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Author(s): Hilary Kilpatrick

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FROM VENICE TO ALEPPO: EARLY PRINTING OF SCRIPTURE IN THE ORTHODOX WORLD

HILARY KILPATRICK

Introduction: Bible and Scripture

The Bible, as the etymology of the word indicates, refers not to one book but to many. The Christian Bible is made up of the Old Testament, that is, the Jewish Scriptures, and the New Testament; moreover, for some Churches, among them the Orthodox, certain books commonly called the Apocrypha, which were added to the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, also form part of the Bible.

The Bible is thus a small library, and as is common in libraries, some books are more popular than others. Long before the introduction of printing, the varying degrees of importance accorded to different books of the Bible led to some of them being translated before others. For instance, in Anglo-Saxon England, interlinear glosses (i.e. crude word-by-word translations) were made of the Gospels and Psalms, and separate portions of the Bible, including the Gospels, were rendered into Old English (Anonymous 1997: 200). Likewise, the earliest known written translations of parts of the Bible into Arabic are of the Gospels and Psalms; they can be dated to the 8th century. Oral translations are older, going back to pre-Islamic times (Graf 1944: 114-115, 138; Griffith 2012: 123-126). By contrast, the first attempt to produce a complete Bible in Arabic occurred only in the 16th century (Graf 1944: 89-90).

1 Independent Scholar. The paper on which this article is based was given at a conference entitled “Sacred Texts and Print Culture. The case of Qur’an and Bible of the Orthodox Churches during the 18th and 19th Century” held at the Central European University, Budapest, in December 2005. I would like to thank Dr. Mihail Neamtu (Bucharest) for corrections, Dr. Ioana Feodorov (Bucharest) for an additional reference, Dr. Rosemary Bancroft-Marcus (Rixensart) for information about Greeks under Venetian rule, and in particular Dr. Carsten Walbiner (Bir Zeit/Bonn) for constructive criticism and several additions to the bibliography.
As these examples show, a distinction must be drawn between the Bible as a whole and individual books or passages of it. If the complete Bible is not translated or, in the case of the subject here, printed, this does not necessarily mean anything except that the material conditions for translating or printing a text of considerable length are absent. If, however, no portion of Scripture is printed, then an objection on principle to the procedure of printing, or to printing a sacred text, may exist. It is for this reason that I have chosen to speak of the Scriptures rather than the Bible in my title. The question of principle, whether the Scriptures could be printed or not, is the primary issue. The practical problems, although important for the history of printing and indicative of attitudes to Scripture, take second place.

In the Orthodox Church, moreover, passages from Scripture are also to be found in a number of service books, most notably the Apostolarion (Book of the Epistles) and Evangelion (Book of the Gospels), lectionaries containing the readings appointed throughout the year from the Acts and Epistles and from the Gospels respectively; they are, in other words, the New Testament “pre-packed” for liturgical use. The Psalter or Book of Psalms is found in a separate volume. The Triodion and Pentekostarion include the services for Lent and the period from Easter to Pentecost, with the set readings from the Old and New Testaments for those seasons. The Liturgikon has the texts of the three Liturgies commonly used in the Orthodox Church, while the Menaia (sg. Menaion), twelve books, one for each month, contain the services for the fixed feasts throughout the year, also including appointed readings from Scripture.

When examining the history of the printing of Scripture in the Orthodox world, it is necessary to take into account these books as well as the Old and New Testaments and the complete Bible.

The Orthodox world and the spread of printing

At the end of the 15th century the Orthodox world, by which I mean

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2 The Book of Revelation is not read in services.
3 An accessible description of Orthodox service books is to be found in Multiple Authors 1969: 535-543. See also Sklavenitis 2001: 182-183.
4 The following survey is intended only to bring out the main lines of the development of printing in the Orthodox world up to the end of the 17th century. Neither space nor my knowledge of most of the regions concerned allows a more thorough-going approach to this complex subject. ("Orthodox" is here understood in the generally accepted sense of pertaining to the family of independent Churches in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople).
regions where Orthodox were either in a majority or had a significant and historic presence, could be divided into three parts. First came the countries where Orthodox were self-governing: Muscovy had recently freed itself from Tatar domination and was independent, while Moldavia, Wallachia and some other areas of the Balkans paid tribute to the Ottomans but otherwise managed their own affairs. Second, there were regions where Orthodox lived under Muslim domination: in the Ottoman Empire in most of the Balkans and Anatolia, and in the Mamluk domains of Syria and Egypt, which came under the Ottomans after the conquest of 1516-17. The historic Orthodox patriarchates of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople all fall within this area. And third, certain Orthodox lived in territories governed by Western Christians: by Latin Catholics in the islands of the Mediterranean and parts of the Peloponnese, which were ruled by the Venetians and Genoese, and in Ukraine, which formed part of the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom; and by Protestants in Transylvania. There was also a significant presence of Orthodox, mainly Greeks, in Italy, especially in Venice, which dated back to the Council of Florence (1438-9) but had increased greatly after the fall of Constantinople (1453).5

The following sketch of printing in the Orthodox world up to the establishment of the Arabic press in Aleppo seeks only to trace the main lines of its development and bring out the similarities and differences between various regions.

Venice quickly established itself as one of the major printing centres in Europe; in the realm of printing in Greek, for a long time it played the leading role. While the earliest Greek books to be printed were classical texts, soon religious books started to come off the presses. Legrand’s bibliography of books printed by Greeks lists two 15th-century Psalters from Venice, one produced by George Alexander, the other printed by Aldo Manutio and prefaced by Justinos Dekadios (Legrand 1885: 7, 22). For the 16th century, it records 13 printings of the Horologion (Book of Hours), six of the Psalter (1524, 1525, 1545, 1547, 1578, 1586), five each of the Evangelion and Apostolarion (1539, 1550, 1575, 1581, 1588 and 1542, 1550 (twice), 1579, 1596) and one of the New Testament (1538). Some 30 volumes of Menaia for different months were also produced at various times during the century (Layton 1994; Zorzi 2000: 22-24). Other printings not mentioned by Legrand include the Greek

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5 These regions correspond to the three areas of civilisation identified by Virgil Cândea (Cândea 1970: 260).
Bible produced by Andrea Torresani in 1518, of which the Old Testament followed the Septuagint text and the New Testament that of Erasmus.6

But Venice was not the only place where printing for or by the Orthodox started in the age of incunabula. In Krakow, Szwajpolk Fiol, a Catholic from Franconia and a goldsmith by trade, in 1491 produced the first printed books in Church Slavonic for the many Orthodox of Poland-Lithuania, who were mostly Belorussians and Ruthenians. They were the Triodion, the Pentekostarion (which contains the services for the period from Easter to Pentecost), the Horologion and the Oktoechos (Book of the Eight Tones).7 That same year Fiol was tried for heresy. The Inquisition brought the charges, which related to the Catholic Church’s claim to provide the exclusive way to salvation and to the question of communion in two kinds. The charges were subsequently dropped, but Fiol had to swear obedience to the Catholic hierarchy and abandon his printing activities, although he continued to work as a goldsmith and branched out into mining and the metal trade (Zimmer 1983). Fiol was supported by a wealthy and influential patron, the merchant Jan Turzo, and it was probably he who saw to it that the books already printed were distributed; there is no record of them having been destroyed (Zimmer 1983: 26-27; Nemirovkij 1996: 7-29).

Cetinje, the former royal capital of Montenegro, was the home of the first Cyrillic printing press in the Balkans.8 It was set up by Prince Djurdje Crnojević, who had spent time in Italy and married a Venetian noblewoman. He installed Venetian equipment in the city’s monastery and appointed a monk, Makarije, who had learned printing in Venice, to run the press (Cândea and Luca 2000: 179). It has been suggested that Makarije was either an engraver or a calligrapher because of the high quality of the type he produced (Zimmer 1983: 141). Between 1493 and 1496 the press brought out six books for liturgical use, including the Psalter and the Book of the Gospels. With the Ottoman occupation of the country it was forced to close, and Djurdje Crnojević was in the end exiled to Anatolia, where he died (Montenegro, 1994: [20], [22]). The Cetinje experiment was, however, pursued in Venice, where Božidar Vuković, who had worked with Monk Makarije, took refuge

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6 It is described in Pelusi 2000: 121-2.
7 This contains all the texts for Tone One and the texts for Saturday and Sunday for Tones Two to Eight.
8 Extensive information about early Serbian printers and printing in the Balkans up to the end of the 17th century can be found in Pantić 1994. This encyclopaedic work also includes facsimiles of early printings. See also for Montenegro Nemirovkij 1996: 30-42.
after the occupation of his country; he came to dominate Cyrillic printing for several decades, both in quantity and in quality. The first book published by the press he set up in 1519 was a Liturgikon, and he continued printing liturgical books at least until 1540, after which his son Vicenzo continued his work until 1561. Altogether they produced 15 titles, including two Psalters (Pantić 1994: 76-82, 83-86; Pelusi 2000a: 46-50; Nemirovskij 2001: 7-101).

Opinions are divided about whether or not Monk Makarije moved from Cetinje to Târgoviște in Wallachia. If he did, he would be identical with Macarie, the monk who introduced printing to the Romanian principalities. Be that as it may, Wallachia was the scene of the next attempt at printing in the Orthodox world. Working at the monastery of Dealu in Târgoviște, Monk Macarie produced three liturgical books in Church Slavonic between 1508 and 1512: a Liturgikon, an Oktoehkos, and a Book of the Gospels. He gave up printing in 1512 when he was appointed Metropolitan. These books were widely distributed, and many copies have been preserved in Russia, former Yugoslavia and elsewhere. Macarie’s Evangelion was reprinted six times in the 16th century, on presses in Sibiu, Belgrade and Brașov.

Szwajpolk Fiol’s experiment in Krakow may have been nipped in the bud, but his plan was taken up by a Belorussian from Polotsk, Frančisak Skaryna (?1485-1540), who after studying in Krakow and Padua set up a press in Prague in 1517. From 1517 to 1519 he produced his Bibliaruska, a massive tome of 1,200 folios, including 20 books of the Old Testament in Belorussian except for the Psalms, which were in Church Slavonic. In 1520 he moved to Vilno, where he published a Small Traveller’s Companion (a book containing the Psalms, the Biblical Canticles and prayers and offices for everyday use) and an Apostolarion. These two books are in Church Slavonic with Belorussian influences (Zimmer 1983: 135-138). In technical matters,

9 This is the view taken by Păcurariu (Păcurariu 1994: 221-2), and Cânda and Luca (Cânda and Luca 2000: 179). They point out that the Metropolitan of Wallachia at the time, Maxim Brancovici, was a relative of the Montenegrin ruler Džurđe Crnojević. Less sure is L. Demény (Demény 1969: 561). He observes that the type used in Târgoviște was less fine than that of Cetinje, while admitting that this is not a conclusive argument against Makarije and Macarie being identical, since the same printer may use different types at different times. See also the articles on the two printers in Pantić 1994: 137, 138-9.
10 Păcurariu, 1994: 221-2. The dates of the reprints are as follows: Sibiu 1546, Belgrade 1552 and 1562, Brașov 1562, 1579, 1583. Lists of Macarie’s and other 16th and 17th century printings in Târgoviște and elsewhere in Romania are given in Simonescu and Petrescu 1972: 49-62, 75-83. Nemirovskij 1997 has an extensive discussion of Macarie’s work; see especially 9-49.
11 Malaya podorozhnaya Knizhka, equivalent to the Greek Synekdimos or the Arabic Rafiq al-musāfīr.
Skaryna was influenced by Czech and international printing; however, as a printer in the vernacular he was a pioneer (Zimmer 1983: 140).

Some Serbs wishing to learn the new technology went to Venice to work with Božidar Vuković. After overseeing the production of a *Liturgikon*, one of them, Teodor Ljubavić, returned to the Balkans and set up a press in the Bosnian town of Goražde which brought out a Psalter (1521) and a *Small Euchologion* (*Trebnik;* Book of Prayers) (1523) (Nemirovskii 1995: 43; Pelusi 2000: 156 (exhibit 88)). As can be seen from the colophons of the books that Božidar Vuković printed, these apprentice printers were priests or monks (Pelusi 2000: 156, exhibits 91a, 92). It was probably their experience, together with the examples of Četinje, Goražde and Târgoviște, which inspired some Serbian monasteries to install printing presses. The first press in Serbia was set up in the monastery of Rujno in 1536; it produced one volume, the *Evangelion*. Next was Gračanica, near Priština, where Metropolitan Nikanor installed a press in 1539. There, Dimitrije Ljubavić (Dimitrie Liubavici), a nephew of Teodor, printed the *Oktoechos*. Mileševa in northeast Montenegro produced a Psalter in 1544 and a small *Euchologion* two years later. In 1557 this press came back to life briefly when it printed another Psalter. In another Montenegrin monastery, Mrksina Cerkva, Hieromonk Mardarije printed the *Evangelion* in 1562 and a *Triodion* in 1566 (Nemirovskii 1995: 5, 7, 43, 68, 109, 122). All these books were in Slavonic.

For reasons to be considered later, none of these monastic presses continued to function and one of the Serbian printers, the clerk Dimitrie Liubavici, then moved to Wallachia with his brother the hieromonk Moisie. In Târgoviște, they together brought out a *Book of Prayers* in 1545. Dimitrie went on alone to print a *Menaion* (1546), an *Apostolarion* (1547), and a *Evangelion* (1548-51), all in Slavonic (Pâcurariu 1994: 222-223), which from the 14th to the 17th century was the language of the court, the administration and the educated in the Romanian principalities, enjoying a status similar to that of Latin in Western Europe.12

At around this time, the first press in Transylvania to print Orthodox service books was set up in the city of Sibiu. Its founder, Filip Moldoveanul (d. circa 1555), worked as a secretary and translator in the city’s government and was entrusted with several diplomatic missions to Wallachia by the authorities.

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12 Cândea and Luca 2000: 169-70. They note that the Slavonic used in Wallachia was Middle Bulgarian, while the variety used in Moldavia was Old Russian.
in Braşov. The press appears to have been set up with the aim of converting Romanians to Protestantism; it first produced a Lutheran catechism in Romanian (1544), and then reprinted Macarie’s Slavonic Evangelion (1546) and brought out a bilingual Slavonic and Romanian Evangelion (1551-1553) (Rother 2002: 34-38; Păcurariu 1994: 223). The introduction of the native language can be partly ascribed to the influence of the Reformation, which spread from Hungary to Transylvania and later Wallachia and Moldavia (Cândea and Luca 2000: 180).

In Braşov itself the Orthodox Deacon (Gheorghe) Coresi (d. circa 1583), who had learned printing from Dimitrie Liubavici in Târgovişte, produced his first book, a Slavonic Oktoechos, in 1556-7. For his second book, a Pentekostarion (1557-8), he moved back to Târgovişte, but then returned to Braşov, probably taking printing equipment with him. There he brought out more than 20 books in some 25 years. Until 1565 his main patron was Johannes Benckner, a city magistrate, merchant and owner of a paper-mill, who was a Lutheran. From 1568 on, when Coresi was working without a partner and was in contact with Wallachian notables, a change from Lutheranism to Orthodoxy is perceptible in his output. The later books often do not mention the place of printing, probably intentionally. For their part, the Braşov city authorities, glad to have an outlet for their paper, did not prevent the printing of Orthodox books. Some of Coresi’s productions, such as the Evangelion (1578-9) and the Psalter (1577), were in Slavonic. They were ordered by princes or metropolitans of Wallachia, where the Slavonic tradition was strong. Others were in Romanian; these included a Liturgikon and Psalter (1570), and a bilingual Slavonic-Romanian Psalter (1577). They reflect Coresi’s expressed desire to provide his fellow-countrymen with the Scriptures in their own tongue. The significance of the Romanian Liturgikon and the books of the Bible which Coresi printed was immense; it marks the beginning of a process which lasted for more than a century of replacing Slavonic with Romanian in church life and services. Coresi had many pupils, including his son Şerban who, with a colleague, Marian, printed the first two books of the Old Testament in Romanian (Rother 2002: 60-64; Cândea and Luca 2000: 181).

Printing began in Russia in the 1550s, but the first books printed in Moscow are undated.13 The first known printer is Ivan Fedorovich Fedorov,
born between 1520 and 1530, a well-educated deacon who, after his wife’s death, chose not to become a monk. He was an engraver and scribe, and he may have learned the craft of printing in the early anonymous Moscow workshops. Around 1563 Tsar Ivan IV appointed him to establish a printing house, and he brought out an *Apostolarion* (1564) and a *Horologion* (1565). Soon afterwards the printing house was burned down by a mob. Various factors seem to have contributed to this: Metropolitan Makarii, who supported Ivan Fedorov, died in 1563; it was a period of grave unrest, which forced Ivan IV to leave Moscow for some months; influential churchmen suspected Ivan Fedorov of spreading heresy; the printing house was seen as a threat to the scribes’ guild (Hotimsky 1977; Zimmer 1983: 63-64, 147; Hosking 2001: 122). After returning to Moscow, Ivan IV had the printing house moved outside the city, where it functioned until his death and the beginning of the Time of Troubles. In the 17th century it resumed work, while some monasteries also established presses. The Moscow publishing house produced a limited number of devotional titles, many of which were reprinted several times. Patriarch Nikon in particular made use of printing to impose revised and officially approved service books in the face of strong opposition (Hotimsky 1977; Marker 1985: 19-20).

Ivan Fedorov, meanwhile, had fled to Zabludów in Lithuania, where Prince Grigorii Khodkevych enabled him to set up a press. There he printed a collection of sermons on Gospel readings, the so-called “Teaching Gospel” (1569), and the Psalter (1570).14 Political changes caused the prince to withdraw his support, and Ivan Fedorov moved to Lvov, where after many difficulties he managed to produce an *Apostolarion* and a primer in 1574. The next year he was invited by Prince Konstantin Ostrozhkii to his estate at Ostrog, which had become a centre of Orthodox cultural revival; a primary school had been opened there in 1570, followed eight years later by a secondary school, known as the Ostrog Academy. In this favourable atmosphere, Ivan Fedorov completed the major project of his life, printing the Bible in Church Slavonic for the first time in 1580. He returned to Lvov and died there in 1583, beset by financial problems (Hotimsky 1979). The press in Ostrog continued to operate, however, until 1612, publishing over twenty

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14 For more information on these books and the press which produced them, together with reproductions of passages from them, see Labyntsev and Shchavinskaia 1996.
books (Magocsi 1999: 157).

The press in Ostrog was only one of a number of presses set up by Orthodox in the latter half of the 16th century in towns and cities in Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. In what has been called an Orthodox cultural revival at this time, the brotherhoods of Orthodox laymen in Lvov, Vilno, Kiev and elsewhere focused their energies on religious and educational activities, which included setting up schools and printing books (Magocsi 1999: 151-159; Heller 1991, 111-121; Medlin 1975: 176-182). The Lvov Brotherhood bought up the Fedorov press after its founder’s death, though the first book it produced there only came out some eight years later, in 1591. The Vilno Brotherhood set up a press in 1574. Both presses produced liturgical texts along with other religious and educational ones. A list of religious materials published by the presses of the various Brotherhoods (and also in Moscow) up to 1620 includes nine editions of the Psalter, five of the Apostolarion, and four of the Evangelion and the New Testament (Medlin 1975: 182).15 In Kiev the Monastery of the Caves (Pecherskaya Lavra) took upon itself the task of producing books in a press founded in 1615; it produced forty titles in its first fifteen years of operation (Magocsi 1999: 187).

Kiev, already a major Orthodox cultural centre by the early 17th century, gained even more importance when the energetic and visionary Peter Mogila (Petru Movila/Petro Mohyla) (1596-1646) became its Metropolitan in 1632. A member of a Moldavian princely family, he had studied at the Brotherhood school in Lvov. He sought to raise the cultural level of the Orthodox to that of their Catholic neighbours, and with this aim he founded a college in Kiev modelled on the Jesuit schools in Poland. He used the press belonging to the Monastery of the Caves to support this project.16

He also supported printing outside the Ukraine. In his native Romania, for instance, he provided Prince Matei Basarab with a press when the latter reintroduced printing into Wallachia in the 1630s after a break of three quarters of a century.17 The first work to be printed at the Monastery of Câmpulung

15 Medlin does not specify which titles were produced in Moscow, but since printing was disrupted during the Time of Troubles and very limited during the first quarter of the 17th century, almost all these books will have been printed in the Ukraine or Poland-Lithuania; cf. Hotimsky 1977.
16 For an overview of Mogila’s contribution, especially in theology, with extensive bibliographical references, see Podskalsky 1988: 229-236.
17 For information on printing in Romania in the 17th century, see Pâcurariu 1994: 250-252, 262-264; Olteanu 2000: 440-441; Bălan 2000: 879-888.
was an *Euchologion* in Slavonic (1635). After a break the press resumed production under a Ukrainian printer, Timotei Verbiţki, and printed further titles including a *Psalter* (1650). Another press, installed at the Monastery of Govora-Vâlcea, started by printing a Slavonic *Psalter* in 1637 and produced four other titles, one of which was a Romanian *Horologion* (1640). Here the printers were monks from Macedonia. After a century-long interruption, the press of the Monastery of Dealu in Târgovişte resumed work, producing an *Evangelia învăţătoare sau Cazanie* (Teaching Gospel or Homiliary) of nearly 1000 pages, translated from Slavonic, in 1644. Other liturgical books were either in Slavonic or were bilingual (Slavonic-Romanian); the Metropolitan of Wallachia at the time, Ştefan, sought to introduce more Romanian into the services, at the same time avoiding alienating those who associated the use of the vernacular language with Calvinism (Pâcurariu 1994: 253).

Iaşi, the capital of Moldavia, acquired its first press in 1642, when Prince Vasile Lupu installed it at the Church of the Three Hierarchs. The first books this press produced, under the aegis of Metropolitan Varlaam, were not liturgical. During the Tatar incursion in 1650 it was burned down. When, in the 1670s, Metropolitan Dosoftei began to insist on using Romanian as the main language of services, he resuscitated the press, which printed the Divine Liturgy in Romanian (1679; revised edition 1683), the *Psalter* in Slavonic and Romanian (1680), and the *Euchologion* (1681). Dosoftei also revised the translation of the Old Testament which was included in the first Romanian Bible. During his reign a Greek press was installed in Iaşi at the initiative of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem. Dositheos had previously seen France as a place where Greek books could be printed, but after some disappointments he became convinced of the need for a Greek press in an Orthodox country. He was no stranger to Romania, and when he visited Iaşi in 1680, he arranged for a press to be set up in the Monastery of Cetăţuia, which was subordinate to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The first book, a refutation of the Papal claims to supremacy, came out two years later (Turdeanu 1952: 299-302).

The Romanian Bible was printed in 1688, under the aegis of Metropolitan Teodosie of Wallachia. His predecessor Varlaam had installed a press in Bucharest, and with the support of Princes Şerban Cantacuzino and Constantin Brâncoveanu, Teodosie was able to publish the *Evangelion* (1682)

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18 Marinescu and Rafaila 2004: 272. Their article provides a useful survey of Greek printing in Wallachia and Moldavia during and beyond the period under discussion here.

Constantin Brâncoveanu also supported Bishop Mitrofan of Buzău when he established a press in his diocese in 1691, until 1696 headed by Monk Antim Ivireanul ("the Georgian") (Păcurariu 1994: 274-279, 330-331). It printed six service books in Romanian and 15 religious books in Romanian and Slavonic. When Antim became superior of the Monastery of Snagov near Bucharest, he set up a press which from 1696 to 1701 printed liturgical, educational and other texts not only in Romanian and Slavonic, but also in Greek. This press took the place of the Bucharest one, which had temporarily ceased working but resumed publishing in 1702 (Bălan 2003: 884).

In Transylvania, more than half a century after Coresi’s press had fallen silent, his Gospels with Commentary were reprinted in Alba Iulia (1641). The Metropolitan of Transylvania, Simion Ştefan, had a Romanian translation of the New Testament printed there in 1648 and a Psalter in 1651 (Mureșan 2003: 918-920). His successor, Sava Brancovici, provides a rare example of an Orthodox hierarch resisting pressure to maintain a press, although it was one of the obligations imposed on him by the Calvinist Prince of Transylvania, Mihály Apafi. Brancovici refused to comply because he feared that the press would be used to print Calvinist literature. For his opposition to this and other demands, the prince had him removed and imprisoned in 1680 (Păcurariu 1994: 270-271).

The development of printing among various Orthodox communities in Europe had not escaped the attention of their fellow-believers in the Ottoman Empire, who were aware of the advantages of the new technology. Already in the 16th century, cases of Greek books were shipped to Constantinople and Chios (Lecuir c. 1993: 125; Papadakē 2004: 126-137). The inhabitants of the islands, which were under Venetian and Genoese rule until the second half of the 16th century, also provided a ready market for printed books in Greek. The Greek islands would have been an ideal place for printing, marketing, and exporting books to the surrounding Greek- and Arabic-speaking Orthodox world, but in the pre-Ottoman period suspicion among the Latin rulers of anything which might foster anti-Latin sentiment led to explicit or implicit restrictions on the free circulation of books. The Catholic Church, for its part, sought to prevent the printing of books not conforming to Catholic doctrine (Layton 1994: xxvii-xxviii; Eisenstein 2005: 191-193).
In the 1620s Patriarch Cyril Loukaris of Constantinople, who had studied in Venice and Padua and spent several years heading the Brotherhood schools in Lvov and Vilno, decided to set up a press in Constantinople itself as part of his programme to raise the intellectual level of the Greek Church (Todt, 2002: 617-651, and for the press 625-626). The technical knowledge was provided by Nikodemos Metaxas, a monk from Cephalonia, who had already printed a few Greek theological works in London. When he arrived in Constantinople with a press and cases of books in 1627, the English ambassador helped them through customs. The two volumes the press produced in 1627, collections of texts mainly setting out divergences between Orthodox and Catholic theology, provoked the anger of the Jesuits and the French ambassador, who feared the spread of Calvinist ideas and the influence of Protestant powers (Legrand 1894: nos. 167, 168). Moreover the Congregation for the Propaganda of the Faith had established its own Greek printing press a few months earlier and did not welcome competition. When the Jesuits accused the Patriarch of publishing material hostile to Islam, the janissaries confiscated the press, and although the accusation was later proved false and the Jesuits were expelled in 1628, this put an end to the Patriarchate’s plans for printing in Constantinople for over a hundred years. Metaxas pursued his career as a printer in his native island (Augliera 1996; the books he printed are listed pp. 237-240).

The Arabic-speaking Orthodox of the Patriarchate of Antioch were in contact with their fellow-Orthodox in Constantinople, the Greek islands.

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19 It is sometimes maintained that the Patriarchate of Antioch had no independent existence after the Ottoman conquest of Syria in 1516 but was subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. As any study of the available information shows, however, the Patriarchate of Antioch was autonomous and administered its own affairs from Damascus or Aleppo until the mid-18th century. Patriarchal elections took place in Syria, and the Patriarchs were usually Arabs, as can be seen from their names. Only when disputes broke out did the Antiochians sometimes appeal to Constantinople. Perhaps the most important difference between the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Antioch was that whereas Patriarchs of Constantinople at this time generally had very short reigns and were frequently replaced, some Patriarchs of Antioch reigned for considerable periods (Yuwäkiim ibn Jum’a from 1543 to 1575; Yuwäkiim ibn Ziyâda from 1593 to 1603; Ighnätiyûs ‘Afiya from 1618 to 1634; Iftûmiyûs III al-Säqizî from 1635 to 1647; Makâriyûs III ibn al-Za’tm from 1647 to 1672). Particularly in the 17th century, they were thus able to carry out significant programmes of religious and cultural revival. For a detailed account of the Patriarchs of Antioch in the 16th and 17th centuries and their literary activity, see Nasrallah 1979: 67-146).

20 For instance, in connection with conflicts in the Patriarchate of Antioch, Mišätiyûs Karmâ, then Archbishop of Aleppo, went to Constantinople twice to appeal to the Ecumenical Patriarch, first in 1615, when he spent three months in the capital, and then in 1626-1627, when the brilliant theologian Cyril Loukaris was occupying the Ecumenical See.

21 Patriarch Iftûmiyûs III of Antioch (1635-1647) came from Chios, as his nisba, al-Säqizî, indicates;
and monasteries such as St. Saba in Palestine; they also went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Furthermore, some of their Patriarchs and higher clergy travelled abroad to (or occasionally came from) places where books in Greek or Slavonic were at least in circulation, if not being produced. But whereas Greeks in the Ottoman Empire were supplied with printed books by their fellow-countrymen in Venice, the Arabs had no diaspora to support them. The only source of Arabic printed books known to them was Rome. Catholic missionaries working in Aleppo and elsewhere in Syria and Palestine could bring with them printed New Testaments and perhaps Horologia. In the course of the 17th century, as Arabic printing for the Near East developed, they were to provide Arabic translations of Western Christian theological

likewise his nephew Nāwuffūs, who was anti-patriarch to Kīrillus ibn al-Zaʾīm from 1672 to 1684. Zakhārīyās, a Cypriot, was consecrated Bishop of Tripoli by Athanāsiyūs II al-Dabbās (1611-1619) and spent some years there before he went to Georgia. For these and other examples of Greek or Greek-speaking bishops, monks and ordinary priests in Syria, see Walbiner 1997-1998: 577-587; Walbiner, 2007: 113-127). Scattered references to Greek clergy travelling in Syria are found in Būlus Ibn al-Zaʾīm, Safrat al-baṭrīyark Makārīyūs 1930, 1933, 1945 and Belfour’s slightly abridged and somewhat inaccurate translation The Travels of Macarius, 1829-1836. A scholarly edition and translation of the entire text of the Safra has yet to appear.

22 Among the Syrians who were educated at the monastery of St. Saba were the later Patriarchs of Antioch Ḥīrmiyīs II (Milāṭiyūs) Karma and Athanāsiyūs III al-Dabbās. Milāṭiyūs Karma also spent time in the monastery of St. Michael in Jerusalem, where he copied a MS of a book of spiritual teaching (Nasrallah 1979: 85).

23 Apart from Milāṭiyūs Karma’s two visits to Constantinople mentioned in note 19 above, there were earlier contacts. Yuwākīm ibn Ḫum’a (1543-1576) took part in the council in Cairo in 1557 which re-established the coenobitic rule of the Monastery of Saint Catherine in Sinai, while Mīkḥāʾīl Sābbāgh (1575-1580) visited Constantinople twice to defend his claim to the patriarchy (Nasrallah 1979: 47, 67). Yuwākīm ibn Dawʾ (1580-1592) travelled to Moscow in 1586-1587, stopping on the way in Lvov, where he supported the activity of the Brotherhood and accepted its charter (Magocsi 1999: 158, giving the date of the stay in Lvov as 1585). There is no direct evidence of them seeing or acquiring Greek printed books, but it is hard to imagine that an event such as the publication of the Ostrog Bible would not have come to Yuwākīm ibn Dawʾ’s ears while he was in Lvov, not to speak of the availability of Greek printed books in Constantinople and Chios, both centres of the Greek book trade. For further information about attitudes to printing among the Orthodox of Antioch, see also Walbiner 2008, who concentrates on the contacts between the Orthodox and the Vatican and Latin Catholic missionaries.

24 For the earliest printing in Italy of books destined for Arab Christians, see Vercellin 2001: 20-22. The Arabic New Testament was printed twice by the Medici Press between 1590 and 1595. Vercellin 2001: 58-69 discusses the Kitāb al-sawāʾī (Horologion) of 1514 and the various theories concerning whether it was printed in Fano or Venice; he also reproduces the Latin colophon of one copy which makes clear that it was intended for export to Arab Christians. A page of the Fano Kitāb al-sawāʾī is reproduced in Dabbās and Rashshū 2008: 25, but incorrectly described as the first page of the Medici Press Rome’s 1593 printing of Ibn Sinā’s Qāmūn fi ḫībb. On p. 70 and plate [1] it is correctly identified.
and spiritual works, and textbooks of various kinds.\textsuperscript{25} Milātıyūs Karma, who as Archbishop of Aleppo (1612-1634) and briefly as Patriarch of Antioch (1634-5) made revising and correcting the Arabic versions of the Orthodox service books and the Scriptures his life’s work, turned to the Vatican for help with this project. He may have assumed that Rome would be as ready and able to produce Arabic books as Venice was to produce Greek ones; over 220 liturgical and other religious titles in Greek had appeared there by 1600.\textsuperscript{26} His first request was that the Vatican support his plan to produce a revised Arabic translation of the Bible in Aleppo, but in the Roman Catholic authorities’ view such an undertaking could only be carried out in Rome by carefully selected scholars. He then asked for his revised translations of the \textit{Euchologion} and \textit{Horologion} to be printed in Rome. But he did not foresee either the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith’s requirement that he should first sign a Catholic confession of faith and or its desire to ensure that the texts of the two books conformed to Catholic doctrine. Although a committee was instituted to look into the matter, it never reached any conclusions, and Milātıyūs died without seeing his versions in print. The Vatican Archives contain a detailed memorandum on the printing of [service] books which he sent to Rome shortly before his death.\textsuperscript{27}

Makāriyūs ibn al-Za‘īm, Milātıyūs Karma’s successor first as Archbishop of Aleppo (1635-1647) and then, indirectly, as Patriarch of Antioch (1647-1672), tried to breathe new life into this plan, but without success (Walbiner 2004: 174-175). It was another Archbishop of Aleppo (1694-1720) and later Patriarch of Antioch (1720-1724), Athanāsiyūs al-Dabbās,\textsuperscript{28} who concluded

\textsuperscript{25} A Jesuit catechism in Arabic was printed in Rome in 1566. Thomas à Kempis’s \textit{Imitation of Christ} was printed by the Propaganda Fide in 1663 (Graf, 1951: 244). Textbooks included Thomas Obicini’s translation of al-Abhari’s \textit{Isagoge} (Rome 1625), his \textit{Grammatica Arabica}, a printed version with Latin translation of Muḥammad ibn Dā‘ūd ibn Ājurram’s \textit{Al-ājurrumiyya} (Rome, 1631), and the Arabic-Syriac-Latin dictionary completed after his death (Rome, 1636) (Graf 1951: 174-175). Details of the various presses in Rome and the books they printed, which also included some medical texts, are given in Gdoura, 1985: 28-30, supplemented by the list in Balagna 1984: 135-141.

\textsuperscript{26} This figure is given by Astéros Argyriou, basing his calculation on Legrand’s \textit{Bibliographie Hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des Grecs aux XVI\textsuperscript{e} et XVI\textsuperscript{e} siècles} and several more recent sources; 203 of these titles were liturgical books (Argyriou 1989: 391). Legrand’s list, which appeared between 1885 and 1906, gives some 120 titles.

\textsuperscript{27} See the study of this episode in Walbiner, 2004: 163-175 and, paying more attention to the aspect of translation, Kilpatrick 2012: 63-73.

\textsuperscript{28} For Athanāsiyūs’s life and works see Nasrallah, 1979: 132-146; Idlibī, 1985: 107-132. Dabbās and Rashshū 2008, which is inaccurate and ignores many fundamental and recent publications, is to be used with caution.
that Rome was the wrong place to appeal to and turned to an Orthodox country where printing had been developing in the meantime; he may have been inspired by the experience of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem twenty years before in printing Greek. Athanàsiyús al-Dabbâs had spent some time in Wallachia as a young man, and when he returned there at the end of the 17th century, enjoying an honoured position at the court of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, he found a well-established printer, Antim Ivireanul, willing and able to bring out the Liturgikon and the Horologion in Greek and Arabic. The prince provided financial support for these two editions, which came out in Snagov, a monastery near Bucharest, in 1701 and in Bucharest in 1702 respectively (Nasrallah 1979: 144-145; Gdoura 1985: 134-137; Walbiner, 2012: 58). This result of collaboration between an Arab archbishop, a Romanian ruler and a Georgian printer who had been the protégé of a Greek patriarch has been seen as exemplifying the “Byzantine commonwealth” (Panchenko 2012: 562, borrowing the expression coined by Dimitri Obolensky); it shows what could be achieved by Orthodox from different countries when they united their efforts, despite their limited resources.

In 1705 Athanàsiyús al-Dabbâs returned to Aleppo, probably with some equipment and certainly with the technical information which enabled him to set up the first press printing in Arabic in the Arab world. Among the titles it brought out between 1706 and 1711 were the Psalter, the Evangelion, the Apostolarion, the Book of the Prophecies and the Oktoikhos (Gdoura 1985: 146-148; Walbiner 2012: 59-60). After 1711 it stopped working (Gdoura 1985: 152; Dabbâs and Rashshū 2008: 78-79). The reasons for this are not entirely clear. Almost certainly financial problems played a part (Walbiner 2004b: 285), for the books were not sold but distributed freely, and Athanàsiyús had to turn to wealthy Orthodox abroad to cover the costs of producing them. He twice sent an envoy to Peter the Great, in 1707 and 1714, but the first mission brought little or no subsidy, and the result of the second is not known (Panchenko 2012: 405). The Evangelion of 1708 was subsidised by the Cossack Hetman Ivan Mazepa (Panchenko 2012: 407). The last book published, the Homilies of an earlier Patriarch of Jerusalem, Athanasios, was paid for by Chrysanthos Notaras, the then Patriarch of that city (Gdoura, 1985: 147). Constantin Brâncoveanu’s execution in Constantinople in 1714 put an end to hopes for financial support from Wallachia. Another possible cause may have been the growing tensions...
between the Orthodox and Catholic parties in the Patriarchate of Antioch, which led finally to the schism of 1724; a leading figure in printing in Aleppo and a resolute supporter of union with Rome was 'Abdallāh Zākhir, founder of the press in the Greek Catholic monastery of Shuwayr which operated from 1733/4 to 1899. Orthodox printing in the Arab world resumed briefly in the mid-18th century when the Beirut community established a press in the monastery of St. George, but it only produced three liturgical books between 1751 and 1753 (Dabbās and Rashshū 2008: 126-127; Panchenko 2012: 567). Here again, the reasons for its closure are not clear.

Orthodox printers and their motives

From this sketch of printing activity in the Orthodox world up to the early 1700s, certain common features emerge. First, the printers were usually connected with the Church and often monks or deacons. Given that monasteries had traditionally served as centres of manuscript book culture, this represents a logical continuation of a well-established activity. Moreover, monasteries could provide a pool of more or less skilled labour to assist the printer and, in theory at least, they offered a continuity which individuals setting up printing-shops could not guarantee. The monasteries almost always worked under the auspices of a prominent bishop or a prince, and when a bishop moved, he could take the press with him or at least re-found it; this happened, for instance, in Wallachia when Antim moved from Snagov to become Bishop of Râmnice Valceea (Bâlan 2003: 884). If a conclusion can be drawn from the fate of the 16th-century Serbian and Montenegrin presses, it seems to be that monasteries which embarked on printing without outside support could not sustain the effort, economically or technically. But their role in introducing the new technology should not be underestimated (cf. Eisenstein 2005: 294).

Princes often played an important part as patrons of printers. This had obvious short-term material advantages, but it had the disadvantage of making printing dependent on the fate of one individual. Thus the Montenegrin experiment came to an end when Prince Djurdje Črnojević was ousted by the Ottomans. Likewise when Prince Grigorii Khodkevych changed his allegiance, Ivan Fedorov had to look for another patron. Prince Konstantin Ostrozhkii’s efforts to support Orthodoxy institutionally were ended by his
daughter who became a Catholic and transformed his Academy into a Jesuit school (Magocsi 1999: 158). In the course of the 17th century, however, printing increasingly received support from circles close to the centres of power. The printing house outside Moscow functioned as a state enterprise, while families of nobles, several of whom had studied in Italy and were concerned to further culture, emerged in the Romanian principalities (Bălan 2003: 172); this led to greater continuity in patronage. The pattern of much patronage of printing in the Orthodox world in the 16th and 17th centuries is not unlike that observed in Western Europe, with small political units — communes, bishoprics, free cities and later rulers of small principalities — inviting or encouraging printers to establish presses, which were often seen as a source of revenue or publicity (Eisenstein 2005: 337).

Two exceptions to this model stand out: the Greek printers in Venice and the Brotherhood presses. Venice was home to a large Greek community, some of whose members were prosperous merchants. The city enjoyed a political and economic stability not found in many Orthodox regions and, like the other early centres of printing, Antwerp and Amsterdam, it was a great commercial centre but not a major political capital (Eisenstein 2005: 336-337). Technical expertise was readily available, and the Greeks could work more or less freely, for the Venetian authorities kept the Inquisition under control. As documents from the Venetian archives show, the printing of Greek books was often financed by small groups of businessmen forming consortia to print a specific number of books (Layton 1994: xxxii); otherwise, individual wealthy merchants with trading relations in the Greek-speaking world acted as patrons of “Greek books for Greeks” (Zorzi 2000: 23-24). These factors go some way to explaining the volume and continuity of Greek printing in Venice, even if other reasons may also be adduced.

The Brotherhood presses in Lvov and elsewhere in Poland-Lithuania also had a collective character. But the Brotherhoods were vulnerable to pressures from the Polish ruling classes and the Catholic Church (which after 1595 included a Greek Catholic branch), and were affected by the economic problems of the country in the early 17th century. Moreover, they were at times in conflict with the Orthodox hierarchy (Magocsi 1999: 159, 169). Hence they suffered some decline after 1600.

Printers were often nomadic. They followed itineraries from Venice to Montenegro and Serbia, from Serbia to Wallachia, from Wallachia to
Transylvania, from Muscovy to Lithuania and Ukraine, from Ukraine to the Romanian principalities, even, in Metaxas’s case, from England to Constantinople. Apart from Metaxas, these printers were all working in Slavonic, in one or other of its variants; thus, they could circulate freely in the world in which Slavonic was the language of literary culture. In fact, the nomadism of the Slavonic printers contrasts with the sedentariness of most of their Greek colleagues, firmly established in Venice. In the Ottoman Empire, by contrast, it was not printers but some members of the higher clergy who were mobile, searching for presses to produce books they considered important.

Among the motives for printing, one, expressed early on, was to support fellow-Orthodox living under Ottoman rule, mainly by providing them with books to encourage them in their faith. This idea lies behind the slogan of “Greek books for Greeks”, implying that the books were not in the first place intended for Western European humanists. And in such books inevitably Scripture was an important component. As has often been pointed out, much of the Greeks’ cultural activity in Venice was intended for their fellow-countrymen in the Ottoman Empire (Argyriou 1989: 387, 391). The same is true of the Serbs who published in Venice, going by the colophons of books whose printing was supervised by Božidar Vuković. In one of the last of these he writes that “having lately witnessed the destruction and devastation of churches at the hands of the unbelievers and the dispersion of sacred books”, he moved to Venice and cast type to set books in Slavonic, while in an earlier colophon he speaks of God as having commanded him to “fill every holy church in [his] home country with books, if it was insufficiently provided with them”. A somewhat similar need was felt by printers in Poland and the Ukraine to replace the manuscripts destroyed in Tatar raids during the 16th and 17th centuries (Zimmer 1983: 166).

By contrast, Ivan IV’s motive for appointing Ivan Fedorov to establish a printing house was, at least partly, to spread Muscovite religious and political concepts in the newly conquered khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan (Hotimsky 1977). Here one may speak of an offensive use of printing, as opposed to the defensive one of the Venetian Greeks and Serbs, and the Ukrainians.

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29 A nomadic tendency among early printers has been noted elsewhere; see for Italy Vercellin 2001: 65, 67-68, and for Western Europe in general David McKitterick 2003: 5.

30 Pelusi, 2000: 158 (Menatio for September and August, with feasts of Serbian saints), 155 (Horologion). My translation is from the Italian rendering of the Slavonic colophon.
Another reason for founding presses and printing the Scriptures was to respond to the challenges posed by the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. This is true in particular of the Ukraine and Romania. The advent of Protestant ideas stimulated discussion of religious issues, while the Protestant emphasis on individual reading and study of the Bible led to the establishment of schools and printing presses. Moreover, the Psalter in particular served as a reading primer apart from its liturgical use.

Furthermore, making religious texts accessible to wider sections of the population was often associated with the use of the vernacular. In the above survey, the printing of Scripture and service books was, on several occasions, accompanied by translation into the spoken language, from Francišak Skaryna’s Biblia ruska in the early 16th century to the gradual change from Slavonic to bilingual Slavonic-Romanian, and then to monolingual Romanian service books in the 17th century. Among the Greeks, the 16th century writer Ioannikios Kartanos sought to make the Scriptures accessible in the vernacular with his Anthologion compiled from the Old and New Testaments, which also included an outline of popular theology, sermons and an explanation of the Liturgy. It enjoyed great success among the common people but was vigorously attacked by the church hierarchy on doctrinal grounds (Argyriou 1989: 396-398).

In the next century, Cyril Loukaris succeeded in having a bilingual New Testament with modern Greek printed in Geneva by Pierre Aubert, the official publisher to the Republic, in 1637 or 1638, after an earlier attempt to bring it out in Amsterdam failed (Staikos and Sklavenitis 2001: 94-95; Reverdin 1980: 238). To the extent that Milätiyüs Karma and his successors were engaged not simply in revising existing Arabic versions of liturgical and Biblical texts but also in translating them from Greek, they belong to the same trend.

The stimulus from the Catholic side concerned the model of well-organised schools set up by the Jesuits and the printing of educational texts. The Brotherhoods’ schools in Poland and Ukraine, and the texts they used have been characterized as a counter-project to the Jesuits’ missionary

31 Medlin 1975: 173-188, gives a clear outline of Orthodox responses to this challenge in education and printing mainly in Poland and the Ukraine. For parallel developments in Moldavia and Wallachia, see Cânden 1970: 201-203.

32 The trend to employ the spoken language in written texts was also exemplified for instance in the works of the 16th-century writer Nikolaos Sophianos, who sought to spread education in the vernacular (C. Th. Dimaras 1965-1966: 99-100; Lecuir c. 1993: 92).
activities (Heller 1991: 117, 121). Cyril Loukaris’s attempt to set up the Constantinople press, along with other steps he took to improve the clergy’s educational standard, was likewise a response to Catholic measures (Augliera 1996:15-16, 28-31).

In some cases economic motives have been put forward for founding a press. The cost of importing books seems to have played a part in Cyril Loukaris’s plan to set up a press in Constantinople (Augliera 1996: 15-16). The Brotherhood presses were sometimes able to finance other charitable activities (Bryner 2004: 105). One reason suggested for the Serbian monasteries’ attempts at printing in the 16th century was that they hoped to earn money needed to pay Ottoman taxes. Yet printing at the time was a slow business; it might take months or even years for a book to come off the press.

Attitudes to printing the Scriptures: approval, opposition and indifference

The above survey has shown that Orthodox regions and communities tried to the best of their ability to exploit the new technology of printing; the success of their efforts depended on circumstances. They employed printing for religious purposes more than was the case in Western Europe. The vast majority of titles printed by or for the Orthodox in this period were liturgical or other religious books including extensive passage of Scripture. The humanist impulse behind much Western European printing was virtually absent.

In the Orthodox world, expressions of explicit hostility to printing the Scriptures are to be found only in Russia. The burning of the Moscow printing-house in 1565 was an exceptional incident, which took place during a disturbed period in Russian history under a highly controversial Tsar. Such hostility can be seen, amongst other things, as an expression of a widespread and recurrent fear of ideas introduced to Russia from the outside, and thus

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33 Nemirovskii 1995: 174. He observes that the monks underestimated the expense of materials and the need to replace typefaces; the presses closed partly for reasons of cost.

34 I do not know of any calculations of the time required for the printing of Orthodox religious books in this period. However, a calculation for an Armenian book of 780 pages printed in Amsterdam in 1685 may give one an idea of how slow early printing may have been. One man working 10 hours a day needed 547 days to produce 8300 copies of the print run (Kévorkian 1986: 9-10). Using his figures, one can calculate that a run of 1000 copies would have taken 152 working days to produce.

35 It has been questioned whether the assumption put forward by Eisenstein that printing always inevitably stimulated humanism is valid outside Western Europe (Marker 1986: 7-8).
likely to be heretical — the same fear that had led Grand Duke Vasily III Ivanovich to burn a copy of Skaryna’s Bible when he presented it to him in Moscow around 1530 (Zimmer 1983: 40). The failure of Greek churchmen to establish a Greek press in Moscow in the 17th century can be partly ascribed to the same aversion to foreign ideas infiltrating into the country.

The other obstacles to spreading printing for religious purposes among the Orthodox came from the Roman Catholic Church: the Inquisition’s charging Szwajpolk Fiol with heresy, the Jesuits’ sabotaging Cyril Loukaris’s press in Constantinople (though here international politics as well as doctrinal divergences were involved) and the Vatican’s refusal to agree unconditionally to Milātiyūs Karma’s request to print the Bible and service books.

One quarter from which opposition might have been expected at least where printing in Aleppo was concerned were the Muslim authorities. As is known, printing in Arabic script began in Constantinople only after Sultan Ahmed III issued a firman licensing Ibrāhīm Müteferriqa to establish a press in 1727. From this it has usually been concluded that printing in Arabic script anywhere in the Ottoman Empire before that date was prohibited (e.g. Eisenstein, 2005: 335-336). There is no evidence, however, that the Ottoman authorities in Aleppo put any obstacles in Athanāsiyūs al-Dabbās’s path when he set up his press more than twenty years earlier. Aleppo was a commercial but not a major political centre, which could go some way to explaining this permissiveness. This fact also underlines the need for a reinterpretation of the general attitude to printing among the Ottoman élite from the 17th century on.

Be that as it may, the attitude among Muslims towards printing Scripture provides an interesting contrast to that obtaining among the Orthodox. Whereas the first books produced by Ibrāhīm Müteferriqa’s press were philological, historical and scientific works belonging to the auxiliary disciplines (ulūm-i

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36 On three occasions in the 17th century members of the Greek higher clergy, last among them Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, requested permission from the Tsar to set up a Greek press in Moscow, but without success. The Russians’ refusal is ascribed in large part to the Old Believers’ hostility to Greek books and popular aversion to scholarly theology (Turdeanu 1985: 299-302).

37 Rome’s desire to ensure that only doctrinally approved texts were printed led to projects for a Catholic or Maronite press in Lebanon being forbidden (Gdoura 1985: 66-69). The Roman Catholic Church’s opposition to printing among the Orthodox was not a unique case; it employed similar methods against the Armenians in the same period (Kévorkian 1986: 2-3). The inspiration for this policy came from the Council of Trent, which declared the Vulgate the only authentic Latin text of the Bible and sought to curb printing activities which it could not control (Eisenstein 2005: 178-179).

38 See the arguments for this in Reichmuth 2001.
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āliyye) (Gdoura 1985: 261-264; Reichmuth 2001: 159) and the Qur’an was not printed until the 19th century (Albin 2004: 265-267), up till the early 18th century the Orthodox of Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire used the new technology to print Scripture, often as it appeared in the liturgical books, or presented in a form accessible to ordinary Christians.

It is nonetheless true that long after printed books had been introduced into Orthodox countries and even after presses were set up, manuscripts especially of liturgical texts continued to be copied and used. Indeed, the introduction of printing led to a surge in the production of manuscripts. Various reasons have been suggested to explain this phenomenon. In a rural, non-monetary economy, it might be easier to acquire the materials to copy a manuscript than the money to buy a book. Many printers altered texts often out of ignorance, changing or omitting passages. And since most printed books were produced outside the Orthodox world, there was a fear that doctrinal differences would lead to texts being altered – corrupted, from the Orthodox point of view. Where liturgical books were concerned, the printed texts led to a uniformity of practice and the disappearance of local variants in ritual; it took some time for the resistance this aroused to die down (Sklavenitis 1985: 68-74, drawing mainly on Greek sources; Heyberger 1999: 218-221). Despite the advantages of printing – advantages of which the Orthodox were well aware, the idea that printed books could replace manuscripts entirely was not accepted for many years.39

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39 As David McKitterick has shown, in Western Europe too the move from manuscript to print took longer and was far less straightforward than has generally been assumed. For instance, library catalogues only started to distinguish between printed books and manuscripts in the 17th century; up until then they were all simply books (McKitterick 2003: 12-13). In the lengthy process of printing, during which stop-press correcting occurred, copies were produced which differed both in the mistakes they contained and in the degree to which these mistakes were corrected. Consequently, variant copies were the norm (McKitterick 2003: 123-124, 150). If the conditions McKitterick describes for Western Europe obtained in the Orthodox world somewhat later when printing became widespread there, they too may have played a part in delaying the process by which printed books replaced manuscripts.
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