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Birth and Hindering of Religious Studies at the University of Cluj. A Historical Overview.

Abstract:

This study will focus on the birth of studies related to the domain of religion at the University of Cluj, starting with the interwar period, then following with the communist period. The paper aims to offer an exhaustive depiction of what has been done in the academic milieu from 1919 to 1989, concerning the domain of religion, excluding Theological studies. We tried to make the connection, from a historical perspective, between the changes supervened in the Romanian official, political ideology and its representation in the University curricula, on the basis of the Annual Reports issued by the Rectors' Office of the University of Cluj in the analyzed period of time.

Short history of the University

The first university from Cluj was founded by the document signed by Stephen Bathory in Vilna (Vilnius) on May 12, 1581, at that time being a Jesuit one, with three colleges, of Theology, Philosophy and Law.

The higher education in Cluj was reorganized in the year 1776 with the foundation of a new College, having four faculties: Law, Philosophy, Natural Sciences and Surgery.

Then, after the First World War, the university was re-founded by Romanian intellectuals who regarded it as the "best expression of the cultural features and of the constructive needs of the nation."¹ The existence of the University was justified through the support it could offer to the national state. The University of Cluj was reopened as a Romanian University in 1919, after the integration of Ardeal in Romania in 1918. In the Report written by Drăganu which preceded the reopening and justified the foundation of the University as a Romanian state University, the actual Hungarian University was to be moved to Tîrgu-Mureș in the case the Hungarians would have continued its support.² The status of Ardeal at that time restricted an immediate nationalization of the Hungarian University, and, therefore, the solution combined the two main alternatives:

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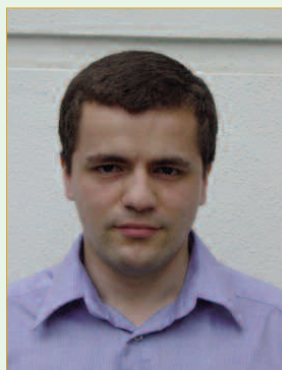
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Key words:

Religion, religious studies, curricula,
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the nationalization and the creation of a new University.³ The takeover of the University was made by Professor Onisifor Ghibu on the 12th of May 1919. A Faculty of Theology did not exist at the University of Cluj. Due to the multi-confessional milieu of Transylvania, a single, Orthodox Faculty of Theology, as it had been planned to be created at a certain moment, would have been regarded as a source of tension between different confessions. The name by which the University was known till 1927 was „The University of Superior Dacia” and starting from that year the name was changed in „King Ferdinand University”, anticipating its tenth anniversary celebration. The name of the University was changed again with its relocation to Sibiu and Timișoara in September 1940. In the summer of 1945 the University King Ferdinand the First moved back to Cluj. In 1948 the name of the University changed again, due to the communist educational reform, in Victor Babeș. Departments of Marxist-Leninist studies were created and an unique curricula imposed to all universities in the country. In 1959 *Bolyai* University, founded by a decree of King Michael I dating from 1945 through which a state university having Hungarian as teaching language is created, is unified with *Victor Babeș* University, resulting the actual name of *Babeș-Bolyai* University.

Methodology

In order to offer an exhaustive image of what has been done in the academic milieu from 1919 to 1989, concerning the domain of religion, i.e., the first courses that focused on religious issues, studies and articles published by University professors, we consulted all the *Annual Reports*, *Programs of the courses and seminars*, *Bulletins* and *Guidebooks for students* issued by the Rectors’ Office starting with 1919, to the last one, published in 1962-1963. We tried to make the connection, from a historical perspective, between the changes supervened in the Romanian official, political ideology and its representation in the University’s curricula. We developed our methodology along our researches. We started by simply searching keywords that would be representative for the domain of religion, but only in the field of human and social sciences. Along our focused search we managed to gather information about the history of the University. We found out that the name of the University was changed a few times along its history. Certainly, this was a consequence of the historical development in *Ardeal* (Transylvania) and it has also strongly influenced the curricula, at least concerning the study of religion. We did not simply look at the list of courses offered at that time by each professor from every faculty with its short description, but we also checked out the biographies of those professors and their list of publications.

Short history of the public documents

Most relevant for the curricula of the University of Cluj from 1919 up to 1989 are the *Annual Reports*⁴ issued by the Rector’s Office. Some of them were preserved at the *Central University Library* from Cluj and others are to be found at the Museum of the University from Cluj. Unfortunately, it was impossible to recuperate the entire educational activity from 1919 to nowadays, even if we narrowed our research only to the domain of different approaches of religion. An exhaustive approach, planned as such from the very beginning, has proved to be unattainable by reason of an irregular issuance of the *Annual Reports* of the University from Cluj. One could blame historical events or major

changes occurring either in the political life of the country or in the organization of the institution *per se* for this irregular printing, or preservation of such reports. But in the case of the *Annual Reports* of the University from Cluj, no such explanation is plausible. From the interwar period there are only two reports missing, i.e., one which should have been published in the year of 1920-1921, and the other from 1939-1940. It is probable that the first one missing was not preserved, and that the second one had not been printed due to the commencement of the Second World War.

The elaboration and publication of the Annual Reports by the University has ceased in 1942. For the following years, up to 1947, the only documents issued by the University of Cluj concerning the curricula was *The program of the courses and seminars*⁵ of the *Faculty of Philosophy and Letters*.⁶ Afterwards, along the communist period, only two publications that played the formal role of the Annals are to be found: two volumes of the *Bulletin of the University*⁷, the first one concerned Sciences and the second one Humanities, both of them being issued under the supervision of the rectors representing each University, that is “Victor Babeș” University and “Bolyai” University. This *Bulletin* appeared only once, in 1956-1957, being afterwards transformed in the *Studia Universitatum Victor Babes et Bolyai* scientific journal that appeared beginning with 1958, being composed of the “series” Philosophy, History and Geology/Geography/Biology. Another document representative for the University during communism is *The Guidebook for students*,⁸ in which are presented the Faculties and their subsequent courses.

The birth of the studies related to religion at the University of Cluj

In order to separate and to interpret correctly the dates encountered in the *Annual Reports* we used the milestones of the historical timeline and, consequently, their correspondent ideologies, as education seems never to be completely detached from politics. This political involvement of the staff of the university in politics becomes obvious at a quick glance at the biographical details mentioned in the *Annals*. To exemplify, one of the most prominent figures representing the University from Cluj was Alexandru Lăpedatu, professor of Romanian History, who was the minister for Culture and Arts⁹, then a State minister¹⁰. He was also elected as deputy and senator in more legislatures. Another professor, Onisifor Ghibu was a deputy in the National Reunion of Transylvania and also member of The National Committee of Refugee Romanians from Ardeal and Bucovina in 1918. He was also member in the Romanian National Committee of the World Alliance for the Fraternization of People through Church. It seemed that most significant and exemplary for what happened in the field of what we nowadays call *religious studies* would be to divide the history of the University of Cluj with a certain relevance for this research study into three main periods: the interwar period (1919-1942), the period of the relocation of the University to Sibiu and Timișoara (1942-1945), and the communist period (1948-1989).

The structure of the reports during the first period (1919-1942) from each faculty follows the same rule, that is, firstly, a short biography of each full professor comprising his¹¹ academic and extra-academic, even political and religious affiliations, secondly, the curricula containing a short presentation of the course and its correspondent seminar that included the topics discussed and the papers presented by the students, and,

finally, an account of the studies, articles or reviews written that year by each professor from each Faculty. Those Faculty reports also contained statistics with the exact number of students registered in an academic year at that particular faculty. The statistics from each faculty were annually gathered in a general statistic of all students registered at the University of Cluj during that year.

One of the criteria that counted for the general statistic of students was, among gender, national or ethnic provenience and citizenship, their religious affiliation. If we take into consideration the order of these variables in the statistics, the apportionment of students according to their religion being the second criteria, next to gender, we can affirm, without going too much astray or misinterpreting facts, that, at least in the inter-war period, religious affiliation in Transylvania was considered essential for the identity of an individual. It was regarded as an essential feature of the person to such an extent that, for example, in the academic year 1922-1923¹³, for the Law School, the statistic also included the number of initially registered students in comparison with the number of successfully promoted students in exams, according to their religious affiliation. Therefore, if religion was a second variable in the statistic, following citizenship, which was taken into account in relation with the number of promoted students, it must have been considered a relevant criteria for the overall academic performance.

The first general statistic of the students of the University according to the criteria of religion and place of birth is recorded in the year 1919-1920.¹⁴ The occurrence of a general statistic at university level is not regular, thus not required every year, for example in the years 1922-1923, 1925-1926 or 1926-1927. Afterwards, the statistics tend to become more elaborated, taking into account also other criteria, such as gender, ethnic origin, citizenship and the exact number of students at each faculty.

In what follows, we will try to demonstrate to which extent has this fact influenced, or it has been representative for the making of the curricula of the University and for the intellectual and moral evolution or development of the student body, along the same period of time.

Studying the biographies of the professors, their memberships in different religious or political associations, their publications, we tried to establish the connection between those mentioned above and their academic interests, their courses or topics approached. To exemplify, Onisifor Ghibu, took his PhD in Philosophy at the University of Jena. He was primary school inspector from the Orthodox Archbishopric of Transylvania from 1919 to 1925. He taught courses of Pedagogy, in which he approached topics related to the field of religion, without a systematic program. For example, in 1935-1936 he held a seminar of *History of Pedagogy*, in which were read and discussed the following papers presented by the students: *The educational activity of the Piarist Order; Orthodox Monarchism as educational factor; Catholicism related to education; Orthodoxy and Catholicism; Neamț Cloister as a pedagogical center; The educational activity of the Premonstratens Order; The religious politics of Great Romania*.¹⁵ At the same seminar held the next year, a paper written by a student, named Iosif Naghiu entitled *Romanian specificities in religious education* was held among others such as *On the national education and Greek-Catholicism* held by Traian Tulbure and *On family, school and church as factors of national education*, held by Anatolie Chirav.¹⁶ Here the emphasis on the national character of education, even in what regards its religious nuance becomes obvious. Among his publications we should mention: *The Hungarian Catholicism in Transylvania and the Religious Politics of the Romanian State* (Cluj, 1924). *An Imperious National Necessity: The Religious Unity of Romanians* (Beiuș, 1931); *An Anachronism*

and a Defiance: *The Roman Catholic Transylvanian State*, (Cluj, 1931); *The University of Superior Dacia and the Problem of the Roman Catholic Transylvanian State*; *The nullity of the Concordate between Romania and the Holy Seat, which is the first volume from the collection Studies and Documents Regarding the Religious Politics of Great Romania*. (Cluj, 1935); *Contributions to the Juridical Problem of the Personality of Catholic Monk Orders from Romania. The Necessity of Repairing a Mistake made by the Minister for the Cults*. (Sibiu, 1936 – Excerpt from the *Theological Magazine*); *The Order of Conventual Franciscans (Minorites) from Transylvania*, (Bucharest 1937-1938); *A Cardinal National Problem: the Romanian Church, in the magazine Cele trei Crișuri*, (Oradea, 1938). In 1940 he publishes the sixth volume of the collection *Studies and Documents Regarding the Religious Politics of Great Romania* entitled *The Minority and Religious Politics of Romania* (București, 1940 Universul Printing House, 832 pages). In this volume, he analyses the principles of religious and minority politics in Romania between the years 1918-1940, opposing the generous official politics of the state to the disloyal politics of Transylvanian Hungarians and of the Catholic Church.¹⁷ In the same year, he publishes *Romanian Christianity and Hungarian Christianity in Transylvania*, written for “Siebenbürgen” a journal initiated by the Institute of National History of the University of Bucharest, published in German and Italian.

In his case, the scientific interest in the field of religion and its curricular reflection was strongly determined by his membership in different religious and educational commissions, and secondly by his interest in current regional political problems.

Alexandru Lăpedatu, was a deputy of Ceica in the Parliament (1922), Deputy in the National Ecclesiastical Congress of the Transylvanian Metropolis (1924). Deputy in the Eparchial Synod of the Dioceses from Cluj. Minister for the Cults and Arts beginning with the 1st of November 1924.¹⁸

Gustav Kisch, professor of German and German Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Counsellor in the *Ecclesiastic Supreme Council of the Evangelic Church from Sibiu*, School Inspector concerning confessional matters urged his students to present papers on German mythology in the light of literature.

Similarly, the academic interests and carrier of Ioan Lupaș has been influenced by his administrative responsibilities in domains related to religion. He was Professor of Romanian Modern History, School Inspector concerning confessional matters (1909-1919), Secretary of the Direction of Cults and Public Instruction from Sibiu (1918-1918), Member of the Commission for the making of the project of the law regarding the unification of the constitutional-ecclesiastic organization, Deputy in the Ecclesiastic National Congress from Transylvania and in the Synod of the Eparchy from Cluj. Among his publications stand the following *Icons in the World History up to the year 1453*, Bucharest, 1930; *Icons in the World History from 1453 to 1930*, Bucharest, 1930; *The Religious Education in the New Project for an Analytic Curricula*, in *Universul*, 25th of October 1931; *Social Protection and the Church*, in *Social Work*, III, no.2/1931, p.15-30; *Challenges between the pulpit and the preachment in Apuseni Mountains*, *Universul*, 15.IV.1933; *The Social Protection and the Church*, in *Our Country*, 1933.

At the Law School, a throughout preservation of the titles of the courses is noticeable, even if, as we will demonstrate in the following, the topics approached in the courses have changed according to the theoretical interests of each professor. One of our aims was to observe the changes which supervened in the curricula once with the change of one of the professors. The most relevant course related to the field of religion which presents, seemingly, the longest constant tradition, at least in the inter-war period at the

University from Cluj is the course of *Ecclesiastic Law*. The chair of Ecclesiastic Law is vacant in the year of 1919-1920, and it is occupied in the in the year 1923-1924 by Petre Poruțiu.¹⁹ The topics discussed during the course focused on: *The Church. Ecclesiastic Law and Canon Law. The history of Ecclesiastic Law. The ecclesiastic constitution in its historical development. Old Times. Bishops, Deacons, Presbyterians. Clergy and laics. The Synods. The Metropolitans. The development of Oriental Church. The Church in the Roman Empire and in the Franc Empire. The Roman primacy. The Tridentine Council. The papacy. The bishopric. The state and the church. The legal position of the Churches in Romania.*²⁰

Afterwards, in the year 1934-1935, the course of *Ecclesiastic Law* was, for the first time held by Lazăr Iacob. It comprised, then, discussions on The Concordats after the war. *The Concordat signed by Romania with the Holy Seat.*²¹ The following year, the same course was also held in the framework of the Graduate School. The topic approached was *The Supreme Patronage and the Rights of the Romanian State.*

But this was not the only course concerning religious issues from Law School. Another course, that of *Penal Law, Criminology*, held since 1924 by Professor Traian Pop, who treated religion among other social factors such as education, instruction and civilization in determining criminality.

Also, the course of *Social Politics*, held by Nicolae Giulea, at the same Faculty, treated the relation between Social Politics and other social sciences such as Sociology, Political Economy, Economic Policies, Bio-politics, Ethics, Esthetics, even Theology.²² In the year 1936-1937 for the course *Constitutional Law*, Romul Boilă approached the issue of the State and the Rights, excepting as presentations for the seminar two papers linked to religion: *Rabindranath Tagore and the Oriental Pantheism* held by Constantin Papuc and *The Papal Encyclic issued on the 6th of March 1937* by Ioan Botlinger. The only publications significant for the research, achieved at Law School are: *Concetto Christiano della Proprieta* by Jose Maria Palacio, O. P., *Compte Rendu* in *Revue Internationale de la Theorie du Droit*, Annee XI Cah. 3. and *Einfluss des Christentum auf das Corpus Juris Civilis*, by Const. Hohenlohe, in *Revue Internationale de la Theorie du Droit*, Annee XI Cah. 3.

Starting with 1939-1940 the course on *Ecclesiastic Law* is no longer held, the emphasis changed to *International Law, Diplomacy and Relations with the neighboring countries*. At Law School no further texts having religion as main theme appear.

In the years 1925-1926 and 1926-1927, at the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy the *Laboratory in Experimental Psychology* has among its publications the title *The Content and Evolution of the Religious Life for the Individual*, paper focusing on statistic based on the material gathered using questionnaires, written by L. Bologa, the Assistant of the Institute. Another publication in same field appears in 1936-1937 as Graduation Paper written by Alexandru Tohăneanu, *The Measurement of the Attitude Towards Church*.

In the field of Pedagogy, Vladimir Ghiozdănescu, even though he does not publish papers on religious themes, includes in his seminars topics related to religious education.

Some theoretical papers treating religious matters are presented during the seminar of Pedagogy such as: *The moral and the religious education in our (Romanian) secondary schools*, held by a student named Lucian Bologa in 1924. He afterwards became an Assistant Professor and maintained his interest in subjects related to religion, as showed above. Another seminar on *The religious education of adolescent girls* is to be found in 1933.²³ Another notable paper published in 1936 by Nicolae Mărgineanu,

Anatole Chircev and Maria Draser was entitled *Tests for measuring the social attitudes towards the church, nationalism and internationalism*.

In the domain of Pedagogy, at the seminar of *Methodics and the History of Pedagogy* were discussed, among others, the following texts on religious topics: *The right of supreme patronage of the Hungarian King over the Catholic Church*, held by the student Petru Nistor; *The carriers of the scholar work of the Jesuits from Transylvania: The Piarists*, presented by Veturia Nemes; *The Roman-Catholic Transylvanian State as Usurper of the Rights of the University from Cluj*, presented by Vasile Barna; *The Study of the Issue of the Roman-Catholic Hungarian, Transylvanian State from a historical and juridical perspective for guidance of the public opinion*, by Irma Juricscay; *The Hungarian Catholicism fighting against the Romanian Feeling*, by Minerva Lipovan; *The Order of Franciscan Conventual (Minorites) Monks in the Ancient Hungary*, by Petru Cimponeriu.²⁴

The Department of History was by far the most productive in the study of religion at that time. To demonstrate this, it is enough to remind that Silviu Dragomir, professor at that department, published in 1922 *The History of Our Religious Manumission*, for which he was awarded the prize of the Romanian Academy, and in 1930, he published a book entitled *The Ancient Churches from Zarand and their founders in the XIVth and XVth Century*. He also wrote *The History of the Manumission of Orthodox Church form Ardeal in the XVIIIth Century*, vol. II, Sibiu, 1930. In the same year, he began to elaborate an inventory of Romanian art aiming at creating an ecclesiastic museum for the Orthodox Bishopric from Oradea. Another book signed by the same historian entitled *The Founders of the Church from Bârsău (The County of Hunedoara)*, in *The Year Book for the Historical Monuments from Ardeal* has been issued in 1933.

In 1930, another famous historian and professor, Constantin Daicoviciu published *Contributions for the Religious Syncretism at Sarmizegetusa*, in *The Year Book* of the Institute for Classical Studies, Cluj. He also held a course entitled *Roman Religious Antiquities* in 1936-1937. Then, Constantin Marinescu, professor of World History participated to the *Fourth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, in Sofia, in September, 1934 with the intervention *Le Pape Nicholas V 1447-1455 et son attitude envers l'Empire Byzantin*. He published in *Bulletin Historique de l'Academie Roumaine* the study *Le Pape Calixte III Alphonse V d'Aragon, Roi de Naples et l'offensive contre les Turques*. Also, during his course of *World History*, the students translated from the Pope Grigore I the Great, *Liber pontificalis* and from St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*. The course of Ancient History of Romanians, held by Associated Profesor C. Diclescu in the year 1926-1927, the topic *what does Christianity Mean for Romanians?* was treated.

At the Department of History, towards the end of the 1920s, the studies concerning the importance of religion along world history grew in importance.

Another representative department for the study of religion is the Department of Letters where Nicolae Drăgan published in 1940 *The History of Ancient Romanian Literature. A Manuscript of Religious Transylvanian Apocryphal from the XVth Century*, in the journal *Dacoromania* IX, pp. 219-224. At the *Laboratory of Experimental Phonetics*, in the year 1934-1935, Assistant Professor Emil Petrovici and Lecturer Ioachim Crăciun gathered material for a Bibliography of the History of the Romanian Church.

In the same manner, Romulus Vuia, in his course from 1936-1937 entitled *Ethnography and Folklore*, allowed students to present papers on different topics related to the field of religion. For example Caludi Anastasia presented a *Report on the Activity of C. Petran, especially on his works regarding the wooden churches from*

Ardeal, Banat and Maramureș; Tömlö Iuliu wrote *Christmas and New Years Eve Customs in the Village of Reteș*; Gheorghe Pavelescu spoke about *The Icons on Glass from the Alba County* and Roman Aurelia about *Christmas and New Years Eve Customs in the Village of Bolintineni*. He also introduced in 1945-1946, in the curricula of the Faculty of Letters, a course named *Introduction to Ethnology* in which he spoke about the beginnings of social, economic, and religious life.

Sociology was underrepresented in the perspective of our research. Only Constantin Sudețeanu held in 1934-1935 a course on Ethics during which a few lectures on the common basis of biological morals and religious morals were approached.²⁵

Last but not least, at one of the oldest departments of the University, Philosophy, Lucian Blaga held under the main topic *Philosophy of Culture* the course entitled *Religion and Spirit* in which he examined the influence that the factors which create a certain "style" have on the religious phenomena, with examples from the history of religions. He also published *Religion and Spirit*, a philosophical study, in which these ideas are developed.²⁶ During the 1939-1940 in the *Seminar of Rural Sociology* he comments on the *Transcendent Revealing Itself as Immanent*.

Another Professor Marin ștefănescu, held the course *The question of knowledge in Christian Philosophy*. He was President of the Association *The Cult of the Nation* and held in 1936-1937 a series of conferences for the enlightenment of the Romanian people in what regards the nationalist doctrine based on the Christian Philosophy. In 1943-1944 he continued with the theme Philosophical issues in the light of Christian Philosophy and held public conferences and discussions regarding philosophical problems. He changed the name of his course in 1944-1945 to *The role of Philosophy in the life of the nations*.

During the academic year 1946-1947 we found no mention of themes related to religion in the curricula.

As we hope to have demonstrated by the above mentioned, we cannot affirm that the criteria of religious affiliation present in the statistics influenced the making of the curricula, but rather the latter was affected by the biographies and interests of the professorial body. Anyway, the curricula planning was not centralized, i.e., decided at a national level, but rather it was determined by the each University. At that time, this could be considered an expression of the Universities' autonomy. Furthermore, the curricula, and, consequently the education and instruction of entire generations of students were being left at the free will and decision of the professors. Yet the interwar period there were a lot of initiatives concerning the study of religion but this cannot be subsumed to an academic discipline such as the religious studies.

The communist period and the study of religion

Even if the issuance of the *Bulletin of the University* from Cluj was regarded as "an important stage in the development of scientific research in the two institutions of higher education... and its aim is to improve the level of the courses and to ameliorate the educative work with the students"²⁷, the tradition of publishing Annals was broken. This happened because on the one hand the Annals seemed to be rejected as bourgeois and on the other hand, all publications were so centralized and totally submitted to the Party that such an initiative on the part of the University would have been considered at least partially incontrollable. The former Annals contained statistics and detailed data

that corresponded to the reality, to what was effectively happening in the University. These statistics and data would have been a lot harder to mystify according to the required ideology. Yet, it is a fact that, at least in the *Bulletin* from 1956, references to religion still appeared: “The practical program of the rural state aims at elevating the state in what regards the spiritual, moral and *religious* level of the state.”²⁸

In the same *Bulletin* the idea that the popular democratic (communist) regime fully installed in 1948, offers people of any national minority equal chances to participate to the political and administrative issues, to the government. The national minorities are considered, from an ideological perspective, in the creation of a common “thesaurus”²⁹ of Romanian people, but no reference is made to religious minorities. This means not only that religious affiliation is totally excluded from the sphere of the politics and left without any political representation, but it is also disregarded in the process of culture making.

Strangely as it seemed at that time, after the famous decree no. 177 from 1948 which “permitted the state considerable control over the religious life”, the *Bulletin* from 1956 contained more studies that could be regarded under the category of studies related to religion. One of them is entitled *A Valuable Contribution to the Development of Literary Romanian Language: The Sermons of Varlaam*. This study, written by Liviu Onu, Chair of Romanian language, V. Babeș University represents a short analysis of the language of sermons from the point of view of the history of literary language, comprising many illustrative citations, having the purpose of emphasizing the role of Varlaam in the development of literary Romanian language.³⁰ There appears, also, *A Transylvanian Copy of the Versificated Psaltry of Mitropolitan Dosoftei*³¹. But the *Bulletin* was the last publication issued by the Rector’s Office in which references and studies related to religion were allowed throughout the communist period.

Conclusion

The lack of a Faculty of Theology encouraged, in a way, other studies concerning religion. Along the researched period of time, we cannot speak about the presence of religious studies as a separate domain of study, as “a perspectival and comparative discipline”³² at the University from Cluj; no systematic study of religion could be noticed, neither from a historical point of view (Mircea Eliade, one of the most important representatives of a historical approach of religion, being at that time in his years of instruction in Bucharest), nor from a phenomenological perspective. Yet, a multidisciplinary study of religion, even if disparate – because the study of religion was not only conducted at various Faculties and institutional Departments, using, therefore, different methodologies, correspondent to particular fields of study, but it is also defined by a lack of continuity along time within the framework of each domain - exists at the University of Cluj, since its creation in 1919.

Even if in the interwar University the study of religion, even separate, was at least present, if not prominent, the communist period broke any tradition whatsoever, and the status of the social sciences degraded during communism in such a manner, that it became impossible to conduct any research regarding religion, and afterwards, immediately after 1989 it was quite hard to recuperate the basis for religious studies, but the curricular need for such a domain was imperative.

Notes:

1 Vasile Pușcaș, *University and Society. A History of Higher Education in Cluj in the 20th Century*, Cluj University Press, 1999.

2 Ibidem, p. 71.

3 Ibidem, p. 73.

4 *Anuarul Universității din Cluj*. 1919-1942.

The program of the courses and seminars for the year 1942-1943, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, Cartea Romanească Cluj Publishing House, Sibiu, 1943.

5 *The program of the courses and seminars for the years 1942-1947*, the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. Cartea Romanească din Cluj Publishing House, Sibiu

Buletinul univeristăților V. Babeș și Bolyai, Cluj, seria științe sociale, vol I nr. 1-2, 1956.

6 *Îndrumar pentru studenți*, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai Cluj, 1962-1963.

7 Alexandru Lăpedatu was minister for Culture and Arts in the following periods of time: 1st of November 1923-31st of March 1926, 4th June 1927-10th of November 1928, and 9th of July 1934-30th of August 1936. Cf. *Anuarul Universității din Cluj* for the year 1924- 1925. Elaborated by the rector of the year, C. Negrea, and by ștefan Jarda, general secretary of the University, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Ardealul” Publishing House, Cluj, 1926, p. 97.

8 Alexandru Lăpedatu was State minister in the following periods of time: 14th of November 1933-9th of June 1934 and 30th of August 1936-15th of November 1936. Cf. ibidem.

9 At that time the majority of the teaching staff was made up by male professors. The first woman professor, who showed a certain interest in topics related with religion was Elena Eftimiu, lecturer of Czech language at the Faculty of Letters, who held a conference at Radio Bucharest entitled *Christmas celebration for Slavic peoples* on the 25th of December 1938. Cf. Annual Report of the University for the year 1939-1940, printed by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, p. 220.

10 The presentation of the seminars, in the *Annual Reports*, developed along time in such a way that the first occurrence of a detailed description of a seminar dates from 1924. It was the seminar for the course of *Theoretical Pedagogy*, held by professor Onisifor Ghibu. Herein, the title of the papers written by students during the seminar of *Religious Educational Literature* was mentioned: *The Historical Development of the Romanian Religious Educational Literature in comparison with German, Hungarian and Jewish Literature*. It is also recorded that the seminar focused especially on the current educational literature for the religious instruction in secondary orthodox, uniate, catholic, evanghelic, reformed, unitarian and mozaic schools. A first, still incomplete bibliography of this literature has been composed as result of the same seminar, in the *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1924-1925, printed by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, p.120.

11 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1922-1923. Elaborated by Professor, Ph.D. Iacobovici, Rector of the year și Dr. ștefan Jarda, general secretary of the University, p. 32.

12 “The number of students enlisted at our University was unexpectedly high. In the first semester there were enlisted overall 1871 students out of which 909 at the Faculty of Law, 707 at the Faculty of Medicine, 116 at the Faculty of Letters, 82 at the

Faculty of Natural Sciences and 57 attended the Faculty of Pharmacy. 1637 were ordinary students and 237 extra-ordinary audience. According to their declarations, 734 Greek-Oriental, 554 Uniates, 281 Hebrews, 220 Evangelical, 72 Catholics and 10 Reformed. According to nationality 1288 Romanians, 281 Jews, 225 Germans, 77 Hungarians. From abroad there were 51, that is: 38 from Hungary, 5 from Poland, 2 from Russia out of which a transnistrian Romanian, one from France, one from Switzerland, one from Austria, one from Czechoslovakia, one from Ukraine and one from Yugoslavia. In the second semester there were enlisted overall 2152 students out of which 1817 were ordinary students and 335 extra-ordinary audience. According to the faculties: 1098 at the Faculty of Law, 797 at the Faculty of Medicine, 114 at the Faculty of Letters, 79 at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and 64 attended the Faculty of Pharmacy. According to their declarations, 838 Greek-Oriental, 595 Uniates, 428 Hebrews, 186 Evangelical, 83 Catholics, 19 Reformed and 3 Unitarians. According to nationality 1433 Romanians, 428 Jews, 291 Germans and Hungarians. From Romania according to place of birth (counties): 1276 from Transylvania, 296 from Banat, 219 from Crișana, 156 from Maramureș, 96 from the ancient Regat, 15 from Bucovina, 10 from Basarabia and 6 from Dobrogea. From abroad there were 78, that is: 61 from Hungary, 6 from Galicia, 2 from each of the following: Macedonia, Russia, France and one from each of the following: Yugoslavia, Ukraine and Austria.” Cf. *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1919-1920, p. 15.

13 Cf. *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1935-1936, elaborated by rector Florian ștefănescu Goangă, printed by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, p. 188.

14 Cf. *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1936-1937, printed by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, p. 113.

15 *Annual Report of the University „King Ferdinand I”* Cluj-Sibiu in the second year of refuge, 1941-1942, elaborated by Iuliu Hațieganu, by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul” p. 522.

16 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1924-1925, elaborated by Rector C. Negrea and ștefan Jarda, General Secretary, Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, 1926, pp. 97-98.

17 *Annual Report of the University*, 1923-1924, elaborated by Rector N. Bănescu and ștefan Jarda General Secretary, printed by the Institute of Graphic Arts “Ardealul”, 1925, p. 48.

18 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1924-1925, elaborated by Rector C. Negrea and ștefan Jarda General Secretary of the University, Ardealul Printing House, 1926, p.24.

19 *Annual Report of the University* 1934-1935, elaborated by Florian ștefănescu Goangă, Ardealul Printing House, p. 78

20 Ibidem.

21 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1932-1933, elaborated by Florian ștefănescu Goangă, Ardealul Printing House, 1933, p. 203

22 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1934 -1935, Elaborated by Florian ștefănescu Goangă, Ardealul Printing House, 1935, p. 255.

23 *Annual Report of the University* for the year 1934-1935, op. cit., p. 250.

24 Lucian Blaga, *Religie și spirit*, Editura Dacia Traiană, Sibiu, 1942.

25 *Bulletin of the University*, op. cit., Foreword written by Acad. Prof. Raluca Ripan, Rector of the Victor Babeș University and Laszlo Banyai, Rector of the Bolyai University, p. 9.

26 Ibidem, from a text written by Gall Ernő, *Chair of Dialectic and Historic Materialism*, Bolyai University, p. 36. Emphasis added by the authors.

27 Banyai Laszlo, *Chair of History*, in *Bulletin of the University*, op. cit.

28 Liviu Onu, *O contribuție valoroasă la dezvoltarea limbii romane literare: Cazania lui Varlaam*, p. 289.

29 *O copie ardeleană a psaltirii in versuri a mitropolitului Dosoftei*, in *Bulletin of the University*, op. cit., p. 291.

30 Richard D. Hecht, *Religious Studies*, in Wade Clark Roof (ed.), *Contemporary American Religion*, Macmillan, New York, 2000, p. 606.