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NEW ASPECTS REGARDING THE TETRAEVANGELIA WRITTEN BY THE MONK GAVRIL URIC IN NEAMȚ MONASTERY IN 1429

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The *Tetraevangheliar* [Four Gospel Book] written by Gavril Uric in Neamț Monastery, Moldova, in 1429 was ordered by Princess Marina, the wife of Alexander the Kind. It is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as MS. Canon. Graeci. 122.
Emil Turdeanu is the researcher who wrote about it the most, but the new research here extends his work by considering some of the questions he left unanswered.
We enquire as to how typical the Old Slavonic in this document is of the language of manuscripts written in that period. Another question concerns how Uric's Gospel reached Venice, and finally the paper asks when the Greek text in the manuscript was added to the original Slavonic. We do not pretend that all the answers we give are certain, but offer some suggestions supported by documented evidence.

Key-words: Tetraevangel (*Tetraevangheliar*), Gospel Book, Bodleian Library MS. Canon. Graeci. 122, Old Slavonic, Bulgarian recension, manuscript, evangelists, monastery, scribes, illumination, frontispieces

This paper presents recent views on the *Tetraevangheliar* [Four Gospel Book] written and illuminated by the monk Gavril Uric in Neamț Monastery, Moldavia, in 1429[1]. Ėmile Turdeanu is the researcher who has written the most on this manuscript (Bodleian

[1] Gavriil (Gabriel) Uric, the scribe monk from Neamț Monastery, was the son of the 'uricar' Paisie. This is the Gavriil's father monastic name, and it seems that he was a local boyar because the Prince of the country chose him as a scribe in his chancellery. Later he took monastic vow in the same monastery where his son was to follow him. *Documente privind istoria Romîniei* (sic), ed. by Petre Panaitescu, Damian Bogdan, Francis Pall et. al., Bucharest, 1956, vol. 1, caption of Fig. 4 showing the first page of the Mark Gospel from the *Tetraevangheliar* of Neamț; there is no number on the page [9?]. 'Uricar' is a scribe or 'caligraf'. In Old Romanian '*Uric*' is a type of a special document, usually a donation decree (and comes from Slavonic, since the Slavonic was the language of the Orthodox Church in Romania during the Middle Ages until late seventeenth century).

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Library MS. Canon. Graeci. 122)[1], but many other researchers mention this document. My study summarises their work and seeks to answer some questions that have arisen both before and since the 1950's, when Turdeanu was preoccupied with this book.
One such question is how Uric's Gospel reached Venice. We do not pretend to give a certain answer, but to offer some documented suggestions as to a possible answer. Also we shall enquire as to how typical the Old Slavonic in this document is of the language of manuscripts written in that period.
A preliminary question arises as to why this manuscript is labelled MS. Canon. Graeci. 122 in the Bodleian. To classify it as such is not completely accurate since the original text has been shown by specialists like Ralph Cleminson[2] and J.D.A. Barnicot[3] as being Old Slavonic of the Bulgarian recension, and the Greek text was added only later. I put this question to Dr. Bruce C. Barker-Benfield, one of the Senior Librarians at the Bodleian Library. He replied: "I don't think anyone at the Bodleian would ever have denied that Old Slavonic is the principal language of the text – Coxe described it in the 1853 Greek catalogue and in the 1854 Canonici catalogue as 'Codex Illyricus'. However, its [the manuscript's] classification by my predecessors of nearly two centuries ago in the Greek sequence is defensible, firstly because the manuscript does obviously also include a substantial (albeit later) Greek text and secondly because a separate classification such as 'MS. Canon. Vet. Slav. 1' would have left the manuscript isolated and therefore much easier to misplace. Nowadays we have a firm rule not to change old shelfmarks (even if illogical), since any such change is likely to cause confusion ever afterwards both to librarians and to future users"[4]. That is true, indeed; since in the academic world, in books, catalogues, etc. the document has been known and circulated as Bodleian Library MS. Canon. Graeci. 122 for more than two centuries, a change now would probably take it out of circulation for a while. Once a name has been established for many years, it is desirable to keep it. It is true also that the book

[1] Ė. Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian Manuscript", in: *Slavonic and East European Review*, XXlX, London 1951.
[2] R. Cleminson, *A Union catalogue of Cyrillic manuscripts in British and Irish collections*, London 1988, no. 158, pp, 242-244. Cleminson refers to this document as 'Gospels. Moldavian. 1429'.
[3] J.D.A. Barnicot, *The Slavonic MSS in the Bodleian*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1938, entry 40, S. C. 18575, p. 32 [S.C. means Summary Catalogue]. This list of Slavonic manuscripts in Cyrillic and Glagolitic characters reproduced, with some additional notes and references, a previous one compiled by Dr. Craster [no precise date offered, but only the note that it "was written some years ago during work on the Summary Catalogue of Western MSS"]. The date and 'Sirku' notations refers to the description of the manuscripts done by P.A. Sirku in his *Zametki o slavyannskikh i russkikh rukopisyakh*. All this information is given by Barnicot in *The Slavonic MSS*..., p. 30.
[4] Dr. Bruce C. Barker-Benfield, Senior Assistant Librarian, Department of Special Collections & Western Manuscripts, Bodleian Library; correspondence of 17 September, 2009. I would like to express my gratitude to him for graciously and substantially helping me in my research on Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122), and for very kindly answering my questions.

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has, in a narrower column, a text in Greek next to the Slavonic. But, as is now established, this was added about two centuries later. (In the literature opinions was divided for a long time as to whether the Slavonic text was written first, or if the two texts were contemporary.)

The History of Uric's Gospel

According to Cleminson, Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122 was bought by the University of Oxford in 1817 from the heirs of Matteo Luigi Canonici (1727 – c.1805/6)[1]. The date of Canonici's death was a matter of controversy (especially if the year was 1805 or 1806), but the latest conclusion on the matter points towards September 1805[2]. He lived in Venice and was a Jesuit until the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773[3].
His collection consisting of 2046 manuscripts[4], which Cleminson describes as being "mostly in Latin and Italian, but with a substantial number of Greek and Hebrew items" included also "five Slavonic manuscripts: two Croatian glogolitic (*sic!)* miscellanies, the famous Moldavian Gospel written by Gavrilo of Neamțu, a Russian Gospel codex and MS Canon. Lit. 413, a fifteenth-century Serbian miscellany"[5], and were all purchased by the Bodleian Library at the same time, according to the above-mentioned scholar.

[1] Cleminson, *A Union catalogue of Cyrillic manuscripts...*, No. 158, pp. 242-244.
[2] Irma Merolle in *L'abate Matteo Luigi Canonici e la sua biblioteca: i manoscritti Canonici e Canonici-Soranzo delle biblioteche fiorentine*, Institutum Historicum, Rome, and Soc. Iesu &Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, Florence 1958 develops that debate and speaks about other aspects of Canonici's life and work. This is a catalogue in Italian of Canonici manuscripts now held in Florentine libraries. The main authors involved in the debate regarding Matthaei Aloisii (Matteo Luigi) Canonici's date of death are G.A. Moschini, *Della letteratura veneziana dela sec. XVlll fino a' nostri giorni*, vols. 1-4 (1806-1808), Venice, vol.2, p.72; C. Sommervogel, *Bibliotèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, Brussels, Paris, 1891, vol.2, pp.688-689; A. & A. De Backer, *Bibliothèque des écrivains* de la C. De J., IV, Liége, 1858, p. 93; C. Frati, *Dizzionario bio-bibliografico dei bibliotecari e bibliofili italiani dal sec. XlV al XlX*, Florence, 1933, p. 134, and V. Rossi, „La biblioteca manoscritta del senatore Jacopo Soranzo", in *Il libro e la stampa*, vol. 1, nos. 3-8, Florence, 1907, p. 123. Moschini's arguments and information from the Museo civico Correr, Venice, ms. Cicogna, 532r indicate the date of Matteo Luigi's death as some time in September 1805. Merolle seems to agree with them, and I also find their arguments convincing.
[3] Merolle, *L'abate Matteo Luigi Canonici e la sua biblioteca*, p. 21.
[4] "The minute from 19 April, 1817", *Bodley Curators. Minutes 1793*, fol. 39v. Library Records d. 12.
[5] Cleminson , Inaugural published lecture "The Serbian Manuscript Heritage in the British Isles", Portsmouth, 2002, p. 5.

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Actually, Dr. Barker-Benfield says that **most** of these manuscripts were bought by the library, **but not all**[1]**.**

In the journal *Magazin istoric* [Historical Magazine] Lajos Demény confirms that the Gospel written by Uric arrived in Oxford around the middle of the 19th century from Venice, and that it was obtained from the antiquarian "Johan Pericinotti" (*sic*)[2]. G. Popescu Vâlcea agrees with this, even though he cannot explain how the manuscript reached Venice. Here is how he mentions the incunabulum: "Brought in the 19th century from the antiquarian J. Pericinotti (*sic*) from Venice for the Bodleian Library. The circumstances in which the manuscript arrived from Moldavia to Venice are not known"[3]. On this issue Turdeanu hypothesised that "It is not impossible that it was brought from Moldavia to Venice by some Rumanian exile or by numerous Greeks or Armenians who roamed through the Danubian Pricipalities throughout the centuries"[4]. Nicolae Iorga has written about the Romanians living in Venice[5] and Sirarpie der Nersessian speaks about an Armenian manuscript, copied and illuminated in Moldavia, which reached the library of the Mekhtarite monks in Venice – she does not know when.[6] Turdeanu based his view on these facts and sources, but I consider that, in regard to Uric's manuscript, they are not concrete enough to constitute a proof for its way to Venice. Actually, as I will show further, today research has managed to uncover a Romanian document of 1429 which can attest with a higher probability the circumstances in which the manuscript reached Venice.

With regard to its itinerary to Oxford, Turdeanu affirms that "in the first half of the 19th century […] it was still in the ownership of the Pericinotti (*sic*) family at Venice"[7]. Actually, the correct name of the heirs of Canonici family is Perissinotti. Following the death of Matteo Luigi Canonici, his collections passed to his brother Giuseppe Canonici, who in turn died in 1807. Giuseppe's property then passed to their nephews Giovanni Perissinotti and Girolamo Cardina, who divided it up with Perissinotti taking the manuscripts[8]. As shown above, most of these manuscripts were bought from Perissinotti in 1817 by the Bodleian Library. The negotiation was carried out through 'Mr. Scott,

[1] E-mail correspondence of 18 November 2008 with Dr. Barker-Benfield.

[2] Lajos (Ludovic) Demény, "Începuturile miniaturisticii române", *Magazin istoric* [Historical Magazine], No 1 (46), 1971, p. 37.

[3] "Acheté au XlX-e siècle de chez l'antiquare J. Pericinotti de Venise, pour la Biblioteque Bodleienne. On ignore les circonstances qui ont fait parvenir le manuscript de Moldavie a Venise." Gheorghe Popescu-Vâlcea, *La Miniature Roumaine*, Meridiane, Bucharest, 1982, p. 89; my translation.

[4] Èmile Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian Manuscript", *Slavonic and East European Review*, London, XXlX, 1951, p. 464; I keep his spelling of 'Romanians' as 'Rumanians'.

[5] Nicolae Iorga, *Ospiti romeni in Venezia (1570-1610)*, Bucharest, 1932.

[6] Sirarpie der Nersessian, *Manuscrits arméniens illustrés des Xlle, Xllle et XlVe siècles de la Bibliothèque des Pères Mékhtaristes de Venise*, Paris, 1937, no. 143.

[7] Turdeanu, "The Oldest…", p. 456.

[8] Merolle, *L'abate Matteo Luigi Canonici*, p. 22.

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Vice Consul at Venice'; the price was 5500 Louis d'or, which is about £6,000 'ready money', obtained mostly as a loan from the Trustees of the Radcliffe Library. The Curators' minutes of the time mention only the name of Mr. Scott, but not that of Perissinotti, who is only mentined as 'the owner' of the manuscript collection[1]. However, the contemporary list in Italian of the manuscripts, which evidently preceded or accompanied the collection, contains the following heading: „Collection of old manuscripts assembled by 'Senior Abate' Matteo Luigi Canonici, Venice, a former Jesuit, left through his will to Mr Giuseppe Canonici, his brother, and inherited by Mr Giovanni Perissinotti"[2].

Ms. Canon Graeci. 122 in literature and bibliography

Uric's manuscript is important for the historian of Romanian culture because "it is one of the oldest monuments of minor art executed in Moldavia; its origin therefore requires to be explained as precisely as possible"[3]. In Romania itself the iconography of the manuscript was the aspect which has received the most of attention. Studies on Uric's Gospel have been made as early as 19th century[4], very intensely in the 20th in both Romania and abroad. Even when Uric's Gospel was in Venice, it drew the attention of specialists, as for example P. Solarić.[5] Generally speaking, in addition to Cleminson, Demény and Turdeanu[6], among the researchers who have described and commented on this mediaeval manuscript are G. Balş[7], D.P. Bogdan[1], I. Bogdan[2], I. Bianu,[3] V.

[1] *Bodley Curators. Minutes 1793*. Library Records d. 12, fols. 39v-41v. On the particular record of the amount, see the minutes of 19 April, 1817 (39v) in which the initial price is discussed ('6000 Louis d'ors, or £6150 Sterlings',) and of 16 June (41r-41v) in which the final amount is stated to 5500 Louis d'ors, after the negociations done by the Vice Consul at Venice, Mr. Scott. The application for the money by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford to the Trustees was discussed on 23 April 1817 (40 v).

[2] „Collezione di Codici antichi fatta dal fu Sigr Abate Matteo Luigi Canonici, Veneto, Ex-gesuita, e lasciata con Testamento del fu Sigr Giuseppe Canonici di Lui Fratello ed erede al Sigr Giovanni Perissinotti"; Library Records
e. 440, fol. 2r; my translation.

[3] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Manuscript…", p. 456.

[4] I.I. Sreznevskii, *Sviedieniia i zamietki o maloizviestnykh I neizvestnyh pamjatnikah pis'ma*, vol. 28, No. 1, St Petersburg 1875, reproduced in: *Sbornik ORJaS*, X , 1876, pp. 559-660; I. Dobrowský, *Institutiones linguae slavicae dialecti veteris*, Vienna 1882, p. XV.

[5] P. Solarić, *Pominak knižeskij*, Venice 1810, pp. 33-34.

[6] Turdeanu, in addition to "The Oldest Manuscript…" see also "Les letters slaves en Moldavie: le moine Gabriel du monastère de Neamțu", in: *Revues des Ėtudes Slaves*, XXVll, 1951.

[7] N. Iorga and G. Balş, *Histoire de l'art roumain anciene*, Paris 1922, p. 317; in the book there is a colour reproduction of a leaf from the Ms. 122; plate facing p. 336. This information is mentioned also in one *Letter about Bodleian manuscripts, XX, Canon. gr.*(*sic*) *122*. There are two

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Drăguț[4], N. Iorga[5], E. Lăzărescu[6], G. Mihăilă[7], J. Milin[8], G.U. Mircea[9], M.A. Musicescu[10], S. der Nersessian,[11] C. Nicolescu[12], G. Oprescu[13], P.P. Panaitescu[14], S.

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more such 'letters' in the Bodleian containing bibliography regarding the Manuscript Canon. Gr. 122; I have mentioned the respective bibliography (Bianu and Nersensian) in the article [Actually these 'letters' in the Bodleian are three brief notes].

[1] D.P. Bogdan, *Paleografia româno-slavă* (tratat şi album) [Romanian-Slavic Palaeography] (Treatise and albume), Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului, Bucureşti 1978; "Quelques témoignages des liens roumano-grecs sous la règne d'Ètienne le Grand, prince de Moldavie", in: *Bulletin V*, nos. 1-2, Association internationale d'Ètudes du Sud-Est Européen 1967.

[2] I. Bogdan, "Evangheliile dela Humor şi Voroneț din 1473 şi 1550", in *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii istorice*, s. ll, t. XXlX, Bucharest 1907.

[3] I. Bianu, *Presentation to the first Congress of Byzantinology*, Bucharest, 1924; at the respective congress Bianu presented the reproductions in colour of the most important ornaments in the manuscript which we have included here (there is a mention about it in Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated MS…", p. 257). Reproductions of images from the manuscript were published in "Evanghelia slavo-greacă scrisă în mânăstirea Neamțului din Moldova de Gavriil Monahul la 1429 [The Slavonic-Greek Gospel written in Neamț Monastery in Moldavia by Gavril the Monk in 1429]", in *Documente de artă românească din manuscripte vechi* [Documents of Romanian Art in Ancient Manuscripts], vol. 1, Bucharest 1922, pp. 2-10.

[4] V. Drăguț (illustrations P. Lupan), *Pictura murală din Moldova. Sec. XV-XVl*, Bucureşti 1982.

[5] N. Iorga, "La figuration des évangélistes dans l'art roumain et l'école chypriote-valaque", in *Buletinul comisiunii monumentelor istorice*, XXVL, fasc. 75, Bucharest 1933, pp. 1-4 and the works further mentioned.

[6] E. Lăzărescu, "Trei manuscrise moldoveneşti de la Muzeul de Artă al Republicii Populare Române", in: *Cultura moldovenească în timpul lui Ştefan cel Mare*, Bucharest, 1958, pp. 541-547 (the mention about the on p. 552).

[7] G. Mihăilă, "Manuscrisele lui Gavriil Uric de la Neamț şi însemnătatea lor filologică", in: *Studii de lingvistică si filologie*, Timişoara 1981, pp. 48-58.

[8] J. Milin, "Din istoricul cercetării manuscriselor slavo-române", in: *Studii de slavistică*, Timişoara, 1998, pp. 5-73, especially pages 6, 16, 25, 58.

[9] G.U. Mircea*, "*Contribution à la vie et à l'ouvre de Gavriil Uric", *Revues des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, vol. Vl, no. 4, Bucharest 1968.

[10] M.A. Musicescu (illustration S. Ulea), *Voroneț*, Bucharest 1971.

[11] S. der Nersessian, "Two Slavonic Parallels of the Greek Tetraevangelia: Paris 74", in: *The Art Bulletin*, t. IX, 1927, nr 3.

[12] C. Nicolescu, *Miniatura şi ornamentul cărții manuscrise din Țările Române. Sec. XlV-XVlll*, Introd. by M.H. Maxy, Catalogue of an Exhibition in the National Museum of Arts, Bucharest, July-September 1964.

[13] *Istoria artelor plastice în România*, ed. by G. Oprescu (ed.), vol. 1, Bucharest 1964, pp. 189-194.

[14] P. Panaitescu & D. Bogdan, F. Pall et. al. (eds), *Documente privind istoria Romîniei* (sic), vol. 1, Bucharest 1956.

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Petrescu[1], S. Puşcariu[2], P.A. Syrcu[3], P.J. Šafařik,[4] Ė. Turdeanu[5], S. Ulea[6], and F. Uspenski[7]. In literature there are references to Mihai Berza's contribution on the manuscript, but so far the research has not found out in which publication his contribution was made.

As an example of the treatment this manuscript has received, we can show that, in his book *Paleografia româno-slavă* [Romanian-Slavonic Palaeography], Damian P. Bogdan mentions either the Uric Gospel, or its author together with its work more then 30 times in the 391 pages comprising the 'treatise' part of the book (the other part of the book, which Bogdan calls 'albume', has 101 pages).

Ion Bianu presented the Tetraevangelia to the first Congress of Byzantinology which took place in Bucharest in 1924. He showed colour reproductions of the most important ornaments in the manuscript, which I have also included in this article (Bianu's presentation is mentioned in one of Turdeanu's articles[8]). He also published the respective images in his study "Evanghelia slavo-greacă scrisă în mânăstirea Neamțului din Moldova de Gavriil Monahul la 1429 [Slavonic-Greek Gospel written in Neamț Monastery in Moldavia by Gavril the Monk in 1429]".

MS. Can. Gr. 122 in the Bodleian has also been mentioned briefly in many books and catalogues. For example J.D.A. Barnicot describes it in the catalogue *The Slavonic MSS in the Bodleian* as being written "in Slavonic of the Bulgarian recension and Greek.

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[1] S. Petrescu, *Odoarele de la Neamț şi Secu* [The treasures from Neamț and Secu], Bucharest 1911.

[2] S. Puşcariu, *Istoria literaturii române. Epoca veche* [The History of Romanian Literature. The Ancient Epoch], Sibiu 1930.

[3] P.A. Syrku, "Zametki o slavyannskikh i russkikh rukopisyakh v Bodleian Library v Oksforde", *Iyvestija Otdelenija russkogo jazyka I slovesnosti*, vol. VII, Book 4, St. Petersburg 1902, pp. 325-345.

[4] P.J. Šafařik, *Geschichte der serbishen Literatur*, Prague 1865, pp. 185-186; he quotes Solarić's, but acknowledges that since 1810, when the latest's work was written in Venice, the 1429 Gospel was bought by the Bodleian Library. Turdeanu mentions both these researchers in footnote 1 of his "The Oldest Illuminated Manuscript …", p. 467.

[5] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Manuscript…", pp. 456-469, and also "Les letters slaves en Moldavie: le moine Gabriel du monastère de Neamțu", in: *Revues des Études Slaves*, XXVII, 1951; "Miniatura bulgară şi începuturile miniaturii româneşti," *Buletinul Institutului român din Sofia*, no. l, Bucharest 1942, p. 414-419.

[6] S. Ulea, "Gavril Uric, primul artist român cunoscut", in: *Studii şi cercetări de istoria artei* (SCIA), 'Arta plastică' Series, vol. XI, no. 2, Bucharest 1964, pp. 235-263, and "Gavril Uric. Studiu paleografic", vol. XXVIII, idem, 1981; "Gavril Ieromonahul, autorul frescelor de la Bălăneşti", in: *Cultura moldovenească în vremea lui Ştefan cel Mare*, Bucharest 1964.

[7] F.B. Uspenski, „O nekotoryh slavjanskich i poslavjanski psannych rukopisjach, chranjaščichsju u Londone i Oxforde", in: *Žurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveščenija*, CC (LL ?) 1878), pp. 89-94.

[8] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated MS…", p. 457

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1429, Sirku I, no. 1"[1]. Gheorghe Popescu-Vâlcea mentions it his books[2], and Sextil Puşcariu, in his *Istoria literaturii române* has a reference to it and reproduces four plates from the manuscript[3]. Also Evangelina Smirnova mentions "Ėvangile moldave du moine Gavriil Uric (1429), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Cod. Canon. gr. 122."; she also refers to an article by S. Ulea about the monk Gavril Uric[4]. In his catalogue of Gospel manuscripts Kurt Aland lists, among other documents from the Bodleian, Ms. Can. Gr. 122. He describes it shortly in term of languages, size, and number of pages[5]. *Studi Medievali*, Serie Terza, contains the following reference: "140 C Moldavian illumination. Slavonic and Greek gospels written in 1429 at the monastery of Neamtzyn [sic] (Cod. Canon. Gr. 122)"[6]. Nicolescu refers to the manuscript as follows: "Written on parchment; the Slavonic text on a full-page, the Greek translation (*sic*!) on the margins. Coloured rich frontispieces formed by interlinked and intertwined circles precede the beginning of each Gospel. The portraits of the four evangelists on the full page, writing in front of their desks, stand out from the golden background, surrounded by vegetal frames"[7]. Popescu-Vâlcea mentions: 'Tetraevangelia of 1429. Bodleian Library Oxford (Cod. Can. Graeci 122), Figs. 1-6. Parchment. Written in Slavonic, with a Greek text on the margin. Frontispieces [worked] in interlaces: ff. 7r, 90r, 145r, 236r. The miniatures – the evangelists: Matthew, f. 6v; Mark, f. 89v; Luke, f. 144v; John, f. 235v."[8] Then he describes each image of the evangelists and reproduces them, as well

[1] J.D.A. Barnicot, *The Slavonic MSS in the Bodleian*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1938, entry 40, S. C. 18575, p. 32 [S. C. means Summary Catalogue]. This list of Slavonic manuscripts in Cyrillic and Glagolitic characters reproduced, with some additional notes and references, a previous one compiled by Dr. Craster [no precise date offered, but only the note that it "was written some years ago during work on the Summary Catalogue of Western MSS"]. The date and 'Sirku' notations refers to the description of the manuscripts done by P. A. Sirku in his *Zametki o slavyannskikh i russkikh rukopisyakh*. All this information is given by Barnicot in *The Slavonic MSS*..., p. 30.

[2] G. Popescu-Vâlcea, *Miniatura românească*, Bucharest 1981, plate 14, and p. 88, and in its French translation*, La miniature roumaine*, and also in *Cărţile populare miniate şi ornate*, Bucharest 1989.

[3] Puşcariu, *Istoria literaturii române*. *Epoca veche*, p. 1? [the page facing the title page], Plate of St. Evangelist Luke, colour, p. 33? [the page facing p. 32] The beginning of Matthew's Gospel, colour; the latest repeats itself in black and white.

[4] E. Smirnova, "Un manuscrit illustré inédit du premiere tiers du XV-e siècle", in: *Byzantine East, Latin West. Art-Historical Studies in honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. by C. Moss and K. Kiefer, Princeton, 1995, pp. 429, 431. In footnote 4 of her article S. Ulea's work's "Gavril Uric, primul artist roman cunoscut" is mentioned.

[5] K. Aland, *Kurzgefasste Liste der Griechischen der handschriften des Neven Testaments*, Berlin, New York, 1994, p. 60, entry 525.

[6] *Studi Medievali*, Serie Terza, vol. V, no. 1, 1964, p. 392, entry 140 C.

[7] C. Nicolescu, *Miniatura şi ornamentul cărţii manuscrise*…, Entry 11, p. 9, my trans.

[8] 'Tetraevangile de 1429. Bibliotèque Bodléienne, Oxford (Cod. Can. Graeci 122) Fig. 1-6, Parchemin. Ecrit en slavon, avec texte grec en marge. Frontispice en entrelacs: ff. 7r, 90r, 145r,

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as the Epilogue of Uric's Gospel. He acknowledges as the source for his reproduction of the images Bianu's "Evanghelia slavo-greacă". K.Sp. Staikos reproduces in colour and describes the figures of St John the Evangelist and of St Luke 'of Stiri' [Figs. 290 in his book], from "the Slavonic manuscript Gospel, written by the copyist Gavril in 1429 (Canon. gr. 122, fols. 235v, 144v)"[1]. *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 1952, refers to the iconography of the Greek manuscripts in Moldavia under Metropolitan Makarios, and in this context also Turdeanu's article "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian MS-Canon Gr. 122" is mentioned. The journal also refers to the style of the characters of the Greek text on the Uric's manuscript[2].

Description of MS. Canon. Graeci. 122

Turdeanu considers the Tetraevangel of Neamț as "one of the most remarkable manuscripts in the entire Slavic literature of the Middle Ages"[3], and today it is still one of the Bodleian Library's most precious acquisitions. Der Nersessian, who mentions Uric's manuscript in Oxford in the context of a discussion about the collection 'Parisinus Graecus 74', considers it as "one of the most important [manuscripts]" written during the reign of Alexander the Kind[4].
It had initially 312 leaves, and this is noted in some of the bibliography, as for example in Henry O. Cox 's catalogue[5]. However, if one counts the blank page from the beginning, the two pages with the translations of the colophon, and the last page which is blank then 316 leaves can be counted; Christian Jensen and Martin Kauffmann count 315[6]. This is true in any of the counting mentioned if a hand-written note in Italian, which is now glued on the inside front cover, is not taken into consideration. The note

236r. Miniatures: les évangélistes: <Matthieu>, f. 6v; <Marc>, f. 89v; <Luc>, f. 144v; <Jean>, f. 235v.' Popescu-Vâlcea, *La miniature roumaine*, p. 89. The figures of the Evangelists are reproduced in his book on pp. [89-94]; the pages have not been numbered by the author. Some of them also contain details from the figures, and on p. 84 there are the captions of the images.

[1] K.Sp. Staikos, *The great librariei*, pp. 496 (Figs. 290), 498-499 (captions).

[2] *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, Stuttgart 1952, vol. XLX, p. 135

[3] E. Turdeanu, 'La broderie religieuse en Roumanie. Les épitaphisi moldaves au XV et XVl-e siècles', in: *Cercetări literare*, vol. 4, Bucharest 1940, p. 177, footnote 2; my translation.

[4] Der Nersessian ,'Two Slavonic Parallels…', pp. 222-274; my translation.

[5] H.O. Cox, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues. Greek Manuscripts* (reprinted with corrections from the edition of 1853), Bodleian Library, Oxford 1969, cat. l, part II, col. 105. (The original title of the catalogue was: *Catalogi codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae pars prima recensionem codicum Graecorum continuens*, Confecit Henricus O. Coxe, A.M., Hypo-Bibliothecarus, Oxonii: E Typographeo Academico, MDCCCLIV).

[6] C. Jensen and M. Kauffmann, *A Continental Shelf. Books across Europe from Ptolemy to Don Quixote. An exhibition to mark the re-opening of the Bodleian Exhibition Room*, Oxford 1994, catalogue entry 37, p. 96.

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mentions shortly some of the characteristics of the manuscript and of its language, stating that it is written in a traditional? [unclear word] idiom of Russian language (as close to Russian as the Toscan dialect is to that spoken in Venice)[1].

The size of MS. Canon. Graeci. 122 is '31x25 cm' (Turdeanu) or '310x220 mm' (Jensen & Kauffman). I have measured it myself and I found out that the covers are 31x23 cm, and the width of the pages is about 21.5 cm, with some little differences from page to page – depending on the angle of opening and how much of the page goes under the binding.

Here is a part of Cleminson's description of the manuscript made in the *A Union catalogue of Cyrillic manuscripts*. He refers to the document's pages, as follows: i+314+i leaves, foliated (i), (1), 2 – 312, (313-315). Earlier pagination of ff. 8-85: 3-9 (rectos only), (10-12), 13, (14-23), 24-25, (26-31), 32, (33-34), 35-36 (37-39), 40, (41-43), 44-159; on ff. 90v-14 iv, 2-104; on ff. 145v-231, 2-173; and on ff. 236v-299, 2-127[2]. In my correspondence with Dr. Barker-Benfield, it is stated that: "Standard Bodleian practice in foliating does not distinguish between original and later leaves, so under our system there are 315 leaves [...] of which fols. 2-312 are original parchment leaves, fols. 1 and 315 are (early?) blank parchment flyleaves, and fols. 313-314 are later paper inserts"[3]. The present calf leather covers were added in the 19th century[4].

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[1] "L'evangelio in lingua Illirica fu scritto in Moldovalachia per ordine della principessa Moglie di Alessandro l'anno 6637, 13 Marzo, da un certo Gabriele Monaco, figlio di Urih (sic) in un convento appartenente alla Germania (sic). Eli carratteri sono di una eccelente perfezione, pero nell' espresione molto differenti, quasi in ogni riga, cosicche non puó, esser intélligible, che da più pratici della Lingua Russa, e della istoria dell'evangelio; e la differenza consiste nell' idioma come differenze è, L'idioma toscano dallo Veneziano. Visono le stesse parole, ma non'espressè lingualmente. L'ortografia in mostioltissi luoghi è differente, è da questa dipende la differente pronunzia. p.e use une predana siot. Nell évangelio è scritto usio une predana sut." The text translates "The Evangel in the Illyrian language was written in Moldovlahia on the orders of Princess Marina, the wife of Alexander, in 6637 [1429], 13 March, be a certain Gabriel the Monk, the son of Uric, in a convent belonging to Germany (*sic*). Its characters [letters] are well [clearly] drawn; however their expression is very different with regard to their meaning in such a manner that they can be understood only by someone who knows the Russian language very well; the difference [between Russian and the language of this Gospel – 'Ilirica'] consists in the idiom. The difference is the same as the difference between the Toscan and Venetian idioms. In both there are the same words, but they are not expressed in the same way from the phonetic point of view. In many situations, the orthography of some languages is different and it depends on the pronunciation, i.e. on the dialect. The dialect of this Evangel is traditional […]?"; page glued on the verso of the first cover. Unknown author, probably Canonici himself or a librarian (?). The translation here was made by Dr. Marian Ciucă, with essential corrections made by Prof. Peter Mackridge.

[2] Cleminson, *A Union catalogue of Cyrillic manuscripts…*, p. 242.

[3] Barker-Benfield, correspondence from December 2008.

[4] Discussion with Dr. Barker-Benfield on 9 December 2008, when I gave a lecture in the New Bodleian Library on the MS. Can. Gr. for the Centre for the Study of the Book, University of

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The marks of the previous binding are still visible across the pages. They indicated that probably the book previously had what was the usual silver Gospel covers in the Middle Ages.

In the *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues. Greek Manuscripts*, compiled by Cox, Ms 122 is introduced as "Codex Illyricus membranaceus", in folio, ff. 312, anno 54λζ [sic!], written by "manu Gabrielis cuiusdem monachi in Moldavia exaratus"[1]. One of its descriptions says, in the words of Jensen and Kauffmann, that "The Bulgarian Church Slavonic text is written in uncial script: each Gospel begins with a decorated headpiece, gold title, and decorated initial. The pericopes, or liturgical readings, are marked in the text, and their appointed days are given in the margins"[2].

The text of the colophon of Ms. Canon. Gr. 122 on fol. 312r says the following:

> Бл(а)гоизволенїемь ѡца и иаоученїемь с(ъї)на и съвръшенїемь
> с(в꙳)т(а)го д(оу)χа оучинс꙳ сіи тетраєυ(аг)г(е)ль вь д(ь)ни
> бл(а)гочьстиваго и χ(рист)олюбиваго г(осподи)на Іѡ Алеξандра
> воеводы, господар҃ъ въсеи земли Молдовлаχіискои и бл(а)гочьстивои
> его г(оспо)жди Марины еже она желанїемь раждегшис꙳, любви
> Х(ристо)-в҃χ слѡ̀весь рачителница, потьщателно даде и исписа тои,
> в л҃т ϛцлз, и сьвръшис꙳ м(҃ъ)с(꙳)ца мартїа вь гї д(ь)нь, р҃ко꙳
> Гаврїила мѡнаχа, с(ъі)на Оурикова, иже исписавь вь Н҃мецком
> мѡнастири.

This translates: "With the blessing of the Father, the teaching of the Son, and the fulfilment ('perfection') of the Holy Spirit this Four Gospel book was written during [the reign] of the devoted Orthodox ruling Prince Alexandru Voievode, the Master of all the land of Moldo-Vlachia, and of his wife Marina. Their love for the word of Christ made them ask for this writing to be done. In the year 6937 (i.e. 1429); finished on the 13th of March, by the hand of Gabriel, the son of Uric, in the monastery of Neamţu"[3]. Two translation of the colophon with the Old Slavonic text above: one in Italian and one

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Oxford and Romanian Cultural Institute, London branch (which financially supported the lecture).

[1] Cox, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogue,* cat. l, part II, col. 105. When I last checked this catalogue, in Nov. 2008, I noticed that the words 'Illyricus' and 'cuiusdem' have been crossed out by someone's handwriting (the librarian's?)

[2] Jensen and Kauffmann, *A Continental Shelf*, p. 96. They base their description on Cox, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues*, cat. l, part II, col. 105; Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian Manuscript", pp. 456-469, and Cleminson, *A Union catalogue of Cyrillic manuscripts in British and Irish collections*. In this exhibition of 1994 in the Bodleian Library Ms Can. Gr. 122 was entry 37.

[3] A translation of monk Gavril's note in Slavonic was made by Turdeanu in "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian Manuscript", p. 458. But the translation here is my own.

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in French were inserted at the back on the manuscript; there are no indications as who made these translations and inserted them between the covers of the Gospel.
Popescu-Vâlcea has also a translation of the colophon into French in his above-mentioned work, and by comparing his translation with that at the back of the *Tetraevangeliar* one can notice some differences between the two translations [into French], written at different times, Popescu-Vâlcea's being the most recent.

The iconography of MS. Canon. Graeci. 122. Byzantine elements

As mentioned above, Ion Bianu reproduces ten images from the manuscript, and describes them accurately saying that "on four folios there are reproductions of the opening pages of the four Gospels, each of them with two headings in colour, one for the Slav text, which is the main one, and another one, smaller, for the Greek text [Fig. 1. a, b, c, d]. On other four folios the faces of the Evangelists are reproduced [Fig. 2. a, b, c, d]. A folio has secondary ornamentation and initials on it [Fig. 3], and the final folio has the epilogue of the text containing valuable data regarding its origins [Fig. 4]. Of a special importance are the portraits of the Evangelists, both for the variegated and rich borders and for the architectural motifs [which surround them], but especially for the manner in which the artist treats the figures of the writers"[1].



Fig. 1a) The first page of St Matthew's Gospel, fol. 7 r



Fig. 1b) The first page of Mark's Gospel, fol. 90 r

[1] Bianu (ed.), "Evanghelia slavo-greacă scrisă în mânăstirea Neamțului din Moldova de Gavriil Monahul la 1429", p. 2; my translation. The reproductions here are also from Bianu's work, pp. 2-10.

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Fig. 1c) The first page of St Luke's Gospel, fol. 145 r



Fig. 1d) The first page of John's Gospel, fol. 236 r



Fig. 2a) St. Evangelist Matthew, fol. 6 v

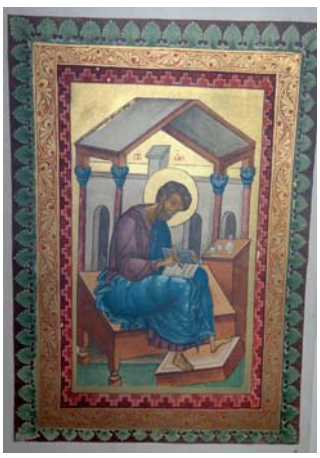

Fig. 2b) St. Evangelist Mark, fol. 89 v

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Fig. 2c) St. Evangelist Luke, fol. 144 v



Fig. 2d) St. Evangelist John, fol. 235 v



Fig. 3) Page with secondary ornamentation and initials



Fig. 4) The last page of the manuscript with the colophon

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Turdeanu is also one of the specialists who describe in detail the decorations of the Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122. I have to reproduce his description as it is so meticulously done. "The miniatures represent the portraits of the four evangelists, each on a full page. The ornament consists of large geometrical frontispieces which precede each gospel. The analysis of these themes enables us to establish certain interesting facts about the origin of the miniature painting and decorations in Moldavian manuscripts. The evangelists are represented sitting at their work-table, in front of an architectural scene. Their arrangement aims at a deliberate symmetry: Matthew, with head bent, seems lost in thought, Mark and Luke are writing, John looks attentively into the distance. Matthew is old, Mark and Luke are middle-aged, John has white hair and beard. Matthew is sitting in a large round-backed chair beside a low table with writing implements and with a higher desk, on which is unfolded the parchment with the gospel text: Mark and Luke are sitting on slightly sloping backless benches and holding on their knees the parchment book or roll on which they are writing; John is also sitting in a broad round-backed chair, beside a marble pedestal which support a desk with a closed book. The evangelists' heads are circled with haloes; beneath their feet they have a little *podium*; their clothing consists of *chiton* and *himation*. Their expressions are lively, their stature is lofty, the draperies of their clothing are rich. An interesting detail: the Apostle Luke wears a tonsure. The architectural themes which decorate the background of the miniatures are fantastic. A portico formed of 10 columns can be seen in the portrait of Matthew, above which rises a little church and four towers. In the portrait of Mark one observes a palace in front of which there is a large baldachino supported on four thin porphyry columns. Again a palace of a stranger type, but one not unknown to Byzantine miniature, occupies the background of Luke's portrait, while the palace which appears in John's is of a form not met with elsewhere[1].

In the end of his thorough description, he concludes that the decoration should be read, at least partially, through a 'Byzantine key': "The model of the Oxford *Gospels* was certainly borrowed direct from Byzantium, the place from which the Metropolitans of Moldavia at this period came. The *epitaphios* of the Metropolitan Macarius in 1428, which I will speak latter in the article, has not only a Byzantine model; its very inscription is in Greek. Greek too is the inscription of the stole of Alexander the Good, but, as Iorga has shown, the name of the Prince is quoted in its Rumanian form *Alexandru*, not in its Greek form *Alexandros*"[2].

Turdeanu draws the attention to the fact that this type of representation of the evangelists is not found either in Serbian or in Bulgarian miniature, where, in the rare cases where such portraits are depicted, their representation is "in the form of small medallions enclosed in a broad band of ornament"[3]. He has problems in finding the

[1] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Manuscript…", pp. 464-465.
[2] Ibid., p. 465.
[3] Ibid.

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source of this type, as he has also in finding the origin of the vignettes. They consist in interlinked circles in various arrangements, loosely or closely connected, with decorative details some cut by diagonals. Turdeanu concludes that the frontispieces belong to a broader tradition, already noticeable in the manuscript copied by Gavriil in 1424 – *Omiliile Sf. Grigorie de Nazianz cu comentariile Iui Nichita al Heracleii* (1424) [The Homilies of St Gregory the Nazianus, with commentaries by Nikitas of Heraklea][1], and which was well represented in Serbia. He points out an aspect of Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122 which might surprise any researcher: even though written originally in 'Old Slavonic of the Bulgarian recension', in its iconography the manuscript has more similarities with Serbian rather than Bulgarian incunabula: "Vignettes, some identical, other similar, have been found in Byzantine and Serbian manuscripts. On the other hand, it has so far been impossible to establish any interesting parallel with Bulgarian art"[2]. This should not be a surprise since in general, the arts of the time – especially the architecture – reflect the Serbian influence in addition to that more obvious Byzantine, and Turdeanu emphasises that in his article. I have mentioned elsewhere the influence from the Serbian kingdom of the fourteenth – fifteenth centuries which was manifested in Romanian arts[3]. Perhaps the correct statement would be in this context to affirm a Byzantine influence manifested in Serbia, and then spread to the Romanian Principalities.

Jensen and Kauffmann also explain the manuscript's iconography as being painted in the Byzantine style. They also affirm that this is to be expected since the principalities to the North of the Danube were in the area of influence of Byzantium: "Moldavia (which joined Walachia to form the state of Romania in 1859) was an independent principality at this period; but Byzantine influence continued in all types of artistic production, and is evident here in the Evangelist portrait preceding each Gospel"[4]. Iorga and Balş also speak about a Byzantine influence in the culture of Romanian principalities in general[5]. Iorga even mentions once *en passant* and with no proofs Constantinople as the place where Gavriil Uric would have been educated, even though he does this only once and never repeats the idea[6]. In a work written shortly after the above statement was made, Iorga softens his affirmation and says that it can only be suggested that monk Gavriil

[1] *Omiliile Sf. Grigorie de Nazianz cu comentariile Iui Nichita al Heracleii* (1424) [The Homilies of St Gregory the Nazianus, with commentaries by Nikitas of Heraklea],

[2] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Manuscript…", pp. 465. (Ibid Tur 465).

[3] E. Ene D-Vasilescu, *Inspiration and innovation: orthodox art in Romanian lands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries*, *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 3, London, 2006, pp. 277-278.

[4] Jensen and Kauffmann, *A Continental Shelf*, catalogue entry 37 (classified as 'Slavonic Gospel, Neamtu, Moldavia, 1429'), p. 96.

[5] Iorga and Balş, *Histoire de l'art roumain anciene*, p. 317.

[6] Iorga, "În jurul pomenirii lui Alexandru cel Bun", *Analele Academiei Române*, Mem. Secția Istorie, Series lll, vol. 13, Bucharest, 1932-1933, p. 182.

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could have learnt the skills in miniature and ms illumination in Byzantium: "One should therefore state Byzance as a source, without been able to be more precise than that"[1].
Vasile Drăguț refer to the artistic works of that time in Moldova (embroideries were included among them because the painters made the cartoons for them), in the following terms: "Starting from iconographic schemes of Byzantine tradition, the Moldavian painters […] have proven a real maturity in their conception of the closed architecture forms, which are balanced and calm, in which the internal tensions allow themselves to be controlled by a restrained solemnity. All these qualities are to be found in the Tetraevangel of Princess Marina, the work of one of the most important Romanian painters of the Middle Age, Gavril Uric, monk and illuminator from Neamț Monastery. The son of a princiar Court's calligrapher, Gavril was himself a skilled calligrapher, the proof being the twelve manuscripts left by him. Among them, the Tetraevangel accomplished in 1429 on the order of the Princess is a veritable masterwork, pointing to an artistic personality of undoubted originality. It is interesting to notice that, even though the objects under discussion are illuminated works, the conception behind the images is rather one of a monumental painter. Covering in its entirety the guard page (the page preceding each of the four gospels), the miniatures represent the Evangelists in inspirational moments of writing the Biblical texts, seated in the middle of an architectonic environment, at a desk. The iconographic models which are the basis of Gavril Uric's work are, obviously, Byzantine from the Palaeologan epoch. But the Romanian artist has managed to escape from the constraints of canons, by ordering the decorative elements within a harmonious composition, which lacks the traditional Byzantine rigidity, and gives to the figures a noble serenity. In spite of their small sizes, Uric's miniatures benefit from the characteristics of monumentality, envisaging the impressive achievements of the Moldavian mural painters from the epoch of Stephen the Great, to which they will be a valuable and respected example[2].
On the website of the Romanian Orthodox Church it is written that actually thirteen manuscripts written in Slavonic[3] have survived from Uric, and other are only attributed

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[1] "*It faut donc retenir comme source Byzance, sans pouvoir préciser*." Iorga, *Les arts mineurs en Roumanie*, Bucharest 1934, pp. 47-48; my translation, his emphasis.
[2] V. Drăguț (illustrations Petre Lupan), *Pictura murală din Moldova. Sec. XV-XVl*, Bucureşti 1982, p. 8; my translation. The spelling in this text follows the pre-1989 linguistic rules regarding the usage of letters 'î' and 'a'.
[3] These 13 manuscripts are as follows: The Tetraevangel from1429, another Tetraevangel without illuminations (1436), three *Mineia* (probably the series was complete); a *Sbornic*, containing *sixteen Sermons of St. Grigory of Nazianzum and St John of Sinai's Ladder* (1413, today in Moscow); *The Homilies of St. Grigory of Nazianzum with the commentaries of Nichitas of Heraclea* (1424); another *Sbornic, containing The Sermons of St John Christostomous and other Patristic texts* (no date), two more Sbornic books containing the lives of some saints and sermons (1439 and 1441); *The Jewels [Mărgăritarele] of St. John Christostomous* (1443), *The ascetic writings of St. Basil the Great* (1444), and *St John's of Sinai's Ladder* (1446); http://biserica.org

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to him, their paternity being questionable. Most of them are in the Library of the Romanian Academy of Science; a *Sbornic containing Sixteen Sermons by St. Grigory of Nazianzum and St. John from Sinai's Ladder*, (1413) is now in Moscow, and one of his Gospels (1436) is in the Museum of Neamț Monastery.

Maria Ana Musicescu makes Uric's manuscript representative, together with other works, for the Moldavian culture of the fifteenth century: "The embroideries which illustrate scenes from the cycle of the feasts, the *épitaphisi* from 1428 and 1437, or even more the Tetravangel written and illuminated by Gavril Uric in the Monastery of Neamt, are typical works, not only as representing the area of art they belong to, but also of the culture of Moldavia in general. They demonstrate a high degree of technical and artistic skill. The figurative and decorative repertoire, the straight lines and the chromatic combinations, the proportion between the main composition and its background constitutes a true artistic achievement. Its fundamentals come both from the organic integration of various contributions from the worlds of the East, Byzantium, and the West, and from the cultural milieu, sensibility and requirements of the Moldavian society.This is the basis on which the first phase of the classical style of the Moldavian art in the Middle Ages developed[1].

Other researchers share the view that the illustrations in the MS. Can. Gr. 122 are of Byzantine influence. In his *The Illuminated Book: Its History and Production*, David Diringer describes fragments from Uric's manuscript in the following terms: "Fig 11-30 represents the Evangelist Mark (fol. 89v) and Luke (fol. 144v) and the initial pages of

[1] "L'étoles brodées de scénes illustrant le cycle des fêtes, les épitaphes de 1428 et de 1437, ou encore le tétraévangile écrit et énlumine en 1429 par Gavril Uric au convént de Neamt sous des oeuvres typiques non seulement de l'art qui a présidé à leur exécution, mais aussi de la culture de la Moldavie in général. Elles temoignent d'un haut degré d'habileté technique et de maitrise artistique. Répertoire figuratif et décoratif, tracés lineaires et accords chromatiques, rapport entre composition et found constituaient tout autant des réalisation dont la réussite sur le plan artistique impliquait l'integration organique des différentes apports du monde de l'Orient, de Byzance, de l'Occident, au fonds culturel, à la sensibilité et aux exigencies de la société moldave. C'est ainsi que furent consolidées les assises sur lesquelles allait s'élever et se parachever, dans la deuxieme moitié du XVe siècle, la prèmiere étape du style classique de l'art moldave au moyen âge". M.A. Musicescu (illustration S. Ulea), *Voroneț*, Bucharest 1971, p. 6; my translation from French. I have not fond any documentation for an *epitaphios* of 1437. Musicescu might refer to a *epitrachelion* mentioned by Turdeanu in "The Oldest manuscript…", p. 459. But what Turdeanu says even about this *epitrachelion* is that it "dates from the same period" with the above-mentioned *epitaphios*; it might mean the year 1437, but not compulsory. See more in Iorga, "Patriarhirul lui Alexandru cel Bun. Cel dintâi chip de Domn român", *Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile sectiunii istorice*, s. ll, vol. 35, Bucharest 1913, pp. 343-346, with a plate and *Domnii români, după portrete şi fresce contemporane*, Sibiu 1929, Pl. 10; G. Millet, *Broderies religieusse de style byzantin*, album, fasc. l, Paris, 1939, Pl. VIII; Turdeanu, "La broderie religieuse en Roumanie…", II and "Les étoles des XV et XVle siècles", in *Buletinul Institutului Român din Sofia*, vol. l, no. 1, Bucharest 1941, pp. 7-12.

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their Gospels [as they appear] in a beautiful Slavonic-Greek Gospel-book of the Bodleian Library (MS. Can. Gr. 122)"[1]. He makes this affirmation in the context in which he states the Romanians' connections with Byzantium: "Although most of her art and culture came only indirectly from Byzantium, Romania may nevertheless be considered to be culturally within the Byzantine orbit"[2]. (Actually in his *The Hand-produced book* written earlier (1953), Diringer had mistakenly taken as, and named St Mark a 'Late Byzantine scribe"[3]). Also Bianu puts forward the hypothesis of a "Byzantine common source" for all the arts in the Romanian lands in his study on the 'Slav-Greek Evangel' (*Evanghelia Slavo-Greacă*) written in Neamț[4]. In spite of this fact, he thinks that one can recognise a style similar to that of the Italian primitives in the manner in which the Evangelists are depicted in the 1429 manuscript. And he attempt to suggest that this is the case based on the fact that Romanian principalities received direct and indirect cultural influence from Italy from time to time throughout the country's history – and, in his opinion – this was the case in the beginning of the 15th century. But, in the end of his article, he doubts the provenience of the Italian influences, and just mentions the fact that the arts in the Romanian lands, as in other country from Balkans, and even in Italy itself, have the same 'common Byzantine source'.

The culture in Moldavia flourished during the long reign (1400-1432) of Alexandru cel Bun [the Kind], and the year 1429, when Uric's Gospel was written, was one of the most fruitful. Princess Marina, Alexandru's last wife, a daughter of a local boyar (Marin[5]) became the patroness of arts, and with a Greek Metropolitan – Macarius – in the country, a new wave of Byzantine influence became manifest. In addition to the manuscript in Oxford today, as shown earlier on p.17, more objects from that time survived. They not only reflect the influence on them of the art of the Empire which was still strong, but the fact that, in their turn, they influenced the evolution of miniature and religious embroidery in the fifteenth – sixteenth centuries. Drăguț makes known the historical context which made possible the production of such objects: "The thirteenth

[1] D. Diringer, *The Illuminated Book: Its History and Production*, Faber and Faber, London, 1958, p. 120.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 119.
[3] Diringer, *The Hand-produced Book*, London, New York, Toronto, Melbourne, Sydney, Cape Town 1953, Fig. Xl-6, p. 558.
[4] I. Bianu, *Evanghelia Slavo-Greacă scrisă în Mânăstirea Neamțului din Moldova de Gavriil Monahul la 1429*. Bibl. Bodleiană, Oxford: Cod. Can. Graeci 122, Bucharest 1922, p. 2.
[5] M. Costăchescu, *Documentele moldoveneşti înainte de Ştefan cel Mare*, Fundațiunea 'Regele Ferdinand l'. Viața Românească, Iaşi, 1931, vol. 1. Documente interne, 1374-1437 [Internal documents, 1374-1437], p. 296. Costăchescu mentions as sources for identifying this wife of Alexandru the Kind: 'The list of names' (*pomelnic*) from Bistrița Monastery where the princess appears as Maria (Tocilescu, *Analele Academiei Române*, seria 2, vol. 18, 1896, p. 65) and the Chronicle (*letopiseț*) from the same monastery, where she is called Marina (I. Bogdan, *Cronice inedite*, p. 35).

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century witnessed a strong proliferation of the pre-state formations having the necessary means to live a luxury life – obviously only for the upper strata of the society – a life in which the showing off of clothes and jewellery was not a rarity. They were also a proof of political connections and commercial exchanges with the Byzantine centres within the Danube-Pontic area, and also with artistic centres in the Ukraine, in Russia or Hungary"[1]. He also refers particularly to embroidery: "Indeed, beyond the embroidery technique itself, one has to take into consideration the clear and precise compositions, the supple and elegant designs, and the chromatic harmonies of a rare nobility"[2].

In this context it is worth mentioning that Gavriil Uric made many contributions to the cultural flowering of the time. He copied the book of ascetic writings mentioned above – the collection from the *Sermons of Gregory the Theologian* in 1424 and, as shown, other works before and after the manuscript preserved today in the Bodleian Library. The Gospel which he copied in 1436 (that which is now in Neamț) has decorations in the style of the 1429 ms., but with no illuminations. He copied his third Gospel in the year when the first school of Slavonic scribes he founded closed (1447)[3]. This school was to function again during Stephen the Great time (1457-1504) through direct and indirect disciples of Gavril, as will be shown further.

My initial view on the issue of iconography in the Moldavian *Tetraevangheliar* of 1429 was that this could be of Byzantine style belonging to the Palaeologan artistic phase. It looks similar to the Serbian manuscript decoration, and it makes sense that the artistic life from the neighbour country to have influenced that in the Romanian principalities because "the Serbian Kingdom […] adopted the Palaeologan style as early as 1321 (in Gračanica Monastery)"[4]. This would not be the only case when the Serbian influence was present to the north of the Danube.

However, Bianu's argument for the influence of the Italian primitives on Uric's iconography in this 1429 book has some basis. In the manuscript there are some common elements – especially architectural – with those in Giotto's paintings (c. 1267-1337). For example, the fact that St Apostle Luke has a tonsure in the Catholic fashion can strengthen an impression along these lines. But, on the other hand, there are other similar examples of such paradoxes later in history. For example, in Anastasie Crimca's Gospel, decorated in 1616/1617 by the painter Ştefan from the town of Suceava (and probably meant for the monastery of Krehiv in Ruthenia, which it never reached), one of the illustrations representing an Apostle looks more 'conservative' even than Uric's Gospel, in spite of the fact that Crimca's manuscript was written about two hundred years later. So here the apparent temporal discrepancy between the illustration and the text goes in the opposite direction.

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[1] Drăguț, *Pictura murală*…, p. 6; my translation.
[2] Ibid., p. 8; my translation.
[3] Turdeanu, "The Oldest manuscript…", p. 459.
[4] Ene D-Vasilescu, *Inspiration and innovation,* p. 278.

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Crimca was the Metropolitan of Moldavia in 1608-1617 and 1619-1629; his Gospel manuscript stayed for long time in the Old University Library in Lvov (I AZ), and is now in the National Library in Warsaw (Akc. 10778) – with some of its illuminated folios in Vienna (Cod. Slav. 6)[1].

The question of languages in Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122

a) The Greek text

There has been a debate in literature about the dating of the Greek text in Uric's Gospel. Turdeanu's opinion on this issue is in agreement with his position regarding the arrival of the manuscript in Venice through travellers. He thinks that the Greek text may "have been copied at Venice, where there was a strong community and where, starting from the end of the 15th century, countless books were printed in Greek"[2]. Even today a 'Greek Institute' exists in Venice (The Greek Institute of Hellenic Culture), but it does not seem that the Greek community in Venice would have had a special reason to 'complete' a Gospel written in Old Slavonic in Moldavia, especially one with such a small margin which does not look like being intended to have another text fitted into it. Unless a very stringent need – as for example, a liturgical one – prompted this writing, the Greeks would have not hand-written this text (and, moreover, this is not a 'printed book').
In the context in which Damian Bogdan states the presence of other Romanian-Slavonic palaeographical sources in various libraries in Slavic and Western countries (he mentions especially the libraries in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Munich, and

[1] C. Costea, 'Une nouvelle replique slavonne du Paris gr. 74: seven decades after', in *Series Byzantina*, vol. 1, Wydawnictwo Neriton, Warsaw 2003, p. 114; Turdeanu, 'Métropolite Anastase Crimca et son oeuvre littéraire et artistique (1608-1629)', in: *Études de littérature roumaine et d'écrits slaves et grecs des Principautés Roumaines*, Leiden 1985, p. 232 (first published in 1952); apparently the first source to mention the monastery of Krehiv as the destination of the codex is M. Sokolowski, 'Sztuka cerkiewna na Rusi i na Bukovinie' in: *Kwartalnik historyczny*, vol. 3, 1889, pp. 629-630, and *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, vol. 38, Bucharest 2001, pp. 3-17. See also Der Nersessian, 'Two Slavonic Parallels of the Greek Tetraevangelia; Paris gr. 74', pp. 222-274; idem, 'Une nouvelle réplique slavonne du Paris gr. 74 et les manuscrits d'Anastase Crimcovici' [in] *Mélanges offerts à M. Nicolas Iorga par ses amis de France et des pays de langue française*, Paris 1933, pp. 695-725. Vienna source was indicated to me by Waldemar Deluga, Professor in the Department of History of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw – who sent me also the illustrations, for which I am grateful; e-mail correspondence of 6 December 2008.
[2] Turdeanu, "The Oldest…", p. 464.

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Oxford)[1], he brings a new element into discussion regarding the history of the Ms. Can. Gr. 122. This element has a connection with the Greek text in Uric's Gospel. Bogdan states that, before being bought by antiquarians from Venice, the 1429 Tetraevangel was kept in Zographos Monastery, on Mount Athos. This is what he affirms, echoing also the appreciation Turdeanu made with regard to this manuscript: "The Tetraevangeliar from 1429, written on parchment, one of the most remarkable art manuscripts in the entire Slavic literature of the Middle Ages, some time ago at Zographos, today is in the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (Cod. Canonici Graeci, 122).[2]

He explains how the manuscript went to the monastery on Mount Athos, and also dates the Greek text in accordance with the following facts: On the 30 January 1698, when the Moldavian ruler Antioh Cantemir dedicated Căpriana Monastery to Zographos Monastery, the Gospel of Uric dated 13 March 1429 was in Căpriana. This monastery was in Lăpuşna county, Orhei district (in Moldavia beyond the Prut River, not far from today's Chişinău city). The Tetraevangel was there together with the document through which Alexandru cel Bun (the Kind) gives Căpriana Monastery and some villages to his wife, Marina. This document was also issued in 1429, but on 10 February.[3] Both the Gospel written by Uric and the document to Marina were taken to Zographos on the occasion of Căpriana been dedicated to this Athonite monastery. Costăchescu shows that in 1931, when he published his collection of documents, the parchment with

[1] D. Bogdan, *Compendiu al paleografiei româno-slave*, [s. n], vol. 1, Bucharest 1969, p. 38. He also mentions Uric on p. 67 as being the first to introduce the so-called 'literary minuscule [letter]' in one of his colophons (in Codice 164 written in Moldavia, now in the Library of the Romanian Academy of Science in Bucharest).

[2] D. Bogdan, *Paleografia româno-slavă* p. 105.

[3] M. Costăchescu, Document 91. "[Suceava. 1429 Fevruarie 10. Alexandru Voevod dăruieşte soţiei sale, Cneaghina Marena [Marina], mănăstirea la Vişnevăţ, unde este egumen Chiprian […], şi satul Calinouţi, unde este Golovca, şi prisaca la Botne din vârful Cunilei, Brăneşti şi Şendreşti şi Prijolteani şi Glăvăşani. Se arată hotarele". The transaltion of the text is as follows: [Suceava. 1429 February 10. Alexandru the Prince offers as a gift to his wife, the Princess Marena [Marina], the monastery at Vişnevăţ, where Ciprian is the abbot, and the village Calinouţi, where Golovca is, and the apiary Botne from the Cunila hill, [the villages] Brăneşti and Şendreşti and Prijolteani and Glăvăşani. The borders are shown.]", *Documentele moldoveneşti înainte de Ştefan cel Mare*, Viaţa Românească, Iaşi, 1931, vol. 1, pp. 248-253. Costăchescu shows, on pp. 251-252, that 'mănăstirea la Vişnevăţ' [Monastery at Vişnevăţ] was called Căpriana Monastery in 1931, and he tries to identify all the other places mentioned in the donation document (which is called *uric* in Old Romanian). As regarding why and how the name of Căpriana Monastery evolved, see also p. 140 in *Documentele moldoveneşti* – from being the monastery of the monk Ciprian or 'Chiprian' – who was already settled there before 1420; the local popular language named the village and the monastery Chiprieni (and they shortened and derived the name 'Căpriana' for the monastery only). See also Ştefan Gr. Berechet, *Mănăstirea Căpriana*, Chişinău, 1928, p. 12.

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Alexandru's donation act was in Zographos Monastery [where probably still is][1]. Syrku believes that the Greek text that exists along with the Slavonic one within MS 122 was also copied in Moldova. He thinks that it happened during the Fanariot regime installed by the Turks in the Romanian principalities between 1711-1821, on the orders of one of the rulers of the time.[2]

Bogdan assumes, very plausibly, that the Greek in Uric's manuscript might have been written "about the end of the XVII century", after it reached Mount Athos[3] (the realisation that the Greek text was added more recently than the Slavonic explains why it has been categorised as a Greek manuscript by the Bodleian Library – we find it as the *Codex Cononici Graecus* 122 and not *Slavicus 122*). Cox also thought that the Greek text is more recent than the Slavonic one, and he thought the Greek text to have been written independently from the Slavonic. Also Jensen and Kauffman affirm that "The parallel Greek text was added in the margins in the late 16th or early 17th century"[4].

In his continuation of the above description of Uric's manuscript, Cox shows that: "The titles of the chapters of this (Four)-Gospel, the [Theophylactus'] arguments and the painted illustrations, as well as the Greek version of the Gospel hand-written on the margins of the manuscript, are more recent [than the Slav original]. The Table of Contents, the Synaxarion, the Menologion, and the other parts are original"[5]. M. Vogel

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[1] Costăchescu, *idem*, p. 251. A copy of this document is in the library of the Romanian Academy, Ms. 126, donated by I. Bogdan who made this copy after a photograph taken by S. Nicolaescu. Costăchescu says that Uricaru made a wrong summary of this document in ('17', p. 102).

[2] Syrku, "Zametki o slavyannskikh i russkikh rukopisyakh", p. 328.

[3] D.P. Bogdan, 'Quelque témoignages des liens roumano-grecs sous la règne d'Étienne le Grand, prince de Moldavie', in: *Bulletin*, vol. 5, nos 1-2, Association internationale d'Études du Sud-Est Européene 1967, p. 123; also in: *Paleografia româno-slavă*, p. 105, footnote 36.

[4] Jensen and Kauffman, *A Continental Shelf*, catalogue entry 37, p. 96.

[5] The original translated by Cox from Latin is as follows: "Evangelia quatuor, titulis capitum, Theophylacti argumentis, et imaginibus Evangeliarum pictis illustrata, necnon versione Graeca, quoad evangelia, in margine *manu recentiori* scripta. Subjiciuntur, Synaxarium, Menologium, et alia ejusdem generis". Cox, *Bodleian Library Quarto Catalogues*, col. 105. Then the text continues, Cox has not translated all of it, but we will include here a translation of the entire text on p. 313 of Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122: "Praemissa est notitia de codice, *Italice scripta*, quae incipit 'L'evangelio in lingua Illirica fu scritto in Moldovalachia per ordine della principessa Moglie di Alessandro l'anno 6637 [1429, 13 Marzo, da un certo Gabriele Monaco. Adnectictur unicuique evangelio subscription, cujus initium subjungimus, manus in linguam Italicam ita traduxit: "Colla benedizione del Padre, dottrina dell Figliuolo, e perfezione della Spirito Santo. Si e fatto questo tetro-vangelio nel tempo dell'ortodosso e divoto padrone Gio Alessandro Vajuodo (Pallatino) padrone di tutta la terra Moldavo-Valaca, e della fedele sua moglie Marina, la quale accesa d'amore delle parole di Cristo, sollecitamente ha voluto che sia scritto. Anno 929 (sic!) compito nel mese di Marzo il giorno 13, colla mano di Gabrielle Monaco, filio di Uricova, il quale scrissa nella citta di Vanimesce". The translation of the second part of the text is as follows: "The Preface is a hand written note in *the Italian language* which begins with: 'The Evangel in lingua Illirica was written in Moldovlahia on the orders of Princess Marina, the wife

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and V. Gardthausen, after mentioning 'Gabriel, Monaco, figlio di Uricova' as the author of the Slavonic text, affirm that "the Greek margin translation is much later (seventeenth cent.?)"[1].

Bogdan's explanation on a seventeenth century authorship of MS 122 by the monks in Zographos is consistent with that given by Turdeanu who tries at length to prove that, after a period in which scholars like Syrku[2] – and himself – believed that the Greek text was written by monk Gavriil at the same time with the Slavonic original[3], now there is an agreement that it was written later then the original. (Turdeanu changed his view after seeing Uric's manuscript in the library). A bibliographical note from the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 1952 draws attention to Turdeanu's latest position[4].

To a possible objection that in Zographos, as a mainly Bulgarian monastery, the Liturgy was (and still is) held in Slavonic, one can answer that on Mount Athos each monastery has always had an ethnically mixed community. This statement is especially true for the 16th-18th centuries, when it is very likely that Greek monks lived in Zographos alongside Bulgarians and probably others. The Right Rev. Dr Kallistos Ware, Lecturer in Orthodox Eastern Christianity at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford between 1966-2001, who has spent extensive periods of time on Mount Athos, and especially in Patmos, in the Monastery of St John the Theologian, affirms that this was the case in the respective places during the period under discussion. He said that in the 16-18th century the ethnicity of the monks in Patmos and Mount Athos was not very important[5]. Even now, in Zographos' library there are 126 Greek manuscripts and 388 Slavonic, and the monks who used to live in that monastery until 1845 were Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians[6]. Therefore, it is probable that, when the Gospel written by Gavriil Uric

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of Alexander, in 6637 [1429], 13 March, be a certain Gabriel the Monk'. To each Gospel an annotation is attached, of which beginning we include below; an unknown hand has translated this text in Italian: ""With the blessing of the Father, the teaching of the Son, and the fulfilment ('perfection') of the Holy Spirit this Four Gospel book was written during [the reign] of the devoted Orthodox ruling Prince Alexandru Voievode, the Master of all the land of Moldo-Vlachia, and of his wife Marina. Their love for the word of Christ made them ask for this writing to be done. In the year 6937 (i.e. 1429); finished on the 13th of March, by the hand of Gabriel, the son of Uric, in the monastery of Neamțu." The Tetraevangel Manuscript; later adding [p. 313]. Dr Marian Ciucă's translation of this footnote. According to Cleminson, Theophilactus was the Archbishop of Bulgaria at that time.

[1] M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber*…, p. 441.

[2] P.A. Syrku (spelled also as Sirku and Sircu in various sources), 'Zametki o slavyannskikh i russkikh rukopisyakh v Bodleian Library v Oksforde', in: *Izvestija otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti*, v. 7, no. 4, St Petersburg 1902, pp. 325-345, especially p. 328.

[3] Turdeanu, 'The Oldest Manuscript', pp. 460-464.

[4] *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, Stuttgart 1952, v. XLX, p. 135.

[5] Personal conversation, June 2009.

[6] The 10th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities' website, Mount Athos, Prefecture of Halkidiki.

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reached Zographos, the monks there added the Greek text for their spiritual needs, as most of the researchers seem to agree.

Turdeanu appreciates that: "For the Byzantinologist it [MS. Cononici Graecus 122] poses the question of the provenance of the Greek text, just as for the historian of the art of the S.E. Europe it raises the problem of the relations between Moldavian miniature painting and the different Balkan sections of Byzantine miniature painting"[1]. His arguments against the writing of the both texts at the same time refer, among others, to the linguistic and also calligraphic aspects: "The Slavonic part is copied in semi-uncials, large and precisely traced, so that they appear printed, while the Greek part is copied in a cursive script, minute and with ligatures"[2], and "The Slavonic text, copied in large semiuncials characteristic of the Moldavian scribes, fills two-third of the page, while the Greek text, copied in a very small cursive hand, forms a narrower and taller column"[3]. The researcher has in view that: "While the Slavonic text occupies a column 20 cm. high and 13 cm wide, the Greek column is as narrow as 5 1/2 cm and sometimes even 5 cm; on the other hand it is 21 cm. high and has in general 30 lines. Now if we add to the width of the Greek text the white space which separates it from the Slavonic text on the other hand and from the edge of the parchment on the other, we obtain precisely the width of the white space on the lower edge of the leaf. (The upper edge is usually 4 cm. and includes the line with liturgical indications.) In other words, the copyist of the Slavonic text left a margin of 7 cm. both on the outer edge of the book and also at the bottom of each page. Then another copyist used this free space to transcribe the Greek text and in this way to adapt the beautiful manuscript for believers of *a different liturgical language rather than for those for whom it was originally intended*. The Slavonic copyist did not foresee the proximity of the Greek text. Therefore, whenever he had a correction to make to his text, he did not hesitate to make it on the margin of the page, making free use of the empty space[4].

Turdeanu concludes that the "very disproportion between the Slavonic column and the Greek shows that the copyist of the first text did not think of reserving sufficient space for the second one"[5]. In the same place, Turdeanu even tries to prove that Gavriil did not know Greek, but his arguments on this topic are not convincing enough[6]. Another argument is the fact that "it is known that no manuscript was copied in the Rumanian lands during the period in question in both languages. And not only in Moldova or Wallachia; not even among Serbs and Bulgarians, who were more closely linked with

[1] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Illuminated Moldavian Manuscript…", p. 456.
[2] Ibid., p. 462.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., p. 461; my emphasis.
[5] Ibid. p. 462.
[6] Ibid. 456.

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the culture of the Byzantium, was any religious manuscript copied in Greek and at the same time in Serbian or Bulgarian"[1].

Dr. Christos Simelidis, a British Academy Fellow at the Ioannou Centre for Classics and Byzantine Studies in Oxford, and also Nigel Wilson (who was consulted by Simelidis as his mentor) appreciate, as did Bogdan and Turdeanu earlier in the 20th century, that the version of the Greek text (i.e. the choice of variant readings) used in this manuscript conforms to the editorial conventions concerning the Bible that prevailed in the Byzantine period. It is also independent from the Slavonic text, and is not a translation of it[2]. They also believe that it could belong to the sixteenth or seventeenth century, the later date being in accordance with Bogdan, Turdeanu, and also M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen's opinions[3]. Simelidis' conclusion on the Greek text in MS. Can. Gr. 122 is summarized as follows: "It is definitely the Byzantine-type text [as I have already written to you], but I can't say anything more. It also seems […] that the Greek text was copied from a medieval manuscript and not from a printed edition of the textus receptus. The text was not copied very carefully. There are omissions. In some cases the text omitted has been supplemented later (see e.g. p. 34, l. 4). But elsewhere this is not the case. E.g. in John 6.64 οὐ πιστεύουσιν ... οἱ has been omitted (by saut du même au même: οἵ - οἱ) and not supplemented. The same in John 6.69: Θεοῦ του is also missing. I have nothing more to say about the handwriting of the Greek text. It could be dated to the 15th or 16th centuries, but it could also be later (17th)…" [4] Dr. Georgi Parpulov, from the same Centre in Oxford opts for the seventeenth century[5].

The fact that Simelidis considers that the Greek versions is a copy of a manuscript, and not of a printed text, could mean that the Greek text is actually a translation of the Slavonic text, but it was not enough space to write the two text in parallel on the same page. So the scribe wrote in Greek wherever he found the necessary space to do it. But they were two 'independent' texts in the sense that they were written at different times by two different authors.

The well-argued and logical conclusions of all above-mentioned specialists close the discussions which took place in literature regarding whether or not the Greek text was written at the same time with the Slavonic original, and whether the Greek is an independent text from the Slavonic. The texts were written independently, and the Greek in Ms Can. Gr. 122 is of the type which is still used today in the Orthodox Church[6].

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[1] Ibid. p. 462.
[2] Christos Simelidis, e-mail correspondence in December 2008.
[3] Marie Vogel and Victor Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* [The Greek Scribes in Middle Ages and Renaissance], Otto Harrassowitz, Leipzig, 1909.
[4] Simelidis, the correspondence on the 1 April, 2009.
[5] Personal discussion after my lecture in the Bodleian New Library, December 2008.
[6] Simelidis, the correspondence of December 2008.

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b) The orthography of Ms. Canon. Graeci. 122

In 1951 Turdeanu indicates the fact that "The orthography of the manuscript is characterised by the confusion of the nasals ѧ and ж, a phenomenon which appears particularly in the Slavo-Bulgarian texts of the end of the fourteenth century. The original of Ms. Canonici Gr. 122, or rather the archetype of the family of which it forms part, will therefore has to be sought in the Bulgarian literature of the preceding century"[1]. At that time he considered that "the investigation will not however be possible until the moment when a sufficiently large number of gospel texts pertaining to the last period of the flowering of Bulgarian literature has been published"[2]. In the 40 years which have passed since that statement was made enough Gospel manuscripts have been published in order for the researchers to try to find out more about Ms. 122 Canon. Gr. by comparing it with Bulgarian sources of the fourteenth century.
On the advice of Dr Catherine Mary MacRobert from Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford, I sent a copy of Ms Canon. Gr. 122 from a film made by the Bodleian Library to Prof. Cynthia Vakareliyska from Oregon University for an opinion on the Slavonic redaction of the text.
After she finished working on the manuscript of Curzon Gospel[3], and published it with annotations, comments, etc. in two volumes with Oxford University Press, she analysed MS. Canon. Gr. 122. At the end of that work she was also of the view that Neamț Gospel should be compared with other Slavonic manuscript written in the same period in order to assess how similar Ms. Can. Gr. 122 is to them. She said that the comparison should be made with regard to several aspects: lexical, iconographical, grammatical, orthographical. One comparison of Uric's manuscript which Vakareliyska has done is with Ivan Alexander Gospel (1356) from the British Library. Both these mss. belong to the 'third redaction' Gospels in spite of Ivan Alexander manuscript been written some 70 years earlier that Uric's Gospel. Ivan Alexander text is believed by many scholars to be representative of this redaction, which was introduced in the fourteenth century and intended "to return to the archaic Old Church Slavoniv vocabulary, grammatical forms, and orthography, after several centuries of 'anything goes'"[4]. The two manuscripts under disscussion here are similar; there are no local variants in the language of Uric's Gospel, as perhaps a researcher would have expected (and Vakareliyska did). When there are differences between the two texts compared above, Ms. 122 has the older lexical forms, which makes [it] appear to be even more conservative and archetypal for this redaction than Ivan Alexander Gospel"[5]. It would be interesting to see if MS. Can. Gr. 122 has

[1] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Manuscript…", p. 460.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Cynthia Vakareliyska, *Curzon Gospel*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, vols. 1-2, 1312 pages.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

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"more consistent archaic vocabulary than the great majority of other gospels of the same redaction". But that would only be possible if "someone undertakes a study of that group of mss. as a whole"[1].

Another aspect which Vakareliyska found interesting to compare is the distribution of the broad letter 'o's as opposed to 'ω's in both the manuscripts here and other mss. that use the same conventions. Some scribes used a broad letter 'o' te represent a long vowel 'o'. From the comparison she made between Uric's and Ivan Alexander's Gospels she noticed that, in spite of the two being very similar in their lexical aspect, they differ in the use of the broad letter 'o's versus 'ω's. The use of the broader letter 'o' indicates stress in pronunciation, and if 'o' and 'ω' are used differently in manuscripts written in the same periods of time, it proves that the scribes were very aware of the role of accentuation marks in texts as indicating the proper pronunciation in the geographical area where a text was written, and that "they did not use them just decoratively"[2].

Vakareliyska's conclusions are consistent with Turdeanu's opinion that this Tetraevangel is of interest for the historian of Slavonic religious literature because "it is typical of the period of the first Middle Bulgarian texts copied in the Danubian principalities"[3]. I have proposed the project of mounting this manuscript on the University of Oxford website via The Bodleian Library. If this project succeeds, the specialists working on similar documents anywhere in the world will have the chance to compare it with any of the others.

The role of Ms Can. Gr. 122 as model for other mss of the same epoch

In Dragnev's opinion, expressed when referring to manuscripts from outside the Parisian group, Uric models of tetraevangels and, in general, the models of the fifteenth century Neamț school "display a relative homogeneity"[4]. Turdeanu concurs in "Les letters slaves"[5]. Dragnev emphasises this with regard to documents from the second half of the fifteenth century, but I believe that it can be also said about some earlier manuscripts written in the same geographical area. Dragnev states that those model-manuscripts "with *entrélaces* on their frontispieces and the representation of the four evangelists, have become a 'business card' for the Moldavian illumination crafts in the epoch of Stephen the Great. The representation of the evangelists follows the famous model in

[1] Ibid.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Turdeanu, "The Oldest Manuscript…", p. 456.
[4] Emil Dragnev, *O capodoperă a miniaturii din Moldova Medievală: Tetraevanghelul de la Elizavetgrad şi manuscrisele grupului Parisinus Graecus 74*, Civitas, Chişinău, 2004, p. 169. The Parisian group of manuscripts refers to a collection of mediaeval Greek manuscripts of which the archetype (sec. Vlll AD) is in the Bibliotheca Vaticanae.
[5] Turdeanu, "Les letters slaves en Moldavie…".

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Oxford from the iconographic point of view, with the exception of one of the three manuscripts illuminated by Tudor Mărişescu (that from Munich from 1493), where Prohorus is depicted besides St John (after which similar replicas followed)"[1].

Damian compares Ms. Can. Gr. 122 with some subsequent ones, such as the illuminated Four Gospel Book from 1493 mentioned above and preserved today in the National Library in Munich. The latter was written on parchment by the deacon Teodor Mărişescu, also in the scriptorium of Neamț Monastery on the order of Stephen the Great, for the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God in Hotin. It has an autograph of the Metropolitan Petru Movilă (Peter Moghila), which makes it even more precious[2]. Iorga compares the illuminations from this 1493 manuscript with those of another Gospel written in 1473 for the Monastery of Humor, and with another one finished in 1502 on the order of the same ruler (today in the National Library in Vienna), and all of them with the manuscript in the Bodleian Library. His conclusion is that only the Gospel from 1473 and 1502 belong to Gavriil Uric's school[3]. That was also Bogdan's conclusion[4]. Popescu-Vâlcea strongly supports this view when he affirms that in the Romanian lands the preoccupation with art and culture in general through decorating and illuminating manuscripts "arose in the beginning of the XV century in the calligraphy and decorating of cult manuscripts: the 'Tetraevangel of 1429', by the artistic genius Gavril Uric, followed by the works of his famous fellow craftsmen: Paladie and Spiridon from Putna, Nicodim with his 'Tetraevangel of Stephen the Great' from Humor, Teodor Mărişescu from Neamț, etc." Popescu-Vâlcea's statement strengthens that of Turdeanu, in appreciating that, with the afore-mentioned exception from Munich, Mărişescu's works follow the 1429 Gospel-book model. Ulea agrees with the idea that manuscripts from the second half of the fifteenth century constitute models for those from Stephan the Great's reign[5].

The fact that the Gospel written in 1429, now in the Bodleian, was a model for other manuscripts, and that many researchers take the document in Oxford as a reference in assessing the value of other mss with a similar content, explain its importance. However, until now the comparisons had been made only against other manuscripts produced in the Romanian lands, but not against those written in other countries. Moreover, these comparisons were not made from the point of view of the redaction of the texts, a fact which has been rectified by this article.

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[1] Ibid.; my translation.
[2] Bogdan, *Paleografia româno-slavă*, p. 109.
[3] Iorga, *AM*, I, ll, p. 47.
[4] Bogdan, *Paleografia româno-slavă*.
[5] Ulea, "Gavril Uric. Studiu paleografic…"

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Another contribution of this study is that we have now opinions regarding MS. Can. Gr. 122 from the most qualified specialists in the world. Nevertheless, the discussion on it is not closed. On the contrary, if the manuscript is mounted on the Bodleian Library's website, that will make it available for comparisons and analyses against any other Gospel manuscript.

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