# The Importance of Graphics in the Early Romanian Religious Writings of Bucharest (1582-1830)*

**Anca Elisabeta TATAY, Cornel TATAI-BALTĂ**

*Pendant la période ancienne du livre roumain, Bucarest occupe la première place parmi tous les centres typographiques du pays. En fait, environ 350 livres y paraissent (en roumain, grec, slavon, arabe etc.) et ayant des thématiques diverses (religieuse, didactique, scientifique, littéraire etc.).*
*Les livres religieux ont été décorés de nombreux cadres de page de titre, des illustrations, vignettes et d'autres ornements gravés sur bois par des maîtres travailleurs et talentueux, dont nous mentionnons Ieromonahul Lavrentie, Ivan Bakov, Damaschin Gherbest, Antim Ivireanul, Ursul Zugrav, Vasilie Dobromirski, Grigorie Ieromonah, Stanciul Tipograf, Ghervasie Monah, Simeon Ierei, Ieromonahul Costantie. Leurs xylographies sont la preuve de l'assimilation créative des influences orientales et occidentales (byzantines, de la Renaissance, baroques, néoclassiques etc.). La gravure bucarestoise doit être encadrée dans le contexte de l'art graphique roumain et européen, ce qui permettrait aussi l'identification des influences roumaines (de Buzău, Iaşi, Rîmnic, Blaj etc.) que des influences étrangères (de Venise, Kiev, Lvov, Vienne etc.).*

*Mots-clés: Bucarest, Roumanie vieux livre religieux, gravures sur bois, gravures métalliques.*

In the course of the last 100 years, in Europe and the United States, there came out more and more books and studies consecrated to the history of printing and of book illustration, numerous aspects manifested along the time in different geographic areas[1] being dealt with. Among the numerous books dedicated to

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[1] See, for example: Duplessis G., *Histoire de la gravure en Italie, en Espagne, en Allemagne, dans les Pays-Bas, en Angleterre et en France, suivie d'indications pour former une collection d'estampes*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1880; idem, *La gravure*, Paris, Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1882; Thieme U., Becker F., *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart. Zusammen mit Vollmer: Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler des XX. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1-37, Leipzig, E. A. Seemann, 2008 (first edition: Leipzig, 1907-1950).



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printing and writing, we will only mention those written and edited by: Albert Flocon (Romanian edition in 1976[2]); Lucien Febvre, Henri-Jean Martin (1993[3]); Adrian Johns (1998[4]); Neil Rhodes, Jonathan Sawday (2000[5]); David McKitterick (2003[6]); Elisabeth L. Eisenstein (2009[7]). Book exhibitions accompanied by catalogues (the Exhibition Catalogue in Bruxelles, 1977[8] or the Exhibition Catalogue in Venice, 1994[9]) were organized as well. Synthesis books referring to printing or graphic arts from a certain country were also elaborated: (Italy – Ferdinando Ongania, Carlo Castellani, 1894[10], Francesca Cocchiara, 2010[11]; Germany – Heinrich Höhn, 1925[12], Horst Kunze, 1975[13]; Russia – A. A. Sidorov, 1951[14], A. S. Zernova, 1952[15]; Bulgaria – Evtim Tomov, 1955, 1978[16]; Serbia – Dejan Medaković, 1958[17]; Ukraina – 3 volumes achieved by A. A. Guseva, T. N. Kameneva, I. M. Polonscaia, 1976-1990[18]; Hungary – 3 volumes produced by V. Ecsedy Judit and her collaborators, 2004, 2010, 2014[19]), or making reference to a

[2] Flocon A., *Universul cărţilor*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1976.

[3] Febvre L., Martin H.-J., *The Coming of the Book. The Impact of Printing. 1450-1800*, London, Verso, 1993.

[4] Johns A., *The Nature of the Book. Print and Knowledge in the Making*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

[5] Rhodes N., Sawday J. (ed.), *The Renaissance Computer. Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print*, London & New York, Routledge, 2000.

[6] McKitterick D., *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450-1830*, Cambridge, University Press, 2003.

[7] Eisenstein E. L., *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[8] *Le livre illustré en Occident du Haut Moyen Age à nos jours. Catalogue*, Bruxelles, 1977.

[9] *Aldo Manuzio: e l'ambiente veneziano 1494-1515*, 1994, Venezia, Il Cardo, 1994.

[10] Ongania F., Castellani C., *Arte Della Stampa Nel Rinascimento Italiano: Venezia*, Venezia, F. Ongania, 1894.

[11] Cocchiara F., *Il libro illustrato veneziano del Seicento. Con un repertorio dei principali incisori e peintre-graveurs*, Saonara, Il Prato, 2010.

[12] Höhn H., *Deutsche Holzschnitte bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, Karl Robert Langewiesche Verlag, 1925.

[13] Kunze H., *Geschichte der Buchillustration in Deutschland. Das 15 Jahrhundert*, I-II, Leipzig, Insel-Verlag, 1975.

[14] Sidorov A. A., *Drevnerusskaia cnijnaia graviura*, Moscova, Izdatelsvo Academii Nauc S. S. S. R., 1951.

[15] Zernova A. S., *Ornamentica cnig Moscovskoi peciati XVI-XVII vecov* Moscova, 1952.

[16] Tomov E., *Bâlgarskaja grafika. Gravjura*, Sofia, Bâlgarschi Hudojnik, 1955; idem, *24 Bâlgarsci vâzrojdenski ştampi,* Sofia, Bâlgarschi Hudojnik, 1978.

[17] Medaković D., *Grafica srpskih stampanih kniga XV- XVII-veka*, Beograd, 1958.

[18] Kameneva T. N., Guseva A. A. (ed.), *Ucrainschie cnighi chirillovscoi peciati, XVI-XVIII vv. Catalog izdanii, Vîpusc I, 1574 g. – I polovina XVII v*, Moscova, 1976; Guseva A. A., Kameneva T. N., Polonscaia I. M. (ed.), *Ucrainschie cnighi chirillovscoi peciati, XVI-XVIII vv. Catalog izdanii, Vîpusc II, Tom 1, Kievschie izdaniia, 2 – I polovinî XVII v*, Moscova, 1981; Guseva A. A., Polonscaia I. M., *Ucrainschie cnighi chirillovscoi peciati, XVI-XVIII vv. Catalossg izdanii, Vîpusc II, Ceast 2, Lvovschie, Novgorod-Severschie, Cernigovschie, Unevschie izdania, 2 – I polovinî XVII v*, Moscova, 1990.

[19] Ecsedy V. J., *A régi Magyarországi nyomdák betűi és diszei, 1473-1600 (Hungaria typographica I)*, Budapest, Balassi Kiadó – Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2004; idem, *A régi*



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certain artist, such as Albrecht Dürer (Willi Kurth, 1963[20] or Walter L. Strauss, 1973[21]), Blasche János (2 volumes achieved by Júlia Papp, 2012[22]) or writings treating a certain period of time (Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, 1977[23]). Although the respective writings prove a high scientific standard, they do not approach issues related to Romanian graphic arts (excepting V. Ecsedy Judit).

E. Bénézit – editor[24] as well as *SAUR Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*[25] present valuable information about engravers active in various countries of the world.

Ever since 1929 the Romanian historian Alexandru Busuioceanu pointed to the historical, cultural and artistic value of book illustration, which in his opinion should be studied "from book to book, from one typographic center to another"[26]. Later on, throughout the time, more or less complete investigations of some typographic locations were made, where the existent engravings were quite remarkable, such as: the Monastery of Neamţ (Gheorghe Racoveanu, 1940[27]), Blaj (Cornel Tatai-Baltă, 1995[28]), Rîmnic (Aurelia Florescu, 1998[29]), Sibiu (Anca Elisabeta Tatai, 2007[30]), Buda (Anca Elisabeta Tatay, 2010 and 2011[31]).

Bucharest, a cosmopolitan city, where the flow of ideas came from varied directions, caused the development of a remarkable cultural centre[32] here.

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*Magyarországi nyomdák betűi és diszei, XVII. század, I Kötet, Nyugat-és Észak-Magyarországi nyomdák (Hungaria typographica II)*, Budapest, Balassi Kiadó – Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2010; Bánfi S., Pavercsik I., Perger P., Ecsedy V. J., *A régi Magyarországi nyomdák betűi és díszei XVII. század, 2 Kötet: Kelet-Magyarországi és Erdélyi nyomdák, Lőcse, Kassa. Tanulmányok és katalógus – Illusztrációk (Hungaria typographica II)*, Balassi Kiadó– Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Budapest, 2014.

[20] Kurth W. (ed.), *The Complete Woodcuts of Albrecht Dürer*, New York, Dover Publications INC., 1963.

[21] Strauss W. L. (ed.), *The Complete Engravings, Etchings and Drypoints of Albrecht Dürer*, New York, Dover Publications INC., 1973.

[22] Papp J., *Könyv és kép a 19. század elején. Blaschke János (1770-1833). Illusztrációinak katalógusa*, Vol. I-II, Budapest, Argumentum Kiadó/MTA, 2012.

[23] Lehmann-Haupt H., *An Introduction to the Woodcut of the Seventeenth Century*, New York, Abaris books, 1977.

[24] Bénézit E. (ed.), *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays*, vol. 1-14, Paris, Editions Gründ, 1999.

[25] *SAUR Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*, München-Leipzig, which appeared in numerous volumes.

[26] Busuioceanu Al., *Gravura românească veche după un album recent,* in „Gîndirea", IX, nr. 12, dec., 1929, p. 403-405; Maniu A., *La gravure sur bois en Roumanie*, Bucureşti 1929.

[27] Racoveanu Gh., *Gravura în lemn la Mănăstirea Neamţul,* Bucureşti, Fundaţia Regală pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1940.

[28] Tatai-Baltă C., *Gravorii în lemn de la Blaj (1750-1830)*, Blaj, Editura Eventus, 1995.

[29] Florescu A., *Gravura rîmniceană (1705-1827)*, Craiova, Editura Aius, 1998.

[30] Tatai A. E., *Xilogravura de la Sibiu (sfîrşitul secolului al XVII-lea – începutul secolului al XIX-lea)*, Alba Iulia, Editura Altip, 2007.

[31] Tatay A. E., *Tradiţie şi inovaţie în tehnica şi arta ilustraţiei cărţii româneşti tipărite la Buda (1780-1830)*, Alba Iulia, Editura Altip, 2010; idem, *Din istoria şi arta cărţii româneşti vechi: gravura de la Buda (1780-1830)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Mega, 2011.

[32] See for example: Giurescu C. C., *Istoria Bucureştilor*, Bucureşti, Editura Vremea, 2008.



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In Bucharest, in the period 1573-1830, several printing offices carried on their activity (the typography of the Monastery of Plumbuita; the typography of the Metropolis; the Princely typography, the new typography of the Metropolis, the typography of the Monastery of All Saints; the typography of the Monastery of St. Sava or the typography of the Văcăreşti School; the Greek typography; the typography of the Healing Spring; the secular typography from the Mavrogheni Well[33] etc., which printed about 350 books (in Romanian, Greek, Slavonic, Arabic etc.) with various themes: religious, didactic, scientific, literary[34] etc. This number of books points out that Bucharest held the first place[35] among all the other typographic centers (Tîrgovişte, Govora, Buzău, Rîmnic, Blaj, Sibiu, Braşov, Iassy, the Monastery of Neamţ, Buda, Vienna etc.) that published Romanian writings in the period 1508-1830 (Iassy occupies the second place, and Buda-Hungary the third one). Anyway, no monograph about the typography of Bucharest has been written so far (and particularly about the graphic arts of this centre), even if researcher Ludovic Demény underlined this aspect in 1986[36]. The investigation, we propose, is much more necessary since the centre under discussion was the capital of the Romanian country, and later on, the capital of Romania, up to the present. On the other hand, the book illustration in some other typographic sites has already been investigated as I have mentioned above. Undoubtedly, the position of Bucharest as a capital initiated various trends, outlining directions of manifestation regarding the illustration of books[37].

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[33] Simonescu D., *Din activitatea tipografică a Bucureştilor (1678-1830),* in „Bucureştii vechi. Buletinul Societăţii Istorico-Arheologice", I-IV, 1930-1934, p. 118-135 (or in the form of abstract 1935); Decei A., *Din tipăriturile orientale la Bucureşti în secolul al XVIII-lea,* in „Revista istorică română", XV, 1945, p. 365-371; Simedria T., *Tiparul bucureştean de carte bisericească în anii 1740-1750,* in „Biserica Ortodoxă Română", LXXXIII, nr. 9-10, Bucureşti, 1965, p. 845-942; Alexianu Al., *Din cărţile vechii Mitropolii din Bucureşti,* in „Glasul Bisericii", XXVI, 1967, nr. 5-6, p. 609-639; L. Demény, *Tiparniţa bucureşteană în secolul al XVI-lea,* in „Studii. Revistă de istorie", XXV, 1972, nr. 2, p. 203-223; Tomescu M., *Istoria cărţii româneşti de la începuturi pînă la 1918,* Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1968; Simonescu D., Buluţă Gh., *Scurtă istorie a cărţii româneşti,* Bucureşti, Editura Demiurg, 1994; Papacostea-Danielopolu C., Demény L., *Carte şi tipar în societatea românească şi sud-est europeană (Secolele XVII-XIX),* Bucureşti, Editura Eminescu, 1985.

[34] Bianu I., Hodoş N., Simonescu D., *Bibliografia românească veche (1508-1830),* Tom. I-IV, Bucureşti, Atelierele grafice Socec & Co., Soc. Anonimă Română, 1903-1944 (further BRV); Poenaru D., *Contribuţii la Bibliografia românească veche,* Tîrgovişte, Muzeul Judeţean Dîmboviţa, 1973; Rîpă-Buicliu D., *Bibliografia românească veche. Additamenta, I (1536-1830),* Galaţi, Editura Alma Galaţi, 2000; Mîrza E., Bogdan F. (co-ordinators), *Repertoriul tipografilor, gravorilor, patronilor, editorilor cărţilor româneşti (1508-1830),* Sibiu, Astra Museum, Techno Media, 2013.

[35] Miskolczy A., *Le rôle des publications de l'Imprimerie Universitaire de Buda dans l'évolution de la culture roumaine de la fin du XVIIIe siècle à 1830,* in *Typographia Universitatis Hungaricae Budae, 1777-1848,* publié par Király P., Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1983, p. 301.

[36] Demény L., Demény L. A., *Carte, tipar şi societate la români în secolul al XVI-lea,* Bucureşti, Editura Kriterion, 1986, p. 106.

[37] Iorga N., *L'ornementation du vieux livre roumain. Communication faite au Congrès des bibliographes et bibliophiles à Paris,* in „Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'étude de l'Europe Sud-Orientale", X, 1923, p. 51-58; idem, *Tipografia la români. Traducere din limba franceză de Liliana Iorga,* in „Almanahul graficei române", 1931, p. 32-55; Molin V., *Ilustraţia în vechea carte*



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Many of these books are decorated with title page frames, illustrations, frontispieces, vignettes, coats of arms and other elements (letters and typographic decorations) engraved particularly, on wood, but occasionally on metal, as well. The graphic aspect of the books and publications that came out in Bucharest has hardly drawn the attention of researchers till now. Although some of these graphic elements were reproduced in different studies or books, they have never been brought together, and neither have they been analyzed in detail, in order to emphasize the issues of iconography, style or influences (which might be Romanian or European) and of the impact they had, in their turn, on other similar creations.

As regards the restricted historiography of the issue, we point to some older or younger authors. Ioan Bianu, Nerva Hodoş and Dan Simonescu in *Bibliografia românească veche* [*Early Romanian Bibliography*] sometimes mention the graphic ornaments in the writings of Bucharest and reproduce a small number of them. In *Grafica românească în secolul al XIX-lea* [*Romanian Graphic Arts in the 19th Century*] Gh. Oprescu describes the engravings (woodcuts, metal engravings) of about 17 books and reproduces 7[38] of them. In his turn, Mircea Tomescu in *Istoria cărţii româneşti de la începuturi pînă la 1918* [*History of the Romanian Book*] briefly refers to the book graphics published in Bucharest. Lajos Demény demonstrated the existence of the printing house at the Monastery of Plumbuita (Bucharest) in the 16th century and noticed the influence of Venice on earlier printings. He underlines that from 1573 on, Lavrentie and his apprentice Iovan carried on their activity in the field of printing in that monastery in Bucharest. The result of their work was finalized only in 1582, when two editions of the *Slavonic Tetraevanghel* and the *Slavonic Psalter*[39] came out. It is time to mention that in the following 100 years, in the city on the Dîmboviţa a hiatus occurred in the typographic activity, the printing of the next book (*Cheia înţelesului* [*The Key to Meaning*]) being dated to 1678. Dragoş Morărescu wrote short articles in which he presents the activity of some engravers who illustrated the books of Bucharest, reproducing a part of their creations[40]. In the book *Tiparul românesc la sfîrşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea* [*The Romanian Printing at the End of the 17th Century and the Beginning of the 18th Century*] Doru Bădără put

*bisericească,* in „Biserica Ortodoxă Română", LXXVIII, nr. 7-8, 1960, p. 683-719; Tatai-Baltă C., *Incursiune în xilogravura românească (sec. XVI-XIX),* in „Apulum", XVII, 1979, p. 441-467; Dima-Drăgan C., Avramescu A., *Die Illustration im altrumänischen Buch (1508-1830),* in „Börsenblatt für den Deutschen Buchhandel-Frankfurter Ausgabe", Nr. 17. Vom. 28 Februar 1981, p. 506-524.

[38] Oprescu Gh., *Grafica românească în secolul al XIX-lea,* vol. I. Bucureşti, Fundaţia pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1942.

[39] Demény L., Demény L. A., *op. cit.*, p. 106-127.

[40] Morărescu D., *Un xilograf moldo-vlah: Damaschin Gherbest Stemarul,* in *Arta,* Anul XXIX, nr. 7-8, 1782, p. 23-25; idem, *Antim Ivireanul xilograf,* in „Cîntarea României", nr. 3, 1983, p. 42-43; idem, *Xilografii epocii brîncoveneşti: Ursul Zugrav,* in „Arta", Anul XXX, nr. 2, 1983, p. 26-27; idem, *Imaginea şcolii în xilogravură,* in „Cîntarea României", nr. 6, 1983, p. 45; idem, *Xilografii Bibliei lui Şerban Cantacuzino (1688),* in „Dacoromania" (München), VII, 1988, p. 331-340.



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forward a few appreciations concerning the graphics of books printed in Bucharest, discussing in short the activity of some engravers and reproducing about 30 images[41]. In recent times, Ana Andreescu, in her work *Cartea românească în veacul al XVIII-lea. Repertoriul ilustraţiilor* [*Romanian Writings in the 18th Century. The Catalogue of Illustrations*], reproduces about 60 coats of arms, title page frames and illustrations existent in the books of Bucharest, writing about 10 pages about the typographic centre of Bucharest in which she approaches more the evolution of printing and less the one of graphics[42]. Tangential but significant approaches regarding the graphics under discussion were also encountered in the investigation made by Gabriel Ştrempel (1955)[43] and Cornel Tatai-Baltă (1995), the latter enumerating 11 master engravers active in Bucharest: Ieromonahul Lavrentie; Ivan (Ioanichie) Bakov; Damaschin Gherbest; Antim Ivireanul; Ursul Zugrav; Vasilie Dobromirski; Grigorie Ieromonah; Stanciul Tipograf; Ghervasie Monah; Simeon Ierei; Ieromonahul Costantie[44].

Ludovic Demény demonstrated that the frontispiece depicting in the centre the *Crucifixion*, bearing Ieromonah Lavrentie's signature, in the Slavonic *Tetraevanghel* from the Monastery of Plumbuita, 1582, followed a model from the *Menaion of Feastdays* printed by Božidar Vuković[45], at Venice, 1538.

In his turn, Gabriel Ştrempel showed that in the *Key to Meaning*, printed in 1678, *the title page frame* skillfully engraved in the Baroque manner by Ivan Bakov and dated to 1678 is akin to that found in *Kluci razumeaniia* at Lviv, 1665[46]. It was the same well known and gifted engraver, probably of Ukrainean origin, who also signed and dated to 1678 the fine illustration entitled *the Sunday of All Saints*, with Slavonic inscriptions. In order to produce this image he used as a prototype a xylograph in Petru Movilă's *Homiletics* from Kiev, 1637[47].

Some other woodcuts signed by Ivan (Ioanichie) Bakov, sometimes dated to 1700: *The Raising of Lazarus, Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, The Descent into Hell, The Holy Women at the Sepulchre* can be found in writings published at Buzău, Snagov, Rîmnic, some of them being repeated in the printings of Bucharest, as well. Referring to these images Alexandru Busuioceanu states: "A great archaic purity of lines and a sense of decoration full of feeling […], which none of his contemporaries surpassed as regards such narrative compositions: a primitive

[41] Bădără D., *Tiparul romînesc la sfîrşitul secolului al XVII-lea şi începutul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Brăila, Editura Istros, 1998, p. 180-186.

[42] Andreescu A., *Cartea românească în veacul al XVIII-lea. Repertoriul ilustraţiilor*, Bucureşti, Editura Vremea XXI, 2004.

[43] Ştrempel G., *Sprijinul acordat de Rusia tiparului românesc în secolul al XVII-lea, in* „Studii şi cercetări bibliologice", I, 1955, p. 15-42.

[44] Tatai-Baltă C., *Gravorii în lemn de la Blaj*, p. 26, 30-33, 37, 40.

[45] Demény L., Demény L. A., *op. cit.*, p. 36-37.

[46] Ştrempel G., *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[47] Popa A., *Varlaam, Mitropolitul Moldovei: Cazania, Iaşi, 1643. Prezentare grafică,* Timişoara, Helicon, 1944, fig. 25, 26.



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purity, imagining holy histories with a fairly idyllic feeling which is drawn in plain and almost graceful lines"[48].

Damaschin Gherbest a Moldo-Wallachian xylographer is the author of the four *evangelists*, portrayed on separate pages, in the *Gospels* from 1682. He only signs the image depicting *Luke the Evangelist*. The biblical characters, seated and accompanied by their symbols write the Gospels. The evangelists are placed in a background composed of palaces, terraces, arcades, columns and artesian wells. Dragoş Morărescu asserts that "in these compositions one can recognize an original synthesis between the Byzantine tradition and a German influence of the Renaissance and Baroque style", while treating architecture, figures and the fluttering curtains[49]. Related to the other evangelists, John is presented in front of a cave, according to Byzantine tradition.

*The title page frame* in *Apostle*, 1683, is executed by D(amaschin) G(herbest) in the Baroque style, as well. The illustration *Luke the Evangelist* dated to 1683 is signed in an intricate manner by the same gifted engraver.

Several times it was mentioned that Antim Ivireanul, an outstanding personality of Romanian feudal culture, originated from Gruzia (Iviria, Georgia) was a scholar, typographer, calligrapher, sculptor, carver in wood and stone and also a skilled xylographer. The *title page frame* and the four *evangelists* in the *Greek-Romanian Gospel* from 1693 are attributed to him. The Brancovan style shows itself in plenty in this fine title page frame, a balanced composition, benefitting by the Renaissance influence but abundantly decorated with vegetal motifs like acanthus leaves, with pilasters having composite capitals, accolade-shaped arches, richly decorated spiraled columns, sumptuously dressed holy figures, revealing Baroque influences[50].

The four evangelists portrayed standing, a procedure rarely used in the Eastern-European ambience, are obviously preoccupied with their creative demarche. Wearing ancient vestments, they are placed in interiors of Renaissance manner (architectonic elements, the rendering of perspective). Each of them is inscribed in a richly adorned oval framework, belonging to the Baroque style.

During Constantin Brîncoveanu's epoch (1688-1714) the art of printing and woodcutting used chiefly in Bucharest, Buzău or Rîmnic as well as the Romanian cultural life on the whole flourished vigorously. This fact become possible as Constantin Brîncoveanu, a versatile and highly cultivated prince was responsive to the flow of ideas coming from the East or the West.

Throughout the 18th century and during the first decades of the 19th century the woodcut blocks made previously at Bucharest but also at Buzău or Rîmnic were frequently reused at Bucharest. Woodcuts (illustrations, title page frames, frontispieces, vignettes) were also executed after earlier prototypes. In this respect, highly appreciated are Ioanichie Bakov's illustrations (*The Sunday of All Saints*

[48] Busuioceanu Al., *Scrieri despre artă*, Bucureşti, Editura Meridiane, 1980, p. 61.
[49] Morărescu D., *Un xilograf moldo-vlah: Damaschin Gherbest Stemarul*, p. 24.
[50] Tatai-Baltă C., *op. cit.*, p. 32-33.



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*etc*.). *The title page frames* signed Ursul in the *Psalter* of Buzău, 1701, is repeated in *Psalter*, Bucharest, 1806[51]. *St. John Damascene* engraved for the *Octoechos* of Rîmnic, 1706, appears again in editions of the *Octoechos* in Bucharest from 1709, 1720, 1730, 1731, 1736, 1746[52].

Other woodcuts in the printings of Bucharest bear the signatures of: Vasilie Dobromirski (*John the Evangelist* in *The Gospel* of 1760), Grigorie Ieromonah (who dated the *frontispiece*[53], *Crucifixion*, *The Entrance into Jerusalem*: 1768 in *Triod*, 1768), Stanciul Tipograf (*The title page frames* in *Psalter*, 1780 and *Pentecost*, 1782, *Resurrection* in *Apostle*, 1784), Ghervasie Monah (*Jesus Great Bishop* in *Apologhia*, 1819, *Annunciation* in *Akathist*, 1823 similar to the one signed by Ioaniţiu Endrédi in *Acatistiariu*, Blaj, 1763 as well as to that signed by Petru Papavici in *Acatistier*, Blaj, 1774), Popa Simeon (who also appears as a xylographer in the *Akathist* of 1823, mentioning the year when it was done, 1819; *David the Prophet*, *Psalter*, 1827)[54], Ieromonahul Costantie (*Jesus and the Samaritan Woman*, *The Sunday of All Saints* etc. in *Psalter*, 1820, the latter being based on the homonymous woodcut which bears Ivan Bakov's signature and is dated to 1678) etc. It must be emphasized that some xylographers and engravers who worked for Bucharest, came from different Romanian cultural centres.

The writings of Bucharest published in Romanian, Greek, Slavonic or Arabic but particularly the religious ones were decorated with many woodcuts which treat various themes. It must be pointed out that one of the oldest metal engravings in the Romanian area, depicting the portrait of Dositheos, the Patriarch of Jerusalem existent in his work *History of Jerusalem's Patriarchs*, in Greek, in 1715, is found at Bucharest. The special quality of the portrait carved with chisel as well as of the paper it was printed on, much superior to that used in the rest of the book made the art historian Gh. Oprescu suppose that the work was executed and printed abroad, very likely in Vienna. The author who signed using the initial letters A. F. might be either a German or an Italian engraver[55].

Systematic, deep and minute researches are imposed in order to reveal Eastern and Western influences (Byzantine, Renaissance, Baroque, neo-classical etc.) creatively assimilated by the authors of religious and secular graphics who worked in Bucharest's typographies. The engravings of Bucharest must be included in the context of Romanian and European graphic arts as one can find in them Romanian

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[51] Bădără D., *op. cit*., p. 185.

[52] Tatai-Baltă C., *op. cit.*, p. 111.

[53] Elisabeta Tatay A., Tatai-Baltă C., *Reprezentări ale „Cinei celei de taină" în grafica de carte românească veche (1700-1829)*, in „Şcoala Ardeleană", VII/ 2013, Oradea, Editura Episcop Vasile Aftenie, 2014, p. 61, fig. 5. (Italian version: *Rappresentazioni dell' „Ultima Cena" nella grafica di libro romeno antico (1700-1829)*, in „La Scuola Transilvana", Nyíregyháza – Oradea, Casa Editrice Szent Atanáz Görögkatolikus Hittudományi Főiskola, p. 68-69, fig. 5.)

[54] Ghervasie and Simeon were active in the typography of the Monastery of Neamţ, and the latter worked at Iaşi, as well.

[55] Oprescu Gh., *op. cit*., p. 216-217.



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influences coming from Buzău, Iassy, Rîmnic, Blaj etc. and also from abroad (Venice, Kiev, Lviv, Vienna etc).

In this way, one can demonstrate the historical and cultural importance of the graphics of early writings from Bucharest, an aspect not enough investigated so far, but which is fully justified as we have attempted to prove. Therefore, the book, through its content, (text and image altogether) contributed to the cultural unification of Romanian people.

As several researchers have highlighted[56], the books printed in the most prolific centre of the early Romanian printings, Bucharest, intensely circulated throughout the whole territory inhabited by Romanians and even beyond it, gradually influencing the evolution of Romanian printing, graphics and culture[57].

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[57] In order to see how the woodcuts in the books of Bucharest were intwercepted, see Tatai-Baltă C., *op. cit.*, p. 78-79, 85-86, 90, 93, 96, 98, 111, 124, 129. The impact which Bakov's illustration (1678) had on the evolution of the respective theme within certain artistic techniques is discovered by Tatai-Baltă C., Tatay A. E., *Reprezentarea Duminicii tuturor sfinţilor în icoana pe lemn, xilogravura de carte şi icoana pe sticlă românească (sec. XVI-XIX)*, in „Transilvania", Serie nouă, Anul XLII (CXLVI), 2014/5-6, p. 126-133.



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**Anexe**




Ieromonah Lavrentie, **Frontispiece with Crcifixion** (woodcut), *Slavonic Tetraevanghel*, Monastery of Plumbuita (Bucharest), 1582




**Frontispiece with Crucifixion** (woodcut),
*Menaion of Feastdays* of Božidar Vucović, Venice, 1538



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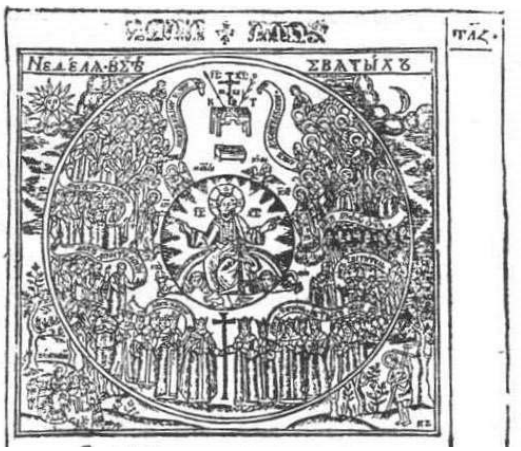
Ivan Bakov,1678, **Frame of the title page** (woodcut), *The Key to Meaning*, Bucharest, 1678



**Frame of the title page** (woodcut), *Kluci razumeaniia*, Lviv, 1665



Ivan Bakov, 1678, **The Sunday of all Saints** (woodcut), *The Key to Meaning*, Bucureşti, 1678



**The Sunday of all Saints** (woodcut), Petru Movilă's *Homiletics*, Kiev, 1637



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[Damaschin Gherbest], **Matthew the Evangelist** (woodcut), *Gospel*, Bucharest, 1682



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[Antim Ivireanul], **Frame of the Title Page** (woodcut),
G*reek-Romanian Gospel*, Bucharest, 1693



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[Antim Ivireanul], **Mark, the Evangelist** (woodcut), *Greek-Romanian Gospel*, Bucharest, 1693



Vasilie Dobromirski, **John, the Evangelist** (woodcut), *Gospel*, Bucharest, 1760



Stanciul Tipograf, **Resurrection** (woodcut), *Apostle*, Bucharest, 1784



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Ghervasie Monah, **Annunciation** (woodcut), *Akathist*, Bucharest, 1823



I[oaniţiu] E[ndrédi], **Annunciation** (woodcut), *Acatistiariu*, Blaj, 1763



P. Simeon, **David, the Prophet** (woodcut), *Psalter*, Bucharest, 1827




A. F., **Dositheos, the Patriarch of Jerusalem** (metal engraving), *History of Jerusalem's Patriarchs,* Bucharest, 1715



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