

ABOUT ANTHIM THE IBERIAN AND HIS FIRST BOOKS PRINTED IN WALLACHIA (THE ROMANIAN LAND)

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Abstract. In the pages of this study, we have presented the results of the hermeneutical analysis carried out on the texts of the Prefaces and Colophons of the first books printed by Anthim the Iberian (Antimoz Iverieli) on Romanian soil (1691–1699), which, until the present day, have not been examined and evaluated in the specialized literature from an interdisciplinary perspective (historical, philological, theological etc.).

The informed reader will be able to observe that the majority of the books printed by Anthim the Iberian were in the Greek language, and that this was due to the fact that they had been commissioned — through the mediation of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu — by Dositheus II Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was interested not only in promoting Greek-language culture, but also in meeting the urgent need for printed books throughout the Christian East.

During the reigns of Princes Șerban Cantacuzino (1678–1688) and Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714), Wallachia (the Romanian Land) became a place of refuge not only for Greeks educated in the spirit of Byzantine culture, but also for numerous clerics from all four Greek Patriarchates (Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem), who were in need of Greek books, supplied to them both by the princely printing press and by that of the Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia.

Keywords: cultural relations; typographical activity; printing press; cultural heritage.

Introduction. In 1716, the envoys of the Ottoman Porte took Anthim the Iberian (Antimoz Iverieli) *manu militari* from his metropolitan residence in Bucharest, with the assistance of the Phanariot prince of Wallachia, the Greek Nicholas Mavrocordatos — a native of the Phanar district of Constantinople, where he had proved himself a devoted servant of the Sultan — in order to send him into exile at the Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai. Yet, as soon as he was removed from the geographical space of his adoptive homeland, Wallachia, Anthim the Iberian — who, through “his diligence, his artistic tastes, and his passion for books, would alone suffice to be regarded as an exceptional figure” (Picot, 1886: 515) — was treacherously murdered, and his body thrown into the swift waters of the Tundzha River in Bulgaria.

Metropolitan Anthim the Iberian of Wallachia proved to be one of the fervent supporters of the independence of the Christian countries — including both his native homeland, Georgia, and his adoptive homeland, Ungro-Wallachia (Wallachia) — from Ottoman domination at that time. Thus, in 1716, he passed to the Lord as a martyr in defense of the Christian faith and of the independence of the Christian states subject to Ottoman rule.

By martyring such a cleric, renowned printer, and scholar-theologian, the rulers on the Bosphorus believed that they would put an end to the flourishing process of printing books intended for the entire Orthodox Christian world in the Greek, Slavonic, Romanian, Georgian, and Arabic languages.

Through these books, Anthim of Iveria, who had ascended to the primatial throne of the Church of Wallachia, actively promoted and supported the ideals of liberation of these peoples from Ottoman domination. Indeed, through the written word — whose power was overwhelming even in that age — Anthim contributed to the awakening of an acute awareness of the imperative necessity of liberation from Ottoman rule, which was meant to lead to the building of a new world in which the humanistic and Christian values for which Andrew, known as Anthim, of Georgian origin, had struggled, would be affirmed and fulfilled.

In 2016, three hundred years had passed since the martyric death of the ever-memorable Holy Hierarch Anthim the Iberian, a founding figure of the cultural and spiritual relations between the two peoples. As was only natural, the commemoration of this historical event took place both in Romania and in Georgia.

These relations, however, had been initiated more than three centuries earlier, namely after 1690, when Anthim, recommended to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, printed his first books in Greek on Romanian soil.

In 1704, when the brother of Prince Vakhtang VI of Kartli, of the Bagrationi dynasty, the hieromonk Domentius, came to Bucharest in order to present to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu the request of the Prince of Kartli to send them a printer, these relations entered a new stage, in which Anthim the Iberian undoubtedly played a decisive role in bringing to fruition the desideratum of Prince Vakhtang VI.

In 1709, when “Mihail, the son of Stephen the Ungro-Wallachian” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 544), that is the Romanian Mihail Ștefan from Ungro-Wallachia (Wallachia), printed at Tbilisi the first book in the Georgian language with the type matrices cast in Bucharest by Anthim the Iberian, together with a number of ornaments and woodcut frontispieces of Romanian tradition, a new stage in Romanian–Georgian cultural relations was inaugurated. This therefore represents another significant date marking the early history of cultural relations between Romanians and Georgians.

In 2014, by a decision of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church the year 2016 was declared “a year of tribute to the religious education of Christian youth and a commemorative year of St. Hierarch Anthim the Iberian and church printers” (Patriarhia Română, 2016). In his spoken words on the first January 2016, his Beatitude, the Father Daniel, the Patriarch of Romanian Orthodox Church, remembered — among other things — that by a decision of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church — Antimoz Iverieli, who was martyred in 1716 by the Ottomans in the river Tundja (Bulgaria), was canonized as a Saint of the Orthodox Church on 27th September 1992. In other words, from that day, Antimoz Iverieli he is venerated as a Saint of the Church, and every year of this day, that is 27 September, he is honored in the Romanian soil as a Romanian Saint.

I. Antimoz Iverieli and Mihail Ștefan (Mikheil Stepaneshvili), the main Founding Fathers of Georgian–Romanian Cultural Relations

In 2016, His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, stated that Antimoz Iverieli, who published 63 books on Romanian soil — in Greek, Arabic, Church Slavonic, and Romanian — of which only 21 were in Romanian, “laid the foundations for the establishment of the first printing press with Georgian characters” (Patriarhia Română, 2016) in his native country, Georgia, and that, in 1706, he founded “a printing press with Arabic characters,” in which he printed, at Snagov Monastery, “the first book in Arabic” (Patriarhia Română, 2016), namely a Liturgikon.

In 2016, Georgia and Romania celebrated the 300th anniversary of Georgian–Romanian cultural relations, which rest upon four great pillars: two Georgians and two Romanians, namely: St. Martyr Antimoz Iverieli, Metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia († 1716); St. Martyr Constantin Brâncoveanu, Prince of Wallachia († 1714); Vakhtang VI Bagrationi, Prince of Kartli and, from 1716, king; and the hypodeacon Mihail Ștefan (Michael Stepaneshvili), a scholar and master of the art of printing, who arrived in Georgia in 1707, where he established the first printing press and, until the spring of 1713, printed the first books on Georgian soil.

All these four personalities, who are indeed the founding fathers of the cultural and spiritual relations between our peoples and countries, deserve the respect of each and every one of us. However, we must take into account the fact that such relations began with the presence of Antimoz Iverieli on Romanian soil, which occurred in the years 1680/1682, when he was brought by Patriarch Dositheus II Notaras of Jerusalem to Moldavia in order to learn the art of printing from the Romanian famous master, the hieromonk “Mitrofan, the printer”.

In 2016, on the occasion of the commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the death of Antimoz Iverieli, Georgia and Romania also celebrated 300 years of cultural relations. In Romania, Georgian texts, engravings, typographical ornaments, gables, frontispieces, and other items — some of them originating from the works printed by Mihail Ștefan — were exhibited in 2019 during an exhibition of Georgian prints organized by the Ambassador of Georgia in Bucharest, Mr. Nikoloz Nikolozishvili, with the support of Professors N. V. Dură and C. Mititelu, on the premises of Ovidius University of Constanța.

A few days later, such an exhibition took place at the “*Antim Ivireanul / Antimoz Iverieli*” Library in Râmnicu Vâlcea, the city where Antimoz served as bishop between 1705 and 1708 and where he published books with the assistance of his Romanian collaborator Mihail Ștefan. At that time, Mihail Ștefan corrected and revised the Romanian texts of his bishop and personally printed the books requested by Antimoz.

Certainly, we cannot speak about Antimoz Iverieli, the main founder of the cultural and spiritual relations between our countries, without mentioning his printing activity, materialized in 63 books, nor without referring to his relationship with his fellow labourer in the field of book printing, namely Mihail Ștefan (Michael Stepaneshvili), who published 20 books and left us many introductory studies, such as prefaces and epilogues to his own books, to some of the books of Antimoz Iverieli printed by him, and to the books of other authors.

Among the main founders of the cultural and spiritual relations between our countries were the Iberian Antimoz (Dură, 2016: 153–162) († 1716) and the Romanian Mihail Ștefan (Stepaneshvili) (Dură, 2017: 191–200), who signed his first printed book in Georgia, *The Gospel / Evangelion* (1709), as “the typographer Mihail, the son of Ștefan, the Ungro-Wallachian” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484 and 543), that is, from Wallachia, the Romanian Principality.

In their typographical activity, Antimoz and Mihail had the opportunity to work together in the cultural field for the benefit of their countries, Georgia and Romania, and thus they were also able to gain a better knowledge of their cultural heritage and spiritual identity.

In the pages of our paper, we also make some additional references to the contribution of the two lay founding fathers of the cultural and spiritual relations between our peoples and countries, namely the two great Christian princes of that time: Constantin Brâncoveanu of Wallachia, the Romanian Principality, and Vakhtang VI Bagrationi of Kartli, Georgia, who were indeed two secular pillars in the establishment of Georgian–Romanian relations.

In the Preface to the Georgian Liturgikon (Liturgy Book) printed by Mihail Ștefan in 1709 at Tiflis — on whose first page appeared the coat of arms of the Bagrationi dynasty (the dynasty that ruled Georgia) together with a portrait of Vakhtang VI — Prince Vakhtang VI (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484) wrote: “I brought a

printer from Wallachia and established a printing house" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484). Thus, from the testimony left to us by Prince Vakhtang of Kartli, it emerges that the request that a master printer be sent to him was made by the prince himself. Moreover, from the testimony left by Mihail Ștefan — who publicly declared his origin, presenting himself as "the Ungro-Wallachian printer," that is, from Ungro-Wallachia/Wallachia — we may observe that "the ruler and governor of Georgia, Prince Vakhtang", was the one who "took care" of the printing of this book as well, just as he "also took care of other books printed by us in your Georgian language" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484).

Through the printing of the Liturgikon, Vakhtang VI was placing — as Mihail Ștefan stated — "the candle upon the lampstand," since the "most holy prelates and humble priests" of Georgia now had a book in their own language, which enabled them, "during the celebration of the service and the bloodless sacrifice [...]" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484), to commemorate and pray "for the health and life of the one at whose expense this work was accomplished and the book was printed" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484).

It is also worthy of note that Mihail Ștefan concluded his dedication addressed to Vakhtang VI with the words: "your spiritual son, the Ungro-Wallachian printer Mihail Ștefanovici" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484).

Through these words, Mihail Ștefan — who, in the note placed at the end of this book and written in the Georgian language, appears with the statement that "this book was printed at Tiflis by the hand of the printer Mihail Ștefanișvili" (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484) — also attests to the fact that his name, Ștefan, had been rendered by the Hungarians in the form "Istvánovici", and at Tbilisi in the form "Ștefanișvili".

The fact that the Georgians rendered the surname „Ștefan” in its Georgian form, „Stepanishvili” (Ștefanishvili), constitutes compelling evidence that they learned directly from Mihail himself that his authentic name was Mihail Ștefan, and not Mihail Iștvanovici.

In the Liturgikon, known in Georgian as the *Kondaki*, printed in Tiflis/Tbilisi in 1709, we also find six Romanian verses printed in Georgian characters, which could not have been transcribed into Georgian script and cast in type by anyone other than Anthim the Iberian, in Bucharest. Moreover, these verses recur as a leitmotif not only in the works of Anthim Ivireanul and Mihail Ștefan, but also among other printers from the Romanian Principalities as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 484).

Georgian historiography has also recorded the fact that Vakhtang VI, Prince of Kartli (1675–1715) and King of Georgia between 1715 and 1737, made "a great contribution to the study of *Kartlis Tskhovreba*" (Metreveli, 2014: 6), that is, of "the historical works of different authors", since he was the one "who created a special commission of learned men to compile and edit the texts of this literary work" (Metreveli, 2014: 6). These texts were arranged "in chronological order," thus producing "a unified history of Georgia" (Metreveli, 2014: 6), within the horizon of which the history of Georgian printing may also naturally be integrated, a history to whose foundation Anthim of Iberia and Mihail Ștefan of Wallachia/Valachia made a founding contribution on Georgian soil.

II. New Documentary Testimonies concerning Antimoz Iverieli, Who Was Brought to the Romanian Principalities by Dositheus II Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem

That "Antimoz" was a native of Georgia is confirmed not only by foreigners — Turks, Greeks, Romanians, etc. — but also by Antimoz himself, who called himself by the Turkish word "gurji" ("Georgian"), as is also attested in the prefaces of the books printed by Antimoz in Greek, Romanian, Slavonic, and Arabic in the Romanian printing presses of Bucharest, Snagov, Râmnic, and Târgoviște.

In 1680 or 1682, Antimoz Iverieli arrived on Romanian soil, having been brought to the Romanian Principalities by Patriarch Dositheus II Notaras of Jerusalem so that he might learn the art of printing and subsequently serve as a typographer in the printing house of Cetățuia Monastery in Iași.

However, although Antimoz spent four years, from 1682 to 1686, as an apprentice to the famous Romanian printer Mitrofan, who in 1682 had been employed by Patriarch Dositheus as printer of his Greek printing house at Cetățuia Monastery in Iași, he nevertheless did not manage to master all the secrets of the printing art. This could explain the fact that Antimoz Iverieli published his first book in Wallachia, in the Greek language, only in 1691.

Antimoz Iverieli printed his first books in Greek for the benefit of the three Greek Patriarchates — Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria — thus promoting the development and predominance of the Greek language in the theological, liturgical, historical, and literary spheres within the Romanian Principalities.

The fact that, during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714), one may speak of a “history of Greek domination in the Romanian Principalities” (Legrand, 1888: V) is not surprising, since in both Wallachia and Moldavia many hierarchs were Greeks, usually accompanied by Greek clerics and scholars who had sought refuge in the Romanian Principalities after the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Some of these Greeks came to occupy not only the leadership of the Church or of the country, but also the administration of the higher schools of the time, namely the famous Princely Academies founded as early as the reign of Șerban Vodă Cantacuzino (1678–1688). Moreover, some of the rulers of the Romanian Principalities themselves, at the persistent insistence of certain Greek patriarchs from Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, dedicated monasteries of the country to them, printed books for them, established printing houses, and granted them substantial financial assistance.

One of these rulers was Gheorghe Duca, Prince of Moldavia (1665–1666; 1668–1672; 1678–1683), who was **of Greek origin**. At the persistent request of Dositheus II Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem, he ordered that the princely printing press at the Cetățuia Monastery in Iași be transformed into a **Greek printing press**. The monastery had, in fact, been placed under the canonical jurisdiction of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem long before his reign, during the time of his predecessors.

In this Greek printing house at the Cetățuia Monastery (Iași), the hieromonk Mitrofan, disciple and collaborator of the celebrated humanist scholar Dosoftei, Metropolitan of Moldavia (1671–1674 and 1675–1686), who, in his work *The Lives of the Saints*, printed in Romanian in 1682, made, among other things, also explicit reference to the “science of the Romanian language” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 244), printed in Greek, at the request of Patriarch Dositheus of Jerusalem, several valuable books on theology and church history.

If we take into account the fact that books in the Romanian language had already been printed in the time of Filip Moldoveanul, in 1544, and later by Coresi (†1583), beginning in 1559, we may also speak of a “science” of the Romanian language, even though it had, for centuries, been ignored or overshadowed by the princely courts and the country's nobility, whose cultural formation was rooted first in the Slavonic tradition and, from the time of Șerban Cantacuzino and Constantin Brâncoveanu onward, in the Greek tradition—an influence from which the Romanian cultural milieu was not fully emancipated until after the end of the Phanariot regime, that is, after 1821 and, more precisely, only toward the middle of the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, the prefaces, epilogues and colophons of the books printed on Romanian soil, beginning with Macarie's *Liturgikon* of 1508, also bear witness to the contribution made by the servants of this “science” of the Romanian language, among whom some cleric-printers occupy a place of particular distinction.

During the age of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the notion of “science” defined “knowledge in every sense”, while “natural philosophy was an examination of God's creation similar to Theology, without indicating any incompatibility of purpose or intention with religion” (MacCulloch, 2011: 696). Nevertheless, in that period, the history of the Enlightenment, whose beginnings may already be identified in the Re-

naissance era, also associated “science” with certain aspects of cultural life developed up to the year 1700. Thus, many of the ideas of Enlightenment doctrine “derived from the Old and New Testament and from the two religions that had created this literature, Judaism and Christianity” (MacCulloch, 2011: 713-714).

Within this history of cultural and spiritual illumination are also included the great scholar-printers of the Romanian Principalities, such as deacon Coresi, Metropolitan Dosoftei, the hieromonk and later bishop Mitrofan, the hieromonk Anthim of Iberia, who subsequently became bishop and metropolitan, as well as the hypodeacon Mihail Ștefan. Therefore, whenever we attempt to classify these scholars as “moral philosophers” or “Enlightenment philosophers”, we must understand that, in reality, they were first and foremost clerics theologians, whose enlightenment ideas derived from the Old and New Testaments, that is, from Holy Scripture, and not from the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle, or of the leading representatives of Neoplatonists, such as Plotinus, John of Damascus etc.

As regards the assertion that Antimoz Iverieli was a philosopher, we state from the outset that this claim is attested neither by his writings nor by his typographical, scholarly, and pastoral activity. We likewise consider unfounded the assertion that Antimoz Iverieli was a “philhellene”, as some recent researchers of his typographical activity have maintained, since the Romanians never perceived him as such. Perhaps the fact that Antimoz printed the majority of his books in Greek — more than 40 out of 63 — and that he expressed particular appreciation for the Greek language and culture, as well as for the Greek patriarchs, led some of his biographers to state categorically that he deserved the appellation of “philhellene” (Chițulescu, 2024: 31-44).

One should not, however, ignore or conceal the fact that Antimoz Iverieli was brought to Romanian soil by the Greeks, namely by Patriarch Dositheus of Jerusalem, for the purpose of learning the craft of printing and printing Greek books. And, therefore, also the first books printed by him were in Greek, in Wallachia (Ungro-Wallachia). Nevertheless, this did not prevent him from integrating into his adoptive homeland, loving it, and striving for the affirmation of Romanian culture and for the fulfilment of its ideals of political and ecclesiastical freedom and independence.

III. The Typographical Activity of Antimoz Iverieli between 1691 and 1699

In 1691, Anthim the Iberian printed on Romanian soil his first book, namely a work originally written in Ancient Greek, but translated into the vernacular Greek (*dimotiki*) by the hieromonk Chrysanthos Notaras, nephew of Patriarch Dositheos, “Archimandrite of the Most Holy and Divine Sepulchre”.

The correction (*diorthosis*) of the book, entitled *Sixty-Six Admonitory Chapters* of Emperor Basil the Macedonian addressed to his son Leo the Wise, was carried out by “the hieromonk Chrysanthos,” who, in turn, expressed with reverence and gratitude his thanks to “the most illustrious, most pious, and most exalted ruler and lord of all Ungrovlahia, Lord Ioan Constantin Basarab Voivode,” who was indeed a patron of Greek books and culture.

The book of Emperor Basil the Macedonian was printed “by the hieromonk Anthim” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 326) in the princely printing house of Bucharest, at the request of Chrysanthos Notaras and by the command of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.

In the following year, 1692, “Anthim the Iberian, the most humble among hieromonks” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 326) — as he styled himself — printed *The services of Saint Paraskeva the New* and of *Saint Gregory the Decapolite*, “whose holy relics are found in this God-loving land of Wallachia (τῆς Βλαχίας), in the holy and princely Monastery of Bistrița” (the Preface of Șerban Cantacuzino addressed to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu) (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 327).

Both the book and its preface were written in the popular Greek language (*dimotiki*), which abundantly attests to the fact that Anthim of Iberia had a rather good command of the modern Greek spoken in his time.

In 1693, “the humble hieromonk Anthim of Iberia” printed — in the princely printing house of Bucharest — a bilingual Greek-Romanian Gospel Book, “by the command and at the expense of ... the most pious and illustrious lord and protector of all Ungrovlahia, Io Constantin Basarab Voivode” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 328).

The work was corrected by a Romanian, “the humble hieromonk Atanasie Moldoveanul” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 334), and printed by Anthim the Iberian. The fact that the correction of the book was carried out by a Romanian remains further peremptory evidence that, in 1693, Anthim the Iberian had not yet fully mastered the cultivated register of the Romanian language, or, more precisely, literary Romanian.

In the *Predoslovie* (Foreword) to the *Evangelion* (Εὐαγγέλιον), printed in Greek and Romanian by the typographer Antimoz in 1693 and drafted by the logothete Șerban, it is stated that it had been **“now for the first time compiled in both languages and arranged according to the Greek order of the Church”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 328). In other words, this appears to have been the first bilingual Greek–Romanian Gospel Book, whose exemplar was the Greek text.

Among other things, in the Preface to this *Evangelion* (Εὐαγγέλιον), **the Grand Chancellor (logothete) Șerban** also stated that **“the worthy Christian nations have adopted the practice that the Gospel should be written and printed in the language of every nation according to the model of the Greek language; so that, if any error or doubt should arise in the Gospel translated into their own languages, the doubt may be resolved and the error corrected by reference to the Greek one, just as the New Testament was written by the Apostles in the Greek language”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 333).

Thus, even after the publication of the Bible in Romanian in 1688, the idea still prevailed that every book ought to be translated from the Greek original, since the New Testament was written in Greek, although the Gospel according to Matthew is believed to have been composed around the year 50 in Aramaic for Christians converted from among the Jews of Palestine, and only about two decades later translated into Greek.

In 1694, **“the humble among hieromonks, Anthim the Iberian, the Printer,”** printed in the same princely printing house in Bucharest the first book in the Romanian language, namely a *Psalter*, **“by the command and entirely at the expense of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu,”** and with the blessing of **“Metropolitan Teodosie of Wallachia”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 335). Thus, twelve years after his arrival on Romanian soil, Anthim Ivireanul printed his first book in Romanian, namely a *Davitni* (*Psalter*), which Mihail Ștefan would likewise print in Tbilisi in 1709.

In 1737, **“by the command of Prince Matei Basarab”** and with the blessing of **“the Most Reverend Archbishop Teofil, Metropolitan of the entire Land of Wallachia,”** a Slavonic *Psalter* with the *Horologion* was printed at the princely press of Govora Monastery by **“Hieromonk Ștefan of Ohrid”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 106). According to several historians of early Romanian literature, this printer, Ștefan of Ohrid, was a Vlach (Romanian) from Montenegro and is believed to have been the father of the renowned printer Mihail Ștefan, who likewise printed a *Psalter* in the Georgian language, just as Hieromonk Antimoz Iverieli had done in Wallachia in 1694.

In the Preface to the 1694 *Psalter*, printed at the **“princely printing house”** in Bucharest, Anthim of Ivir stated that it had been **“translated into the Romanian language, together with the kathismata, troparia, and prayers, for the greater benefit and understanding of those who shall read it”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 336), as was likewise emphasized in the dedicatory letter addressed to **“the pious, most illustrious and most glorious Lord and ruler of the entire Orthodox Land of Wallachia”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 336), namely **“the good and Christian Ioan Constandin Băsărabă Voievod, my benefactor and merciful lord,”** who had printed it **“entirely at His Highness’s expense, in order to distribute it as a gift among the Orthodox Christians”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 337).

Indeed, in almost all the Prefaces to the books printed by Anthim at the expense of Constantin Brâncoveanu, he expressed words of gratitude and appreciation for the reception and paternal support he enjoyed in Wallachia. At the same time, Anthim acknowledged that it was thanks to Prince Brâncoveanu that books had been printed not only for Greeks and Romanians but also for those who used the Slavonic, Arabic, and Georgian languages. Indeed, only in this way can we explain why, in 1694, Hieromonk Anthim regarded Brâncoveanu as his **“benefactor and merciful lord”** and, **“bowing down in reverence, I pray to God to grant him blessed happiness”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 336), wished that he might **“increase and strengthen the Orthodox faith (pravoslaviia),”** so that he might become **“like the great Constantine”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 337).

The fact that, in 1694, the hieromonk Anthim of Iviron printed the first book in the princely printing house that he directed at Snagov was due, first and foremost, to the efforts of Metropolitan Teodosie, the Primate of the Church of Wallachia at that time, who, through his own writings and through the books printed with his blessing in the printing presses of the Church of Wallachia, contributed decisively to the implementation of the process of introducing the Romanian language into the liturgical worship of Wallachia. For example, in the Slavonic–Romanian Liturgikon, printed by Bishop Mitrofan of Buzău in 1702, the *Brief Instructions for Priests*, previously composed in Romanian by Metropolitan Teodosie, were also included.

All these manifest efforts of the worthy Romanian hierarchy, Metropolitan Teodosie of Ungro-Wallachia, were to contribute to the formal completion of the process of reintroducing the Romanian language into the worship of the Church and, *ipso facto*, to the acceleration of the process of removing the domination exercised by the Slavonic and Greek languages (Mititelu, 2017: 95–113).

Indeed, the triumph of the Romanian language, both in the Church and in the cultural life of Wallachia, was crowned by the publication of the **Șerban Cantacuzino Bible** in 1688, a work produced by **“Mitrofan, Bishop of Huși, master of every craft of typography, corrector of the Romanian texts, and God-loving laborer,”** together **“with all his disciples”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 291), among whom **Anthim of Iviron** was absent, since at that time (1688) he was still at **Cetățuia Monastery** in Iași.

It was within this climate of cultural effervescence, marked by the publication of the monumental **Bible of Bucharest** (1688), that the activity of Anthim of Iviron developed. Although he was also obliged by his protectors to print books in Greek and Slavonic, in 1713 Anthim personally financed the printing of the book entitled *The Divine and Holy Liturgies*, produced by the printer Gheorghe Radovici in the princely printing house at Târgoviște (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 487).

In this **Liturgikon** of 1713, written in a refined Romanian language, heir to the tradition of the old **Cazanii** (*Books of Homilies*), and owing much to the Romanian scholars of the period, we find, alongside the coat of arms of Wallachia, **“several ornaments and engravings”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 487) that Gheorghe Radovici reproduced from the **Liturgikon** printed by **Bishop Mitrofan of Buzău** in 1702.

The first **Liturgikon** printed entirely in Romanian, with both the liturgical text and the typikon rubrics in Romanian, was in fact printed by **Mihail Ștefan** in 1706 in the printing house of the **Bishopric of Râmnic**. More precisely, it was the text of a **Liturgikon** incorporated into an **Euchologion (Molitfelnik)** printed by the same typographer, in the same place and in the same year, with the blessing of the local bishop, **Anthim of Iviron**, **“while Kir Teodosie was Metropolitan of the country”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 541), the very hierarchy who had earlier sent Mihail Ștefan to **Bălgrad (Alba Iulia)** to print Romanian-language books for the Church of the Romanians in Transylvania, where, in 1699, he published two books in Romanian.

In the opening pages of the **Euchologion** printed at **Râmnic** in 1706 by Mihail Ștefan, we find the coat of arms of Wallachia together with the **“political verses from the Psalter of Buzău (1701)”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 541), which had been printed **“through the zeal and diligent efforts of the lover of labor, Mitrofan, Bishop of Buzău”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 416), the teacher of Antimoz Iverieli in the art of printing.

This **Psalter** also contains the six “**political verses concerning the honorable Cross in the coat of arms of the most illustrious Lord Io Constantin Basarab Voivode**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 414), reproduced *ad litteram* in the **Euchologion** printed by Mihail Ștefan at Râmnic in 1706, into which the **Liturgikon** was incorporated.

It should also be noted that, in the **Preface** to the **Psalter** printed at Buzău, Bishop Mitrofan informed Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu that “**in political affairs, too, there is an order established according to the pattern of spiritual matters**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 414), thereby emphasizing that the order of civil society had been established in harmony with the spiritual order. At the same time, he added that “**with the good counsel, the will, and the blessing of His Holiness our Archbishop and Metropolitan Kir Teodosie, I was moved to print this soul-profiting Psalter ... in the language customarily read in the Romanian churches**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 415).

It is equally important to note that, following the coat of arms of the country and the political verses in the **Euchologion of Râmnic** (1706), there appear “**extracts from Holy Scripture concerning the celebration of the divine services in the national language**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 541), as well as the remarkable testimony entitled “**Proof that it is not forbidden for every Orthodox Christian to celebrate the Liturgy in his own language**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 541), after which follows the preface signed by “**Mihai Iștvanovici, hypodeacon and printer**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 542).

Such an affirmation—that every believer is entitled to hear the Word of God in his own language—can already be found in the sixteenth century in the prefaces of the printers **Filip Moldoveanul** and **deacon Coresi**. This principle, however, was reaffirmed and further promoted in the early eighteenth century, finding renewed expression in the books printed during that period by Antimoz Iverieli and Mihail Ștefan.

As several distinguished scholars have also observed, “**this Psalter is not a new translation,**” since “**Anthim merely revised an older text and added a few prayers**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 388). Indeed, we are not dealing with a new translation, because in 1568—that is, 126 years earlier—deacon Coresi (a Romanian from Wallachia) printed in Brașov (Transylvania) a “**Romanian Psalter**” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 52-53), which he reprinted in the same printing house in 1570 (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 54-56), on the basis of Romanian manuscripts dating back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, whose sources were Greek and Slavonic texts.

In 1570, Coresi, the greatest Romanian printer of the sixteenth century, printed a Romanian *Psalter* in Brașov, explaining that he had seen that “**almost all nations have the Word of God in their own language, while we Romanians alone do not,**” and that, for this reason, he had resolved to print this book “**in the town of Brașov**” (*The Romanian Psalter of Deacon Coresi*, Brașov, 1570) (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 56). In Wallachia, however, a Slavonic *Psalter* was printed in 1574, in which one of the leaves bears the **coat of arms of Wallachia** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 527).

It is also worth noting that on the verso of the first leaf of the *Psalter* (*Kitāb al-Zabūr al-Sharīf*), printed in Aleppo (Syria) in 1706, the coat of arms of Constantin Brâncoveanu is depicted as an expression of gratitude on the part of the Greek Patriarch of Syria, Athanasius Dabbas, for the assistance provided by the Prince of Wallachia, Constantin Brâncoveanu, in establishing that printing press. Indeed, upon his departure from Bucharest in 1708, where he had lived for several years at the princely court, he received from the Prince of Wallachia “the Arabic types and other printing implements ... as a gift” (Feodorov, 2013: 242).

With the aid of these printing types, Patriarch Athanasius Dabbas printed books in Arabic at Aleppo between 1706 and 1711, when the printing press was closed by the Ottoman authorities, since Syria was then under Ottoman rule.

The Arabic characters were inserted into the matrices by Patriarch Athanasius himself and his Arabic-speaking Greek companions from Syria. This makes the head of the Syrian Orthodox Church of that period

an example even for Metropolitan Anthim the Iberian, who, in 1708, although he was the head of the Church of Wallachia, personally prepared the matrices that his collaborator in the printing enterprise, Mihail Ștefan, would later carry with him to Georgia.

The activity of the printing press established in Aleppo by Patriarch Athanasius III al-Dabbās resulted, according to several scholars, in the printing of **“a dozen books”** (Frantsouzoff, 2020: 197), in which **“the beautiful regular typefaces engraved by Antimoz Iverieli, which may be admired in the books printed by him at Snagov in 1701 (Liturgikon, with parallel Greek and Arabic text) and at Bucharest in 1702 (Horologion in Greek and Arabic), differ considerably from the clumsy characters characteristic of the Aleppo Psalter”** (Frantsouzoff, 2020: 198).

In 1648, Metropolitan Simion Ștefan of Bălgrad (Alba Iulia, Transylvania) printed the *New Testament* in the Romanian language, making use of the **“original of its language”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 184), that is, the Greek text, in which this book had been **written**.

In 1651, the same Romanian Metropolitan of Transylvania, Simion Ștefan, printed the *Psalter of Alba Iulia* (Neaga, 1970: 257–261), translated **“from the Hebrew original into the Romanian language”** (as stated on the title page) (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 184). Concerning this *Psalter*, the great Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga (1871–1940) wrote that no other book is more suitable **“for everyone’s needs, sufferings, and hopes than the Psalms”** (Iorga, 1904: 184). This also explains why the *Psalter* became, for the Romanians as well, a fundamental book for all those able to read Greek, Slavonic and Romanian texts.

Thus, forty-three years later, Antimoz printed a new Romanian *Psalter*, and in the dedicatory letter to the *Psalter* printed in Romanian in 1694, addressed to **“the good and Christian Ioan Constantin Basarab Voievod”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 336), and **“my benefactor”**, **“Antimoz Iverieli, the printer,”** stated, among other things, that although this book had been **“printed by others before in many editions, ... it has now been brought to light with even greater diligence and adorned more richly than by others; namely, translated into the Romanian language itself, together with the kathismata, troparia, and prayer offices for the greater benefit and understanding of those who shall read it”** (*The Printer Antimoz Iverieli’s Foreword*) (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 337).

From these words it clearly follows that Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was Antimoz Iverieli’s protector and **“benefactor,”** and that, some twelve to fourteen years after his arrival in Wallachia, Antimoz Iverieli had succeeded in learning and mastering the Romanian language sufficiently well to print a book in the language of his adopted country.

We should also note that, in the *Psalter* printed in 1694, the **“kathismata, together with the troparia and prayer offices”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 337), were translated from Greek into Romanian and incorporated into the text.

Although such kathismata, that is, “groups into which the 150 Psalms of David are divided” (Baniște, E. Baniște, 2001: 22) within Orthodox divine worship, accompanied by troparia and prayers, were already circulating in Romanian through certain manuscript texts, we nevertheless cannot exclude the possibility that Antimoz Iverieli was the one who translated into Romanian the *Kathismata* (*Τὰ Καθίσματα*), namely groups of Psalms arranged according to their liturgical use — for example, the Psalms of the morning and of the night — which are read during “the weekday services,” while “during Great Lent they are read twice” (Baniște, E. Baniște, 2001: 92). The same possibility may also be considered with regard to the *molitvas*, namely “the prayers that the priest reads for various purposes or needs in the life of the Christian” (Baniște, E. Baniște, 2001: 309).

Since Antimoz Iverieli had mastered not only Greek, but also Slavonic—most probably initiated in his native country—a few months after printing the Romanian *Psalter*, and still in 1694, he also printed a

“Slavonic Psalter”. In the Romanian Principalities, such Slavonic *Psalters* had been printed since the sixteenth century.

As for the *Slavonic Psalter* printed by **Antimoz Iverieli** in 1694, it has been observed that the printer rendered in its text all the typikon instructions relating to certain kathismata and prayers in the Romanian language, following the example of earlier hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church, such as Metropolitans Ștefan of Wallachia (1648–1653 and 1655–1668) and Teodosie of Wallachia (1668–1672 and 1679–1708).

At the princely printing house of Snagov Monastery, directed by Abbot **Antimoz Iverieli** from 1696 onwards, the *Order of the Service of Saints Constantine and Helen* (1696) was printed in the Slavonic language by the printer **“Robu Mihai”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 341). From the text of the book’s *Predoslovie* (Foreword)—which is, in fact, an encomium dedicated to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu—we learn that the printer Mihai Robu had learned the craft of printing from **Antimoz Iverieli**, of whom he stated that his work was due to **“the care of my honourable father and gracious teacher, Antimoz Iverieli”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 342).

This is, in fact, the first occasion on which **“the humble hieromonk and printer, Antimoz Iverieli, appears in the role of a teacher”** to his own apprentices in the art of printing, just as he himself had been, in 1682 at Iași, among the disciples of **“Hieromonk Mitrofan, the maker of printing types”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 345).

Therefore, after four years of apprenticeship (1682–1686) spent at the Greek printing house of Cetățuia Monastery (Iași) under the guidance of his renowned teacher, Hieromonk Mitrofan (who became Bishop of Huși in 1683), and after a further two years of apprenticeship (1689–1691) in Bucharest under the supervision of the same bishop-printer, **Antimoz Iverieli** emerged in the role of a master and teacher in the art of printing.

From the latter part of 1691, after being appointed Bishop of Buzău, Mitrofan disappeared from the Bucharest printing scene and transformed the printing house of that bishopric into a second capital of Romanian printing.

From a note at the end of the book *The Order of the Service of Saints Constantine and Helen*, printed in the Slavonic language by Mihail Ștefan **“under the care of my honourable father”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 342) that is, his spiritual father, **Antimoz Iverieli**, Abbot of Snagov Monastery and director of the princely printing house established there in 1696—the very year in which this book was printed—we learn that **“the Paraklesis, not being found for the Feast of the Saints in the Greek originals, was composed in Slavonic by the command of the Most Reverend Kyr Teodosie, Metropolitan of Ungrovlahia. And it was appointed to be sung on the Feast of the Saints”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 343). From this we may conclude that Metropolitan Teodosie of Wallachia did not rely exclusively on the **“Greek originals,”** but also made use of Slavonic sources whenever he considered that they could supplement or improve the Greek text.

In Orthodox liturgical terminology, **“Paraklesis** also denotes the religious service (*παράκλησις* = invocation) consisting of prayers and hymns through which the Saints are invoked for help” (Braniște, E. Braniște, 2001: 343–344). Thus, it was Metropolitan Teodosie who ordered that the text of this **“Service”** should remain in the Slavonic language, while the typikon should be introduced in Romanian. This represented yet another way of contributing to the introduction of the Romanian language into the liturgical worship of the Church, and, to some extent, to curb the hegemony of the Greek language in the liturgical life of the Romanian Church.

From the sixteenth century onwards, and especially from its second half, marked by the Romanian-language publications of deacon Coresi, one may also speak of the **“triumph of Romanian writing”** (P. P. Panaitescu). This period was followed, in the seventeenth century, by the appearance of the first liturgical books in the Romanian language and by the process of compiling and printing the first collections of civil and ecclesiastical (nomocanonical) laws in Romanian, during the reigns of Matei Basarab in Wallachia and Vasile Lupu in Moldavia.

A new stage in the triumph of Romanian writing through liturgical books was brought about by the great Romanian scholar, Metropolitan Dosoftei of Moldavia (some of whose works were revised and printed by his disciple and collaborator, the printer Mitrofan). Indeed, through the *Liturgikon* printed in Romanian at the printing house of the Metropolitanate of Moldavia (Suceava) in 1679, Dosoftei established the language of the Romanian people as the liturgical language of the Church.

On the title page of the work, entitled *The Divine Liturgy*, it was stated that this book was **“now for the first time printed in Romanian”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 222), that it was addressed **“to the whole Romanian nation ... found within this Orthodox language”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 223), and that it was offered as **“a gift to the Romanian language ... so that all those who do not understand Slavonic or Greek may understand”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 224).

The first *Liturgikon* in the Romanian language was therefore offered as **“a gift to the Romanian language”** to all Romanian speakers, both within the country and throughout the diaspora. Its author, the eminent scholar, theologian, and poet, Metropolitan Dosoftei of Moldavia, regarded it as **“a gift to the Romanian language”**.

The expression **“a gift to the Romanian language”** had already been used by Metropolitan Varlaam of Moldavia in the preface to his aptly entitled *Romanian Book of Teaching*, printed at the princely printing house of the Monastery of the Three Holy Hierarchs in Iași in 1643. The same expression also appears in the *Psalter in Verse* by Metropolitan Dosoftei of Moldavia, printed in 1673.

Through this **“gift to the Romanian language”**, an expression reiterated in the *Bible of 1688*, it became evident that these books emancipated the Romanians from the dominance of the Slavonic and Greek languages, in which the Divine Liturgy had been celebrated for centuries (from the twelfth to the sixteenth century). Indeed, **“whereas in the sixteenth century only about 20% of the entire printed book production was in the Romanian language, in the seventeenth century Romanian-language books became predominant, accounting for more than 60% of the total book production”** (Danielopolu, Demény, 1985: 8). However, by the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, **“a new element that can be observed in the structure of printed books is the emergence and increasing proportion of Greek-language publications”** (Danielopolu, Demény, 1985: 8). This was, moreover, the period during which **Antimoz Iverieli**, first as a hieromonk and later as a hierarch, printed his books.

It should also be noted that, in Transylvania, **“Cyrillic printing throughout the entire seventeenth century was carried out exclusively in the Romanian language”** (Danielopolu, Demény, 1985: 8), and that **“the most significant achievement of Romanian printing in Transylvania at the end of the seventeenth century”** (Danielopolu, Demény, 1985: 76) remains the *Chiriadromion*, printed at Alba Iulia in 1699 by **Mihail Ștefan (Iștvanovici)** from Wallachia (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 373).

This *Chiriadromion* was also known as the **Gospel with Homilies** (*Evangelia cu învățătură*), because it contained homilies (*cazanii*) for the Sundays throughout the ecclesiastical year, for the major feasts of the Lord, and for the **“named Saints,”** that is, the most renowned saints. In the Preface to this book, Mihail Ștefan (Iștvanovici) recalled that its publication had been made possible through the **“assistance”** received **“from the Most Illustrious and Exalted Victor over the whole of Ungrovlahia, Io Constandinu Brâncoveanu Basarab Voievod”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 375), who **“has shown himself (and continues always to show himself) to be an illuminator of the Orthodox faith, strengthening it through divine books,”** and who was **“the true patron of the Holy Metropolitanate here in Transylvania and of all those who seek refuge under His Highness's mercy”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 375). He further stated that he himself had been sent to Transylvania by Prince Brâncoveanu as a **“master craftsman for the work of the printing house”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 375), that is, to re-establish the printing press of the Metropolitanate of Transylvania, where books would be printed in the Romanian language.

Both in his books printed in Transylvania and in those produced in Georgia, Mihail Ștefan employed as models the entire iconographic repertoire (headpieces, engravings, images of Saints, etc.) that he had known and used in Wallachia, where he had lived and worked as a printer. Indeed, several distinguished scholars of Romanian printing maintain that, in the case of Georgia as well, we are dealing with **“the transfer of ornamental and iconographic matrices from Wallachia to Tbilisi by Mihail Ștefan, who used in the Georgian liturgical books engravings created by Ioanichie Bacov”** (Feodorov, 2013: 245), one of the Romanian master engravers who had worked together with Mihail Ștefan and **Antimoz Iverieli** at the printing house of Snagov.

The same scholars have also observed that **“this iconography is also present in books previously printed by Anthim in his printing shops”** (Feodorov, 2013: 245).

In 1697, on the feast of the **“Holy Great Sovereigns and Equals to the Apostles, Constantine and his mother Helen,”** the Greek priest Gheorghe Maiotis delivered, in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Metropolitanate of Ungrovlahia in Bucharest, a **“Panegyric”** (Πανηγυρικός), that is, a laudatory oration **“on the God-crowned Emperor and Equal to the Apostles, the Great Constantine”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 350), namely Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu of Wallachia.

This *Panegyric*, which was in fact **“a speech of praise delivered on the occasion of a celebration in honour of someone (on the feast day of a Saint)”** (Braniște, E. Braniște, 2001: 338), was dedicated by the panegyrist Gheorghe Maiotis to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, who, in all probability, was present at the Divine Liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Teodosie of Wallachia on the occasion of the Prince's name day, that is, the feast associated with his baptismal name.

This Panegyric also attests to the fact that, at the end of the seventeenth century, the Greeks insisted that panegyrics be delivered in their own language, and not in the language of the people, *recte*, in Romanian. Hence also the observation that, at that time, one could not yet speak of a definitive victory of the Romanian language, but only of a formal exclusion of the Slavonic language and of a coexistence with the language of the Princely Court and of the Princely Academy, namely Greek, which had succeeded in gaining hegemony not only in the worship of the princely and boyar churches, but also in the Church of the Romanians.

The considerable presence of Greeks at the princely court and at the Princely Academy in Bucharest indeed caused the Greek language to be perceived as a kind of **“lingua franca”** and, naturally, as the language of the aristocracy of that period. This is likewise confirmed by the Greek publications of **Antimoz Iverieli** at the close of the seventeenth century, for he too had to align himself with this Hellenic current in order to satisfy the expectations of his patrons, Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu and Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem.

This *Panegyric*, delivered in the Greek language, was printed **“by Hieromonk Antimoz from Iveria”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 349-350) at the princely printing house of Snagov Monastery (near Bucharest).

In September of the same year, 1697, **Antimoz Iverieli** printed, at the same press, and **“at the request of the most noble and learned archon, Lord Constantin Cantacuzino,” “brother of the most illustrious and most pious Lord Ioan Șerban Cantacuzino”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 349), the work of Ioan Karyophylles, **“most learned among teachers”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 349) and **“Grand Logothete of the Great Church of Christ”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 350), entitled **“Manual on Certain Doubts”**.

In that same year, 1697, the presses of Snagov Monastery also produced a **“Slavonic Grammar”** with the **“blessing of the Most Reverend Kyr Teodosie ... Metropolitan of this Land”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 351). The supporters of preserving the Slavonic language in the Church thus persuaded Metropolitan Teodosie—who, like his predecessor Metropolitan Ștefan, had introduced the text of certain prayers and the typikon order into books printed in the Slavonic language—to publish a **“Slavonic Grammar”** as well.

In the *Predoslovie* (Foreword) to this book, signed by **Antimoz Iverieli**, which is in fact an encomium dedicated to Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, it was stated that **“we Romanians,”** although we use the Sla-

vonian language **“not as our own, but as a foreign and borrowed one”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 353), nevertheless, **“during Your Highness's reign,”** this grammar had been printed in a **“fortunate”** manner because such a work was greatly needed in order **“to understand what is read”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 353) and **“what is written”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 353). Indeed, at that time, the Slavonic language continued to be understood not only by neither the people nor the greater part of the clergy.

More than fifteen years had passed since Anthim the Iberian, probably tonsured by Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem either in Jerusalem or at the Cetățuia Monastery in Iași, had come to live in the Romanian lands. The fact that he regarded himself as one of **“us, the Romanians”** constitutes the earliest eloquent testimony that the country which had adopted him and which he, in turn, had adopted—namely Wallachia (Ungro-Wallachia)—had also become his own homeland. This is demonstrated not only by the sentiments he expressed toward the Romanian people but also by his typographical activity, carried out for the benefit of his adopted country, his native homeland, and the Orthodox Christian world as a whole.

That **Antimoz Iverieli** was also familiar with the texts of the prefaces to Greek grammars is demonstrated by the following words written by him in his Foreword to the **“Slavonic Grammar”**: **“If anyone wishes to know the nature of letters and syllables, if he wishes to accentuate words correctly and to mark them with the proper accents, he must turn to the first part of grammar, namely orthography. If he wishes to analyse words into their constituent parts accurately, he must examine in detail the second part, namely etymology. If he wishes to compose compound words, he must first master well the rules of syntax. If anyone desires to compose verses, he acquires this skill through prosody, the art of verse-making. Truly speaking, all the intellectual benefits that grammar has produced, whether in the Greek language, the Latin language, or any other language, it likewise provides in Slavonic, for it teaches us to recognize in sentences the distinctions between the parts of speech, the declension of nouns and the conjugation of verbs according to their stems and endings, and to judge irregular or anomalous forms with regard to omission, addition, or change. In a word, it teaches those who zealously strive to learn it to speak and to write correctly. Of all these things we were greatly deprived, because we lacked a guiding grammar”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 353-354).

In order to demonstrate both the absence of such a Slavonic grammar and the evident and urgent necessity of printing one, **Antimoz Iverieli** further stated that **“all the more useful it ought to appear to us, since in our divine churches we have become accustomed to reading in Slavonic; yet, because we do not know this language, which is foreign to us and not our own, we could (many times) ... fall into errors”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 354). Hence Antimoz's assertion that this language was useful to us in the Church, that is, in the liturgical services, whose ministers were obliged to know it, even though it was not our own language but a foreign one, both to the Romanian tongue and to its own printer, Hieromonk **Antimoz Iverieli**, who nevertheless knew and spoke it quite well, like any theologian of his time, with the exception of those of Greek origin.

Antimoz Iverieli concluded this Preface to the Slavonic Grammar by noting that Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu had also established **“a school for the teaching and correction of the Slavonic language for children of tender age”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 354) and that **“the humble among hieromonks, Antimoz the printer”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 354), had printed **“this little book called Grammar, now brought forth from the press at Your Highness's command”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 354).

This Preface likewise remains eloquent evidence that **Antimoz Iverieli** wrote in all three languages—Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian—at the command of his patrons, namely the prince Constantin Brâncoveanu and the Greek Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Dositheos and Chrysanthos. At the same time, Antimoz was also able to speak and write in his native language whenever he wished or had the opportunity to do so. Hence, it may

be concluded that the learned hieromonk knew and employed four languages in his typographical activity: Georgian (for the letters engraved into the matrices sent to Tbilisi through Mihail Ștefan), Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian.

As for the Turkish and Arabic languages, we possess no direct evidence that Antimoz knew them. However, in printing books in Arabic, he relied—just as Mihail Ștefan did for Georgian publications—on matrices prepared by the Arabic-speaking Greeks from Antioch and Jerusalem, who were present at the court of Prince Brâncoveanu together with their Patriarchs and who were all proficient in the Arabic language.

In February 1699, **Antimoz Iverieli** printed at the princely printing house of Snagov Monastery, **“at the initiative and expense of ... the Most Illustrious Prince and Ruler of all Ungrovlahia, Constantin Basarab Voievod Brâncoveanu, for the benefit of Orthodox Christians”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 379), the book by **“the most learned Hieromonk Visarion Makris of Ioannina,”** entitled **“Confession of the Orthodox Faith and an Exposition on the Three Virtues”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 378), whose corrector and editor was **“Panaghiotis of Sinope, from Pontus Euxinus”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 379).

On the occasion of the publication of this book, Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu was also praised and thanked by several distinguished Greeks of the time. Among them was Sevastos Trapezountios Chimenites, **“Professor of Sciences at the Princely Academy of Bucharest in Ungrovlahia,”** who wrote: **“The Western world once took great pride in all its wisdom and in the printing of Oriental books; but now, through the zeal and expense of your magnanimous and God-inspired hand, O Prince, most perfect among the faithful, Constantine the Great, most illustrious Basarab, the best among the rulers of the cities of Ungrovlahia, the grace of Christians has also flourished here, both in learning and in printing houses”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 380).

According to this professor of the Princely Academy of Bucharest, printing and books had thus found a true home in Ungrovlahia (Wallachia), thanks to the initiative and zeal of the illustrious Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, the genuine patron of Orthodox Christian culture not only in South-Eastern Europe, but also throughout the Arab and Caucasian worlds.

For his part, Prince Brâncoveanu's personal physician, Dr Ioan Comnenos, likewise praised **“the renowned Brâncoveanu, Prince of the Ungro-Wallachians; gentle, gracious, yet endowed with a profound and righteous mind, the pious publisher of the words of Holy Scripture ... under whose rule Dacia rejoices in the pursuit of philosophy”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 381). By **“Dacia”** he referred to the ancient land of Decebalus, the name by which the Romanian territories had been known more than two millennia earlier.

These words, in fact, encapsulate and reveal the essential features of the remarkable personality of Constantin Brâncoveanu, who proved himself to be not only an outstanding statesman, endowed with a profound sense of justice and love for his people, but also a publisher of the words of Holy Scripture, thereby revealing himself to be an authentic intellectual shaped by a humanism of Christian provenance.

In one of his encomia, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem likewise testified that **“the Christ-loving Prince Ioan Constantin Basarab Voievod was the defender of the Orthodox faith”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 385). Undoubtedly, Dositheos was referring specifically to the printing of books in the Greek language, which, according to the testimony of the Patriarch of Jerusalem himself, could not have been published because the **“Orthodox Community”** had **“no one else to whom it could turn for assistance”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 389) except **“the most pious and most illustrious, God-beloved Prince of all Ungrovlahia, Lord Ioan Constantin Basarab Voievod, whose soul was endowed with humanity, piety, and the rectitude of the Orthodox faith ...; therefore he bestowed benefactions upon many churches, in many different ways, throughout various provinces and numerous places; and, besides these, through the books that he caused to be printed, as the whole Apostolic Church knows”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 389). That is, the Church of the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Among the books printed **“at the initiative and expense”** of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu **“for the benefit of Orthodox Christians”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 379) was also **The Orthodox Confession of Faith** by Peter Mogila (Petru Movilă), translated from Greek into Romanian by the Grand Logothete Radu Greceanu and printed at Buzău in 1690.

The Epistle of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem—which was included as the Preface to the book printed by Antimoz Iverieli in 1699—further informs us that Prince Brâncoveanu “commanded that it be printed, bound, and distributed free of charge to the Christian multitude” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 389). Hence the Patriarch’s exhortation: “Having therefore received this book, let us all together, brethren, with one voice and one accord, cry out: ‘O Lord, save the Christ-loving Prince Io Constantin Basarab Voievod, the defender of the Orthodox faith (τὸν προμάχον τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου πίστεως)’” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 385-389).

This, then, is the true portrait of Brâncoveanu, who was indeed a patron of learning and a defender of the Eastern Orthodox Church, suffering a martyr’s death by beheading in Istanbul in 1714 for the Orthodox faith, together with his four sons and his brother-in-law and faithful counsellor, Ianache Văcărescu.

In April 1699, Hieromonk **Antimoz Iverieli** printed, **“at the princely printing house of the Holy Monastery of Snagov”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 370), another work **“in the Romanian language,”** entitled **“Book, or Light, with Sound Proofs from the Dogmas of the Eastern Church regarding the Divisions of the Papists”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 370), written by Hieromonk Maximos the Peloponnesian.

In his Preface to this book, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem tells us that its author had been **“the disciple of the renowned Kyr Meletios Pegas, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372), and that **“many”** had refused to print it **“because it openly, demonstrably, and clearly proclaims the truth. Yet the truth prevailed, and the Lord willed that it should be printed, for the remembrance of the wise and for the instruction and strengthening of all Orthodox Christians. Therefore, O enlightened sons of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ in the East, having received it and read it, pray for those who wrote it, printed it, and corrected it”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372).

This constitutes yet another eloquent testimony of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem concerning the role and mission of the books printed in the printing houses of Wallachia, at the expense of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, for the propagation and defence of the Orthodox faith of the apostolic, Orthodox, and ecumenical (catholic) Church of the East.

The book written by **“the learned Hieromonk Maximos the Peloponnesian”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 370) was printed by **Antimoz Iverieli “by the command and entirely at the expense”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 370) of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, whom Antimoz esteemed as **“my benefactor and merciful lord”** (*Foreword, Psalter*, 1694) (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 336).

Through this work, **Antimoz Iverieli** also aligned himself with the programme established by Patriarch Dositheos, namely that of making known the **“dogmas of the East”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372) and responding to the accusations levelled by the **“Latins”** against the Eastern Christians, according to whom **“the Pope of Rome”** is **“the first and head of all”** (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372).

In these books, printed by order and at the expense of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, certain medieval beliefs and practices of the Church of Rome were also refuted, such as the doctrine of the “procession of the Holy Spirit” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372) also from the Son (*Filioque*), the use of “unleavened bread,” the “change in the substance of the Mysteries,” the “cleansing fire, which they call Purgatory” (Bianu, Hodoș, 1903: 372), and so forth, which the Byzantines had numbered among the teachings regarded as heretical as early as the time of Patriarch Photios of Constantinople, in the ninth century.

Conclusions. Since the beginnings of a literary language are to be found in the prefaces of books, often written by the printers themselves, who proved to be good connoisseurs of Greek, Latin, and Slavonic and,

ipso facto, of the medieval religious texts written in these languages, in the pages of this study we have examined and evaluated the texts of the prefaces and epilogues written by Antimoz Iverieli for the books printed between 1691 and 1699.

From the analysis of these Prefaces and Epilogues to the books printed by Antimoz Iverieli in the last decade of the seventeenth century, in the princely printing houses — in Bucharest, at the Holy Metropolitan Church of Bucharest, and at Snagov Monastery —, it could be observed that Antimoz Iverieli printed 12 books, of which 7 were in Greek, 3 in Romanian, one in Slavonic, and one bilingual, Greek-Romanian.

The books printed by the hieromonk Anthim were usually prefaced by their printers, namely Antimoz Iverieli and Mihail Ștefan, and sometimes also by high-ranking churchmen and distinguished scholars of the time, both Romanians and Greeks, who were associated either with the Princely Academy of Bucharest or with the court of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu.

It should also be noted, albeit briefly, that, first as Bishop of Râmnic (1705–1708) and subsequently as Metropolitan of Wallachia, Antimoz Iverieli contributed to the official completion of a long historical process, extending over several centuries, through which Church Slavonic was replaced as the liturgical language and Romanian was established as the sole official liturgical language of the Church. Nevertheless, in response to the requests of the Orthodox Patriarchs of the East, to which Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu gave his support, Anthim was also obliged to promote the use of Greek in the liturgical life of the Church in Wallachia, both through the books printed in that language and through the Princely Academies, where Greek served as the language of instruction.

From the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, a process of the “Romanianization” of Byzantine chant also took place, owing to the works of several renowned protopsaltai of Wallachia (Bucur, 1980: 836-856). Through their activity, they contributed to the indigenization of Byzantine chant and to the creation of a form of ecclesiastical music much more closely attuned to the musical spirit of a people whose earliest ancestors, the Thracians, inspired even the music of the ancient Greeks.

Through the clarifications and assessments concerning the earliest printed works of Antimoz Iverieli, as well as through the new contributions advanced in this regard, we have sought to help eliminate a number of misconceptions perpetuated in the scholarly literature through stereotypical clichés derived from popularizing works lacking documentary support. Hence the compelling necessity of relying on authoritative sources and first-hand documentary evidence.

The printed works of Saint Antimoz Iverieli, the principal founder of the cultural and spiritual relations between Romania and Georgia, provide us with a valuable primary documentary source, not least through the Prefaces and Epilogues of the books he printed in Wallachia. These texts constitute an invaluable source of documentary information not only for historians, theologians, philologists, and sociologists, but also for scholars of the medieval culture shaped by the ideals of Christian humanism.

By examining and evaluating these Prefaces and Epilogues, we have sought to offer the reader new insights not only into the content and thematic scope of the books printed by Antimoz Iverieli between 1691 and 1699, that is, during the final decade of the seventeenth century, but also into their underlying intellectual message, which forms an integral part of the heritage of world culture.

Last but not least, these Prefaces and Epilogues also reveal lesser-known aspects of the typographical activity of the man who laid the foundations of the cultural and spiritual relations between Georgia and Romania, namely Anthim “of Iveria”. Hence the necessity of examining, highlighting, and systematically evaluating these texts in order to bring to light their full documentary, cultural, and epistemological value.

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