



VILNIUS EDITIONS FROM THE END OF THE 16TH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 17TH CENTURY IN BULGARIA

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Summary. *The aim of this paper is to present the publications of the printing houses in Vilnius from the end of the 16th and the 17th century which have been preserved in the larger Bulgarian libraries and in the archives in Sofia, Plovdiv, and Rila Monastery. These are some of the liturgical books published by Peter Mstislavets, the Mamonichi brothers, and the printing house of the Holy Spirit Monastery. We are offering systematic information with brief descriptions of the preserved copies. We are tracing the distribution of these printed books and the ways of their penetration into the Bulgarian lands in the 16th–17th century, as well as their usage in the following centuries.*

Keywords: *Old printed books, editions from Vilnius, typography, Bulgarian libraries, archives*

XVI a. pabaigos ir XVII a. pradžios Vilniaus leidiniai Bulgarijoje

Santrauka. *Šio straipsnio tikslas – pristatyti XVI a. pabaigos ir XVII a. Vilniaus spaustuvų leidinius, saugomus didesnėse Bulgarijos bibliotekose ir Sofijos, Plovdivo bei Rilos vienuolynų archyvuose. Tai kai kurios Petro*

Mstislaviečio, brolių Mamoničių ir Šventosios Dvasios vienuolyno spaus-tuvių išleistos liturginės knygos. Straipsnyje pateikiama susisteminta informacija su trumpais išlikusių egzempliorių aprašymais bei atsklei-džiami šių spausdintų knygų paplitimo bulgarų žemėse XVI–XVII a. būdai, taip pat aptariamas jų naudojimas vėlesniais šimtmečiais.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *senosios spausdintos knygos, Vilniaus leidiniai, tipografija, Bulgarijos bibliotekos, archyvai.*

In the final years of the 16th century, Medieval Bulgaria lost its political independence, and the Bulgarian lands formed the central part of the Balkan territory of the Ottoman Empire. During the following five centuries, Bulgarians were deprived of national political, religious, and cultural institutions. This led to a long and difficult process of people-driven literary and spiritual development during the time of the National Revival (18th–19th c.).

THE PRINTED BOOK IN THE BALKANS IN THE 16TH CENTURY

The Bulgarians, as well as the other Slavs in the Balkans subjected to the foreign power, found it extremely difficult to establish their own printing houses on their territory, to produce and distribute printed editions in their own language. The first South Slavonic printing house in the Balkans appeared forty years after the Gutenberg Bible (1453–1455), it was established in 1493, in Cetinje by Đurad Crnojević, the last ruler of Montenegro. The printing house worked for only three years and printed four essential liturgical books of the Church: the Octoechos in two parts (Octoechos of the First Tone, Octoechos of the Fifth Tone), the Psalter, and the Prayer book (Trebnik)¹. These editions exerted great influence on the early Slavonic printing in terms of the text, decoration, and typography. The incunabula of Cetinje were the first printed liturgical books used in the Bulgarian churches. Today, there are thirteen of them preserved in Bulgaria, nine copies of the Octoechos of the First Tone from 1493, and four copies of the Psalter from 1495².

1 NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Pochetsi shtamparstva u Tsrnoj gori (1492–1496)*. Tsetinje, 1996, p. 226–231, 462–472; *IZMEĐU traditsije i inovatsije. 520 godina od prve čirilske knjige shtampane na srpskoslovenskom jaziku. /Katalog izlozhbe/*. Beograd: Narodna biblioteka Srbije, Retro print, 2014, p. 13.

2 POLIMIROVA, Mariya. Tsetinskite inkunabuli v B'lgariya. In: *D''lgiyat osemnadeseti vek*,

Despite the difficult political situation for the Orthodox people in the Balkans, in the 16th century, a few Slavonic printing houses were established. These were the printing houses in the towns of Gorazde, Belgrade, Târgoviște, and Bucharest, and in the Serbian monasteries Gračanica, Mileševa, and Mrkšina Crkva. The printing activities in these places were carried out under the patronage of the local metropolitan, with the support of wealthy merchants and Wallachian governors, and with the efforts of skilled monks. Most of these printing houses operated for a short period of time with frequent interruptions. Usually, they only published a few books, however, these were distributed not only in the immediate lands, but also in the more distant regions in the Balkans. In the Bulgarian libraries, most copies have been preserved from the editions of the printing houses in Brașov, Belgrade and Bucharest.

In the 16th century, the largest, most productive and continuously operating South Slavic typography was located in Venice. It was established in 1519 by Božidar Vuković of Podgorica, also known by his Latinized name Dionisio della Vecchia³. His publications were intended for the Slavs under the Ottoman rule whose Orthodox churches lacked the basic liturgical books. In addition to liturgical books, Božidar Vuković also published other types of books, Prayer Books or Miscellanies, in a small format, which are convenient for travelers (the so-called Miscellanies for travelers). The Venetian editions of the Vuković printing house were the most widely distributed books in the 16th century in the Balkans, and also in the Bulgarian lands. Today, more than 130 of them have been preserved in Bulgaria⁴. Bulgarian scholars have demonstrated a lasting research interest in them, especially in the editions of the first Bulgarian

3. *Knigite kato s"bitiia v Evropa i Osmanskata imperiya (XVII–XIX v.)*. Sofiya: B"lgarsko obshchestvo za prouchvane na osemnadeseti vek. Sofiya, 2020, p. 130–155.

- 3 LAZIĆ, Miroslav. Bozhidar Vuković između stvarnosti i konstruktsije: Od shtampara do srpskog despota, *Tsrkvene studije*. 2018, 15, p. 17–39; LAZIĆ, Miroslav. Od Bozhidara Vukovića do Dionizija Dela Vekije. Identitet i pseudonim u kulturi ranog Modernog doba. In: *SCALA PARADISI. Akademiku Dimitriju Bogdanovihu u spomen 1986–2016*. Beograd, 2018, p. 165–186.
- 4 ATANASOV, Pet"r i Lidiya DRAGOLOVA. Slavyanskie kirillovskie inkunabuly i paleotipy v knigokhranilishchakh Bolgarii. In: *V pomoshch s"staviteľyam staropechatnykh izdaniĭ kirillovskogo i glagolicheskogo shrifta. Metodicheskie ukazaniya*, Moskva 1981, Vypusk 6, p. 5–26; POLIMIROVA, Mariya. Izdaniya na venetsianskata pechatnitsa na Vukovichite ot XVI v. v b"lgarskite khranilishcha. In: *Manastir ot Slepche i postvizantiskata umetnost na Balkanot od XVI i XVII vek. IZbornik na trudovi*. Zhurche, Demir Khisar: Manastir „Sv. Atanasij Veliki“, 2021, p. 264–293; POLIMIROVA, Mariya. Nauchniyat interes k"m venetsianskite kirilski pechatni knigi ot XVI v. v B"lgariya, *Ricerche slavistiche*. 2020, Nuova serie 3(63), p. 189–207.

printer Jakov Krajkov, the owner of the Vuković printing house in the period of 1566–1572⁵.

The Cyrillic incunabula and the early printed books in the large Bulgarian libraries were catalogued at the beginning of the 20th century by our first bibliographers E. Sprostranov and B. Tsonev⁶. In the second half of the century, the earlier information about them was further updated and supplemented by I. Goshev, P. Atanasov, I. Bogdanov, B. Raikov, L. Dragolova, D. Ivanova⁷, and was also included in the general catalogues prepared by the Russian bibliographers A. Guseva and E. Nemirovsky⁸. At the beginning of the 21st century,

- 5 ATANASOV, Pet"r. *Yakov Kraikov. Knizhovnik. Izdatel. Grafik. XVI v.* Sofiya: Nauka i izkustvo, 1980; TSIBRANSKA-KOSTOVA, Mariyana. *Etyudi v"rkhu kirilskata paleotipiya XV–XVIII v.* Sofiya, 2007; TSIBRANSKA-KOSTOVA, Mariyana. *Sbornik"t „Razlichni potrebi"na Yakov Kraikov mezhdu Venetsiya i Balkanite prez XVI vek.* Sofiya: Izdatelstvo Valentin Trayanov, 2013; DZHUROVA, Aksiniya. *Sbornik"t „Razlichni potrebi“ (Kniga za p"tnika) ot 1571/72, Biblioteka Ambroziana S.Q.VI.41,* Sofiya, 2014.
- 6 SPROSTRANOV, Evtim. *Opis na r"kopisite v bibliotekata pri Sv. Sinod na B"lgarskata ts"rkva v Sofiya.* Sofiya: D"rzhavna pechatnitsa, 1900; SPROSTRANOV, Evtim. *Opis na r"kopisite v bibliotekata pri Rilskiya manastir.* Sofiya: D"rzhavna pechatnitsa, 1902; TSONEV, Benyu. *Opis na r"kopisite i staropechatnite knigi na Narodnata biblioteka v Sofiya.* Vols. 1, 2. Sofiya: D"rzhavna pechatnitsa, 1910, 1923; TSONEV, Benyu. *Opis na slavyanskite r"kopisi i staropechatni knigi v Plovdivskata narodna biblioteka.* Sofiya: D"rzhavna pechatnitsa, 1920.
- 7 GOSHEV, Ivan. *Stari zapiski i nadpisi, Otpechat"k ot Godishnika na Sofijskiya universitet, Bogoslovski fakultet.* 1929, 1934–1935, 1935–1936, 1937, (sv. 2, 3, 4, 5); ATANASOV, Pet"r i Lidiya DRAGOLOVA. *Slavyanskite kirillovskie inkunabuly...*, p. 5–26; ATANASOV, Pet"r. *Slavyanskata staropechatna sbirka na Narodnata biblioteka „Iv. Vazov“ – Plovdiv, Bibliotekar.* 1971, book. 2, p. 44–45; ATANASOV, Pet"r. *Tseni slavyanski staropechatni knigi v bibliotekata na Rilskiya manastir, Bibliotekar.* 1977, 2, p. 20–23; BOGDANOV, Ivan. *B"lgarski p"rvopechatni knigi ot XVI–XVIII v., Godishnik na BBI.* 1962, IX, s. 85–123; RAIKOV, Bozhidar. *Opis na slavyanskite staropechatni knigi ot XV i XVI v. v Narodna biblioteka „Kiril i Metodii“ v Sofiya, Izvestiya na Narodna biblioteka „Kiril i Metodii“ i na Sofijskiya universitet „Kliment Okhridski“.* 1967, vol. VII (XIII), p. 225–251; DRAGOLOVA, Lidiya i Maya BOZUKOVA. *Pripiski v slavyanskite staropechatni knigi XV–XVII v., s"khra nyavani v Narodnata biblioteka „Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodii“, Izvestiya na NBKM.* 1996, Vol. XXII, p. 325–345; IVANOVA, Diana i Dimit"r DUNKOV. *Staropechatnite slavyanski knigi v plovdivskata Narodna biblioteka „Ivan Vazov“.* In: *Najstarsze druki cekiewnoslowianskie i ich stosunek do tradycji rekopismiennej.* Kraków, 1993, p. 301–315].
- 8 GUSEVA, Aleksandra. *Izdaniya kirillovskogo shrifta vtoroi poloviny XVI veka. Svodnyi katalog,* book. 2. Moskva: Indrik, 2003; NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Tsnogorska bibliografija. Vol. I, book. 2, (1519–1638). Tsetinje, 1993;* NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Slavyanskite izdaniya kirillovskogo (tserkovnoslavyanskogo) shrifta 1491–2000. Inventar' sokhranivshikh-sya ehkzempliarov i ukazatel' literatury.* Vol. I (1491–1550). Moskva: Znack, 2009; Vol. II (1551–1592). Moskva: Znack, 2011.

a separate catalogue of early Slavic printed books from the 17th century was prepared by the National Library in Sofia⁹. Catalogues of the Kliment Ohridski University Library and of the National History Museum in Sofia were also published, in which a few additional Cyrillic early printed books were included¹⁰. Editions from the printing houses in Targovishte, Braşov and Bucharest, and the Venetian editions, were the subject of separate publications examining their content, language, illumination and marginal notes, as well as the relationship between the printed book and the manuscript tradition. In a number of studies on the early Russian and Ukrainian printed books in Bulgaria, some editions from the printing houses in Vilnius were also mentioned, but, so far, a separate publication focusing on these editions has not appeared¹¹. Bulgarian bibliographic scholarship is in need of more studies which would offer up-

- 9 KIRILOVA, Rositsa. *Opis na slavyanskite kirilski pechatni knigi ot XVII vek v'v fonda „Staropechatni, redki i tsenni knigi” na Natsionalnata biblioteka „Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodii”*. Sofiya: Nats. bibl. „Sv. sv. Kiril i Metodii“, 2015.
- 10 ANGELOVA, Anna i Lilyana PETKOVA. *Kolektsiya „Slavika”. Redki i tsenni izdaniya po slavistika ot bibliotekata na SU „Sv. Kliment Okhridski” 1519–1922*. Sofiya: Universitetsko izdatelstvo „Sv. Kliment Okhridski”, 2005; VELINOVA, Vasya i Nina VUTOVA. *Opis na slavyanskite r“kopisi, kirilski pechatni knigi i periodichni izdaniya v Natsionalniya istoricheski muzei*. Vol. 1. Sofiya: Natsionalen istoricheski muzei, 2013; VUTOVA, Nina, et al. *Opis na r“kopisite, staropechatnite, redkite i tsennite izdaniya v Natsionalniya istoricheski muzei*. Vol. 2. Chuzhdoezichni r“kopisi, dokumenti, staropechatni knigi, redki i tsenni izdaniya. Sofiya: Unikart, 2017.
- 11 DYLEVSKII, Nikolai. Russkie i ukrainkie rukopisi i staropechatniye knigi v bolgarskikh knigokhranilishchakh. In: *Issledovaniya istochnikov po istorii russkogo yazyka i pis'menosti*. Moskva: Nauka, 1966, p. 206–224; ATANASOV, Pet“r. Ukrainkie kirillicheskie staropechatnye knigi XVI–XVII vv. v Bolgarii. (K voprosu o bolgarsko-ukrainskikh kul'turnykh svyazakh), *Sovetskoe slavyanovedenie*. 1972, Vol. 6, p. 72–83; ATANASOV, Pet“r. Tsenni slavyanski staropechatni..., p. 20–23; ATANASOV, Pet“r. Ruskite pechatni knigi v Rilskiya manastir, Starob“lgarska literatura. 1982, book 12, p. 82–100; ATANASOV, Pet“r. *B“lgaro-ruski literaturni vr“zki prez XVI i XVIII vek*. Sofiya: Nauka i izkustvo, 1986; NESHEV, Georgi. *B“lgaro-Ukrainski kulturno-istoricheski vr“zki prez XV–XVIII*. Sofiya: Slavyansko druzhestvo v B“lgariya, 1997; Arkhim. PAVEL, Stefanov. Glozhenskiyat manastir „Sv. Georgi“ – mitove i istini, *Dveri BG*, 2008. Access online: https://dveri.bg/component/com_content/Itemid,125/catid,90/id,5697/view/article/ [accessed 20 Feb 2023]; MILTENOVA, Anisava. Ruskite r“kopisni i staropechatni knigi v b“lgarskite zemi prez K“snoto srednovekovie. In: Marshruti na knizhovno obshchuvane na iztochnite i yuzhnite slavyani prez XI–XX vek. *Mezhdunarodna konferentsiya, 21–22 noemvri 2019 g., B“lgarska akademiya na naukite*. Sofiya: Izdatelski tsent“r Boyan Penev, 2020, p. 337–357; KIRILOVA, Rositsa. Slavyanskite kirillicheskie knigi Natsional'noi biblioteki Bolgarii: tsennost' i znachenie fonda. In: *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos metraštis. Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas*, 2015, p. 433–444.

dated information about the editions of specific printing houses preserved in Bulgaria. This topic has caught our attention¹², and, more specifically, here we focus on the Cyrillic editions of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century from the printing houses in Vilnius.

The Vilnius early printed books are included in the aforementioned general catalogues and the publications on early printing of the *National Library St. St. Cyril and Methodius* in Sofia, the *Ivan Vazov Public Library* in Plovdiv, the library of Rila Monastery, and the library of the Church Historical and Archival Institute. Regrettably, the latter two collections have only catalogues from the beginning of the 20th century, which have not been updated¹³. Research work in both repositories is currently difficult. The collection in Rila Monastery is being studied by a team of researchers, and a new detailed catalogue is about to appear. The building of the Church Historical and Archival Institute in Sofia is under major renovation, and, for the time being, the archive is not accessible to readers, but we received important information about two editions from Vilnius held there¹⁴. Other Bulgarian book repositories which have preserved copies from the printing houses of Vilnius are: the library of the Chitalishte (community center) *Elenka and Kiril Avramovi* in Svištov and the National Museum of History in Sofia.

At the end of the 16th century and in the beginning of the 17th century, the local Balkan printing houses were not operational, and the Vuković printing house in Venice was not as active as before. At that time, publications from the territories of Russia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania penetrated the Bulgarian lands thereby compensating for the lack of liturgical books. For the spiritual development of the Bulgarian people under the Ottoman rule and under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Greek Patriarchate¹⁵, cultural

12 POLIMIROVA, Mariya. *Izdaniyata na venetsianskata pechatnitsa na Vukovichite...*, p. 264–293; POLIMIROVA, Mariya. *Nauchniyat interes k"m...*, p. 189–207.

13 SPROSTRANOV, Evtim. *Opis na r"kopisite v bibliotekata pri Sv. Sinod na B"lgarskata ts"rkva v Sofiya*. Sofiya, 1900; SPROSTRANOV, Evtim. *Opis na r"kopisite v bibliotekata pri Rilskiya manastir*. Sofiya, 1902.

14 We would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Hristo Temelski, Director of the Church Historical and Archival Institute in Sofia who provided us with information about the two Vilnius editions stored in the Institute.

15 In the period of 1557–1766, part of the Bulgarian lands was under the jurisdiction of the re-established Serbian Patriarchate of Peć. The metropolitans were Serbian and Bulgarian, and they encouraged the production and distribution of printed editions in Slavonic. Within the Diocese of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć were the Western Bulgarian bishoprics Kyustendil, Samokov, Bansko, Razlog, and Rila Monastery.

ties with other Eastern Orthodox nations, especially with the Eastern Slavs in Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, were of vital importance.

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The process of territorial consolidation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was intensified in the period from the end of the 15th to the middle of the 16th century. After the Union of Lublin (1569) and the formation of the united Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, it became one of the most important political and cultural European centers.

In the second half of the 16th century, Vilnius established itself as the leading center of Cyrillic printing in Eastern Europe¹⁶. In 1575–76, the printing house of Peter Mstislavets revived book publishing in Vilnius 50 years after the printing activities of Francysk Skaryna¹⁷. Vilnius printing houses published a significant number of books with religious and secular content, intended for the needs of both the Eastern Orthodox and the Uniates, not only on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also for Muscovite Russia, as well as for the Southern Slavs in the Balkans. This was a tradition introduced in the middle of the 16th century with the publications of the Mamonichi brothers which were addressed to: “*the regions of Muscovite Russia, Wallachian, Serbian and Bulgarian*”¹⁸. It is no coincidence that the first edition from the printing house of the Mamonichi brothers in Vilnius – the Priest’s Service Book of 1583 reproduced the famous Venetian headpieces with the monogram of Božidar Vuković. The sought-after similarity with the popular editions of Vuković was a guarantee for the successful distribution of the Vilnius editions among the

- 16 JAROSZEWICZ-PIERESŁAWCEW, Zoja. Vil’nyusskoe kirillicheskoe knigopechatanie: ego sud’ba i znachenie In: *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos metraštis, 2015*. Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas, 2015, p. 303–324; KAZURO, Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos kirilikos leidinių kolekcija, 1525–1839: Katalogas*. Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas, 2013, p. 33–46.
- 17 KNIGA *Belarusi 1517–1917. Svodnyi katalog*. Sost.: G. Golenchenko i dr. Minsk: Izdatel’stvo „Belorusskaya Sovetskaya ehntsiklopediya“ imeni Petrusya Brovki, 1986, p. 29.
- 18 JAROSZEWICZ-PIERESŁAWCEW, Zoja. Vil’nyusskoe kirillicheskoe knigopechatanie..., p. 315, 318. The author quoted: POZDEEVA, Irina. *Kniga v kul’ture rossiiskikh regionov. Opisanie kirillicheskich izdaniy XVI–XVII vekov v Tverskoi, Permskoi i Yaroslavskoi oblastiakh*. In: *Ferodovskie chteniya 2003*, Moskva, 2003, p. 100–118; GUSEVA, Aleksandra. *Izdaniya kirillovskogo shrifta vtoroi poloviny XVI veka. Svodnyi katalog*, Book 2. Moskva: Indrik, 2003, Book 1, p. 9; Book 2, Tab. I, II.

Southern Slavs in the Balkans in the period after 1572, when the activity of the Venetian printing house declined¹⁹. In the final decades of the 16th and in the early decades of the 17th century, the production of Vilnius printing met the urgent need for new liturgical books for all Eastern Orthodox Christians in the Balkans.

Some of these Vilnius editions reached the Bulgarian lands where they were used for centuries by priests and literate Christians, and they have been preserved until today in our libraries and archives. These are a total of eight books printed in the late 16th and the early 17th century in the typographies of the Mamonichi brothers, of the Brethren of the Monastery of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and in the typography in Evije (Vievis), near Vilnius²⁰. There are multiple copies of some of these editions preserved in the Bulgarian libraries (11 books in total). These are:

1. 1575, *Mstislav's Four Gospels* (*Четириевангелие на Мстиславец*), Vilnius – 3 copies.
2. 1576, *Mstislav's Psalter* (*Псалтур на Мстиславец*), Vilnius – 1 copy.
3. 1596, *Study about reading* (*Наука ку читанию*), Vilnius – 1 copy.
4. 1616, *Didactic Gospel* (*Учително евангелие*), typography in Evije (Vievis), near Vilnius – 1 copy.
5. 1620, [*The Vertograd dushevnyi*] (*Вертоград Душевный*), Vilnius – 2 copies.
6. 1640–41, *Prayer book* (*Требник*), typography in Evije – 1 copy.
7. 1641, *Priest's Service book* (*Служебник*), Vilnius – 1 copy.
8. 1644, *Gospel* (*Евангелие*), Vilnius – 1 copy.

In this article, we present up-to-date information about the above listed items based on bibliographic studies and library research. The focus of our attention is directed to some newly discovered, as yet unknown and unpublished

19 ZERNOVA, Antonina. *Tipografiya Mamonichei v Vil'ne (XVI–XVII veka). Kniga. Issledovaniya i materialy*. Sb. 1. Moskva, 1959. Available from: RARUS'S Gallery. Fine Books, Prints, Photographs & Icons: <http://www.raruss.ru/slavonic/slav5/1601-zernova-mamonichi.html> [accessed 25 Feb 2023].

20 Ibidem; SHLEVIS, German. Vilenskoe Pravoslavnoe Svyato-Dukhovskoe Bratstvo. In: *Pravoslavnaya Ehntsiklopediya*. Vol. 8. Moskva, 2004, p. 480–484; KAZURO, Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos leidiniu kolekcija...*, p. 33–46; JAROSZEWICZ-PIERESLAWCEW, Zoja. Vil'nyusskoe kirillichesкое knigopechatanie: ego sud'ba i znachenie In: *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos metraštis, 2015*. Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas, 2015, p. 303–324; VOZNESENSKII, Andrei. Petr Timofeevich Mstislavets i ego izdaniya, *Natsional'naya biblioteka*. 2018, 2(12), p. 33–38; ZERNOVA, Antonina. *Tipografiya Mamonichei v Vil'ne (XVI–XVII veka). Kniga. Issledovaniya i materialy*. Sb. 1. Moskva, 1959. Access online: RARUS'S Gallery. Fine Books, Prints, Photographs & Icons: <http://www.raruss.ru/slavonic/slav5/1601-zernova-mamonichi.html> [accessed 25 Feb 2023].

copies, as well as the different typographical versions of the same edition. We also examine some more significant marginal notes which are bound to reveal the origin, the journey, and the previous owners of these books in Bulgaria.

Following the chronology of the editions, we present three copies of the earliest and most luxurious edition from the printing house of the Mamonichi brothers in Vilnius, the Four Gospels, printed by Peter Mstislavets in 1575²¹.

The Gospel book is the main liturgical book with a solemn function in the liturgy, and it must be present on the altar of every church. It is one of the symbols of Christianity, and it is revered as a sacred book before which an oath of fidelity and truth is taken. The Gospel books are better preserved than other liturgical books, we rarely find careless marginal notes on their pages, where usually only the more significant events were being recorded. The presence of three copies of the Mstislav's Four Gospels book is indicative of the popularity and use of this edition in the Bulgarian lands at the end of the 16th century.

The distribution of the early Vilnius editions in Bulgaria is related to the monastic embassies to Muscovite Russia and Kiev to collect alms. The first such monastic missions were carried out by the largest Bulgarian monastery (Rila Monastery) in the first half of the 16th century during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, and related to these delegations were the so-called *проэзжые грамоты*, preserved to the present day²². The usual practice for these embassies was to wait for official permission from the Russian authorities in the border town of Putivl, where these documents are kept in the archive. According to reports, on their way back, the monks passed through Lithuania to avoid the danger of Tatar incursions into Ukrainian lands and to strengthen their contacts with the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth²³. More detailed infor-

- 21 NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Slavyanskije izdaniya kirillovskogo...*, Vol. II (1551–1592), Book 1, p. 299–312; *KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. Svodnyi katalog...*, p. 59, № 8; KAZURO, Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos leidinių kolekcija...*, p. 174–177, № 58; VOZNESENSKII, Andrei. Petr Timofeevich Mstislavets i ego izdaniya..., p. 33–38.
- 22 DYLEVSKII, Nikolai. *Ryl'skii monastyr' i Rossiya v XVI i XVII veke*. Sofiya, 1946; DYLEVSKII, Nikolai. Dogovor 1466 goda mezhdru bolgarskim Ryl'skim monastyrem i obitel'yu Panteleimona – Russikom na Afone, *Études balkaniques*. 1969, Vol. 2, p. 81–98; ATANASOV, Pet'r. B'lgaro-ruski literaturni vr'zki prez XVII i XVIII v. Sofiya: Nauka i izkustvo, 1986; *RUSIYA, Aton i Rilskiyat manastir (IX–nachaloto na XX v.)*. S'tav., prev. Nikolov, Angel, Tina Georgieva i Ioana Bencheva. Sofiya: Fondatsiya – B'lgarsko istoricheskoko nasledstvo, 2016, p. 42–107; MILTENOVA, Anisava. Ruskite r'kopisni i staropechatni knii..., p. 345–350; MINCHEVA, Kalina. P'tuvane na Kyustendilski mitropolitni do ruskite zemi, *Izvestiya na Regionalniya Istoricheski muzei – Kyustendil*. 2019, Vol. XX, p. 347–357.
- 23 NESHEV, Georgi. B'lgaro-ukrainski..., p. 3–43; *RUSIYA, Aton i Rilskiyat manastir ...*, p. 90–91; MINCHEVA, Kalina. P'tuvane na Kyustendilski mitropolitni..., p. 347–357.

mation has been preserved about the trips of the Kolasian (from Kyustendil) Metropolitans Vissarion and Michael to Moscow who returned with donations in money, ecclesiastical books, and church utensils²⁴. At the end of the 16th century, the Kolasian Metropolitan Vissarion travelled together with other clergymen from Western Bulgaria and was mentioned in a letter delivered to the Russian ruler Fyodor I Ivanovich (1584–1598)²⁵.

In the 1640s, Metropolitan Michael participated in several trips of this kind. From 1651 to 1654, he resided in Moscow, where he met Tsar Alexei Romanov (1645–1676) and Patriarch Nikon. The arrival of the delegation was recorded in the archives of the Ambassador's Order, and, on the way back, the mission left with 12 carts loaded with donations, including printed books²⁶. At that time, Vilnius was the main typographic center of Cyrillic printing in Eastern Europe, and it is fairly logical that the Metropolitans passing through the city acquired the new editions printed there²⁷. The monks of Rila Monastery most often undertook these missions, and they completed such missions regularly, every seven years, and, as a result, today, three out of the 11 Vilnius-printed early books in Bulgaria are preserved in the library of the monastery.

In a publication from 1981, P. Athanasov²⁸ informed that, in Rila Monastery, the following editions from the beginning of the 17th century can be found: Didactic Gospels, published in 1616 in a printing house in Evije (Vievis) near Vilnius²⁹; two copies of the Didactic Gospels of Cyril Tranquilion, published

24 ANGELOV, Bonyu. Mikhail mitropolit Kolasiiiski. In: *Rusko-yuzhnoslavyanski knizhovni vr'zki*. Sofiya, 1980, p. 5–83; MINCHEVA, Kalina. P'tuvane na Kyustendilski mitropolit..., p. 347–357; MINCHEVA, Kalina. Michael of Kolasia: A Metropolitan Bishop from the Pax Postbyzantina, *Godishnik na SU "Sv. Kliment Okhridski" (TSSVP "Ivan Duichev")*, 2019, Vol. 100(19), p. 151–159; MINCHEVA, Kalina. P'tuvaneto na Kolasiiiskiya mitropolit Mikhail do Svetite zemi v sredata na XVII vek. In: *Kultura na p'tuvaneto v Evropeiskiya Yugoiztok*. Sofiya, 2020, p. 124–135; MILTENOVA, Anisava. Ruskite r'kopisni i staropechatni knigi..., p. 345–350.

25 MINCHEVA, Kalina. P'tuvane na Kyustendilski..., p. 347–348; MINCHEVA, Kalina. Michael of Kolasia..., p. 151–159.

26 Ibidem; MILTENOVA, Anisava. Ruskite r'kopisni i staropechatni..., p. 347.

27 Ibidem; ANGELOV, Bonyu. Mikhail mitropolit Kolasiiiski..., p. 31–32; MILTENOVA, Anisava. Ruskite r'kopisni i staropechatni..., p. 346–348.

28 ATANASOV, Pet'r. Ruskite pechatni knigi v Rilskiya manastir, *Starob'lgarska literature*. 1982, Book 12, p. 82–100.

29 *KATALOG knig kirillicheskoj pechati XV–XVII vv. nauchnoi biblioteki Moskovskogo universiteta*. Sost. I. V. Pozdeeva, I. D. Kashkarova i M. M. Lerenman. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1980, p. 67; *KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. Svodnyi katalog...*, p. 87–88, № 78.

in 1619 in the village of Rokhmaniv³⁰; and two copies of the miscellany *The Vertograd dushevniy* (“Вертоград Душевный”) of Thikarios (Phikarios) of the Holy Mount, published in 1620 in the typography of the Monastery of the Descent of the Holy Spirit³¹.

The preservation of more than one copy of the editions of 1619–1620 supports the suggestion that they were probably brought by the monks of Rila Monastery on a trip made in those years to Russia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania³². The Prefaces in the two Didactic Gospels appealed for the use of simple, understandable language in communication with the common people, and expressed disapproval of the attitudes of rulers and clergy towards the common people treating them “as donkeys and oxen.” This democratic exhortation certainly resonated with the enlightened monks of Rila Monastery. At that time, a new genre of collections (Damaskin), which were miscellanies with mixed – religious and instructive – content, written in simple language, were becoming particularly popular in the Bulgarian lands. These collections were written by the monks of Rila Monastery who knew well and regularly used Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Lithuanian early printed books. The relationship between the Damaskin miscellanies and the early printed books, for example, the Moscow printed Prologues, was established long ago by Bulgarian researchers³³.

30 These two copies of the Didactic Gospels of Cyril Tranquilion are two separate editions. Their Prefaces were addressed to different rulers: the first one spoke to Prince Czartoryski, while the second one was meant for Princess Irina of Moldavia and Princess Višnevicka: ATANASOV, Pet’r. *Ruskite pechatni knigi v Rilskiya manastir...*, p. 87–88.

31 *KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. Svodnyi katalog...*, p. 94, № 93.

32 In the archive of the border town Putival, documents from 1622 have been preserved concerning Bishop Antonii of the Varshetz Bishopric (Varshetz Bishopric was also under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć). According to these documents, Bishop Antonii on his way to Lithuania passed by Sombor, and in the village of Dragobiche was robbed: MURAV’EV, Andrei. *Snosheniya Rossii s Vostokom po delam tserkovnym*. (Chast’ II. Snosheniya Rossiiskoi Tserkvi s Vostochnoyu v tsarstvie Mikhaila Feodorovicha). Access online: https://azbyka.ru/otechnik/Andrej_Muravev/snosheniya-rossii-s-vostokom-po-delam-tserkovnym/8 [accessed 26 Feb 2023]; *RUSIYA, Aton i Rilskiyat manastir...*, p. 90–91.

33 ATANASOV, Pet’r. *Ruskata pechatna kniga v B’lgariya, Ezik i literatura*. 1964, Vol. 3, p. 75–79; ATANASOV, Pet’r. *Moskovskite staropechatni prolozi i B’lgarskoto natsionalno V’zrazhdane, Istoricheski pregled*. 1978, Vol. 2, p. 60–62; MIRCHEVA, Elka. *Rusko-b’lgarski literaturni i ezikovi vr’zki prez XVII i XVIII vek, Proglas*. 1995, Vol. 1, p. 3–10; PETKANOVA, Dora. *Chetivoto na B’lgarina prez XVI–XVIII v*. In: *Narodnoto chetivo prez XVI–XVIII v*. Sofiya: B’lgarski pisatel, 1990, p. 5–23.

We mentioned that three copies of Mstislav's Four Gospels from 1575 have been preserved in Bulgaria. We had access to two of them, stored in the libraries in Sofia and Plovdiv³⁴. A comparison to the described versions of the edition by N. Bondar³⁵ allows us to conclude that they represent the second published version of Mstislav's Four Gospels. The characteristic features of this second version included the use of different types of paper with variable watermarks and placing the superscripts of certain words in the main line of the text³⁶. For example: ff. 3, 5 and 20 where 'ч' from *Pe/ч/zb* was placed in the main line *Рече Гб*. The most representative example is on f. 128, where, in this second version, the *Рече Гб* was not printed at all.

The marginal notes of the copy in Sofia reveal that the Gospels were used in several churches in Western Bulgaria. On the first folio, under the main text, there is a marginal note recording the purchase of the book by the inhabitants of the village of Lokorsko, near Sofia³⁷. On folio 391v, in the margins, a note was added about the commemoration of St. Therapontii. The saint was especially venerated in Western Bulgaria, in the region of Tran and Sofia.

In the Plovdiv copy, we find a handwritten marginal note about the binding of the book, commissioned by certain Nedyalko the Teacher from the village of Adjar in 1687, at the time of Bishop Nektarios of Plovdiv³⁸. Regrettably, we cannot offer new information about the copy of Svištov, since we were not able to study it *de visu*, and we only have its early catalogue description from 1931³⁹. The Gospels book is preserved in a good condition, it is nearly complete, and it was part of an exposition in the Museum of Aleko Konstantinov in Svištov in 2018.

In the National Library in Plovdiv one more edition by Peter Mstislavets is available, the Psalter of 1576⁴⁰. It was printed in the Mamonichi typogra-

34 We would like to express our gratitude to Dr. Petko Georgiev, chief librarian at the National Library in Plovdiv, who assisted our work with the Vilnius editions stored at the Library.

35 BONDAR, Natalia. Ekhzemplary kirillicheskikh izdaniy vil'nyusskikh tipografii fondov Natsional'noi biblioteki Ukrainy imeni V. I. Vernadskogo kak istochnik istoriko-knigovedcheskikh i filigranologicheskikh issledovaniy. In: *Vilniaus Universiteto Bibliotekos Metraštis*. 2015, Vilnius, 2015, p. 408–413.

36 Ibidem, p. 410.

37 DRAGOLOVA, Lidiya i Maya BOZUKOVA, Pripiski v slavyanskite..., p. 336.

38 TSONEV, Benyu. *Opis na slavyanskite r''kopisi i staropechatni knigi v Plovdivskata...*, p. 248.

39 KHRISTOV p. Georgi. Staropechatni knigi i r''kopisi v chitalishchnata biblioteka. In: *Yubileen sbornik na Svishchovskoto chitalishche*. Svishchov, 1913, p. 137–190.

40 KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. *Svodnyi katalog...*, p. 59–60, № 9; NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Slavyanskie izdaniya kirillovskogo...*, Vol. II (1551–1592), Book 1, p. 317–322; KAZURO,

phy. The book is missing the first folio, but a fragment of the engraving of King David and the entire epilogue has been preserved. Between ff. 243 and 244 and in the end of the book, 14 handwritten folia in total were inserted, containing a fragment of the Liturgy of Hours for the Great Compline, and a Service for the Holy Mother of God⁴¹. Thus, this handwritten insertion provided the most necessary services to the Psalter. On the last folia of the book, many notes about the ownership, acquisition and donation were written by literate Bulgarians who were referred to as “the grammarian,” “the teacher,” “the pilgrim,” and were also added in the years 1704 and 1714. The Bulgarian alphabet was employed, and there is also a note about the appearance of a comet star in 1666.

Another very rare edition kept in the National Library in Sofia deserves our attention. This is the so-called *Study about the Reading and Understanding of the Slavonic Writing* (“Наука ку читанию”) by Laurentius and Stephan Zizaniy from 1596⁴². We have only a fragment of four folia of this publication bound together with six other editions in one volume. This volume (convolute) contains grammar studies and other works in Latin, Polish, and Church Slavonic focusing on the teaching and upbringing of children. Among these different compositions, there is a complete copy of the “*Lament of the House of Prince Ostrogski*” (“Ламент дому княжат Острогски”) from 1603⁴³.

The fragment from the aforementioned Vilnius edition of “*Study about the Reading*” (“Наука ку читанию”) contains two folia with the alphabet and syllables, one folio with a *Preface* beginning with a *Prayer to the Lord*, and one folio with the Orthodox Creed. The edition is missing 40 folia containing the entire Lexis (Dictionary), compiled by Laurentius Zizaniy, which was probably taken to be used elsewhere with a different purpose⁴⁴. After the “*Study about*

Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos leidinių kolekcija...*, 2013, p. 289–291, № 155.

- 41 TSONEV, Ben'о. *Opis na slavyanskite r'kopisi i staropechatni knigi v Plovdivskata...*, p. 245–247; STANCHEV, Krasimir. *Opis na slavyanskite r'kopisi v Plovdivskata narodna biblioteka „Ivan Vazov“, post'pili sled 1920 g.* Sofya, 1982, p. 79–80.
- 42 *KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. Svodnyi katalog...*, p. 75, № 43; NEMIROVSKII, Evgenii. *Slavyanskite izdaniya kirillovskogo...*, Vol. II (1593–1600), Book 2, p. 98–100.
- 43 TSONEV, Benyu. *Opis na r'kopisite i staropechatnite knigi na Narodnata...*, p. 520–521; KIRILOVA, Rositsa. *Opis na slavyanskite kirilski pechatni knigi...*, p. 13.
- 44 The fragment from “*Study about the Reading*” (“Наука ку читанию”) is followed by a few handwritten folia, and a copy of the Primer of Ivan Feodorov of 1574. The textual analysis also revealed similarity with the “*Slavonic Grammar*” (“Славянская рекома граматика”) of 1598: ATANASOV, Pet'r. *Unikalen pametnik na ruskata srednovekovna kultura v Narodnata biblioteka Kiril i Metodii, Izvestiya na Narodna biblioteka Kiril i Metodii.* 1971, 12(18), p. 66–77.

the Reading” (“Наука ку читанию”), we find some handwritten folia containing the textbook of Ivan Feodorov “*Beginning of Teaching Children*” (a primer) (“Начало учения дете”) from 1574. This unique volume from the collection of the National Library in Sofia has been the subject of several publications, presenting separately the Polish and the Cyrillic editions⁴⁵. However, a detailed study of the volume as a whole is most certainly due.

In this general overview of the early printed books from the Vilnius printing houses in Bulgaria, we should also include two later editions from the 1640s which are stored in the archive of the *Church Historical and Archival Institute* in Sofia. These are the Prayer Book printed in the typography of the Brethren of the Holy Spirit in 1640/41, and a Priest’s Service Book from 1641 published in the printing house in Evije (Vievis)⁴⁶. The two editions are bound together in one volume. The beginning of the Prayer Book is missing, but manuscript sheets are inserted instead.

The final edition to be presented here is one luxury Vilnius publication, acquired in 2017 by the National Museum of History in Sofia. The book was included in the second volume of the *Catalogue of the Early Printed Books* in the National Museum of History where its detailed description was complemented by a few photos⁴⁷. This is a Four Gospels book printed in 1644 in the printing house of the Brethren of the Church of Descent of the Holy Spirit in Vilnius⁴⁸. The book is well preserved, and it contains 257 folia with engravings of the four evangelists. On the front flyleaf there are notes in several languages, on which we shall summarize below. The note in Bulgarian is from 1773, and it is related to the purchase of the book by the town of Shumen for the Monastery of *Nativity of Virgin Mary* in Kilifarevo. On the back flyleaf, there is another

45 Ibidem, p. 66–77; CLEMINSON, Ralph. Some 16th and Early 17th Century Printings in the NBKM. *Paleobulgarica*. 1997, Vol. 21, 2, p. 71–79.

46 KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. *Svodnyi katalog*..., p. 110–11, № 138, 139; KAZURO, Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos kirilikos leidinių kolekcija*..., p. 324, № 188.

47 VUTOVA, Nina, et al. *Opis na r"kopisite, staropechatnite, redkite i tsennite izdaniya v Natsionalniya istoricheski muzei*. Vol. 2..., p. 353–354.

48 KNIGA Belarusi 1517–1917. *Svodnyi katalog*..., p. 113, № 146; KAZURO, Ina. *Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos kirilikos leidinių kolekcija*..., p. 185–186, № 62; OSTAPCHUK, Ezhi. Tekstologicheskie raznochteniya v spiskakh evangel'skikh glav – eshche odna osnova dlya otozhdestvleniya podlinnika Vilenskogo Evangeliya-tetr 1644 goda. In: *Yazyk, kniga i traditsionnaya kul'tura pozdnego russkogo srednevekov'ya v nauke, muzeinoi i bibliotechnoi rabote*, Ed. 10, Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 2019, p. 271–282; SHLEVIS, German. Vilenskoe Pravoslavnoe Svyato-Dukhovskoe Bratstvo. In: *Pravoslavnaya Ehntsiklopediya*. Vol. 8. Moskva, 2004, p. 480–484.

inscription about the binding of the book “by Stoen the Teacher from the village of Tryavna”. The note in Greek is from 1759, and it says that the Gospels had a silver bookbinding, which was stolen by the Tatars in 1758, and afterwards Christopher from the village of Lovcha “spent money and donated it”⁴⁹.

The earliest note in the Four Gospels book is dated to precisely June 4, 1696. It is in Polish, and is written in the lower margins of the first 24 folia of the book. In translation, it says: “*This Gospels is donated by me, Alexander Mocoshey, Denisk Matveyovski, a hieromonk from the order of St. Basil, administrator of the bishoprics of Udzk and Ostrog, who donated this book to the church of the Annunciation of the Holy Mother of God who is my mother, patroness, and benefactor. Whoever takes this book, may he be excommunicated from the Orthodoxy and from our holy Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, let he be cursed by... and called another Judas*”⁵⁰. The text is informative, and it is a testimony to the complex religious relationship between the Uniates and the Eastern Orthodox believers at that time in the territory of Poland, and especially in the region of Ostrog. The note was written by a hieromonk, a member of the Uniate order of St. Basil, founded in 1617 (This is a Roman Catholic order but following a Byzantine Orthodox rite). In 1623, the Mamonichi typography was given to this order, and the printing house of the Brethren of the Holy Spirit was its heir⁵¹.

These handwritten marginal notes in the presented editions can be analyzed further, and new facts and connections related to the distribution and the use of these books in Bulgaria may still come to light. The presence of more than one copy of a given book in the library of Rila Monastery is also important, indicating the lasting interest towards these books among the literate Bulgarian clergy. Here, we have presented the general information about the Vilnius-originating editions from the end of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century in hope to stimulate the scholarly interest and inspire further research on the topic.

49 VUTOVA, Nina, et al. *Opis na r''kopsisite, staropechatnite, redkite...*, p. 353–354.

50 The note was transcribed in Polish by Prof. Sergius Temchinias, translated to Bulgarian by Prof. Georgi Minchev, and to English by Lily Stammner.

51 ZERNOVA, Antonina. *Tipografiya Mamonichei v Vil'ne...*, Available from: RARUS'S GalLery. Fine Books, Prints, Photographs & Icons: Access online: <http://www.raruss.ru/slavonic/slav5/1601-zernova-mamonichi.html> [Accessed 26 Feb 2023]; BAZILIANSKAYA TIPOGRAFIYA Troitskogo monastyrja v Vil'ne i staroobryadcheskie izdaniya kirillovskogo shrifta vtoroi poloviny XVIII veka – nachala XIX veka] Access online: <http://www.raruss.ru/slavonic/slav5/4032-vilno-troitskaya-printing-house.html> [accessed 26 Feb 2023].

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3. Arkhim. PAVEL STEFANOV. Glozhenskiy manastir „Sv. Georgi“ – mitove i istini, *Dveri BG*, 2008. [accessed 20 Feb 2023]. Access online: https://dveri.bg/component/com_content/Itemid,125/catid,90/id,5697/view,article/
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9. ATANASOV, Petor. Kolleksiya slavyanskoy staropisi v Narodnoy biblioteke „Iv. Vazov“ - Plovdiv, *Bibliotekar*. 1971, kniga 2, p. 44–45.
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11. ATANASOV, Petor. Unikal'nyy pamyatnik russkoy srednevekovoy kul'tury v Narodnoy biblioteke „Kirill i Metodiy“, *Izvestiya na Narodnoy biblioteke Kirill i Metodiy*. 1971, 12(18), p. 66–77.
12. ATANASOV, Petor. Tsennyye slavyanskiye staropeatatnyye knigi v biblioteke Ril'skogo monastyraya, *Bibliotekar*. 1977, 2, p. 20–23.
13. ATANASOV, Petor i Lidiya DRAGOLOVA. Slavyanskiye kirillicheskiye inkunabuly i paleotipy v knizhnykh magazinakh Bolgarii, *V pomoshch' sopaditelyam staropeatatnykh izdaniy Kirillicheskiy i glagolicheskiy shrift. Metodicheskiye ukazaniya*. 1981, vypusk 6, p. 5–26.
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