
THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE ROMANIAN LITURGIKON BETWEEN THE BYZANTINE AND SLAVONIC LITURGICAL TRADITION

Ciprian Ioan Streza*

'Lucian Blaga' University of Sibiu, no.10, Victoriei BLVD, 55002, Sibiu, Romania

(Received 29 November 2018, revised 10 January 2019)

Abstract

The shift from manuscript to printed form represented a substantial progress in the liturgical life of the Eastern Orthodox peoples, and this process of spiritual and liturgical renewal that had started in the 16th century would be brought to its peak by the translation of the service texts in the oral language of the people. The Liturgikon currently used by the Romanian Orthodox Church is the product of an extensive effort made by the Romanian people to crystallize and naturalize the Byzantine Liturgical tradition, which they had adopted however, through the Slavonic Liturgical tradition. The entire Romanian Liturgical tradition is reflected in the Liturgikon that is in use in the Romanian Orthodox Church today. Printed for the first time in Transylvania and established in an edition revised in Wallachia and refined in Moldavia, the text of this service book is set apart from the Greek and Slavonic Liturgikons by a series of specific elements which can be found in comparative analysis of the Slavonic and Slavic-Romanian and the Romanian editions.

Keywords: liturgy, Transylvanian Church, liturgical, language, worship

1. Introduction

Whether they are in manuscript or in printed form, the service books have a history of their own, one that speaks about the life of Christian communities in a certain region and about the manner in which Christianity was engrafted onto the national characteristics of each people it dwelt in.

From the very first centuries of their existence, both Eastern and Western Christian communities linked their lives with the reading of the Holy Scriptures, the consecration through the Holy Mysteries and the celebration of the Holy Liturgy [1-3]. This is the reason why the first ever important Liturgical texts that were written down and then printed were the Gospel Book, the Euchologion and the Liturgikon. The latter is the most important service book for Easter

*E-mail: ciprian_streza@yahoo.com

Christianity, as it comprises the text of the Holy Liturgy, around which the entire Orthodox liturgical practice was shaped [4].

In most of the Greek, Romanian and Slavonic manuscripts and printed editions of this service book, there is either the title of 'The Holy and Divine Liturgies', or of Λειτουργικόν [5], whose perfect linguistic equivalent is the Slavonic 'Sluzhébnik' or the Romanian 'Liturghier', or of the Ἱερατικόν [Hieratikon], as it appears in some of its Greek editions [6].

Having initially been issued as an extract from the old Byzantine euchologies that contained the principal prayers of the Eucharistic Synax, the Liturgikon was originally a collection of the prayers read by the priest during the Eucharistic celebration, which was later upgraded by the addition of the litanies recited by the deacon, the typikonal annotations, and eventually by the responses of the people.

From its original design as a small Euchologion, the content of the Liturgikon has been constantly enriched throughout time. As attested by its early printed editions that were issued in Venice during the 17th century, in the beginning the Liturgikon comprised only the texts of the Liturgies of Saints John Chrysostom, Basil the Great and the text of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. In time, it incorporated the service orders of the Proskomedia, the Vespers and the Orthros, as well as those Euchologion prayers that are connected with the Holy Liturgy or with various needs of the Church (for example, the order of the memorial service, the prayers for the consecration of the koliva, the blessing of the willow branches, of the grapes), and sometimes it also included patristic teachings on the Holy Liturgy [7].

As long as it circulated in manuscript form, the Liturgikon copies were rather diverse and inconsistent both in their rendering of the texts of the euchological formularies and in the liturgical practice reflected in their typikonal provisions [8]. Once the printing press was introduced, the text of this service book reached a degree of uniformization and systematization. Yet its printing in different cultural centres and the use of manuscripts of a questionable quality that was due to their having been subject to numerous interpolations, led to many printed editions of the Liturgikon to be somewhat different from one another, mostly on account of the traces of the local liturgical specificity they contained.

The first printed edition of the Liturgikon was the Slavonic Liturgikon issued by monk Macarius in Târgoviște, in 1508. Following this edition, other *editiones principes* of this book for the Orthodox in other countries were reproduced in printing houses from various centres, in the following order: for the Serbs and Bulgarians, in Venice, 1519, by Montenegrin Hieromonk Pahomije, under the purview of Montenegrin Božidar Vuković, one of the first printers of Serbian books in Montenegro; for Ruthenians and Ukrainians in Vilnius, 1583; for the Russians of the Grand Russia in Moscow, 1602 [9], then in Striatin (Sniatin), 1604, in Kiev, 1620 and 1629 (with another one issued in 1539), and in Lviv (Lemberg) in 1646 and 1666.

A notable mention is that the Orthodox Liturgikon was first published in Slavic long before its first Greek edition, which would come out simultaneously in Venice (as part of the great Greek Euchologion) [5, vol. I, 195] and in Rome (separate edition) [5, vol. I, 192-195] in 1526.

In the Romanian language, the printed Liturgikon was issued in 1570 in Braşov, by the labour of deacon Coresi [10-12] who, aided by the scholar priests Mihai and Jane from Saint Nicholas Church in Şcheii Braşovului, partially translated this service book and included in it only the order of the Proskomedie and the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom [13].

2. The liturgical language of the Romanians

It is a mystery for historians how the Romanians are the only Latin people who adopted the Eastern Christian rite and employed the Slavonic language in their liturgical services in the interim. A compelling explanation of this paradox can be contained in a correct understanding of the events that marked the history of the Romanian people. Along these lines, Romanian historiography states that the Romanian people was born Christian, for its ethnogenesis happened within the same time-frame that Christianity spread in the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic space. The Getae-Dacian population conquered by the Romans was introduced to Christianity by Latin speaking missionaries coming from south of Danube. The Vulgar Latin was thus the first liturgical language used in the church services of the Romanian people, in parallel with the Greek language, in which Christianity expanded within the territories neighbouring the Black Sea [14].

The retreat of the Roman armies from Dacia left behind a Romanised population at the North and South of Danube. This population encountered Christianity very early, as proven by the martyrical acts of numerous bishops and Christians that were preserved from that period [15]. This Christian Romanised population was the very same that afterwards had to stand against the barbarian migratory peoples. Thus, in the 5th century, the first people that appeared, namely the Slavs, inhabited the whole region that makes up Romania today. Later on, in the 7th century, being under pressure from the Avars and Bulgarians, they conceded this territory and moved to the Balkan Peninsula. In this context, the Latin speaking population found itself surrounded only by Slavic peoples, and therefore was forced to flee from the migratory invasions that had destroyed the old towns, and seek shelter into mountains and valleys. While this was happening, though, the more conservatory and resilient rural communities managed to preserve their ancient life patterns and Christian faith in the nascent Roman Carpathian-Danubian language that had evolved from a Vulgar Latin spiced with local Dacian elements [16].

Since they had already occupied a vast territory in the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic region, in the 9th century the Bulgarians organized themselves in a powerful state that would reach its golden age under Tsar Boris I, thus making their Christianisation a point of contention between Rome and Constantinople. However, the discerning Byzantines secured their winning by allowing the

Bulgarians the use of the Slavonic language in their liturgical services, in exchange for their consenting to the Eastern creed [17]. Consequently, the Bulgarian ruled Romanians, who had already been Christianised and who were using Vulgar Latin in their liturgical services, were then forced to accept the Byzantine rite in Slavonic and to remain under the church jurisdiction of Constantinople.

The Slavonic used by Romanians until the 17th century was not only a liturgical language, but also the official language of the Romanian feudal states. All the official documents of the time were written in Slavonic. Just like Mediaeval Latin was used in Catholic countries, or literary Greek and French among the upper-rank classes in the 18th-19th centuries, in the same way Slavonic came to be the spoken language of the court, of urban patriciates and of highly cultivated people in the Romanian Provinces, who used it along with their mother tongue [18]. Spoken Slavonic, a combination of Church Slavonic with elements from the living Slavic language, was taught in royal and monastic schools and was considered the most elevated form of communication in the Mediaeval society [19].

The Slavo-Romanian language used in church throughout the Romanian Provinces between the 11th and the 18th centuries is based on Middle Bulgarian, whose characteristics intermingle with those of the Serbo-Croatian, thus proving that the use of this language has been a cultural and not an ethnic phenomenon [20]. This fact was also historically proved right: amid the great social and cultural reforms in the 16th-17th centuries, the Romanians found a way to experience, almost simultaneously in all three provinces, the Liturgy and their culture in their own language, and to bring into the spoken language the rich legacy of their millennial Christian tradition.

The profound social transformations of the 17th century, the emergence of a new class of boyars, the revival of nationalism and improvement of cultural expectations and intellectual exigencies among local boyars prompted a number of enlightened monks and hierarchs of the Church to start translating the divine service texts into the vernacular language. The use of Slavonic ceased because the priests had only a few Slavonic manuscripts and books to rely on during the divine services, and all the Typikon related advice they could obtain was coming from older priests. It seems that, up until then, the specific musicality and the foreign language found in the church were a perfect fit for a people that had been oppressed and burdened by feudal exploitation, it provided an almost magic atmosphere wherein the peasant could easily find an escape from the dire routine. However, for this new class of boyars, as well as for the intellectuals in Transylvania, the manner in which the divine services were celebrated in the Romanian churches was 'scandalous' [21].

With the reform wind blowing hot, in the 16th century the Romanians from the Romanian Provinces felt the urge and desire to understand the church services and to have the liturgical books translated into their own language, beginning with the Psalter, the Apostle and the Gospel readings. That would be the starting point for the reorganization of the Church throughout the Romanian Provinces. This process targeted multiple directions and unfolded in many gradual stages following a logical and practical sequence.

- a. First, the Church canons had to be translated and edited, in order to put aside any legislative anarchy and set some rules for clergy and laity.
- b. Secondly, a series of books containing sermons (Didache) were translated into Romanian and printed, so as the priests could learn the essence of Christian doctrines and convey the correct message to their parishioners.
- c. Thirdly, the Typikon related indications had to be translated in Romanian (whilst leaving the text of prayers and chants in Slavonic), so that the priests could celebrate the divine services correctly and thus avoid the critiques coming from Greek clergy.
- d. Fourthly, the liturgical readings (the Epistle and the Gospel readings) were translated into Romanian, in order to have them read in Romanian and thus understood by all people.
- e. Eventually, Slavic was pushed to the side, once the key service books such as the Psalter, the Euchologion and the Liturgikon were thoroughly translated and incorporated in the cult [21]. In the case of the Liturgikon, giving up Slavonic also involved going through an intermediary phase, the one with the Slavic-Romanian Liturgikon, in which the texts of prayers were in Slavonic, while the typikonal provisions were translated in the vernacular language.

In the context of a constant pressure exercised by the reformed denominations, which was typical for 16th century Western Europe, and in defiance of a decided opposition coming from the Byzantine-Slavic Orthodoxy observed in the Provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, the Romanians in Transylvania were the first to find a way of introducing the national language in the Church, by gradually translating those texts that were vital for the liturgical and spiritual life of a parish.

This enterprise was at first deemed by both Wallachian and Moldavian Romanians as the mother of all heresies. In the end though, it actually proved to have stirred a truly remarkable cultural and religious revolution that was later replicated by the two same provinces. A Church reform of like magnitude would be allowed by Catholic Europe only in the 20th century, starting with the second Vatican Council, whereas many other national Orthodox Churches are yet to experience it [22].

3. The translation of the Liturgikon in Romanian - the stages of a spiritual renewal of the Romanian Orthodox Church between the 16th-18th centuries

It is interesting to follow the entire spiritual Odyssey of the naturalization process of the liturgical language in the Romanian Orthodox Church, by looking at the various editions of the Romanian Liturgikon, both in manuscript and printed form. The analysis of sources will eventually prove that the emergence of a culture written in Romanian has been, by all means, an internal phenomenon deeply rooted in the Romanian society as it was at the beginning of the 17th century and in the material, cultural and spiritual needs it was facing at that moment. Meanwhile, this bold move made by the Orthodox Church towards the

adoption of the national language in its cult integrated perfectly with the general evolution of the contemporary European society, which was also progressing from the sacred languages of the Mediaeval rite to liturgical services into proper oral languages.

At the end of the 15th century, Transylvania had already had the first texts translated in Romanian but these were distributed only in manuscript form until they were printed by Deacon Coresi (*Tetraevanghelul romanesc* [The Romanian Tetraevangeliar] 1561, *Apostolul* [The Acts of the Apostles] 1563, *Tâlcul Evangheliilor și Molitfelnicul* [Sermons and Book of Prayers] 1567, *Psaltirea* [The Psalter] and *Liturghierul* [The Liturgikon] 1570).

3.1. The Slavonic and Slavic-Romanian editions of the Romanian Orthodox Liturgikon

The transition from the Slavonic to the Romanian Liturgikon was made gradually. As habit would have it, the priests eventually got to a point where they recited the prayers by heart, oftentimes in an approximate Slavonic. This explains why, up to the dawn of the 17th century, the circulating Liturgikons were manuscripts and printed editions in Slavonic and Slavic-Romanian, translations from the Greek Euchologies published in Venice and later enriched with texts pertaining to the Slavic liturgical tradition.

The *Slavonic Sluzhëbnik* was distributed in manuscript throughout Romania for a long time. In 1855, Bishop Melchisedec of Roman made a list of 11 Slavonic Liturgikons existent in monasteries around the Province of Moldavia [23]. A much more comprehensive catalogue of the most important Sluzhëbniks used in the Romanian Orthodox Church, can be found at Slavist Jacimirksi, and the Romanian Academy Library also has an impressive collection of Slavonic Liturgikons, whose marvellous calligraphy and ornamentations are exceptional [24].

3.1.1. Macarius's Slavonic Liturgikon 1508

The printed Slavonic Liturgikon went through five editions: Târgoviște 1508, Brașov 1520-1525(?), Brașov 1588, Dealu Monastery 1646 and Târgoviște 1646. Without any doubt, the 1508 edition printed by Monk Macarius at Târgoviște is the more significant one, as it was the first book ever printed on a Romanian territory, as well as the very first Liturgikon to be published in the Eastern Orthodox world, and therefore the model upon which all subsequent Venice printed editions of the Liturgikon for the Slavs were fashioned [25, 26]. The copy of this beautiful Liturgikon that is preserved at the Metropolitan Library in Sibiu is small (22.6 x 16cm), its beautifully ornate text is bound in wooden covers and strapped in burgundy leather, and its exceptionally generous contents are well specified in the outline at the beginning:

1. exhortation of our father amongst saints, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, Basil the Great, to the priest, on the divine service and

- Communion (f. 1r-3 r);
2. presentation of the chapters of this holy book called Liturgy (f. 3 v-4v) (the book's table of contents, with no indication of the respective folios);
 3. the order of the divine service, diaconal parts included (f. 5 r et seq. = The service of the Proskomedie, wherein the deacon's office had been embedded);
 4. the divine service (Liturgy) of our Father among saints John Chrysostom (its title appears on f. 12 v, when in fact, it only starts on f. 16 r, without any other title);
 5. the divine service (Liturgy) of our Father among saints Basil the Great (f. 57 r-86 v);
 6. the divine service (Liturgy) of the Presanctified Gifts (Ro. *Prejdeosfeštenia* = Slav. *Prezhdeosvyaschenny*, f. 87 r. 106 v);
 7. the prayers recited by the deacon at the Lytia of the Great Vespers (f. 107 r-111 r);
 8. the prayer for the consecration of the koliva in honour of saints (f. 111 v-112 r);
 9. the prayer read during Lytia, at any desired moment (f. 112 v-113 v);
 10. the service of Vespers (f. 113 v-115 r);
 11. the service of Orthros (f. 115 r-117 v);
 12. dismissals (f. 117 v-122 r);
 13. the prayer recited by the hierarch or the father confessor for all the sins committed willingly or unwillingly, for every and all swears and curses, and for any transgression (f. 122 v-126 v);
 14. the second prayer, for the same (f. 126 v-127 v);
 15. cherubic Hymn of Holy Saturday (f. 127);
 16. cherubic Hymn of the daily Liturgy (f. 127 v-128 r);
 17. (No title) the usual note containing words of gratitude addressed to God, the date and the names of the rulers and the printer (f. 128 r and v, Epilogue).

This comprehensive table of contents points to the Greek and Slavonic sources that served as basis for the text of this Liturgikon. It seems that, for the order of the Proskomedie and the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, Hieromonk Macarius used a new and recent translation of the Diataxis of Philotheus, Patriarch of Constantinople, which was most likely penned either in Serbia, or in Wallachia. For the other two Liturgies (Saint Basil's and the Presanctified Gifts – Ro. *Prejdeosfeštenia* = Slav. *Prezhdeosvyaschennyh*) that are not included in the Diataxis of Philotheus, Macarius made use of the already available Slavic translations from older unrevised manuscripts, which also copied and broadcast local Liturgical particularities (Liturgisches Heimatgut). The text of this Liturgikon is written in church Slavonic of Middle-Bulgarian orthography and redaction, which was employed by the Wallachian Church and Chancellery, and not in Serbian orthography and redaction, which was then used in Venice (due to its proximity to Dalmatia) and in the Montenegrin printing house [27].

It is worth mentioning a few of these interesting liturgical peculiarities, as they indicate the way in which the Romanian Liturgikon was born at the junction between the Greek and the Slavonic traditions.

A) The first notable element, which makes Macarius's Liturgikon a rather singular form of the Slavic Liturgikon [28], is its first page insertion 'Exhortation to the priest of Saint Basil the Great', a text that bears the Greek title of Παράγγελμα τοῦ Μεγάλου Βασιλείου πρὸς ἱερεά and is labelled as 'spuria' in the Migne collection [29]. This text is clumsily placed, along with the Table of contents, at the beginning of this Liturgikon, and is printed on a sheet without the usual imprint (numbering), which indicates that the editor's intention was to leave out this piece, as it was not a legitimate part of the Liturgikon, since it probably had not been present in the Liturgikon-manuscript that served as original, either [26]. However, hieromonk Macarius had access to a Slavonic rendition of this text, which is actually chapter 24 from *Kormchaya Kniga* (a Slavic compilation of nomocanons), translated in all probability in 1219, by Archbishop Sava (Nemanja) of Serbia at the Hilandar Monastery, Mount Athos.

This text, attributed to Saint Basil, comprises a series of instructions for the preparations made by the priest prior to the celebration of the Holy Liturgy; this same hortatory text had a most interesting history, since it was duplicated in only a few of the Slavic editions of the Liturgikon printed on Romanian territory during the 16th and 17th centuries (by Deacon Coresi, at Braşov, between 1568-1570, by Şerban Coresi, at Braşov, in 1588 and by archmandrite Ioan from Dealu Monastery, in 1646) before it disappeared completely from the Slavic-Romanian and Romanian editions of the Liturgikon.

However, editions lacking this passage would not be published for long, as the 18th century would mark the dawn of the publication of some Extended Exhortations, at the end of the Romanian and Slavonic Liturgikons. Saint Basil the Great's word to priests would return only at the beginning of the 20th century, in several editions of the Greek Liturgikon printed in Athens, but in those it is not inserted at the opening of the book, but after the three Liturgies, in the same place as the well-known Extended Exhortations from the Slavic and Romanian Liturgikons, which the Greek Liturgikons had never published [26].

B) A unique characteristic of Macarius's Liturgikon is the remembrance of the two national Serbian saints, Archbishop Sava and Venerable Simeon, during the cutting of the particles at Proskomedie. This mention of the two saints is not to be found in any other manuscript or Greek edition of the Diataxis of Philotheus, or in the manuscript or printed Slavic-Bulgarian and Slavic-Russian issues of the *Sluzhëbnik*. The only ones to render this particularity were the Venice and Wallachia printed Liturgikons, which were designed for the use of Romanians and Serbs and reproduced faithfully Macarius's version, and the firsts Romanian translation of the Liturgikon, completed and printed by Coresi at Braşov in 1570 [10, p. 14].

The presence of the two Serbian saints in the order of Proskomedija, which hints to the people's desire to impress a national (Serbian!) specificity onto this service book, could be traced back either to a source or redaction of Serbian origin, or to the ethnicity of the master printer, who could easily edit the Romanian rendition of a Slavonic Liturgikon he used, so as to include the names of these Serbian saints whom he acknowledged and venerated, acting either of his own accord, or at the command or with the blessing of a bishop, such as Maksim Branković (the Serb), who was then a substitute for the Metropolitan of the country [26].

C) Another highly intriguing particularity that indicates the agedness of the sources employed by Macarius in the compilation of his Liturgikon is represented by his use, in the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, of the special Litany and prayer for those who come to be illumined, which is present only in the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - immediately after the usual litany for the catechumens, and read only during the second part of the Great Lent, beginning on the Wednesday in the fourth week of Lent. To draw the attention of the celebrating priests, Macarius placed in his Liturgikon, at the right hand of the text following the formula of the former dismissal of the catechumens ('As many as are catechumens, depart...'), a big red cross, noting: 'It is to be known that we incorporate these litanies and prayers starting from the Wednesday of the Cross and until the Great and Holy Wednesday' (f. 58 r), moving further the formulary for those called to illumination, i.e. the litany, the special prayer read inaudibly by the celebrant priest and of the formula for their dismissal, such as we find them today in the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.

For that matter, this set of litanies and prayers also appear in the service of the Liturgy of Saint Basil that is found in some older and newer Greek manuscripts [30], in almost all of the Slavic Liturgikons handwritten or printed until and during the 17th century, and in some old Romanian manuscript Liturgikons. Their use within this Holy Liturgy had actually been a rule once, not an exception. As soon as the catechumenate institution disappeared, their use in the Liturgy of Saint Basil thinned, but as tradition dictated, it had to be maintained for a long time, until it was decided that it should be used only in the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, such as we have it today.

D) Macarius's edition lacks several elements that are characteristic to the later versions of the Romanian Liturgikon, such as:

- The prayer for the general remembrance of the living ("Receive, o Lord, this bloodless sacrifice...") and of the dead ("In memory and for the remission of sins of all who have reposed...") during Proskomedija; both these prayers, in their current developed form, do not appear in any of the printed editions of the Greek and Slavonic Liturgikon, but represent a peculiarity of the Romanian Liturgikon, from its 1845 Iași edition henceforth [8, p. 52-53].
- At the Great Entrance, it is missing the multiple commemorations, which are recited by the priests in the middle of the church, according to current Romanian and Slavic Liturgikons. Instead, it contains the following indication: "As they walk inside the nave, (the priest and deacon) both pray

for all the faithful: May the Lord, our God, remember us all in His Kingdom” (f. 33 v), that is verbatim from the Diataxis of Philotheus [30, p. 9] and the current editions of the Greek Liturgikon of Athens [31].

- The moment of the Epiklesis misses the troparion and stichera of the Third Hour that were introduced in later Liturgikons and which have admittedly been suppressed from the last editions of the Greek Liturgikon [32].

By the authority of the written word and its power to multiply and propagate, the Slavonic Liturgikon printed by Macarius in 1508 secures and consecrates the prototype of all the subsequent editions of the Sluzhebnik, in a format that would later be employed exclusively not only by the Romanian Church, but also by the vast majority of the Slavophone Orthodox (Bulgarians, Serbs and possibly even Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Russians) for at least one and a half centuries. Its influence is still felt in later Slavonic Liturgikon editions that would be published in various parts of the Orthodox world.

3.1.2. Editions of the Slavic-Romanian Liturgikon - Bucharest 1680 (Metropolitan Teodosie), Buzău 1702 (Metropolitan Mitrofan) and Iași 1715 (Metropolitan Ghedeon)

The introduction of the vernacular language in the liturgical services of the Church was a lengthy and oftentimes difficult process, due to the opposition of certain hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church of the 17th century, who saw the preservation of the Slavonic language in cult as a necessary pastoral measure in the defence of Orthodox liturgical tradition. Unable to oppose the general reinvigorating current the Romanian society of the age was going through, as well as the clergy and people whose chief desire was to understand the liturgical services, these hierarchs came to a compromise solution, by printing the so-called transitional Liturgikons, i.e. the Slavic-Romanian Liturgikons that had the text of prayers in Slavonic and the Typikon related segments in the oral mother tongue of the people.

While in 1679 Metropolitan Dosoftei of Moldavia was translating the entire Liturgikon in Romanian, in 1680, his contemporary, Metropolitan Teodosie of Wallachia was working from Bucharest against this current of Romanianization of the church services, by printing a Slavonic Liturgikon with the Typikon in Romanian, under the watchful eye of hieromonk Inochentie [33]. This latter Liturgikon, which is very neatly printed, has two prefaces, one penned by Metropolitan Teodosie and titled ‘Epistola dedicatoria’, and the other written by monk Inochentie and named ‘Foreword to the reader’ [25, p. 230-237]. In his preface, Metropolitan Teodosie complains about the lamentable state that his people was in, arguing that it was not only the common faithful, but also the members of the clergy who found themselves incapable of understanding the text of the Holy Liturgy due to their poor cultural knowledge and linguistic competence in Slavonic. This state of affairs prompted the Moldavian hierarch to print this Liturgikon, in which, as his own words affirm: “not much did we to it... save for its Typikon (the Liturgy’s) that we took from its Greek origination

and rule and turned into our own tongue, to make it easy for priests and deacons altogether, as little as they may know, to be advised insomuch as to be able to discern what must needs be done during the service. Yet the whole of Liturgy, to have it adapted and transferred into our tongue, that we neither wanted nor dared to undertake.” [25, p. 230-231] In the same context, amongst the motives that had stopped him from translating the text of the Liturgy, he enlists: the inadequacy of the Romanian language, the lack of teachers, that is of scholar translators, the simplicity of the people and their inability to comprehend the translated text and the centuries old tradition of the liturgical Slavonic language, which he saw as a warrant for the faithful preservation of the Orthodox dogmatic and liturgical tradition and teaching.

Metropolitan Teodosie’s greatest merit was to have rendered the first correct and accurate translation of the Typikon and thus set the norm for all the subsequent Liturgikons, and to have managed to use several different Greek sources besides the obvious Slavonic matrices, as he borrowed elements from the Greek Venetian issues of the Liturgikon and from the Greek editions of the Codex Ducas, which were published by Savilius in Rome [17, p. 739-745].

It is interesting to note that this Liturgikon contains also a few prayers translated in Romanian, such as: the prayer for the consecration of the koliva in memory of the departed, the prayer ‘O God of spirits...’ from the service of Panikhida and the Kneeling Prayers from the Pentecost Vespers. All these texts, as well as the Typikon provisions would be replicated in the subsequent editions of the Liturgikon printed in Wallachia.

In 1702, Metropolitan Mitrofan issued a reprint of this service book in Buzău, Wallachia [25, p. 435-440]. This version followed verbatim the text published two decades earlier at Bucharest, to which he added another set of prayers, almost all translated into Romanian, such as: the prayers from the service of Vespers and Orthros, the prayers from the order of Communion, the litanies of the deacon from the service of the Sunday of Pentecost [34]. A particularity of this edition is the use of a stylised Romanian language, as well as an improved and cleaner graphics compared to that of the 1680 Liturgikon, with more ornamentations and faces of saints like those of Saint John Chrysostom and Basil the Great.

The third and final edition of the Slavic-Romanian Liturgikon would be published at Iași in 1715, under the spiritual patronage of Metropolitan Ghedeon of Moldavia and with the blessing of Patriarch Chrysanthus of Jerusalem [25, p. 497-498]. This specific edition is an exact replica of the 1702 Liturgikon from Buzău, the only difference being that, while its table of contents announces the addition of the Vesting of the Bishop service order, in reality, the book does not contain the actual text of the order, nor can it be found in any other volume in the Library of the Academy. It seems that the editor did intend to include this euchological formulary in the Liturgikon, but somehow he was hindered from actually doing that.

4. Conclusions

In the context of a constant pressure exercised by the reformed denominations, which was typical for 16th century Western Europe, and in defiance of a decided opposition coming from the Byzantine-Slavic Orthodoxy observed in the Provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, the Romanians of Transylvania managed to find a way to introduce the national language in the Church, by gradually translating those texts that were vital for the liturgical and spiritual life of a parish. Up until the 17th century, all liturgical texts were written in Slavonic, as the geopolitical situation the Romanian Provinces were in during the 10th-11th centuries, compelled the Orthodox Church adopt the Byzantine-Slavic rite, and that move implanted the Slavonic language into the liturgical worship and the administrative apparatus of the feudal state.

The gradual introduction of the vernacular Romanian in the liturgical services of the Church was a lengthy and oftentimes difficult process, due to the opposition of certain hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the 17th century, who saw the preservation of the Slavonic language in cult as a necessary pastoral measure in the defence of the Orthodox liturgical tradition. Unable to oppose the general reinvigorating current the Romanian society of the age was going through, as well as the clergy and people, whose chief desire was to understand the liturgical services, these hierarchs came to a compromise solution, by printing the so-called transitional Liturgikons, that is the Slavic-Romanian Liturgikons that had the text of prayers in Slavonic and the Typikon related segments in the oral mother tongue of the people.

The Liturgikon currently used by the Romanian Orthodox Church is the product of an extensive effort made by the Romanian people to crystallize and naturalize the Byzantine Liturgical tradition, which they had adopted however, through the Slavonic Liturgical tradition. The texts of the Byzantine manuscripts were first known and acquired via Slavonic sources, and thus the initial Liturgikons in Slavonic are the perfect expression of a Byzantine tradition that was borrowed and enhanced by the Slavonic one.

Acknowledgement

This work was supported by a project financed from ‘Lucian Blaga’ University of Sibiu research grants LBUS-IRG-2017-03.

References

- [1] C.I. Toroczkai, *Studia Monastica*, 2 (2016) 401-409.
- [2] C.I. Toroczkai, *Liturghia și misiunea ortodoxă. Perspective ortodoxe*, in *Arhiereul lui Hristos. Studii în onoarea Înaltpreașfințitului Dr. Laurențiu Streza, Arhiepiscopul Sibiului și Mitropolitul Ardealului*, N. Chifăr & E.-P. Tăvală (eds), Andreiana/Astra MUSEUM Press, Sibiu, 2017, 461-498.
- [3] O. Andrei, *Teologia* 68(3) (2017) 60-85.
- [4] S. Câdea, *Mitropolia Banatului*, 9-10 (1964) 587.

- [5] E. Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique :ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés par des Grecs au dix-septième siècle*, Culture et Civilisation, Paris, 1894-1903, vol. II, 416 and vol. I, 118.
- [6] ***, *Liturgikon of the Grand Church in Constantinople: Τερατικόν: περιέχον τὰς θείας καὶ ἱεράς λειτουργίας Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσσοστόμου, Βασιλείου τοῦ Μεγάλου καὶ τῶν προηγουμένων, Ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει, ἐκ τοῦ Πατριαρχικοῦ Τυπογραφείου, Ἀποστολικῆ Διακονία, Αθήναι, 1895, 1950, 1962, 1987, 1995, 2002.*
- [7] E. Pantelakis, *Irenikon*, **5** (1936) 521.
- [8] P. Vintilescu, *Contribuții la revizuirea Liturghierului român*, Tipografia cărților bisericești, București, 1931, 34.
- [9] P. De Meester, *Grecques (liturgies)*, in *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne et de Liturgie*, D.H. Leclereq & F. Cabrol (eds.), vol. VI, Librairie Letouzey et Ane, Paris, 1924.
- [10] N. Sulică, *O nouă publicație românească din secolul al XVI-lea: Liturghierul diaconului Coresi, tipărit la Brașov în 1570*, Șoimii, Târgu Mureș, 1927, 10-11.
- [11] S. Cîndea, *Mitropolia Ardealului*, **9-10** (1959) 722-771.
- [12] S. Cîndea, *Mitropolia Ardealului*, **1-2** (1960) 70-92.
- [13] E. Braniște, *Limba Liturghierului românesc, Evoluția și importanța ei pentru formarea și unitatea limbii noastre literare*, in *Vreme este a face Domnului. Studii de Teologie Liturgică și Artă creștină*, L. Streza & C. Streza (eds.), Andreiana Press, Sibiu, 2014, 269.
- [14] M. Păcurariu, *Cultura teologică românească - scurtă prezentare istorică*, Basilica, Bucharest, 2011, 40.
- [15] I. Rămureanu, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, **3-5** (1973) 464.
- [16] M. Șesan, *Mitropolia Ardealului*, **1-2** (1975) 10.
- [17] C. Auner, *Les versions roumaines de la Liturgie de Saint Jean Chrysostome*, in *ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΜΙΚΑ. Studi e ricerche a S. Giovanni Crisostomo*, Libreria Pustet, Roma, 1908, 735.
- [18] P. Panaitescu, *Începuturile și biruința scrisului în limba română*, Editura Academiei RPR, Bucharest, 1965, 18.
- [19] P. Panaitescu, *Romanoslavica*, **10** (1964) 229.
- [20] N. Edroiu, *Scrierea chirilică românească*, Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2013, 32.
- [21] P. Brusanowski, *Tabor. Romanian Culture and Spirituality Magazine*, **7** (2007) 41.
- [22] D. Vanca, *Considerații teologice, introducerea la Molităvnic. Bălgrad 1689-2009*, in *Molităvnic, Bălgrad 1689-2009*, A. Dumitran, A. Gherman & D. Vanca (eds.), Reîntregirea, Alba Iulia, 2010, 46.
- [23] M. Ștefănescu, *Notițe istorice și arheologice adunate de pe la 48 de mănăstiri și biserici antice din Moldova*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1885, 128.
- [24] A. Jacimirski, *Manuscrise slave în Bibliotecile românești*, Academy Library, St. Petersburg, 1905, 15.
- [25] I. Bianu and N. Hodoș (eds.), *Bibliografie românească veche*, vol. 1, Edițiunea Academiei Române, Bucharest, 1910, 1-8.
- [26] E. Braniște, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, **10-11** (1958) 1035-1068.
- [27] P. Panaitescu, *Începutul tipografiei în Țara Românească*, in *Prima sesiune științifică de Bibliologie și documentare a Academiei R. R.*, Editura Academiei R.P.R., Bucharest 1957, 269.
- [28] P. Panaitescu, *Liturghierul lui Macarie (1508) și începuturile tipografiei în Țările Române*, Academia R.P.R., Bucharest, 1961, XII.

- [29] Basilius Caesariensis, *Λόγος περὶ καταστάσεως ἱερέων /Sermo ob sacerdotum instructionem*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus. Greek series. Patrologia Graeca*, J.P. Migne (ed.), vol. 31, Imprimerie Catholique, Paris, 1857, 1685-1688.
- [30] P. Trembela, *Αἱ τρεῖς λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις κώδικας*, Ἔκδοσις τῆς Πατριαρχικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς πρὸς ἀναθεώρησιν καὶ ἔκδοσιν τῶν λειτουργικῶν βιβλίων, Ἀθήναι, 1935, 166.
- [31] ***, *Τερατικόν, Αἱ θεῖαι Λειτουργίαι, ἔκδοσις τῆς Ἀποστολικῆς Διακονίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος*, Ἀποστολική Διακονία, Ἀθήναι, 1968, 88.
- [32] P. Vintilescu, *Liturghierul explicat*, Institutul Biblic și de Misiune, Bucharest, 1972, 242.
- [33] L. Petroia, *Liturghierul, teaur de cultură și spiritualitate ortodoxă*, Arhiepiscopia Dunării de Jos, Galați, 2014, 50.
- [34] C. Erbiceanu, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, **3** (1889-1890) 157-164.