

**THE SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE GOSPELS
IN EARLY PRINTED CYRILLIC LITURGICAL TETRAEVANGELIA
AND THEIR RELATION TO THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION**

Popular scientific summary of the project

Project aims

The most important book in different Christian traditions is the Gospel. One of its varieties is the so called Tetraevangelion (gr. τέτταρα = four), as its main part is composed of four books of the Good News. Aside from these four canonical Gospel books and a special appendix with liturgical rubrics, Tetraevangelia also contain several other literary texts that precede or follow each of its four main parts. Among the texts that precede each canonical Gospel book, Chapter division (gr. κεφάλαια), the Preface (gr. ὑποθέσις), the Evangelist's vitae or *Superscription* can be enumerated. They provide readers with essential information, i.e., the division of the Gospels' texts into chapters, authorship, circumstances of the composition of the particular book, the life of the authors, etc. At the end of each Gospel book, there are also relatively short literary texts called *Subscriptions* (i.e., afterwords), containing supplementary information on the book they follow.

The aim of the project is to analyse all the *Subscriptions* (i.e., afterwords) to the four Gospels in all the extant Cyrillic early printed liturgical Tetraevangelia, i.e., books printed up to 1800 in various areas of Slavia Orthodoxia, among others, in the territories of contemporary Russia (Moscow), Ukraine (Lviv, Kyiv, Pochaiv), Lithuania (Vilnius, Vevis {Yev'ye}), Serbia and Montenegro (Rujno, Belgrade and Mrkšina Crkva) and Romania (Târgoviște, Sibiu, Brașov, Alba Iulia, Bucharest and Sebeș). These early printed Cyrillic Tetraevangelia followed different liturgical, textual, and literary traditions, sometimes observed in only a limited area and time, and also often known only locally.

Research description

The *Subscriptions* appended to the end of the four Gospels will be studied on many levels. The descriptive analysis will be used to characterise the literary traditions of different publishing centres in various periods. The textual analysis will be used to indicate whether any relationships exist between the Tetraevangelia printed in different publishing centres and various periods. The typographical analysis will be used to interpret unusual textual variants. The linguistic analysis will be performed on local variations of the Church Slavonic language (East Slavic, Middle Bulgarian, and Serbian recensions). The obtained results will be compared with the handwritten tradition of Slavic manuscripts. The research will use all the extant early printed Cyrillic liturgical Tetraevangelia, i.e., 110 editions, printed between 1512 and 1800, and many other available Cyrillic manuscripts with Gospel texts.

Justification of the research topic

The oldest Slavic tradition represented by manuscripts has long been of interest to academics, while the younger one, represented by early printed books issued from 1500 to 1800, has been studied extremely rarely. The early printed Cyrillic Tetraevangelia, analysed only by book experts, have recently been subjected to textual studies. The different literary texts that precede each Gospel, the several fragments of Church Slavonic translation of Good News or the liturgical rubrics containing the list of saints and feasts have been studied on many levels. The *Subscriptions* appended to the end of the Gospels in Cyrillic printed books and in Slavic manuscript traditions have not yet been the subject of textual and literary studies. These texts in Greek sources, usually disregarded, have been studied only from a general point of view.

Main expected results

The research on the *Subscriptions* appended to the end of the Gospels in the early printed Cyrillic Tetraevangelia enables an accurate interpretation of the several aspects of the Church Slavonic literary tradition of the printed era in its different local variations (Middle Bulgarian, Serbian, Lviv, Kyiv, Pochaiv, Moscow, Vilnius) and their relation to Slavic manuscript tradition, the dissemination and dominance of various literary traditions and their influence on local publishing centres, the presentation of typographical workshop of publishers or the evolution of the Church Slavonic language. The results of the research on the *Subscriptions* to the Gospels in the early printed Cyrillic Tetraevangelia can be used in the further academic work of theologians, medievalists, or linguists. It will be particularly interesting to compare the outcomes of this project with the results of the Greek manuscript studies.