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MODERNIZATION AND PROPAGANDA: PERIODICALS, CIRCULARS
ECCLESIASTICAL AND THE ROMANIAN SOCIETY
IN TRANSYLVANIA DURING THE MODERN PERIOD

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Abstract: Transylvania is well-known as a multi-ethnic and multi-denominational province. Before 1918, the Romanians in Transylvania had not had a state of their own in which they could enjoy all the rights and freedoms the other inhabitants of the province benefited from, even though Romanians had represented, throughout the centuries, two thirds of the province's population. The aim of this paper is to argue that beyond their Christian mission, the Romanian Churches in Transylvania had specific characteristics resulting from the conditions in which the Romanians had lived in the province before World War I. The ecclesiastical publications (periodicals, books and circulars) assisted the higher clergy and the parish priests to be not only spiritual shepherds of their communities, but also counsellors guiding the believers in their everyday lives. The rather diverse content of these circulars, pastoral letters, brochures, articles published in the ecclesiastical press, etc., suggests the tremendous contribution that the Romanian Churches brought to the modernization of the Transylvanian society.

Key Words: Romania, Transylvania, Romanian Churches, Ecclesiastical Periodicals and Circulars, Modernization.

Introduction

Transylvania is an important part of present-day Romania. Here, throughout time, several peoples have settled alongside the Romanians. The ethnic composition of the population in the province has historically comprised Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Jews, Armenians, etc., belonging to 7 religions: Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, Mosaic and Unitarian. Prior to World War I, medieval Hungary and, subsequently, the modern Hungarian State, in which Transylvania was included, promoted a policy of ethnic-confessional uniformity and of assimilating the inhabitants of different nationalities. The measures taken by the Government in Budapest affected their inter-ethnic and, implicitly, confessional proportions. After 1918, Transylvania was united with Romania and the Government in Bucharest integrated the province within the Romanian State. Before World War I, the Romanians in Transylvania had not had a state of their own in which they could enjoy all the rights and freedoms the other inhabitants of the province benefited from, even though Romanians had represented, throughout the centuries, two thirds of the province's population. At the 1910 Census carried out by the Hungarian authorities in Budapest, Romanians still accounted for over 55% of Transylvania's total population, in spite of the demographic policies imposed by those who ruled over this territory¹.

The research hypothesis we advance in this study, supporting it with examples, is that beyond their Christian mission, the Romanian Churches in Transylvania had specific characteristics resulting from the conditions in which the Romanians had lived in the province before 1918. Ever since the early Middle Ages, the Romanians, who were indigenous to Transylvania, had belonged to the Christian Church led from Byzantium. Orthodoxy had been the religion practised not only by the Romanians in Transylvania, but also by those across the Carpathian Mountains, living in the other provinces of present-day Romania. After 1700 and the conquest of Transylvania by the Austrians, a part of the Orthodox Romanians of Transylvania converted to the Greek-Catholic Church United with Rome, so to this day the Romanians in this province belong in nearly equal confessional proportions to the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic Churches. However, this does in no way diminish the value and importance of the two confessions for the Romanian national body in the province, as the role played by the Romanian Churches in the modernization processes that Transylvania underwent during the modern period and, in particular, in the decades leading up to World War I, was visible and undeniable. Over the centuries, periodical and occasional publications (including circulars issued by metropolitans, bishops or archpriests) served as important communication instruments between the

ecclesiastical hierarchy and the faithful². After the mid-19th century, periodicals and other publications transmitted not only an ecclesiological, but also a cultural-scientific, medical, demographic, civic and, sometimes, even political content. The books, brochures and newspaper articles necessary for the organization of religious services and for the Christian education of the population prevailed among the texts printed by the Greek-Catholic and Orthodox Churches, but there was also a considerable number of circulars, brochures and articles published in ecclesiastical newspapers that popularized information regarding other daily needs of the Romanians than those of a strictly religious nature. As pertinently noted in a valuable monograph on the state of the Romanian nation in Transylvania during the 1848 Revolution (a statement that has, in any case, a higher degree of validity for the modern period), “starting at the top level of the elite, where the arch-hierarchs of the two denominations, Andrei Șaguna and Ioan Lemeni, activated, and going all the way to the level of the masses, where the priests acted not only as spiritual leaders but also as the political and military headsmen of their communities, the Romanian nation manifested, during those years, in the spirit of a genuine unity in diversity, the foundation of diversity being ensured by its confessional component.”³

The Romanian Church, a “stand-in for the secular state”

The contribution of ecclesiastical publications to cultivating a civic and democratic spirit

As pointed out above, prior to 1918 the Romanians in Transylvania did not have a state of their own, organized and ruled in their own name. After the measures adopted by the King of Hungary in the year 1366 and several successive evolutions (*Unio Trium Nationum*, the system of official religions, the Leopoldine Diploma, etc.), the Romanians were completely ousted, both as an ethnicity and by way of the religion they embraced, from the political life of the Hungarian and, later, the Austrian and the Austro-Hungarian State, only the Hungarians, the Szeklers and the Saxons enjoying all the privileges and rights entailed by their presence in the local and central institutions of the state. That is why the first major contribution of the Church was to offer the Romanians in Transylvania a framework that was conducive not only to the preservation of their ethnic identity, but also to their civic, democratic education and to the manifestation of certain behaviours that could hardly have found more encouraging circumstances. Especially after 1868, when the Organic Statute compiled by St. Andrei Șaguna, Bishop and Metropolitan of the Romanians in Transylvania, was adopted, the Orthodox Church brought the Romanians into the public sphere, involving them in the life of the local communities, which had overcome the situation of marginalization

to which they had been relegated for centuries. The periodical election of local parish synods and of episcopal or metropolitan synods compelled tens or hundreds of thousands of Romanians to exercise their voting rights, even though they could not take part in the political elections of county councils and parliament members, on account of the prevailing censitary suffrage. For them, the democratic exercise inherent in the election of leadership bodies not only at parish level, but also at that of archpresbyteriates and dioceses was a valuable experience that prepared and validated the political maturity the Romanian nation in Transylvania would demonstrate in the autumn of 1918. It was then that their national county and local councils were democratically elected for the first time, as were the 1,228 delegates who, at Alba Iulia, on 1 December, were to vote unanimously in favour of Transylvania's unification with Romania.

The Church's involvement in the juridical enactment of family life

Over the course of an entire millennium, the Church had represented, almost exclusively, the institution legally empowered to control and rule on matters relating to the birth, marriage or death of a person. Gradually the church increased its social role, trying to control and to extend its authority over the moral evolution and matrimonial behaviour of the members of a community. In this way, between state and church there was a mutual cooperation, the church having the right to exercise its moral jurisdiction, while the state controlled the civilian and military aspects of family life, as well as the children's and wives' inheritance and welfare.⁴ The church was responsible for keeping the marriage records, solving all problems related to engagement and marriage, the conditions of its validity and matters of divorce, for watching over the normal course of family life and over the morality of church members. This duality in the regulation of marriage and matrimonial life, through the cooperation between state and church, was understood and expressed by the main representatives of ecclestatical life, both Orthodox and Greek-Catholic: Andrei Șaguna, Ioan Rațiu etc. Generally, in the course of the 19th century, the norms and religious canons which regulated marriage and family matters for the Romanians were identical with both Orthodox and Greek-Catholics, mainly because the adherence of the latter to the Roman-Catholic Church was not conditioned by a change of the dogma in this respect. In order to understand the role of the church in the family life of 18-19th centuries Transylvanian Romanians, we must begin with the importance of Christian ethical values in the daily life of an individual. The church was a source of comfort to the Romanian peasant confronted with many hardships. So, when the priest punished someone in his parish by forbidding him to enter the church, or to be in communion with the Holy Mysteries, this was the equivalent of a severe reprimand. Therefore, by the end of the 18th century, the necessity to maintain order in the Brașov

district was felt so strongly that priests would not punish anyone with the interdiction to enter the church.⁵ Contemporary memorials from the modern times show us the devotion of the Romanian people of Transylvania to universal Christian values, the deeply religious spirit of the Romanian peasant, and the decisive influence of the priests upon the villagers' attitudes.⁶ The mission of the priests to spread moral norms and to strengthen the Christian sentiment between the members of the community was carried out not only during Sunday mass or during other holydays. The priest had to be active all through the week catechising the villagers, especially the youth⁷.

Normative documents concerning the fundamental demographic events were published with a view to their effective popularization. Others were made known to the priests and to the believers through ecclesiastical circulars, which represented one of the major means of disseminating normative messages from the centre to the parishioners. Another channel used to propagate information on matrimonial issues included the ecclesiastical press, information/popularization leaflets and theology classes, used by prospective priests to garner information on the vast domain of matrimonial matters.⁸ For hundreds of years, the Romanians in Transylvania had been forced to settle their disputes related to marriage and divorce by appearing before their priests, archpriests and bishops, around whom matrimonial courts operated, much like the lay courts of justice. Thus, they had become accustomed to seeing priests and the clerical hierarchy as true judicial institutions and were used to resorting to administrative practices and hierarchical courts when they had to settle a family-related matter.

In the second half of the 19th century, as society underwent a process of secularization and modernization, the powers of the specialized institutions of the State were enhanced to the detriment of the Church. This process led to the introduction, by the Hungarian State, of the laws of 1894-1895 in Transylvania. These laws granted the State the power to exclusively regulate civil status and to rule on issues pertaining to marriage, matrimonial life and divorce. The political-ecclesiastical laws introduced by the Hungarian State at the end of the 19th century interfered with ecclesiastical autonomy. The third law issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Instruction in Budapest, Article XXXIII of 1894, enacted the problem of civil status registers. While up until then these registers had been in the possession of the Churches, the new law stipulated their placement under state administration. Thus, from the perspective of the government officials, the role of the priest in the conclusion of marriage was to be taken over by the Hungarian civil servant. The difference compared to the previous years resided in the fact that the conclusion of religious marriage had been legitimate under both canon and civil law, being valid before both ecclesiastical and civil authorities. After the enactment of the bill of law mentioned above, civil

marriage no longer ensured ecclesiastical validity too, just like religious marriage was not recognized by the state, punishments being provided for the clergy or the couples that concluded a religious ceremony first.⁹ Without a doubt, the Romanians in Transylvania experienced the measure adopted by the secular authorities not simply as an infringement of ecclesiastical autonomy, but also as an attack against their national identity, since before the enforcement of Article XXXIII, the Orthodox Metropolitan of Transylvania, along with the two suffragan Bishops of Arad and Caransebeș, had flatly opposed its provisions. The Orthodox Consistory of Oradea expressed the same position. Through the voice of the archpriests and the higher clergy, the Orthodox priests expressed their belief that the introduction of civil marriage would alter the very sacrament of holy matrimony and, through it, the morality of the faithful. The priests stated that they would not be able to enforce such laws, which represented direct attacks against the very essence of the Church and, indirectly, against the identity of the Romanians. Consequently, they urged the Metropolitan of Sibiu, Miron Romanul, to write a query to be read in one of the sessions of the Parliament in Budapest and then to intervene also with the emperor.¹⁰ As proof of the fact that both the Romanians, on the one hand, and the Hungarian State and some Hungarian inhabitants, on the other hand, perceived the introduction of civil status legislation as a strategy of altering the Romanian national identity, several acts of vandalism were perpetrated by the Hungarians amid the disputes between the Government in Budapest and the Orthodox Church. For instance, in Oradea, the headquarters of the consistory and some Romanian schools and churches were the target of vandalizing actions. Because the local police were, in some way, complicitous with the agitators, the ecclesiastical authorities were forced to seek the aid of the Minister of Internal Affairs and request him to iron out the inter-ethnic tensions.¹¹ Through circulars, Metropolitan Miron Romanul encouraged the Orthodox clergy to oppose themselves, at the local level, to the civilian authorities' enforcement of the provisions of Laws XXXI and XXXIII. Eventually, however, the Orthodox Church was forced to abide by the ministerial decisions. The instruction that Miron Romanul issued in 1895 acknowledged the necessity to comply with the legal provisions concerning the dissolution of marriage, accepted the initial ruling of the civil courts in this matter, but maintained certain prerogatives of his Church. Of these, one referred to the submission of civil sentences before ecclesiastical courts too, whenever it was necessary for the Church to rule on a specific matter. The Church would then decide, albeit in a different form, the path a couple was to follow in order to conclude a legal marriage, from the perspective of both the state and the church. Thus, the couple had to present themselves initially before the priest, to whom they made known their intention to conclude a marriage. After this, their civil marriage was concluded before the state official and then the spouses

would return to the priest in order to have their religious marriage ceremony solemnized.¹²

The reaction of the Greek-Catholic Church against the civil laws of the years 1894-1895 was similar to that of the Orthodox Church. The typography in Blaj printed, in that context, a volume suggestively entitled *Legile politico-bisericești din 1894 și 1895 (The Political-Ecclesiastical Laws of 1894 and 1895)*, together with those ministerial ordinances translated by the Consistory of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș. The volume presented and analysed each legislative text both from the point of view of the State and from that of the Greek-Catholic Church. It was intended as a practical guidebook for the clergy, to whom the changes introduced by the civil laws were explained. In addition to the numerous explanations concerning the matter of matrimony, the volume informed the clergy that there was only one circumstance in which religious marriage could be solemnized before civil marriage: when either the couple or one of the would-be spouses was in a life-threatening situation. Matrimonial courts continued to exist, just like in the Orthodox Church, and they had the same duties as before: analysing matrimonial cases that questioned the validity of marriages concluded by Greek-Catholic priests. It was specified that a civil court ruling would have effects only in the civilian sphere, as it did not have binding force in the ecclesiastical sphere or regarding the sacramental aspects of marriage.¹³

The contribution of ecclesiastical publications to addressing demographic problems

Ecclesiastical publications and population health

A second great contribution of ecclesiastical publications to the progress of the Romanian society in Transylvania in the modern period was related to the demographic, populationist component. Here several directions of action can be identified. Thus, a constant concern of ecclesiastical leaders was to contribute to the improvement of the population's health, to combat superstitions and support the authorities in fighting against epidemics and in introducing measures of personal and public hygiene. Petru Maior, one of the coryphaei of the Transylvanian School (a cultural movement from the end of the 18th century, foundational for the assertion of the Romanian nation in Transylvania), published a work, not necessarily original but vital for those times, entitled *Învățătură pentru ferirea și doftoria boalelor celor ce se încing prin țeară și a celor ce se leagă și a unor boale sporadice, adică pe ici pe colo îmblătoare ale vitelor celor cu coarne precum și a cailor, a oilor și a porcilor (A Teaching for the Avoidance and Cure of Diseases that Break Out across the Country and of Some Sporadic Ailments, that is, of Random Occurrence, among Horned Cattle and Horses, Sheep and Pigs)*, Buda, 1816. Another illustrious representative of the

Transylvanian School, Gheorghe Sincai, wrote a work that was initially disseminated in manuscript form and published much later, *Învățătură firească spre surparea superstiției norodului* (*A Natural Teaching for Abolishing the Superstitions of the Populace*), in which he pled for combating traditional practices and superstitions.

As spiritual advisors by virtue of their profession, priests did not limit themselves to this mission and were actively involved in solving the problems their parishioners were confronted with, including those related to the onslaught of epidemics. Ecclesiastical circulars on combating epidemics were constantly issued in the modern period, by both the Orthodox and the Greek-Catholic Churches. The ecclesiastical hierarchy was enjoined to disseminate the orders and instructions of the secular authorities, but its members did not confine themselves to this role and were actively involved in the fight against epidemics. To that end, they issued their own circulars, printed leaflets and articles in newspapers in order to contribute more effectively to the battle against the mortality caused by epidemics. During the Napoleonic Wars, for example, smallpox was one of the diseases with a devastating impact in Transylvania. Ignatie Darabant, the Greek-Catholic Bishop of Oradea, convened the Diocesan Consistory on 14 August 1804 and wrote a pastoral letter that the priests of the diocese were to present to their parishioners and persuade them to accept the vaccination of their children.¹⁴

One of the most devastating diseases that plagued Transylvania in the 19th century was cholera. The first outbreak of cholera in Transylvania, which wreaked havoc across the entire European continent, lasted the entire year 1831, up until the beginning of 1832. Unknown in Europe up to that time, cholera found a population with a low level of immunity, unprepared to cope with this epidemic. The intensity with which cholera invaded Europe, the plague epidemic of the years 1340-1348, the large number of victims and the panic these diseases generated led to their being associated with gruesome overtones, entrenched in the individual and the collective imagination.¹⁵ At the Greek-Catholic Diocese of Oradea, Bishop Samuil Vulcan drafted and then issued a circular for combating cholera in the year 1831. This epidemic had ravaged the area, the disease having been unknown on the European continent until then. This circular recommended how parishioners could avoid contaminations and instructed them how to take care of themselves in case of illness. Above all, besides its references to the prophylaxis and treatment of cholera, the circular launched a charity appeal to help those afflicted by the disease: "Yet we also have another major duty, to help our beloved, our fellow humans who have fallen prey to the sickness, to the best of our abilities."¹⁶

In an effort to reduce the effects of the cholera epidemic, the administrative authorities rallied the ecclesiastical authorities, which enjoyed greater trust among the people. Thus, many circulars issued by the Gubernium or the Budapest authorities headed towards the bishops,

who further conveyed to the clergy a modicum of scientific information about the epidemic and ways to combat it. The circular of 9 July 1848 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce in Pest, sent to the bishops, was translated into Romanian and then converted into a circular that the Bishops of Blaj and Sibiu dispatched to the archpriests and the clergy. The circular urged the priests to counsel the people towards adopting a rational way of life and taking appropriate care of the sick. The priests were to dispel prejudices and convince the people that the intensity of cholera was much lower than in 1831 and 1836, informing the parishioners that the disease could be cured through compliance with the medical prescriptions. In localities where there were no pharmacies, the priests and the village judges had the obligation to purchase a minimum of medicines necessary for the treatment of cholera.¹⁷ Also, the priests were to demand that during epidemics their parishioners should abstain from “spirit drinks” and unripe fruit, to recommend the ventilation and cleaning of their houses and to insist on the clearing of overcrowded houses. Since both physicians and the authorities associated the harmful effects of a poor diet with the spread and virulence of cholera among the population, the higher ecclesiastical bodies sent the priests several circulars during the cholera of 1836, urging them to inform the villagers that despite the period of fasting, they should consume meat and other foods prohibited by the Church during religious fasts, so that they could show greater resistance to the disease.¹⁸ The clergy, a fundamental component of the rural and urban elite, represented the mechanism for the transmission of social discipline and of necessary, correct information from the state to the people and, in general, during the modern period, they acquitted themselves honourably of this mission in Transylvania, a mission they had been entrusted with by the central and local secular administrative institutions.

The authorities demanded that the priests and the physicians should carry out the cholera prevention campaign with considerable precaution, lest they should “frighten the people more than necessary, as this would cause havoc both in public health and in order.” Many a time the circulars sent to the priests insisted on this side of their prevention activity, lest they should “prematurely stir up the people’s unease and dread.”¹⁹ Such caution was the consequence of both the revolutionary state of mind in Transylvania in the spring of 1848 and the past experience, given the fact that during the cholera epidemic of 1831-1832, particularly in other parts of the monarchy or in France, for example, the masses (peasants and workers) had created huge waves of social unrest, using the epidemic and its devastating effects as a pretext.²⁰ Unaware, for a long time, of the causes of cholera and its transmission channels, the masses were permanently terrified that their lives were in danger. Due to their ignorance, they were tempted to see the outbreak of epidemics as a divine sign sent either to punish them or to test their faith. Panic, fear, terror: all

these words were used to describe the populace's reaction to the impact of cholera.²¹ Given the virulence of the disease and the speed with which it took its toll, such a reaction was to be expected, as suggested by a handwritten note in an old book, dating from 1848: "many people died from cholera, a swift yet horrible way to die, for they would be dead by the following morning."²² Very often, the faces of those who died from cholera underwent visible changes: within a few hours, the vigour of a young man's countenance was replaced with the expression of an aged man; overnight, the faces of his loved ones, contaminated with cholera, were contorted. Panic amplified the disastrous consequences of the epidemic, as revealed by another note made in a religious book, probably by a priest, in 1836: "it was especially in cities that a lot of people perished; some, who'd been as sound as a bell, simply dropped dead, and that happened in villages, too." Entire families could be decimated: "many families passed away, leaving behind deserted houses."²³ Naturally, in such a context, superstitions and rumours could spread very easily. Therefore, to avoid fuelling the tense atmosphere, every measure was taken to avoid anything that might have amplified the feeling of panic and dread. Thus, on 31 august 1848, Vicar Moise Fulea sent a circular to the priests, demanding that "if the death toll should rise, they should ring the bells for all the dead just once a day, at a set time, lest the residents should ceaselessly be filled with fear and horror at the sound of church bells ringing several times a day."²⁴

The Church's involvement in censusing the population

The Church carried out its obligation of recording demographic events in parish civil status registers/registry books. Particularly after the establishment of the Austrian regime in Transylvania, the clergy were required to contribute also to the periodical registration of the population on the occasion of censuses. Moreover, from the 18th century on, in parallel with the demands imposed by the Austrian State, the hierarchical leaders of the two denominations (Orthodox and Greek-Catholic) also supervised their own operations of demographic data collection in order to have accurate records of their parishioners. The first conscription of a confessional nature was undertaken by the Greek-Catholic Bishop Inochentie Micu Klein in 1733. It was followed by many other censuses conducted by the Greek-Catholic Diocese of Blaj and by the Orthodox Dioceses of Sibiu, Arad and Timișoara: 1760-1762, 1783-1784, etc.²⁵

During the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism, the leaders of the Transylvanian Romanians' national emancipation movement related to the demographic factor broadly along the lines of the strategy used in the famous memorandum of 1791 *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, but there were also new nuances and references to the manner of collecting data about

the population, etc. For example, during the 1869 census, the first recording of the population after the end of dualism, the Romanians' leaders realised the importance of this operation of demographic data collection not only for the state, but also for the Romanian national interests. Consequently, they proceeded in accordance with the national desiderata. Thus, on 26 November 1869, Grigore Moisil, the Greek-Catholic Vicar of Năsăud, issued a circular letter to all the priests in his suborder, informing them of the order that had arrived from the leaders of the Năsăud District and emphasizing the importance of statistics for the proper functioning of the state ("in any civilized and well-organized state, statistics are of utmost importance and use"). Beyond the pragmatic usefulness of statistical-demographic data collection for the government, the Vicar of Năsăud underlined the outstanding significance of such a census for the Romanians. Given the fact that this was to be the first record of the population after the end of the Austro-Hungarian dualist pact, the duty of the priests was to do everything in their power to ensure that the data collected thus would reflect the actual ethnic and confessional structure of Transylvania: "If there ever was a conscription or counting of the population of any importance for the Romanians, then the one of 1870 will surely be of utmost importance; because of that, the honourable priests should fully exert themselves, this requiring their utmost vigilance and application. All nations and confessions in the country will strive to conscribe as many as possible for their own nations and confessions, to make sure they have large numbers, and will also try to record members of other nationalities and confessions under their own nation and confession, and I do fear that Romanians, of all others, will be more strenuously registered under other headings, which is why I cannot stress enough the importance of vigilance, honourable priests, so as to prevent any Romanian soul slipping away in favour of others, and to record all those living in your villages, specifying which of them are Romanian, which are of other nationalities, each according to their confession, so that you may compile an accurate and exact conscription, which can serve as the basis for a general conscription of the people."²⁶

Ecclesiastical publications and other problems of the population in Transylvania

Ecclesiastical circulars and the articles printed in the newspapers published by the bishops had a very broad secular spectrum, targeting aspects of everyday life. Many of these printed materials called for educating the population to have fire insurance and to insure their crops against weather related perils, etc. On the occasion of the subsistence crises periodically caused either by heavy rains or by drought and locust invasions, ecclesiastical circulars made propaganda for the introduction of new vegetable crops, especially potatoes. Thus, on 24 March 1815, Nicolae

Stoica, the Archpriest of Mehadia, forwarded to the parishioners the exhortations of Pavel Avacumovici, the Orthodox Bishop of Arad, who aimed to motivate the inhabitants to cultivate potatoes, demanding the priests themselves to serve as models in this regard: “since the vast majority of the Romanians have lacked, of late, wheat and maize, they are bound to endure great famine... they shall receive potatoes, at the emperor’s mercy, for planting and eating purposes.”²⁷

Conclusions

In the modern period, ecclesiastical publications assisted the higher clergy and the parish priests to be not only spiritual shepherds of their communities, but also counsellors guiding the believers in their everyday lives. Villagers turned to the priests when they wanted to receive counsel on the economic, social or cultural decisions they had to make. The rather diverse content of these circulars, pastoral letters, brochures, articles published in the ecclesiastical press, etc., suggests the tremendous contribution that the Romanian Churches brought to the modernization of the Transylvanian society. The collaboration of Church and State granted more authority to the bishops’ or to the archpriests’ initiatives, in their efforts to persuade the population of the adequacy of the measures the Church had taken for their welfare and well-being²⁸.

Notes

¹ Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Bolovan, “Contributions Regarding Transylvania’s Ethnic and Religious Structure in the 20th Century”, *Eurobalkans* (Greece), no.21, (1995-1996): 34-43.

² Marius Eppel, *Politics and Church in Transylvania 1875-1918*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2012), 21sq.

³ Macarie Drăgoi, *Ortodocși și greco-catolici în Transilvania (1867-1916). Convergențe și divergențe*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011), 21. See also for others ecclesiastical leaders and their relationship with the parishioners Sorin Șipoș, „Ideology, Politics and Religion in the work of the Historian Silviu Dragomir”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 7, issue 21 (Winter 2008): 95 sq.

⁴ Regarding the peculiarities of this phenomenon in the Balkans, see N. I. Pantazopoulos, *Church and Law in the Balkan Peninsula during Ottoman Rule*, (Thessaloniki: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1967).

⁵ Ioan Lupaș, *Istoria bisericească a românilor ardeleni*, (Sibiu, 1918), 165.

⁶ Iosif Fessler, *Relatio historica de daco-romanis in Transilvania et Hungaria cum ecclesis Romana unitis vel uniendis*, ed. I. Sabău, (București: Ed. Academia Română, 1942), 12.

⁷ Regarding this topic see Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Paula Bolovan, “From Tradition to Modernization. Church and the Transylvanian Romanian Family in the Modern Era”, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 7, issue 20, (Summer 2008): 108-110.

⁸ *Legislația ecleziastică și laică privind familia românească din Transilvania în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, edited, introductory study and notes by Ioan Bolovan, Diana Covaci, Daniela Deteșan, Marius Eppel and Crinela Elena Holom, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2009), 18.

⁹ *Legislația ecleziastică ...*, 94.

¹⁰ National Archives of Romania, Bihor County Branch, *The Romanian Orthodox Diocese Fund*, file 601, *Protocol of the plenary session of the Consistory of Oradea of 3 April 1893*, ff.74r-75v.

¹¹ National Archives of Romania, Bihor County Branch, *The Romanian Orthodox Diocese Fund*, file 601, *Protocol of the plenary session of the Consistory of Oradea of 13 November 1893*, ff.83r-84r.

¹² *Legislația ecleziastică ...*, 95.

¹³ *Legislația ecleziastică ...*, 96-98.

¹⁴ Blaga Mihoc, *Justiție și moralitate*, (Oradea: Editura Logos '94, 2000), 11.

¹⁵ Vincent J. Knapp, *Disease and Its Impact on Modern European History*, (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1989), 121.

¹⁶ Blaga Mihoc, *Caritate și prigoană*, (Oradea: Editura Logos '94, 1999), 12.

¹⁷ Ioan Bolovan, "Considerații asupra epidemiei de holeră din 1848 în Transilvania," in *Studii de istorie a Transilvaniei. Specific regional și deschidere europeană*, eds. Sorin Mitu, Florin Gogâltan, (Cluj: Asociația Istoricilor din Transilvania și Banat, 1994), 165.

¹⁸ Ștefan Buzilă, "Documente bisericești," *Arhiva Someșană*, 18, (1936): 407 sqq.

¹⁹ *Documente privind revoluția de la 1848 în Țările Române. C. Transilvania*, vol. IV, ed. Ștefan Pascu, (București: Ed. Academiei, 1988), 264.

²⁰ Lorant Tilkovsky, "Mișcările țărănești din Ardeal în 1831 și legăturile lor cu 'răscoala holerei' din Slovacia de Est," *Studii*, no. 2, (1958): 73-90; Nicolae Edroiu, "Un izvor narativ transilvănean privind răscoala holerei din Slovacia de Est (1831)," *Acta Musei Napocensis*, IV, (1967): 549sq.

²¹ Vincent J. Knapp, *Disease and Its Impact...*, 125.

²² Florian Dudaș, *Însemnări pe bătrâne cărți de cult*, (București: Ed. Albatros, 1992), 104.

²³ Florian Dudaș, *Însemnări pe bătrâne cărți de cult*, ed. cit.; Valeriu Leu, "Epidemii și mentalități în Banatul Luminilor," in *Banatul între arhaic și modern. Mentalități în Veacul Luminilor*, (Reșița, 1993), 21.

²⁴ Ioan Bolovan, "Considerații asupra epidemiei de holeră...", 167.

²⁵ Haralambie Chircă, "Valoarea conscripțiilor confesionale din 1733 și 1750 pentru scaunul Sibiu," *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Series Historia*, 18, fasc., 2 (1973): 43-50; Natalia Giurgiu, "Trei conscripții din secolul al XVIII-lea privind populația românească din Transilvania," in *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Series Historia*, 11, fasc. 1, (1966), 55-66.

²⁶ Ioan Bolovan, Adrian Onofreiu, Viorel Rus, *Familiiile din Năsăud în anul 1869. Contribuții de demografie istorică*, (Cluj-Napoca: Ed. Argonaut, 2010), 14-15.

²⁷ Nicolae Bocșan, "Populaționismul în politica reformistă a habsburgilor în Banat în sec. al XVIII-lea," in *Sabin Manuilă, istorie și demografie. Studii privind societatea românească între sec.XVI-XX*, eds. Ioan Bolovan, Sorina Paula Bolovan, (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 1995), 89.

²⁸ For comparison see Aurelian-Petruș Ploeanu, Ion Pohoăț, „Religion as a major institution in the Emergence and Expansion of Modern Capitalism. From

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