٦١	١١	وقطع	وقطعت
٦٤	١٩	منتبرين	مستنيرين
٠	١٥	المسبحى	المسيح
٧٠	١٤	فتامل	تامل
٧٢	١٢	الجد	الجدا
٠	٣	االلايكه	الملايكيه
٧٥	٤	الصديسين	القديسين

Fig. 35: Oktoechos, Aleppo, 1711, errata, first page (B.A.R.).



هذا الكتاب هو وقف كنيسه السيده الكاتدرايه
لطايفة الروم الكاتوليكي ٢ مدينة حلب
في ريآسة السيد كير ديمتريوس ٢ ١١ حزيران ١٧١١

Fig. 36: Oktoechos, Aleppo, 1711, p. 6, manuscript note (B.A.R.).



بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس الاله الواحد

الحمد لله الذي انار بصاير المتبصرين بانوار معرفته اللاهوتيه ❖ واذكي شرار ذكا
المتفرسين في دساتير كتبه الروحانيه ❖ واسطع بمسلسل نوره البسيط اذهان
المتفلسفين في تثقيف طوامير اوضاعه الروحانيه ❖ واظهج لراغبي استنهاج الحقايق
القانونيه ❖ محجة المناهج الراهنه والقوانين اليقينيه ❖ واستهجن بتالق لالا
الصواب دجنة البواطل الوهميه ❖ والاضاليل الظليه ❖ وازاح بواسطة اشعة
اخصايه دياجير الظلم المستحوذه على مولفات بيعته الارثوذكسيه واظهج باشراق
ايحايه تقريظات مجاهدي كنيسته الكاثوليكيه ❖ خاصة مابرهنه علي يدي
خلفا تلامذته السليحيه ورسله الابوسطوليه ❖ نحمك علي ما اسداه الينا من
الاعادة الى الدرايه ❖ وما من به علينا من الانحراف عن الغوايه الى الهدايه ❖

Fig. 37: *The Green Man*, frontispiece of the Oktoechos, Aleppo, 1711, p. 2 (B.A.R.).

Fig. 38: Nektarios, *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq*, Iași, 1746, Ioan Mavrocordat's coat of arms (B.A.R.).

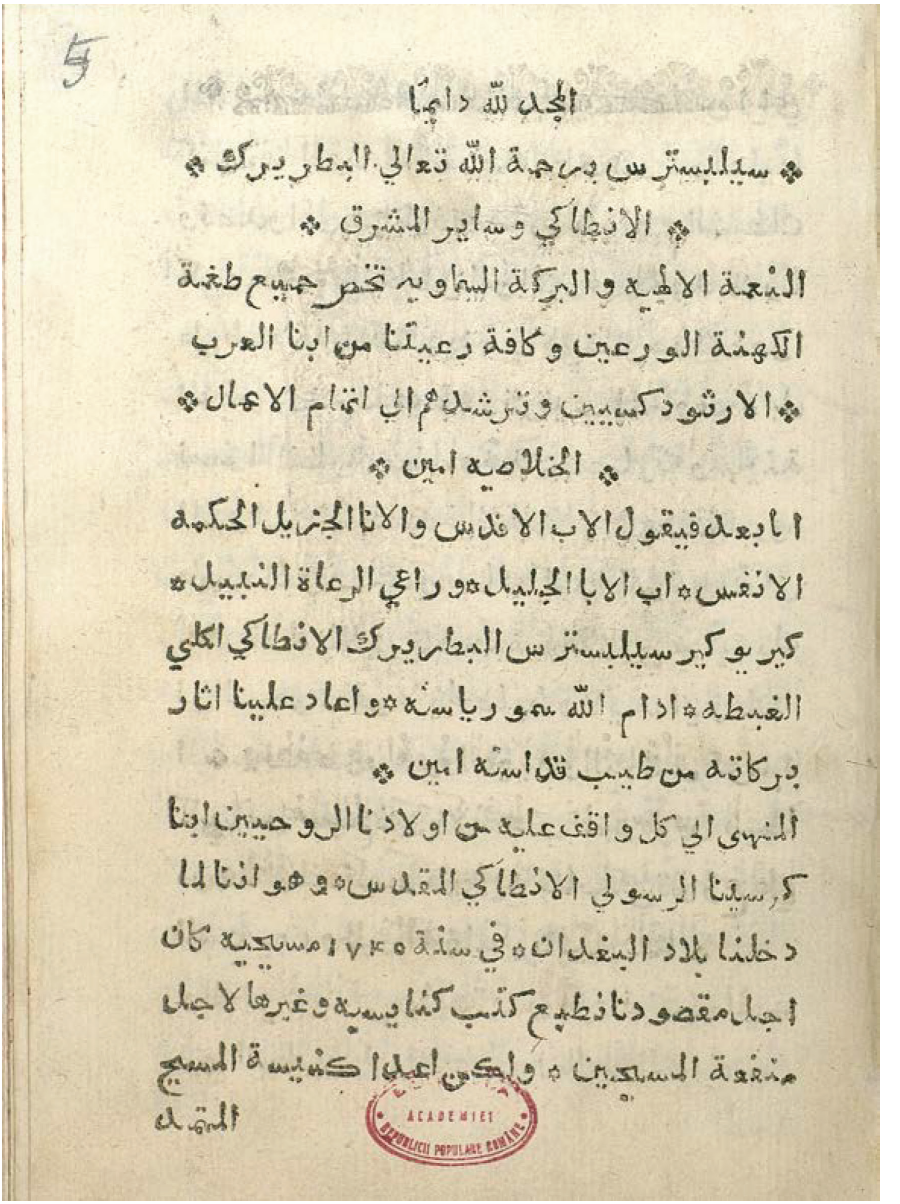
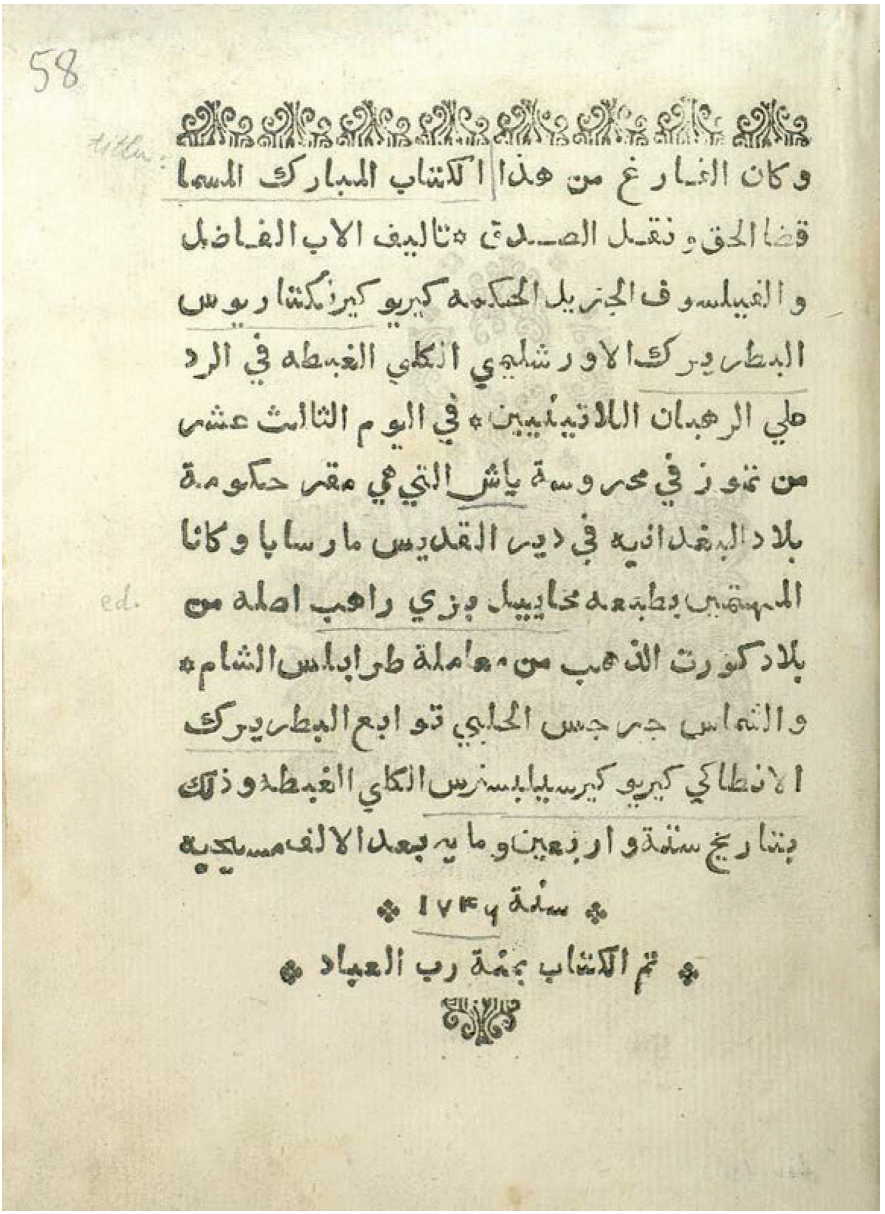


Fig. 39: Nektarios, *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq*, foreword, p. 1 (B.A.R.).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وكان الفارغ من هذا الكتاب المبارك المسما
قضا الحق ونقل الصدق * تاليف الاب الفاضل
والفيلسوف الجزيل الحكمه كيريو كيرلكشاريوس
البطريرك الاورشليمي الكلي الغبطه في الرد
علي الرهبان اللاتينيين * في اليوم الثالث عشر
من تموز في محروسة ياش التي هي مقر حكومة
بلاد البغدانيه في دير القديس مارسابا وكانا
المهتمين بطبعه مخاييل بزي راهب اصله من
بلاد كورت الذهب من معاملة طرابلس الشام *
والشماس جرجس الحلبي توابع البطريرك
الانطاكي كيريو كيرسيليبسترس الكلي الغبطه وذلك
بتاريخ سنة واربعين وماية بعد الالف مسيحيه

* سنة ١٧٤١ *

* تم الكتاب بحمد رب العباد *

Fig. 40: Nektarios, *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq*, first page of Nektarios's work (B.A.R.).

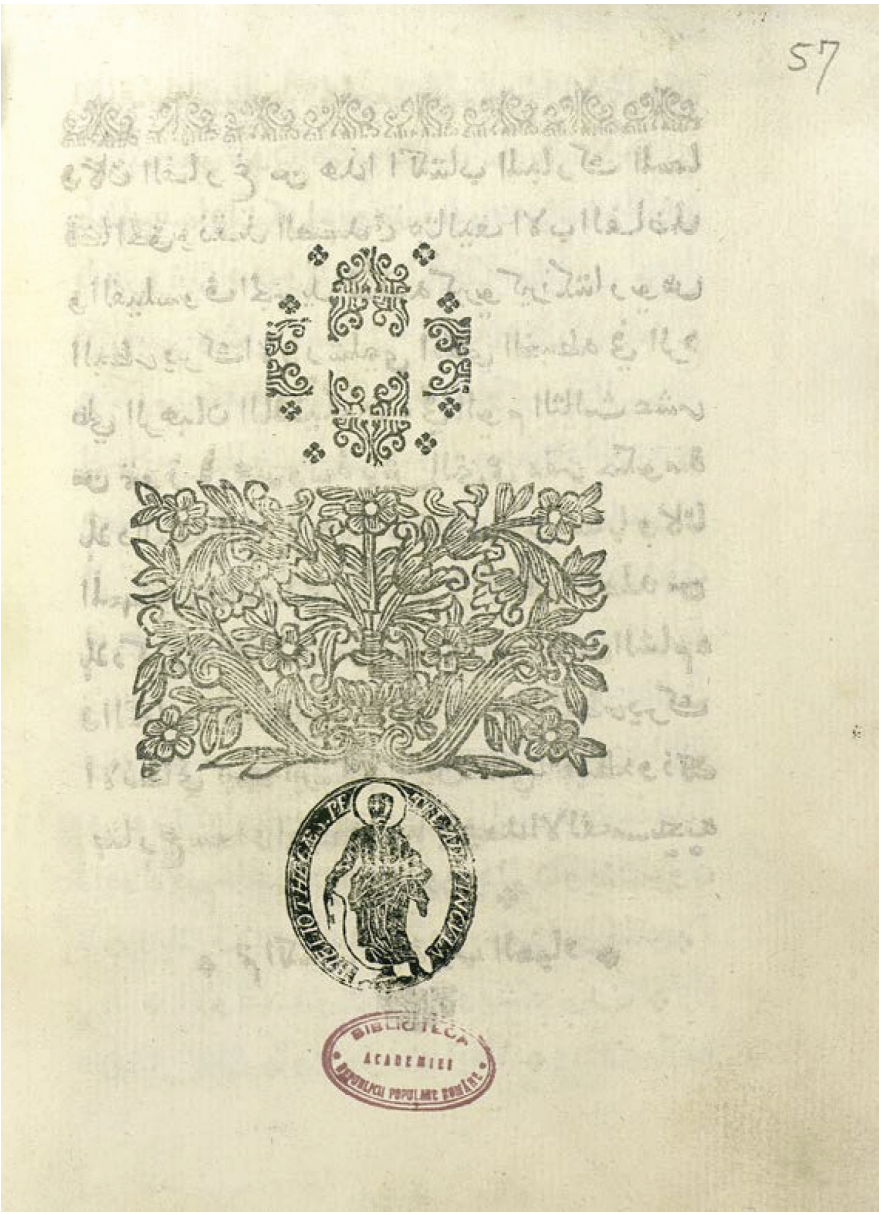

Fig. 41: Nektarios, *Kitāb qaḍā al-ḥaqq wa-naql al-ṣidq*, last page (B.A.R.).

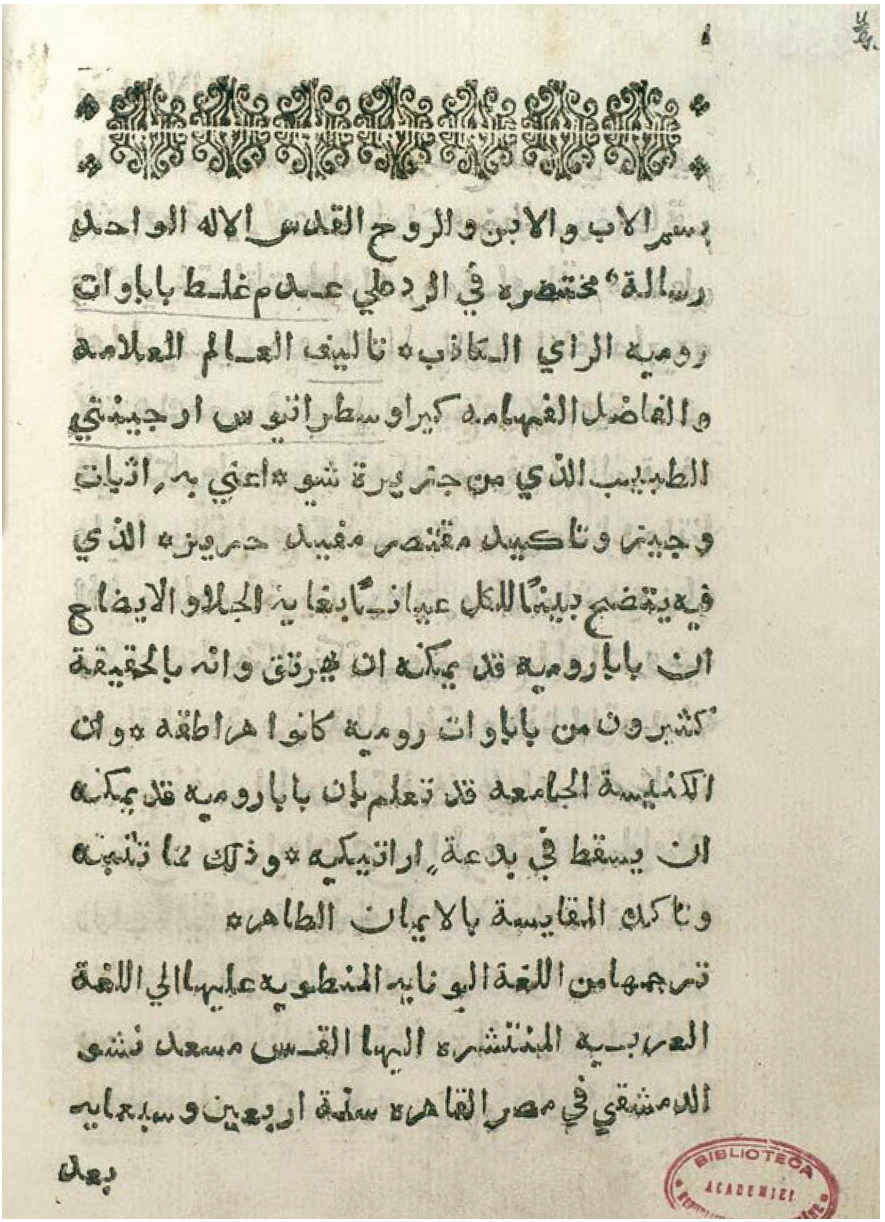
بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس الاله الواحد
رسالة مختصره في الرد على عدم غلط باباوات
رومية الراي الكاذب * تاليف العالم العلامه
والفاضل الفهامه كيراو سطراتيوس ارجيفنتي
الطبيب الذي من جزيرة شيو * اعني به راثيات
وجيز وتاكيد مقتصر مفيد حريز * الذي
فيه يتضح بينا للكل عيانا بغاية الجلاو الايضاح
ان باباروميه قد يمكنه ان يخرق وانه بالحقيقة
كثيرون من باباوات رومية كانوا هراطقه * وان
الكنيسة الجامعه قد تعلم بان باباروميه قد يمكنه
ان يسقط في بدعة اراتيكيه * وذلك مما تثبته
وتاكد المقايسة بالايمان الطاهر *
ترجمها من اللغة اليونانيه المنطويه عليها الي اللغة
العربيه المنتشره اليها القس مسعد نشو
الدمشقي في مصر القاهره سنة اربعين وسبعمايه
بعد

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Fig. 42: Eustratios Argentis, *Risāla muḫtaṣara fī al-radd ʿalā ʿadam ġalaṭ bābāwāt Rūmiya*, Iași, 1746, first page (B.A.R.).

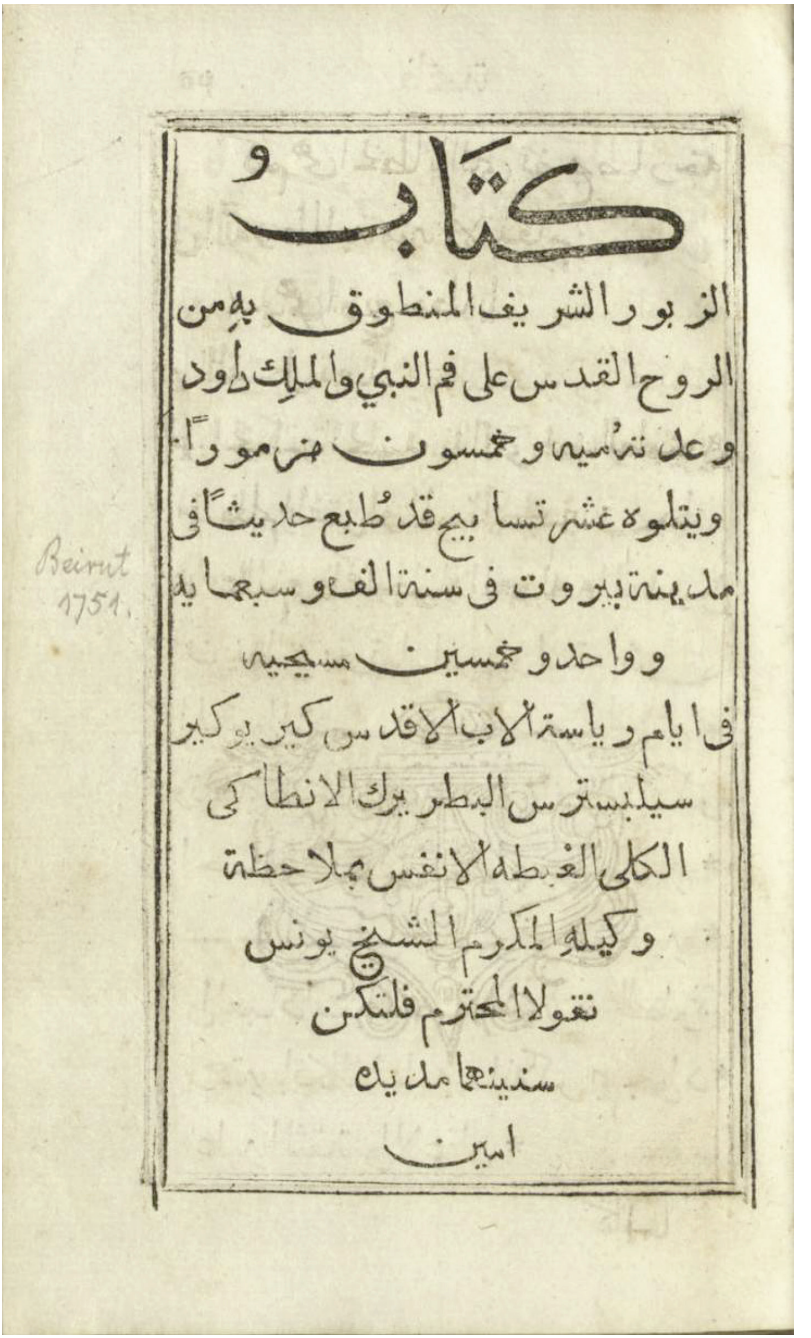
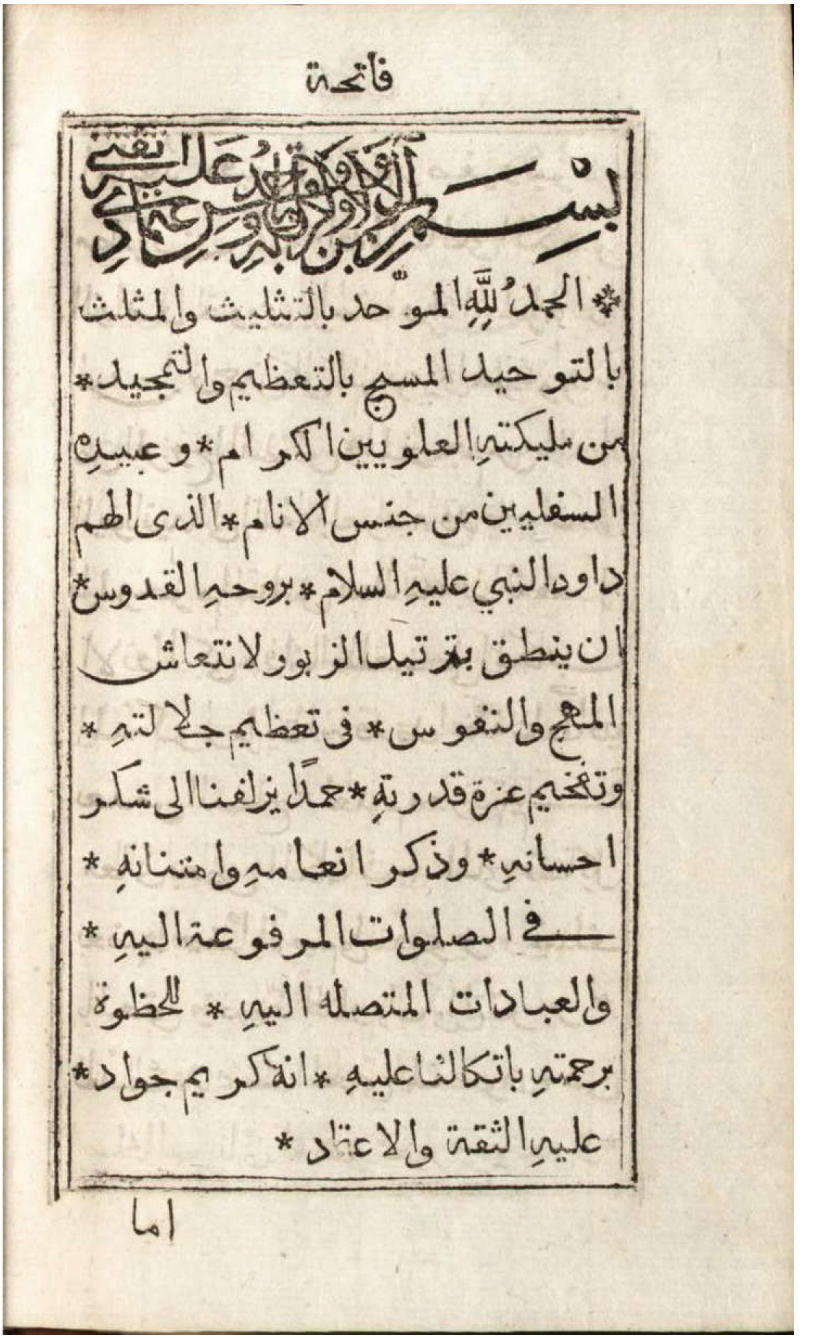

كتاب و
الزبور الشريف المنطوق به من
الروح القدس على فم النبي والملك داود
وعدته مية وخمسون مزمورا
ويتلوه عشر تسابيح قد طبع حديثا في
مدينة بيروت في سنة الف وسبعماية
وواحد وخمسين مسيحية
في ايام رياسة الاب الاقدس كيريوكير
سيلبسترس البطريرك الانطاكي
الكلي الغبطة الانفس بملاحظة
وكيله المكرم الشيخ يونس
نقولا المحترم فلتكن
سنينها مديدة
امين
Beirut
1751.

Fig. 43: Psalter, Beirut, title page (UUB).



فاتحة

بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس عليك يا نقي
ابن ابن ابن عماد

* الحمد لله الموحد بالتثليث والمثلث
بالتوحيد المسبح بالتعظيم والتمجيد *
من مليكته العلويين الكرام * وعبيده
السفليين من جنس الانام * الذى الهم
داود النبي عليه السلام * بروحه القدوس *
ان ينطق بترتيل الزبور لانتعاش
المهج والنفوس * فى تعظيم جلالته *
وتفخيم عزة قدرته * حمدًا يزلفنا الى شكر
احسانه * وذكر انعامه وامتنانه *
فى الصلوات المرفوعة اليه *
والعبادات المتصلة اليه * للحظوة
برحمته باتكالنا عليه * انه كريم جواد *
عليه الثقة والاعتماد *

اما

Fig. 44: Psalter, Beirut, 1752, foreword, p. 1 (UUB).

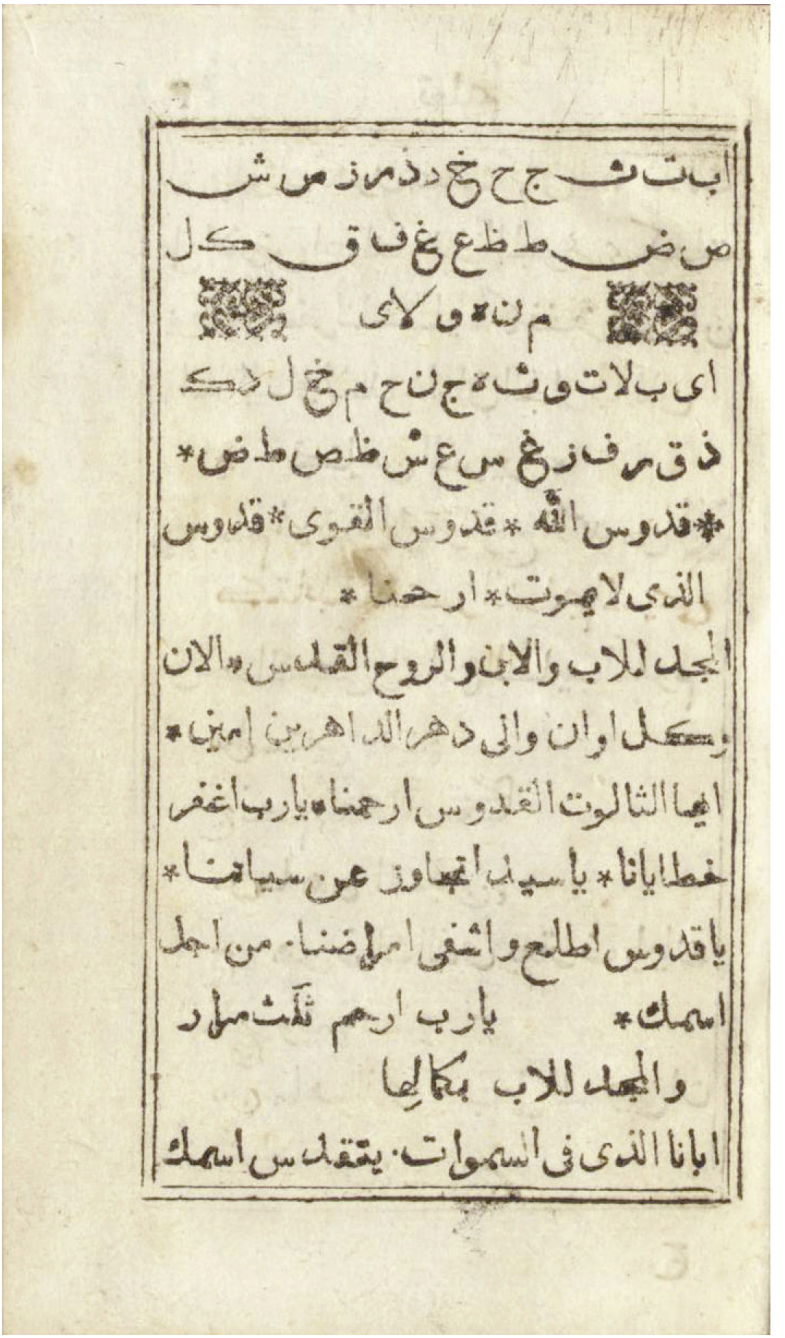
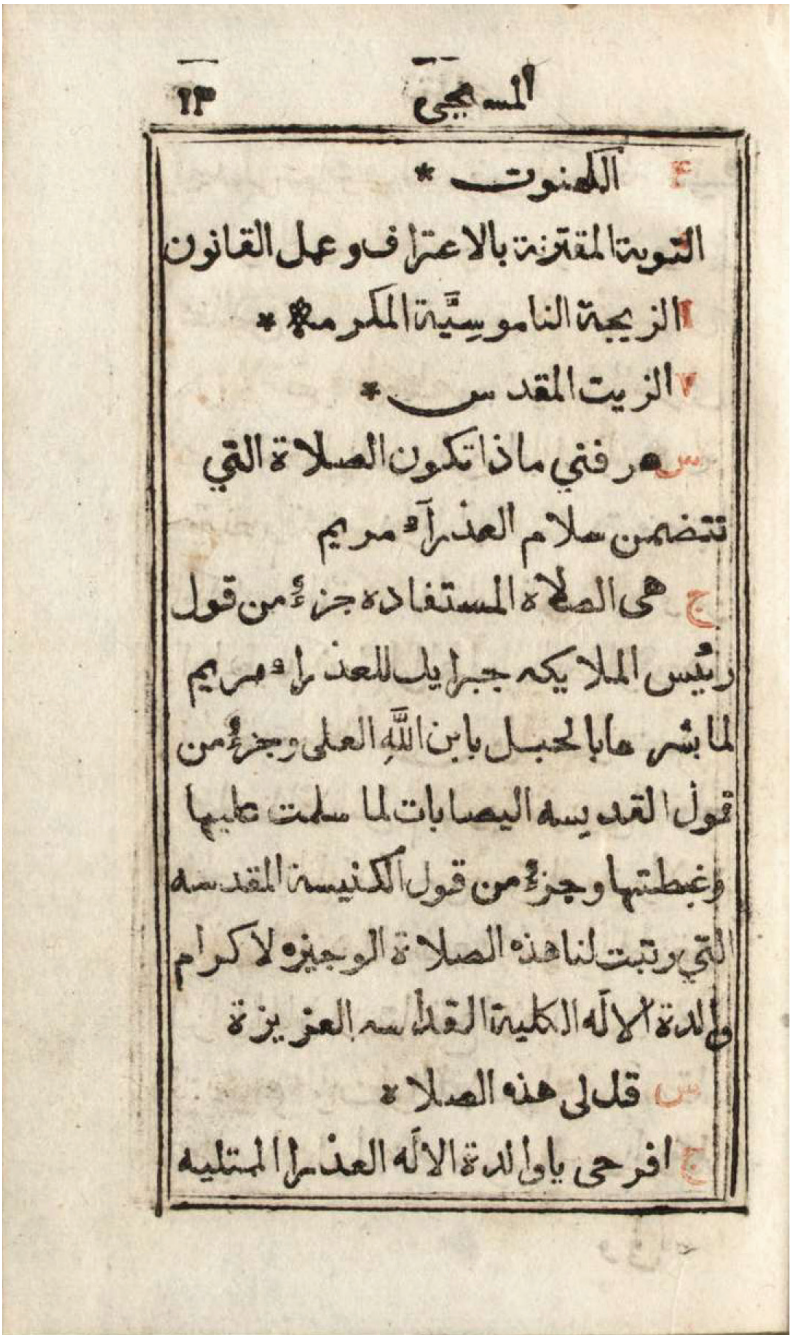

ابت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل
م ن ه و لاى
اى ب لات وث ه ج ن ح م خ ل ذ ك
ذ ق ر ف ز غ س ع ش ظ ص ط ض *
* قدوس الله * قدوس القوى * قدوس
الذى لا يموت * ارحمنا *
المجد للاب والابن والروح القدس * الان
وكل اوان والى دهر الداهرين امين *
ايها الثالوث القدوس ارحمنا * يارب اغفر
خطايانا * ياسيد تجاوز عن سيئاتنا *
ياقدوس اطلع واشفى امراضنا * من اجل
اسمك * يارب ارحم ثلث مرار
والمجد للاب بكماله
ابانا الذى فى السموات يتقدس اسمك

Fig. 45: Psalter, Beirut, 1752, alphabet exercises (UUB).



١٣ المسيحي

٤ الكهنوت *

التوبة المقترنة بالاعتراف وعمل القانون

٦ الزيجة الناموسية المكرمة *

٧ الزيت المقدس *

س عرفني ماذا تكون الصلاة التي

تتضمن سلام العذرا مريم

ج هي الصلاة المستفادة جزء من قول

رئيس الملايكة جبرايل للعذرا مريم

لما بشرها بالحبل بابن الله العلي وجزء من

قول القديسة اليصابات لما سلمت عليها

وغبطتها وجزء من قول الكنيسة المقدسة

التي رتبت لنا هذه الصلاة الوجيزة لاكرام

والدة الاله الكلية القداسة العزيزة

س قل لي هذه الصلاة

ج افرحي يا والدة الاله العذرا المتليه

Fig. 46: Psalter, Beirut, 1752, Catechism, p. 11 (UUB).

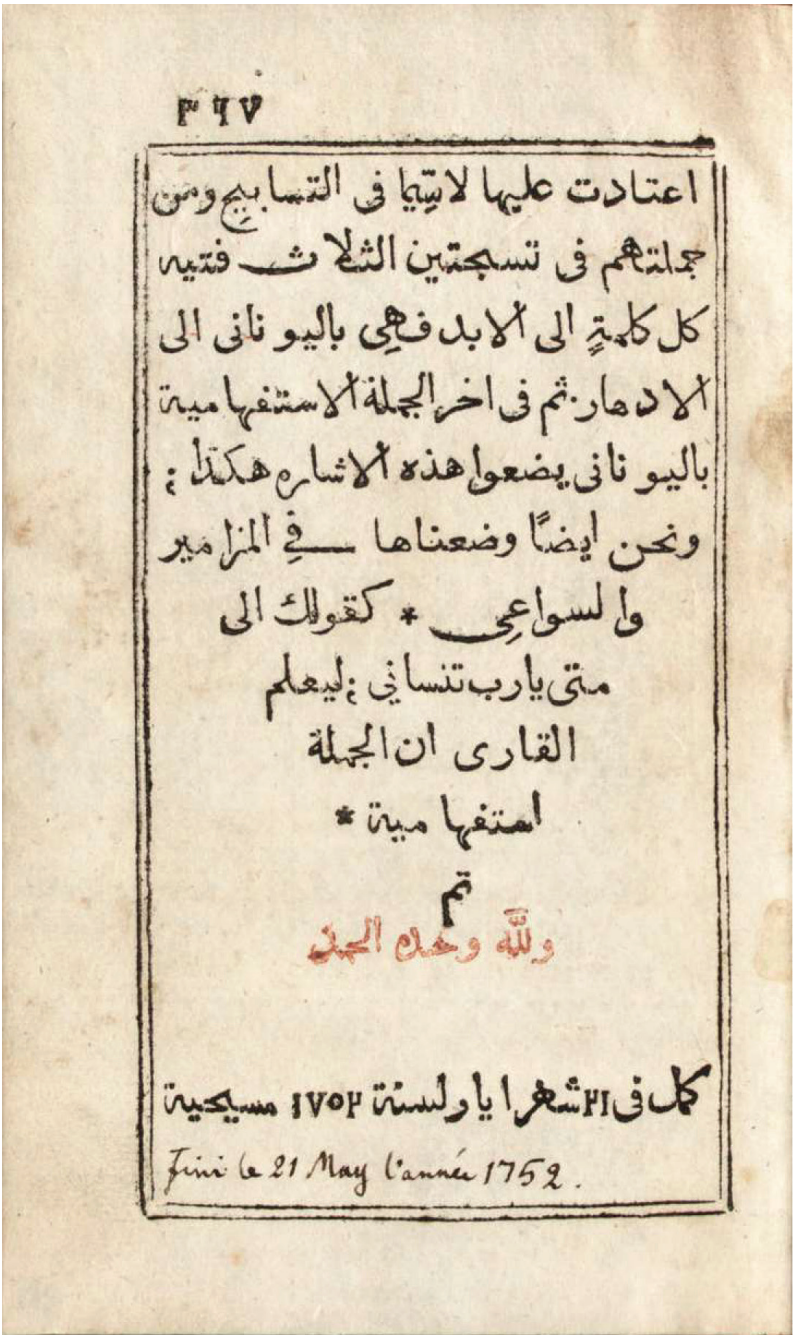


Fig. 47: Psalter, Beirut, 1752, last page (UUB).

Fig. 48: Psalter, Beirut, 1752, *Deisis* (UUB).

Fig. 49: *Deisis*, Akathist, Snagov, 1698 (B.Sf.S.).

Fig. 50: *Deisis*, *Proskynetarion of the Holy Mount Athos*, Snagov, 1701 (B.A.R.).

Fig. 51: *Deisis*, Arabic and Greek Book of the Divine Liturgies, Snagov, 1701 (B.A.R.).

Fig. 52: *David*, Psalter, Beirut, 1752 (UUB).

Fig. 53: *David*, Psalter, Bucharest, 1694 (B.Sf.S.).

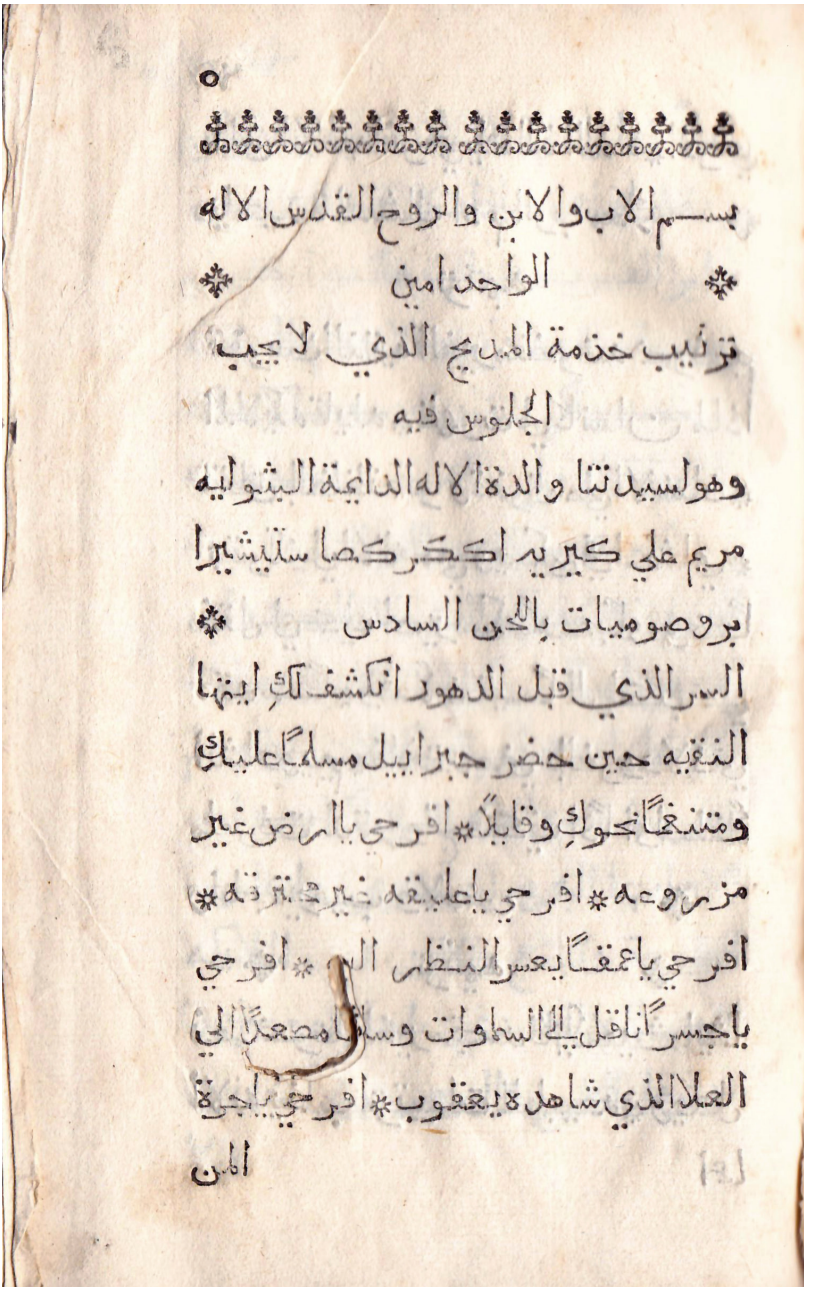


Fig. 54: First page, Akathist, [Beirut?], [1752?] (BPO).

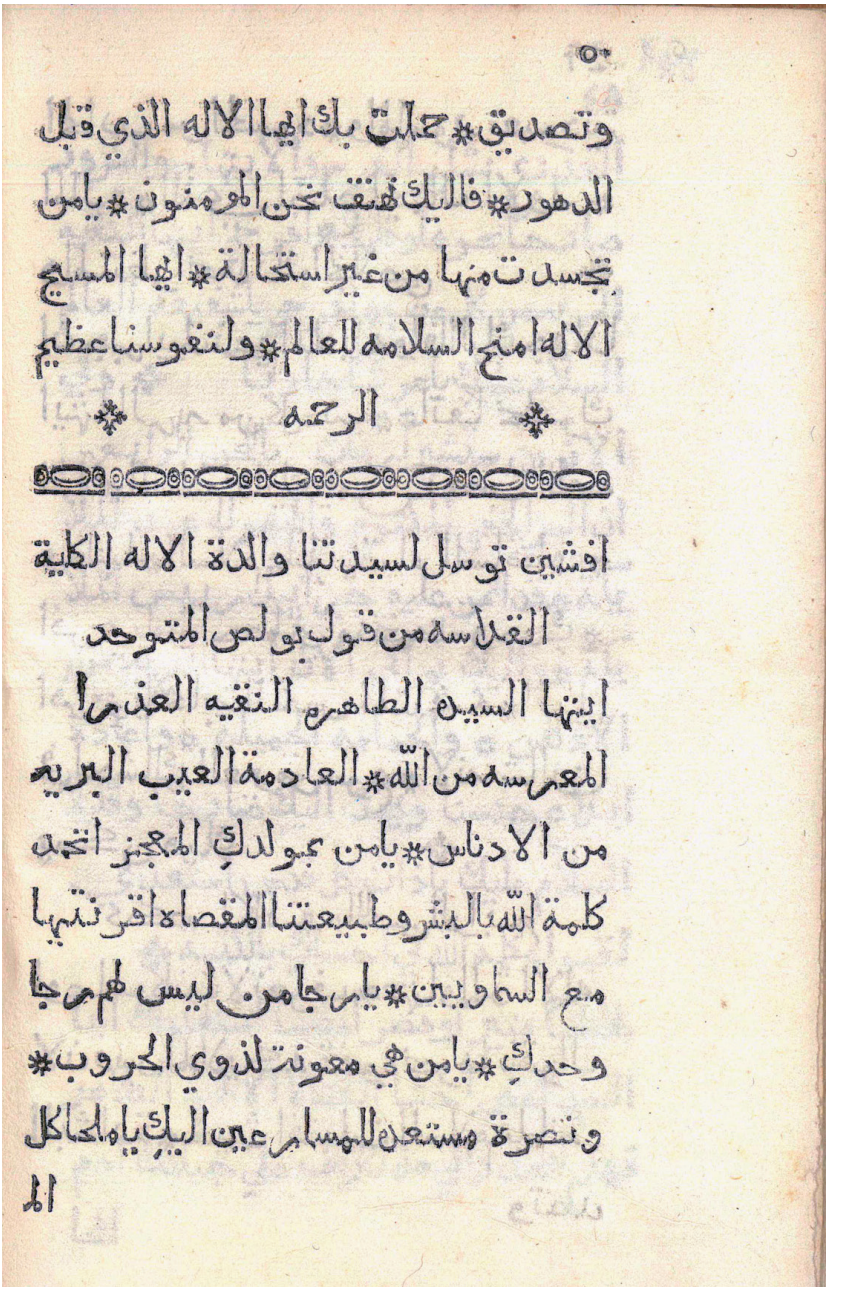

٥٠
وتصديق * حملت بك ايها الاله الذي قبل
الدهور * فاليك نهتف نحن المؤمنون * يامن
تجسدت منها من غير استحالة * ايها المسيح
الاله امنح السلامة للعالم * ولنفوسنا عظيم
الرحمة
افشين توسل لسيدتنا والدة الاله الكلية
القداسة من قول بولص المتوحد
اينها السيدة الطاهرة النقية العذرا
المعرسة من الله * العادمة العيب البريه
من الادناس * يامن بمولدك المجيد اتحد
كلمة الله بالبشر وطبيعتنا المقصاة اقترنتها
مع السماويين * يارجا من ليس لهم رجا
وحدك * يامن هي معونة لذوي الحروب *
ونصرة مستعدة للمسارعين اليك ياملجا كل
الم

Fig. 55: Ornamental frieze, Akathist, [Beirut?], [1752?], p. 50 (BPO).

Fig. 56: *Annunciation*, Akathist, [Beirut?], [1752?] (BPO).

Fig. 57: *Annunciation*, Akathist, Snagov, 1698 (B.Sf.S.).

Fig. 58: *Annunciation*, Romanian Horologion, Târgoviște, 1715 (B.A.R.).

Fig. 59: *Annunciation*, Akathist, [Buzău], 1743 (B.A.R.).

Fig. 60: Coat of arms on last page, Akathist, [Beirut?], [1752?] (BPO).

Fig. 61: *Constantin Brâncoveanu, Antim the Iberian and Athanasios Dabbās*, fresco, gateway, Monastery of Saint Antim, Bucharest (photo IF).

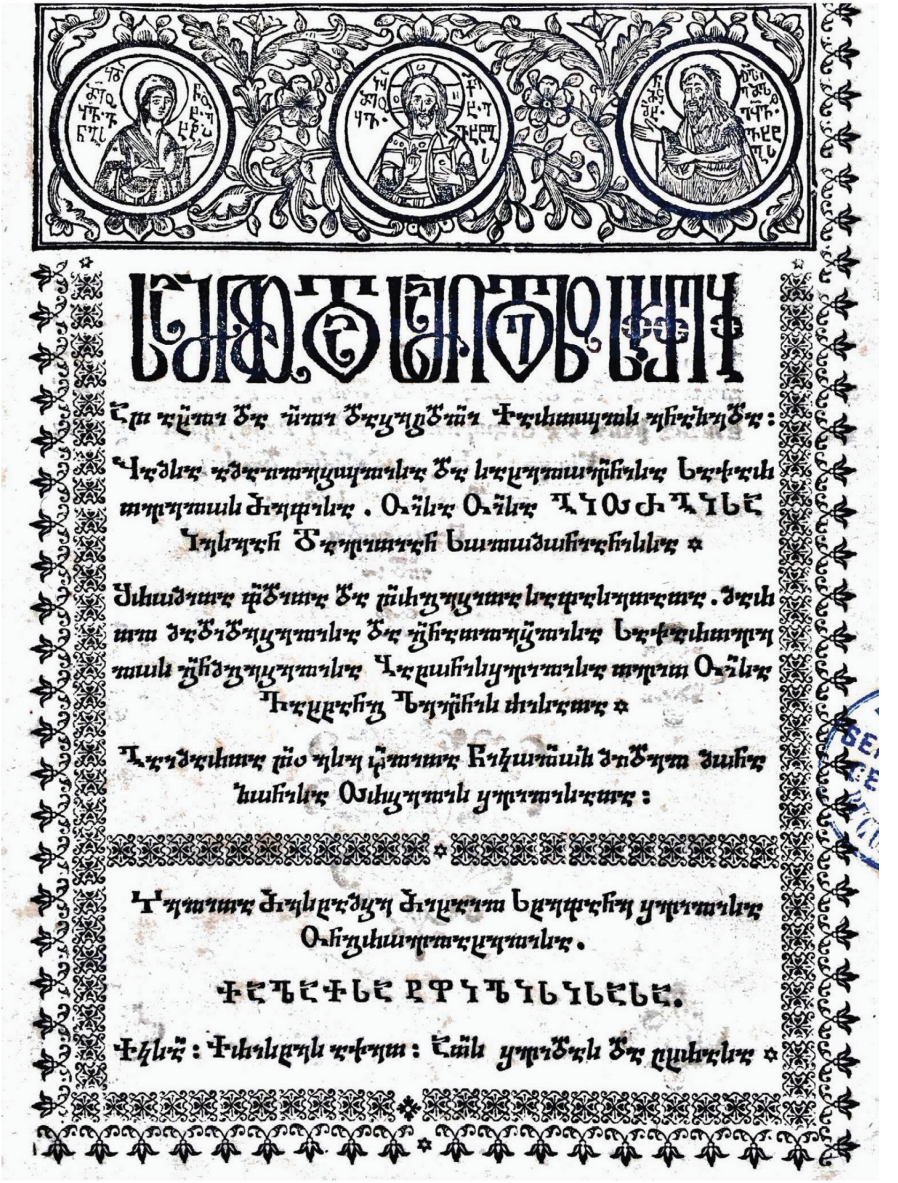


Fig. 62: Gospel, Tbilisi, 1709, title page (B.A.R.).

Fig. 63: *Portrait of King Vakhtang VI*, Gospel, Tbilisi, 1709 (B.A.R.).

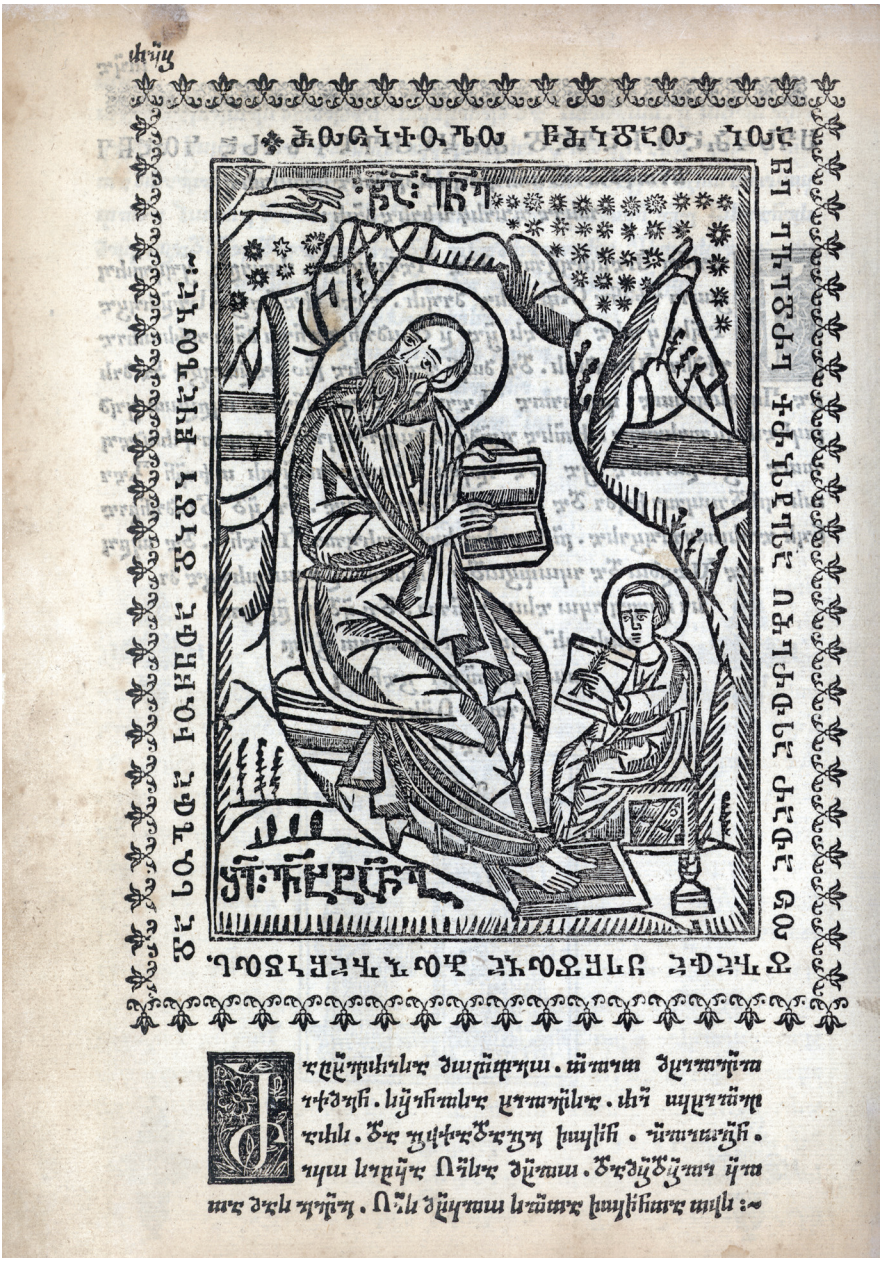


Fig. 64: *The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John*, Gospel, Tbilisi, 1711 ('Korneli Kekelidze' Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi).

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