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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Board of ICOANA CREDINTEI	2
Table of contents	3
Preface	4
* THEOLOGY STUDIES	
Ph.D. Hristea G. KARAIANNIS, Biblical perceptions about diversity and identity in a world of migration	5
Ph.D. Marian VÎLCIU, Several specifications concerning the problem of the Calendar	12
Ph.D. Nicolae PREDA, “The Little Lity for the Dead”- short historical-liturgical approach	18
Ph.D. Ventzislav KARAVALTCHIEV, Romania and Romanian Orthodox Church through the view of Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria according to his “Diaries”	33
Ph.D. Nicusor BELDIMAN, Religious-Moral tenets in the Sermons of Father Arsenie Boca	42
Ph.D. Ion Marian CROITORU, Empirical theology, the only dynamic reality vitalizing the synergy between academic theology and the Church mission in the contemporary society	54
Ph.D. Traian-Alexandru MIU, The Christian roots of Europe	72
Ph.D. Cecilia CURIS, Stress, Psychosomatic disorders and Thanatophobia syndrome	79
Ph.D. Andrei Emanuel RADU, Modes of Persuasion in the Sermons of Father Professor Constantin Galeriu	84
Presentation of ICOANA CREDINTEI	115

Preface

It is a great honour to bring a new issue of *Icoana Credintei - Icon of Faith, International Journal of Interdisciplinary Scientific Research* into the scientific world, especially when the journal aims to publish high quality manuscripts.

The 9th issue of *Icoana Credintei* (IFIJISR) encompasses a group of articles on various themes, dedicated to the areas of Theology, Education, Science and Religion. In addition, although Theology, Education, Science and Religion studies have been a major focus for our life and many scholars understand their value, only a few spend their time actually exploring related issues.

In this context the committee of corresponding authors for the issue 9, (2019) of *Icoana Credintei*, invite authors and readers to visit our website to review articles and items of interest. The issue starts with the keynote lecture “*Biblical perceptions about diversity and identity in a world of migration*”, delivered by Professor *Hristea G. KARAIANNIS*, Ph.D.

The next paper belongs to *Marian VÎLCIU*, Ph.D, entitled: “*Several specifications concerning the problem of the Calendar*”. Since the very beginnings of his existence, the humanity was preoccupied by this phenomenon, and even if time is an abstract concept, as it can't be divided, there was the preoccupation for a certain concretization of time, a system of measurement, so that, according to this periodization, man would be able to manage and unfold his social, material and religious life. *Nicolae PREDA*, PhD, signs the paper, entitled: “*The Little Lily for the Dead*”- short historical-liturgical approach and *Ventzislav KARAVALTICHEV*, Ph.D, bears the title: “*Romania and Romanian Orthodox Church through the view of Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria according to his “Diaries”*”.

The following issue, unfolded by *Nicusor BELDIMAN*, Ph.D is the “*Religious-Moral tenets in the Sermons of Father Arsenie Boca*”. The scientific research is centred on one of the outstanding figures of 20th-century Romanian preaching: Father Arsenie Boca, a great spiritual director, greatly revered by the Romanian people both in his lifetime and today, and a victim of communist persecutions. The next paper belongs to *Ion Marian CROITORU*, Ph.D. and brings new clues in understanding “*Empirical theology, the only dynamic reality vitalizing the synergy between academic theology and the Church mission in the contemporary society*”.

The next article belongs to *Traian Alexandru MIU*, Ph.D. in which he exposes the theme: “*The Christian roots of Europe*”. Author emphasised the major idea and conclusion that the Europe needs Christianity to exist, to not sink, to be able to live in peace and build a civilization of good understanding between its citizens. *Cecilia CURIS*, Ph.D. signs the paper, entitled: “*Stress, Psychosomatic disorders and Thanatophobia syndrome*”. The issue 9, (2019) of *Icoana Credintei*, ends with *Andrei Emanuel RADU*, Ph.D. paper: “*Modes of Persuasion in the Sermons of Father Professor Constantin Galeriu*”.

Therefore, the content of the current issue is a good invitation to read theological, philosophical and moral-educational researches on specific themes from the field supporting thus the scientific aim of *Icoana Credintei*, international journal published by *Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association (IFIASA)* in collaborations with members of the *Faculty of Orthodox Theology and Education Sciences*, “Valahia” University, Târgoviște, Romania.

* THEOLOGY STUDIES

**BIBLICAL PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DIVERSITY AND
IDENTITY IN A WORLD OF MIGRATION****Ph.D. Chrístos G. KARAGIANNIS,**

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ABSTRACT

Diversity means the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people. Identity is associated with something individual. Migration is the movement of people into another country or region that are not native. It is a phenomenon that has occurred since ancient times and is caused by something painful that affects the inhabitant of an area. This is usually a plague, climatic phenomena, hunger, thirst or war. As the world becomes increasingly urbanized, societies tend to become more and more diverse culturally, politically, religiously and economically, and pluralism is becoming the order of the day in all these spheres. In a migrating word diversity comes close to identity and then the discussion about the limits of its one begins. The Bible provides us with a good number of narratives as to the way in which diversity is caused, how the identity of biblical Israel has been shaped, and characteristic examples of biblical forms that have led to migration. A typical example of all is Jesus Christ Himself, who in his teaching has demonstrated how modern man ought to stand on issues such as diversity, identity and migration.

Keywords: Diversity; Identity; Migration; Israel; Patriarchs; Bible; Old Testament; New Testament;

INTRODUCTION

The Bible is the book which contains the revelation of God and is constituted by Old and New Testament. Both Testaments were formatted in the land of Palestine/Israel containing ideas and traditions that derive from the Ancient Near East, the Canaanite region and the Greco-Roman civilization. It is from these cultural backgrounds that we shall discuss diversity, identity and migration. To say it simply, we cannot read the Bible except to come into dialogue or confrontation with the cultural assumptions recorded therein. Thus, reading the Bible is a meeting of cultures.

1. DIVERSITY, IDENTITY AND MIGRATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

According to the Cambridge English Dictionary diversity means the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people. On the other hand the basic meaning of the English word “identity” is: 1. The collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or

known. 2. The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group. 3. The name or nature of a person or thing. As in most other dictionary entries, the focus is on the characteristics of a person, an individual.¹ Although the definition above mentions that it also has something to do with group membership, identity is usually understood as a personal aspect. The term “identity” is used differently in anthropology, sociology and social psychology.²

In the recent years the two words «diversity» and «identity» seem to be strongly associated with the idea of migration. Migration is the movement of people into another country or region that are not native. It is a phenomenon that has occurred since ancient times and is caused by something painful that affects the inhabitant of an area. This is usually a plague, climatic phenomena, hunger, thirst or war. As the world becomes increasingly urbanized, societies tend to become more and more diverse culturally, politically, religiously and economically, and pluralism is becoming the order of the day in all these spheres. In a migrating word diversity comes close to identity and then the discussion about the limits of its one begins.

a. Diversity

At Babel, the famous tower, Yahweh punishes humanity for its attempt to reach him or to bring him down from heaven on earth (gen. 11:8–9). From that tower, whose builders tried to reach the heavens, the descendants of Noah’s sons spread out to their distant territories with their languages (10:5, 20, 31–32). Thus begins diversity in the world.³ The Tower of Babel is not a story about dissent and brokenness but an explanation for the multiplicity of languages and traditions existing in the world.⁴

Consequently, such an explanation offers the possibility to see cultural diversity as a positive feature of human societies. The few scholars⁵ who do not take the traditional punishment approach have noted various features of the text which, when brought together, provide strong arguments in support of this interpretation. Similarly, the story of Noah in Genesis 6-9 is a veritable statement in favor of diversity and growth. Noah is tasked with ensuring the survival of each and every form of life God has created and, in the concluding covenant, humans are again commanded to multiply and fill the face of the earth. This connects well with the table of nations in Genesis 10, which bridges the story of the Flood with the story of Babel and whose purpose seems evident—to present the diversification of human language and culture as the status quo.

b. Identity

The Old Testament’s idea about shaping group identity is evident in the distinction which was made between God’s chosen covenant people, Israel, and all other people groups in the Ancient Near East. The New Testament’s emphasis is on shaping an identity that is

¹ *Reader’s Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary*, Ilson et al. 1984:836.

² R. Byron, “Identity”, Barnard, A. & Spencer, J. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 292. T. M. Luhrmann, “Identity in anthropology”, Smelser, N. J. & Baltes, P. B. (eds), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, Volume 21*, Amsterdam: Elsevier 2001, p. 7154.

³ J. G. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, [Word Biblical Commentary 1], Dallas, TX: Word Books 1987, pp. 232-246.

⁴ N. Blough, “From the Tower of Babel to the Peace of Jesus Christ: Christological, Ecclesiological and Missiological Foundations for Peacemaking”, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 76 (2002), 7-33.

⁵ W. J. Aageson, “City-Building and the Benefits of Babel”, *Christian Century* 106 (1989) 517-518. W. Brueggemann, *Genesis. A Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, Interpretation, Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press 1982, pp. 97-104. T. Hiebert, “The Tower of Babel and the Origin of the World’s Cultures”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126 (2007) 29-58.

characterized by its faith in Jesus as the Risen Messiah. Identity, and the way it is represented or constructed in the Bible, is complex and one should rather speak of an array of identities that are in constant interaction with one another. Viewing Israel's identity from a religious perspective is the most traditional way of studying this ancient society.

The crossing of the Red Sea curved a new identity for Israel. In Egypt Israel's identity was that of a slave.⁶ The crossing of the Sea⁷ and the wandering in the Sinai desert gave the chance to Israel to learn God and create its identity.⁸ Liverani⁹ makes clear that the "very existence of a political entity 'Israel' before the monarchic period must remain a matter of doubt." "Israelite religion during the period of the monarchy (10th ce. B.C.) was predominantly a nationalistic and territorial [particularistic] faith while the destruction of the temple (586 B.C.) ensured the rise of a more universalistic faith".¹⁰ Inclusive or exclusive religious identity in the Old Testament is usually linked to the identity of Yahweh. The religious conception about Yahweh had a dual meaning: 1. According to the tribal Jacob tradition Yahweh is genealogically related to other gods and 2. according to the Deuteronomistic and priestly traditions Yahweh has no genealogy.¹¹ This promoted Yahweh as the only God and resulted in Yahwistic monotheism. This Post-exilic Yahweh-monotheism shaped the whole of the Old Testament.¹²

c. Migration

The value of humanity, begins with the theological premise that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1.26).¹³ Humanity is to "fill the earth" (Gen 1:28; cf. 9:7). Indeed, the directive at the very beginning of the biblical grand narrative presupposes movement. and, truly, migration has characterized the history. In Genesis migration also springs from divine judgment: The first persons are sent out of the garden, east of Eden, for their rebellion (3:22–24); Cain must wander for murdering his brother Abel (4:12–16). But before sending him away, God puts a mark of protection on Cain – so that no

⁶ F. O. Olojede, *The Exodus and Identity Formation in View of the Origin and Migration Narratives of the Yoruba*, University of Stellenbosch 2008, p. 110.

⁷ C. Houtman, *Exodus Vol. 2. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament*, Kampen: Kok 1996, p. 232.

⁸ R. B. Dillard & T. Longman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1994, p. 66.

⁹ M. Liverani, "Nationality and political identity", Freedman, D. N., (ed). *Anchor Bible Dictionary, Volume 4*. New York: Doubleday 1992, p. 1034.

¹⁰ G. M. Brett, "Nationalism and the Hebrew Bible", Rogerson, J W, Davies, M & Carroll, D. R. (ed.), *The Bible in ethics: The second Sheffield colloquium*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1995, p. 151.

¹¹ A. De Pury, "Erwägungen zu einem vorexilischen Stämmejahwismus. Hosea 12 und die auseinandersetzung um die Identität Israels und seines Gottes", Dietrich, W & Klopfenstein, M. A. (eds.), *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1994, p. 414.

¹² This idea of Israel constructing her identity by constructing the identity of her deity, Yahweh. This leaves room for the idea that, although Yahweh became the national God in the 8th-century, the Jacob legend was still the formative myth of the Yahweh cult and had to be opposed by the prophets, who erased the idea that Yahweh's identity had anything to do with a relationship (genealogical) to other deities. (A. De Pury, "Erwägungen", p. 432). Albertz, sees the twofold conception of Israel as, on the one hand, a genealogical conception of a twelve-tribe nation, and on the other hand, a theological conception as the people of God, as two sides of the same coin. He sees the theological and the socio-political elements in both. Ultimately the religious uniqueness of Israel's faith and identity is that Israel defined itself as a people that is constituted in the first place by its personal relation to its God Yahweh This self-conception of Israel does not, however, follow a type of "natural" concept of nation, but opts for Yahweh's loving self-binding to his people, and Israel's thankful binding to their God as that which defines the people of God. (R. Albertz, "Volk Gottes und die Völker nach dem Alten Testament", *Reformierte Kirchen Zeitung* 6 (1996) 279-285.

¹³ D. G. Groody, "Building a Civilization of Love: Catholic Social Teaching and Immigration Reform," *Sojourners*, March 2010, 24.

one will kill him. The criminal migrant was protected so he would not be harmed in his wanderings. The generations continued on the earth, and the biblical story picked up with Abraham. It is there that God spoke to Abraham and said, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you” (Genesis 12:1). Furthermore the bless to Abraham in Gen. 12:3 is very clear: All the nations will be blessed because of you. As Konstantinou suggests “posterior theological analysis of the incident proves that Israel’s faith to the revelation of God does not come in conflict with the admittance of different religious perceptions about others”.¹⁴ Abraham, Sarai, and Lot became migrants going into and out of Canaan, they journeyed toward the Negreb and because of famine went down to Egypt to reside there as an alien – a stranger (Genesis 12:10). They came out of Egypt and eventually separated, with Lot settling near Sodom on the plain of the Jordan and Abraham settling by the oaks of Mamre in Hebron (Genesis 13).

In Genesis 15, God told Abraham of his role in the migration story. It is stated: “Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years” (Genesis 15:13). God continued by telling Abraham that his offspring would come back to the land of Abraham in four generations. In Genesis 18:1-8, God appears to Abraham as three strangers near the oaks at Mamre. He offers the three men – the strangers – hospitality. He refers to them as “my Lord” and offers them the best of what he has. This is the first biblical description of ideal inclusive hospitality – of giving the very best to strangers – who in this case turned out to be God.

The biblical concept of hospitality is based in offering hospitality to the stranger, the sojourner, the alien, the migrant and the foreigner. It can be verified in Deuteronomy 6, which speaks of being brought into a new land by the Lord. This and many other passages in Deuteronomy, which will be included later, stress the importance of being one with the strangers in the land. The importance of this concept of hospitality is seen in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot welcomed the angels, but the townspeople did not. Their lack of hospitality to the stranger brought about their destruction.

The biblical migration story continued including all the patriarchs. A famine is causing Isaac to settle in the land of Gerar as an alien (Genesis 26:2). Jacob was forced to flee because of his brother’s violence. He settled “where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan” (Genesis 37:1). Slavery and trafficking are seen when Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, and was transported to Egypt. Joseph overcame the circumstances that forced him into slavery and following God’s instructions to care for strangers by offering hospitality he welcomed the strangers – his brothers who left Canaan and migrated to Goshen, where there was food and Joseph welcomed them (Genesis 37-47).

The story of the Exodus – is the story of the movement of the people of God away from slavery and injustice to freedom and new life. It is perhaps the world’s greatest and best-known migration story. Exodus narrative begins with the Hebrews being oppressed by their taskmasters. Their leader Moses was saved from death as he was placed in a basket in the river. In today’s language he would be referred to as an “Unaccompanied Alien Child.” Moses witnessed the oppressive treatment of the Hebrews by the Egyptians, he killed an Egyptian, and became a criminal alien, who fled for his life to a strange land. He became a refuge. Then he returned to Egypt, and facilitated the Exodus. Finally the people of Israel permitted to leave as most refugees leave with God leading them. According to Exod. 14:7

¹⁴ M. Konstantinou, *Religious Diversity and Biblical Revelation, Interpretative approach based on the Old Testament*, https://www.academia.edu/1624342/Religious_Diversity_and_Biblical_Revelation.

God migrated with them seeking to protect them and providing manna and water and all they needed to survive. After the entrance to the Promised Land God is the one who takes care about the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing (Deut. 10:17-19). One of the commands is: You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Deut. 23:7,¹⁵ 26¹⁶ and 27:19¹⁷ echo the same perception.

The biblical Law lists the sojourner with other at-risk groups: The poor, the widows, and the orphans.¹⁸ Widows and orphans would find it hard to survive in those farming communities, because the family would have lost the mature male needed to do the hard physical work of tilling the land. The poor and the sojourner did not have the necessary resources to provide for their families, and the sojourner had the additional obstacles. Accordingly, there were laws that provided several means to acquire food (Lev 19:9–10, Deut. 24:19–22, Deut. 14:28–29; 26:12–13).¹⁹ At the same time, there were laws directed specifically at those immigrants desiring to become part of Israelite society.²⁰ The moral demands and practical actions that arise from the enduring biblical imperative is to love the neighbour, and to look after the alien (Lev. 19:34).²¹

The story of uprooted people continues throughout the Hebrew Bible as people of Israel occupy the Promised Land and are eventually sent into Exile and later return. In the time of Babylonian Captivity everyone was on the move and most went into Exile at some time. This includes the prophets, the priests, and the people. None remained except the poorest people of the land.” The migration story is key to understanding biblical ancestry.

The great escape of the Jews with Persian imperial support— according to the Esther narrative — shows that this literature wanted to point out that there was no religious discrimination. The prophetic writing of *Jonah* represents a universalist perspective on the place of Gentiles in God’s plan in which the point of view is reflected that non-Israelites may have access to the God of Israel.²² The book of Ruth,²³ speaks about a Moabite female who was an immigrant and Boaz married her, giving her status in the land.²⁴ She nevertheless

¹⁵ “You shall not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you shall not detest an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land.”

¹⁶ The verse shows the relationship between each and every person’s and the care for the alien.

¹⁷ “Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow”.

¹⁸ D. L. Baker, *Tight Fists or Open Hands? Wealth and Poverty in Old Testament Law*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2009, pp. 176–189.

¹⁹ They were to be allowed to harvest the edges of the fields and a special triennial tithe of produce was to be collected to provide them sustenance.

²⁰ R. Carroll, *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2008, pp. 91–112.

²¹ W. R. O’Neill and W. C. Spohn, “Rights of Passage: The Ethics of Immigration and Refugee Policy,” *Theological Studies* 59 (1998) 84–106.

²² L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period. Volume 1. Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah*, London: T&T Clark, 2004, p. 312. On the other hand Neh. 13:23-25 reflect a strong exclusivist or particularistic understanding of the Jewish identity. The strong polemic in these texts is particularly directed against the neighbouring nations again.

²³ W. H. P. Lau, *Identity and Ethics in the Book of Ruth: A Social Identity Approach*, Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter 2011.

²⁴ L. Chan, “The Hebrew Bible and the Discourse on Migration: A Reflection on the Virtue of Hospitality in the Book of Ruth,” *Asian Horizons* 8/4 (2014) 665-679.

opted to settle in Judah and to adopt the Yahwistic religion. By the marriage with Boaz she gave birth to a son who became an ancestor of King David and Jesus.²⁵

2. DIVERSITY, IDENTITY AND MIGRATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A crucial point is that the New Testament begins with a migration story. According to the Gospel the Christ Child was born in a cave - a stable. Because of Herod's threat Jesus, Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt, as strangers (Matthew 2:13-15).

Christ as a former stranger²⁶ taught how to treat a stranger in Matthew 25:35-41. "...For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." In Matthew 25:40, he clearly states that all, including people who might be seen as the "least of these," are members of his family.

When Jesus is asked by the young man, "Who is my neighbor?", Jesus answers through the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:33. Hebrews 13:1-3 urges, "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured." Christ comes to us in the form of the stranger, and to be one with the prisoners, the persecuted, the undocumented, the refugee, the migrant, the immigrant, the stranger. Paul reinforces this teaching in Romans 12:13, with, "Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers."

At the very beginning of the Church the Holy Spirit blended different ethics, customs, beliefs, historical background and created a new world without controversies. In the name of Christ, the Holy Spirit dissolved the fears and hesitation and created a bond between culturally opposed communities. The architect of the early Christian Church, Paul, tried with all his efforts and succeeded to built a universal Christian character without exclusions, capable to integrate all the differences. The religious transmission from another religion to Christianity was not easy, but it was guided by the Holy Spirit and the baptism. Furthermore it was so strong that could resist to any attack in the following centuries and integrate further cultures and beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Human beings, should find their realization (1) as persons only in relation to God, (2) in the end are measured more by their inner endowments than by their material or financial assets, and (3) are fundamentally relational creatures who need each other in community. Christian theology's principal task in the modern world is not to reject globalization but to humanize it, to make it more risk-averse to human costs than to financial costs, and above all to challenge people to become more interested in the human and spiritual assets of the global community than in the financial and material portfolio of its individual members.

²⁵ D. Bergant, "Ruth: The Migrant Who Saved the People," G. Campese and P. Ciallella (eds.), *Migration, Religious Experience, and Globalization*, Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies 2003, pp. 49-61.

²⁶ D. Christiansen, "Movement, Asylum, Borders: Christian Perspectives," *International Migration Review* 30:1 (1996) 7-17.

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SEVERAL SPECIFICATIONS CONCERNING THE PROBLEM OF THE CALENDAR

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ABSTRACT

Since the very beginnings of his existence, man was preoccupied by this phenomenon, and even if time is an abstract concept, as it can't be divided, there was the preoccupation for a certain concretization of time, a system of measurement, so that, according to this periodization, man would be able to manage and unfold his social, material and religious life. This is why, from the most ancient times, men directed their attention towards different changes and phenomena of nature and, respecting the Holy Bible, they observed especially the astronomical phenomena.

Keywords: Christian; calendar; Sosigene; Gregorian reform;

INTRODUCTION

The theology of the Orthodox Church shows us that „the world was not created in time, but in the same time with time”, therefore understanding that time, as well as space, represents a dimension of the existence. In other words, man's life, between his two worldly limits, life and death, unfolds in time. Since the very beginnings of his existence, man was preoccupied by this phenomenon, and even if time is an abstract concept, as it can't be divided, there was the preoccupation for a certain concretization of time, a system of measurement, so that, according to this periodization, man would be able to manage and unfold his social, material and religious life. This is why, from the most ancient times, men directed their attention towards different changes and phenomena of nature and, respecting the Holy Bible, they observed especially the astronomical phenomena.

1. THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CALENDAR

The very first pages of the Old Testament show us that: „*And God said, <<Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.>>*” (Genesis 1, 14-15), men have attempted to establish different methods to measure time, thus appearing the issue of the calendar.

The word calendar has Latin etymology, deriving from the word *calendae* (which, at its turn, has the etymology in the Greek word *καλῶ* = to summon, to convoke), which indicated the Roman's practice of summoning all the citizens in the forum, in the first day of each month, in order to be informed about various issues of the community. Unlike the Romans, the Greeks didn't have among their social practice such summoning, a thing that made possible the appearance of the expression „*at the Greek calendae*”, that meant that a promise, once made, was never to be fulfilled.

Therefore, the first calendars appear out of the man's desire and need to establish in time the religious events and feasts and to organize as best as possible his daily occupations and chores. In order to do this, it was enough to direct his attention towards the sky, towards the sun, the great luminary of the day and towards the moon, the night luminary. The observation of nature gave him the possibility to discover the first time unit, about which the first pages of the Holy Bible also speak: „*And there was evening and there was morning: the first day*” (Genesis 1, 5).

Man was able to observe that day and night succeed one another with rhythmicity, thus representing a very handy unit of time measurement. This is why since the most ancient times man chose as medium unit of time measurement the average solar day, which represents the time that earth needs to make a complete rotation around its axis. In the same time, there were established the multiples and submultiples of the solar day: *the Hours* with minutes and seconds: the day has 24 hours, the hour-60 minutes, the minute-60 seconds; *the Week*, namely the span of time that the moon needs to pass through its two consecutive phases (approximately 7 days); *the monthly Moon*, which represents the period of time that the moon needs to make a complete rotation around earth, a movement which takes 29 days and a half (more precisely 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 2,9 seconds); *the tropical Year*, also called the solar, or astronomical year, namely the period of time the earth needs to make a complete rotation around the sun, a period which represents approximately 365 days and 6 hours (more precisely 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45-46 seconds)¹.

Because of the fact that the tropical, solar or astronomical year doesn't have a precise number of days, it could not have been taken as a unit of time measurement, which is why there was the need to make a conventional unit of time, starting from the tropical or astronomical year, to which was added the fraction of one day, this conventional unit of time measurement being the calendar or civil year. The latter did not coincide as extension, as length, with the astronomical year, which is why men have searched that, from time to time, by using various methods, to ensure a most faithful coincidence between the two units of time measurement, concerning their extension. Thus appeared what we know as the calendar problem, namely the preoccupation which has as purpose the discovery of the best method by which the civilian or calendar year to be as close as possible, as duration, to the astronomical or tropical one.

If the most ancient peoples used monthly calendars, namely those instruments of time measurements based on the rotation movement of the moon around the earth (the first Egyptian calendar, the Greek or Roman calendars), others have used mixed calendars, lunar-solar ones (like in the Hebrew's case), the first who made and used a solar calendar, based on the Earth's revolution movement, were the Egyptians, the calendar being undertaken by the Romans and improved by them under the form of the Julian calendar, which stands at the base of the modern chronology².

2. HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN CALENDAR

The calendar used today worldwide has a long and, might we say, interesting history. Its inceptions are connected to the Roman Empire, its construction being initiated by the Roman emperor Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.), who, in the year 46 B.C., asked the Alexandrine astronomer Sosigene to make a thorough system of time measurement, which

¹. See Pr. Prof. Dr. Ene Braniște, *Liturgica Generală*, Ed. Episcopiei Dunării de Jos, Galați, 2002, p. 104;

². Cf. Dr. Vasile Gheorghiu, *Noțiuni de cronologie calendaristică și calculul pascal*, Tipografia Cărților Bisericești, București, 1936, pp. 23-26;

he did, using all the astronomical and scientific data encountered in those days in the famous cultural center of Alexandria. Thus, Sosigene set the bases of a scientific solar calendar, based on the apparent movement of the sun in the sky and also considering the movement of the other celestial corps. This calendar, made at the Emperor Julius Cesar's request, was obviously named after the emperor's name, being known as the Julian calendar.

Sosigene, knowing the exact duration of the tropical, solar or astronomical year, had to align this duration with that of the civilian or calendar year, thus establishing the duration of the later to 365 days. As aforementioned, the astronomical year is longer than the calendar one with approximately 6 hours (more precisely 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45-46 seconds), which is why the astronomer Sosigene, in order to ensure the concordance between the astronomic year and the calendar one, has established to add one day a year once every four months ($6 \times 4 = 24$ hours, which is one day), so that, every four years, the civil year has 366 days, being named bissextile year.

In the same time, Sosigene maintained the partition of the year into 12 months, but their duration had no connection whatsoever with the movement of the moon on the sky, thus being simple divisions or arbitrary units of time measurement. It just so happens that, conventionally speaking, some months have 30 days, others 31 days, while February had 28 years in the usual years (of 365 days), and 29 days in the bissextile years. The inventor of the calendar established the spring equinox (the data at which the duration of the day is equal with the duration of night) at 24 March, and the beginning of the year at 1 March, this fact reminding us the names of the autumn months, September, namely the seventh month, October, the eight month etc. But not after long the beginning of the churchly year was moved for the 1st of January.

The calendar that Sosigene made and was used throughout the Roman Empire was undertaken and used by the Christians also, introducing in it specific Christian celebrations.

Apparently, the calendar made by Sosigene the Alexandrine, was to ensure the concordance between the astronomic year and the calendar one (the latter having 365 days and 6 hours), but, as it was an approximation to 6 hours, the difference between the astronomic and the calendar years being actually 5 hours and 48 minutes and 45-46 seconds, the difference of 11 minutes and 14-15 seconds, determined by the approximation, was not under the incidence of the calendar calculus, being thus neglected. Because of this small difference, which was imperceptible in a generation, once every 128 years the calendar year fell behind the astronomic one with one day³.

This situation was observed at the first Ecumenical Synod from Constantinople (325), when they observed that the spring equinox, established by Sosigene at 24th of March, fell, at the beginning of the 4th century, on the 21st of March. The fathers who took part at this synod, dealing among others with the Easter celebration either⁴, after observing these realities, they decided that from that moment on the spring equinox to remain on 21st of March, without taking further measures so that the date will not be changed again in the future. In the same time, the first Ecumenical Synod decided that the Easter Day to be celebrated always on Sunday, the Sunday that would follow the first new moon after the

³. *Ibidem*, pp. 28-30;

⁴. Pr. Prof. Ioan Rămureanu, *Arianismul. Sinodul I ecumenic de la Niceea din 325*, in **Istoria Bisericească Universală**, vol. I, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1993, p. 319;

spring equinox. If this day was to coincide with 14 Nisan (the Hebrews' Easter), the Easter was to be celebrated in the following Sunday⁵.

In this situation, as no correction measures were taken for the calendar calculus deficiency, the difference between the astronomic year and the calendar one continued to increase with one day once every 128 years, and because of this thing, at the beginning of the 16th century, the spring equinox fell 10 days later than the normal data, which determined an erroneous data for the Easter Day.

The 16th century brought an improvement for the concordance between the astronomic and the calendar year. In the second half of this century was observed that the calendar year fell behind the astronomical one with 10 days, while the spring equinox didn't fell on the 21st of March, but on the 11th of March. In these conditions, ever since the Tridentine Synod (1545-1563)⁶ was considered this calendar problem, with the purpose of being solved, and was therefore decided to make a commission which to study the problem and to propose actual measures for solving it. Under the direct coordination of Pope Gregory XIII, this commission, which included the Italian astronomer Luigi Lilio, elaborated a reformation report, evaluated and approved by the most important astronomers of those times: the German Christophor Clavius (a Jesuit priest), the Spanish Peter Ciaconus and the Italian Ignazio Danti⁷. Following this report, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII, gave the bulla *Inter gravissimas*, making a correction of the Julian calendar. It was thus decided to remove the 10 days with which the calendar year was behind the astronomic one, the date of 4 October 1582, becoming 15 October. Moreover, the spring equinox was once again established on the 21st of March, just like it was in the times of the first Ecumenical Synod, establishing different measures which to ensure the congruence between the astronomic year and the calendar one for a longer period of time, approximately 3400 years. Regarding the centenary bissextile years (1600, 1700, 1800 etc.) bissextile remained only those which perfectly divided to four, while the others remained common years, in other words of 365 days. In the same time, they decided that, if the astronomical realities should ask for it, the extra day of a bissextile year to be cut off with the purpose of ensuring the congruence between the astronomic and the civil year⁸.

The process of correcting the calendar, initiated by Pope Gregory XIII is known in the history of the Church under the name of the Gregorian reform. We agree with this entitlement, and we disagree with the usage, which we consider erroneous, of the expression the Gregorian calendar, because Pope Gregory XIII did not make a new calendar, but he initiated and developed a reformation of the Julian calendar, which is we consider the Gregorian reform as being more suited.

This calendar, corrected by the Gregorian reform, begun to be used by the western Catholic Church, while the protestant churches refused to accept it out of confessional raisons. Later on, starting with the first years of the 18th century, the protestant states, reaching the conclusion that the calendar reformation is justified by scientific-astronomic raisons, begun to adopt and use it.

⁵. For details see T. M. Popescu, *Problema stabilizării datei Paștilor. Privire istorică asupra divergențelor și computurilor pascale*, in **Ortodoxia**, XVI (1964), no. 3, p. 430;

⁶. Pr. Prof. Ioan Rămureanu, Pr. Prof. Milan Șesan, Pr. Prof. Teodor Bodogae, *Istoria Bisericească Universală, vol. II*, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1993, pp. 229-232;

⁷. Dr. Vasile Gheorghiu, *op.cit.*, p. 50;

⁸. See Pr. Prof. Dr. Ene Braniște, *op. cit.*, p. 106;

Pope Gregory XIII send a letter to the Eastern Church, requesting the recognition of the calendar reformation and its introduction in the Church's life. Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople send a response letter to the pope, in August 1583, in which he explains that the pope's request cannot be respected because the demarche that was initiated by the papacy was not prefaced by an understanding with the Eastern Church, and an application of the reformed calendar would arise discontentment among the Orthodox faithful⁹, which is why the Eastern Church will continue to use the old calendar.

For almost 350 years, the Christendom was divided, as far as the calendar was concerned, in two great parts: the western Church which used the calendar corrected by the Gregorian reform, also called the new style, and the eastern Church which used the Julian calendar, also called the old style. This reality maintained until the beginning of the 20th century, when the Orthodox Church was forced by the options of some orthodox states, which adopted the reformed calendar in the public, civilian life (Bulgaria, Russia in 1918, Serbia and Romania in 1919, Greece 1923), to show a special attention to this issue and to seek solution for solving it.

In 1923, at Constantinople was organized an inter-orthodox Congress, at which was decided the correction of the Julian calendar for all the Orthodox Churches. As a procedure, were removed the 13 days with which the calendar year fell behind the astronomical year, bringing once again the spring equinox from 8 March (as it was in 1923) to 21 March. Furthermore, based on the new scientific and astronomic discoveries, was established a new system of calculating the bissextile years, far superior to the one applied by the Gregorian reform, which was meant to ensure the congruence between the calendar year and the astronomic one for a much longer period of time, of approximately 44.000 years. In the same time, the Congress allowed the autocephalous Orthodox Churches to apply the decisions adopted at this assembly, for the moment at which the socio-political and religious conditions of each national Orthodox Church will be favorable for such a demarche.

After 1923, nearly all the autocephalous Orthodox Churches begun to adopt the reformed calendar and to introduce it in their cult, and today only the Patriarchy of Jerusalem, the Russian Church, the Serbian Church and the monasteries from Mount Athos are still using the Julian calendar, a reality that created a new problem amongst the Orthodox Churches.

CONCLUSIONS:

Considering that the aforementioned Orthodox Churches did not adopted in their liturgical life the reformed calendar, the Orthodox Churches that use the new style calendar were forced, by raisons of brotherly communion, to celebrate Easter and the other feasts connected to it, according to the old Pascaly, so that all the Orthodox Churches to celebrate altogether the greatest Christian celebration, the Easter¹⁰.

Alas today the Christendom is divided into three parts by the calendar used in the liturgical life:

1. The western Church which uses the reformed calendar, also called the new style;

⁹. See C. Popovici, *Capitolul al șaptelea al literei P din sintagma alfabetică a lui Mateiu Vlastaris: Despre Sfintele Paști sau Despre computul pascal*, Cernăuți, 1900, p. 317 ș.u.;

¹⁰. Pr. Prof. Dr. Nicolae D. Necula, *Este posibilă și necesară serbarea Paștelui din anul 2000 în aceeași zi cu Bisericile apusene*, in *Tradiție și înnoire în slujirea liturgică, vol. II*, Ed. Episcopiei Dunării de Jos, Galați, 2001, pp. 182-183;

2. The Orthodox Churches that still use in their cult the Julian calendar, also called old style (the Patriarchy of Jerusalem, the Russian Church, the Serbian Church and the monasteries from Mount Athos);

3. An intermediary position is occupied by the Orthodox Churches that have adopted the reformed calendar, according to the recommendations made by the Inter-Orthodox Congress of Constantinople from 1923, also called new style, churches that used a mixed calendar: for the feasts with fix data they used the reformed calendar, while for feasts with changing date (Easter and the other feasts determined by it) they use the old Pascale, as a concession made to the Orthodox Churches that have not yet adopted the reformed calendar.

Thus stands the situation which exists nowadays in the Christian world, as far as the use of calendar in the liturgical life of the Christian Churches is concerned, a situation that arise plenty of question marks amongst the faithful. This situation can only be solved in a single manner, namely the adoption of the reformed calendar, the new style, by the other Orthodox Churches also, which up until now haven't find a favorable moment to adopt this calendar, despite the fact that it was demonstrated that the old style one does not longer correspond to the astronomical reality. In the same time, we have to say that this system of time measurement is a conventional instrument, which is meant to ensure an optimal environment for man's religious and social life, as the calendar is not a dogma, and adopting the reformed calendar doesn't mean a a defection or deviation from the Orthodox traditions, a fact which, alas, was not understood by all the Orthodox Churches.

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“THE LITTLE LITY FOR THE DEAD” – SHORT HISTORICAL-LITURGICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

“The Little Lity for the Dead”, as we know it today, seems to be a “structure” of Sabait origin (Palestinian), its order being recorded, not by chance, in the Great Typikon of Saint Sabbas. Unfortunately, the specialists did not deal with this topic enough, perhaps because of the lack of clear clues, which is why the present study proposes to analyze some of the peculiarities of this ordinance.

Keywords: Lity; the Great Typikon; ordinances; procession; liturgical manuscripts; nominal readings of names;

1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE LITY ACCORDING TO THE “TYPIKON” FROM THE SO-CALLED LAVRA OF SAINT SABBAS, IN PALESTINE

We want to emphasize from the very beginning that many of the structural elements of *the Little Lity for the Dead*¹ have their origin, as we shall see, precisely in the primary ordinance of the Lity², which was done in the Sabait monasteries, especially in Saint Sabbas' Lavra († 532), in Palestine.

We believe therefore that the statements on the origin and structure of the *Little Lity for the Dead*, the “indirect”³ typikon specifications from the manuscript *Sinai 1096*⁴, which

¹ “Besides the Parastasis we can find in the *Panihida* (Memorial service), the Euchologion and the Hieratikon (!) a short parastasis, shorter than the great one, under the title Little Lity for the Dead, in which, during the Litany, only the general remembrance of all the dead is made, and not the nominal commemoration. In the monasteries this Lity takes place on Friday evening and is called Lity (procession) because the group of monks goes to the cemetery, leaving the church after the service. In cathedrals and parish churches, this short parastasis (Little Lity) is usually done at the end of the Liturgy and it is called Trisagion for the Dead or Little Panihida/ Memorial Service”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic de cunoștințe religioase (Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Religious Knowledge)*, Caransebeș, Diocesan Publishing House, 2001, p. 346; see also E. Braniște, *Liturgica Specială pentru institutele teologice (Special Liturgy for Theological Institutes)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1985², p. 557.

² “Lity (λιτή, ή - liti, i = prayer, procession) – religious service (Orthodox), performed in monasteries, during the evening service (Vesper or Vigil) and rarely during the morning service (Matins)...”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, p. 261.

³ We call them “indirect” since they only refer to the Lity.

⁴ “1096. Τυπικόν. Cod. membr. 20X14; 3 centim. saec. XIV”, V. Gardthausen, *Catalogus codicum Graecorum Sinaiticorum*, Oxonii, E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1886, p. 222; “Sinai 1096 (12th-13th centuries)”, N. Uspensky, *Slujba de seară în Biserica Ortodoxă (The Evening Service in the Orthodox Church)*. Translated by Cezar Login, Cluj-Napoca, Patmos Publishing, 2008, p. 92; “Π. № 1096. Τυπικόν τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἀκολουθίας τῆς ἐν Ἱερουσαλῦμοις εὐαγοῦς λαύρας τοῦ ὁσίου θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Σάββα. Ркп. той же библ. [Архимандритъ Антонинъ опредѣляетъ XII-XIII в.]”, А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургическихъ*

is mentioned also by N. Uspensky⁵, are fundamental, which is why we will try to reproduce them further on, being by far, the only clues that could concretely guide us to the link between the primary structures of the Lity and the constituent elements of *The Little Lity for the Dead*. However, we will not insist on them in particular, but we will only underline them.

Here is the text that appears in codex *Sinai* 1096 and its translation into Romanian (according to N. Uspensky's study, *The Evening Service...*) and our English translation:

<p>“Καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ψάλλομεν τὸ στιχηρὸν τοῦ ἁγίου πρὸς τὸν ἦχον τῆς Ὀκτωήχου, ἐξερχόμεθα εἰς τὸν τάφον τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ παριστάμεθα κύκλω ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ μάνδρα, ὁ δὲ (π. 4) ἱερεὺς θυμᾷ τὸν τάφον τοῦ ἁγίου, εἶτα τὸν ἠγούμενον καὶ καθ’ ἐξῆς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀδελφότητα, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ δεξιοῦ μέρους καὶ κυκλεύσας ἔρχεται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀριστεροῦ μέρους εἰς τὸν τάφον τοῦ ἁγίου. Πληρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ στιχηροῦ τοῦ ἁγίου λέγει· Δόξα καὶ νῦν, θεοτοκίον τοῦ ἡχου τὸ γ’, καὶ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν λέγει ὁ ἱερεὺς· Ἔτι ἐκτενῶς τοῦ Κυρίου δεηθῶμεν, ἡμεῖς τὸ Κύριε ἐλέησον α’, ὁ δὲ ἱερεὺς· Ἔτι ὑπὲρ τῶν ὁσίων πατέρων ἡμῶν τῶν ἠγουμένων, καθὼς ἀναγράφονται ἐν τῷ Διπτύχῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Σάββα μέχρι τοῦ τελευταίου, ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸ Κύριε ἐλέησον γ’. Ὁ ἱερεὺς Τῆς παναγίας ἀχράντου ὑπερευλογημένης Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας καὶ τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ θεοφόρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Σάββα, μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων μνημονεύσαντες. Ἡμεῖς· Σοὶ Κύριε. Ὁ δὲ ἱερεὺς τὴν εὐχὴν ταύτην· Σῶσον, ὁ Θεός, τὸν λαόν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου... Ἡμεῖς· τὸ Κύριε ἐλέησον ν’. Εἶτα ὁ ἱερεὺς· Ἔτι δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ ἀφέσεως ἁμαρτιῶν τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ... μοναχοῦ καὶ πασης(!) τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφότητος ἡμῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ πάσης ψυχῆς χριστιανῶν</p>	<p>“După rânduiala tipicului, cântăm stihira sfântului după glasul Octoihului, mergând la mormântul sfântului și așezându-ne la locurile noastre în aria îngrădită. Preotul cădește mormântul sfântului; apoi îl cădește pe stareț și pe frați, făcând o mișcare circulară, cădind de la dreapta la stânga și înapoi înaintea mormântului. Atunci când se încheie cântarea stihirii sfântului, cântăm <i>Slavă... Și acum...</i>, stihira Născătoarei de Dumnezeu, glasul al treilea. Apoi preotul zice: <<Cu osârdie să ne rugăm Domnului>>. Noi răspundem: <<Doamne, miluiește (o dată)>>. Preotul: <<Iarăși ne rugăm pentru cuviosii stareți (numele lor sunt citite așa cum sunt înscrise în diptice, începând cu de Dumnezeu purtătorul părinte Sava, și până la ultimul)...>>. Răspundem: <<Doamne, miluiește (de trei ori)>>. Preotul: <<Pe Preasfânta curata, preabinecuvântata, slăvita Stăpâna noastră, de Dumnezeu Născătoarea Maria și pe Cuviosul și de Dumnezeu-purtătorul părintele nostru Sava, cu toți sfinții pomenindu-i, pe noi înșine și unii pe alții și toată viața noastră...>>. Iar noi: <<Ție, Doamne>>. Apoi preotul zice rugăciunea: <<Dumnezeule, mântuiește poporul Tău și binecuvintează moștenirea Ta...>>, iar noi: <<Doamne, miluiește (de 50 de ori)>>. Preotul urmează: <<Iarăși ne rugăm pentru iertarea păcatelor robului lui Dumnezeu (N) monahul, și pentru tot frații noștri cei întru Hristos, și pentru tot sufletul creștinesc cel necăjit și asuprit...>>. Noi cântăm: <<Doamne, miluiește (de 50 de ori)>>. Apoi preotul îi pomenește și citește numele iubitorilor de Hristos vii și adormiți care sunt înscrise în diptice. Încheie cu exclamația: <<Auzi-ne pe noi,</p>	<p>“According to the ordinance of the Typikon, we sing the sticheron of the saint after the tone of the Oktoihos, going to the tomb of the saint and sitting at our places in the confined area. The priest censures the tomb of the saint; then he censures the abbot and brothers, making a circular movement, censuring from right to left and back in front of the grave. When the sticheron of the saint is ended, we sing <i>Glory... And now...</i>, the sticheron of the Theotokos, Tone 3. Then the priest says: <<Zealously let’s pray the Lord>>. We answer: <<Lord, have mercy (once)>>. The priest: <<Again, let’s pray for the venerable abbots (their names are read as they are written in the diptych, beginning with God bearer, our father Sabbas, and until the last one)...>>. We answer: <<Lord, have mercy (three times)>>. The priest: <<Calling to remembrance our most holy, most pure, most blessed, glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and the Holy One and the God-bearer our father Sabbas, with all the saints remembering, let us commit ourselves and one another and all our life unto Christ our God...>>. And us: <<To Thee, O Lord>>. Then the</p>
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рукописей, хранящихся в библиотеках Православного Востока. Томъ III. Типіка, Петроградъ, Типографія В. Θ. Киршбаума, 1917, p. 20.

⁵ “The typikon of this procession in the Jerusalem ordinance is given in manuscript *Sinai* 1096 (the 12th-13th centuries)”, *Slujba de seară... (The Evening Service...)*, p. 92.

<p>θλιβομένων... Ἡμεῖς τὸ Κύριε ἐλέησον ν'. [π. 5) Εἶτα μνημονεύει τῶν βασιλέων καὶ λέγει ἐξ ὀνόματος, οὓς ἔχει κατὰ τὸν τύπον ἐν τῷ διπτύχῳ ζῶντας καὶ τεθνεῶτας φιλοχρίστους, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐκφώνησις: Ἐπάκουσον ἡμῶν, ὁ Θεὸς ὁ Σωτὴρ ἡμῶν... Εἰρήνη πᾶσι Τὰς κεφαλὰς ἡμῶν... Καὶ κλινόντων ἡμῶν τὸ γόνυ ἐπεύχεται μεγάλη φωνῇ Ὁ ἱερεὺς λέγει οὕτως: Δέσποτα πολυέλεε Κύριε... (на всѣхъ молитвахъ поминается имя Саввы)⁶.</p>	<p>Dumnezeule, Mântuitorul nostru...>>, <<Pace tuturor>>, <<Capetele voastre Domnului să le plecați>>. Iar noi cădem în genunchi, iar preotul citește cu glas mare: <<Mult-Milostive Stăpâne, Doamne...>> (numele Sfântului Sava cel Sfințit este pomenit la toate rugăciunile)⁷.</p>	<p>priest reads the prayer: <<O God, save your people, and bless your inheritance...>>, and us: <<Lord, have mercy. (50 times)>>. The priest: <<Again we pray for the forgiveness of the sins of the servant of God (N) the monk, and for our brothers in Christ, and for all the Christian soul, the afflicted and oppressed...>>. We say: <<Lord, have mercy. (50 times)>>. Then the priest remembers and reads the names of the living and dead Christ lovers who are written in the diptych. He end with the exclamation: <<Hear us, O God, our Savior...>>, <<Peace be unto all>>, <<Let us bow our heads unto the Lord>>. And we fall on our knees, and the priest reads with a loud voice: <<Merciful Lord, O God...>> (the name of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified is mentioned at all prayers)⁸.</p>
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We consider equally important, even determinant for the origin and structure of *The Little Lity for the Dead*, the other mentions regarding the “ordinary” Lity, always performed at the grave of Saint Sabbas, particularities also recorded in the manuscript *Sinai 1096*:

- a) “Εἶτα Καταξίωσον, καὶ ἐξέρχεται ἡ λιτὴ καὶ ψάλλομεν ιδιόμελον, ἦχος β' Τῶν ὑπὲρ νοῦν ἀγαθῶν, Δόξα καὶ νῦν, θεοτοκίον, καὶ γίνεται ἡ ἐκτενὴ ἐν τῇ θήκῃ τοῦ ἁγίου κατὰ τὴν τάξιν. Ὑποστρέφοντες δὲ ψάλλομεν στιχηρὰ πλ. α' Χαίροις ἀσκητῆς (...) εἶτα ἡ εὐλόγησις τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ ἡ διάδοσις καὶ τοῦ ὕδατος ἢ οἴνου⁸ [“Then *Make us worthy...*, and we go out to Lity and we sing the idiomelon, the 2nd tone: *The best of those above, Glory...*, *And now...*, of the Mother of God, and there is the litany at the tomb of the Saint (Sabbas, *author's note*), according to the ordinance. Returning, we sing the sticherons, the 5th tone: *Rejoice, you struggler (...)*, then the blessing and sharing of bread and water or wine”];
- b) “Εἶτα δοξολογία μεγάλη, τῷ ἁγίῳ ἀπολυτίκιον, ἡ ἐκτενὴ καὶ στερεοῦμεν, ὡς ἔθος, καὶ εὐθέως ἐξερχόμεθα εἰς τὴν θήκην τοῦ ἁγίου, ψάλλοντες στιχηρὰ ἦχος πλ. δ'· Τοῖς φωτοβόλοις ἐλλαμφθεῖς, Δόξα καὶ νῦν, θεοτοκίον, ἐκτενὴ καὶ τελεία ἀπόλυσις⁹ [“Then The Great Doxology, the troparion of the Saint, the litany and *Strengthen*, as usually, and we go out at the tomb of the Saint (Sabbas, *author's note*), singing the sticherons, the 8nd tone: *You shone with light rays...*, *Glory...*, *And now...*, of the Mother of God, the litany and the final Dismissal (Apolis)”];

⁶ Cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 22.

⁷ Cf. N. Uspensky, *Slujba de seară... (The Evening Service...)*, pp. 92-93.

⁸ Cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, pp. 34-35; the indication appears on December 5 (the day of the commemoration of Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified).

⁹ Cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 35; the indication appears on December 5.

- c) “Καὶ νῦν, Ὑπερευλογημένη καὶ ἡ λοιπὴ ἀκολουθία καὶ ἡ λιτὴ^{10,11} (“*And now..., Most blessed..., and the other service and the Lity*”);
- d) “Καὶ ἐξερχόμεθα λιτανεύοντες, ὡς ἔθος, εἰς τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου θήκη. Οὗτος (!) ὁ τύπος ὀφείλει γίνεσθαι κατὰ πᾶσαν κυριακὴν εἰς τὸ λυχνικὸν μέχρι τῆς ε’ κυριακῆς τῶν νηστειῶν.”¹² [“*And we go out, as usually, at the tomb of the Saint (Sabbas, author’s note). This ordinance (typikon) must be done on all Sunday during Vespers, until the 5th Sunday from the Great Lent*”];
- e) “Κύριε εὐλόγησον καὶ εὐχή, καὶ λιτανεύοντες, ὡς ἔθος, ἐξερχόμεθα, καί, τελέσαντος τοῦ ἱερέως εἰς τὴν θήκην τοῦ ἁγίου τὴν ἐκτενήν, ἀπολυόμεθα”¹³ [“*God, bless, and the prayer, and in procession, as usually, we go out, and after doing the lity at the grave of the Saint (Sabbas, author’s note), we sing the Dismissal (Apolis)*”].

2. CLUES ABOUT THE LITY AND THE LITTLE LITY FOR THE DEAD IN THE GREAT TYPIKON OF SAINT SABBAS AND IN THE BOOKS OF WORSHIP

Mentions similar to those in precedence (see codex *Sinai* 1096), regarding the Lity’s celebration time, are also recorded in the posterior documents: books of worship and the Great Typikon¹⁴ of Saint Sabbas (Greek and Romanian editions). Many of these mentions refer exactly to *The Little Lity for the Dead*, facilitating “somewhat” the understanding of how, over time, *The Little Lity for the Dead* “will detach itself”¹⁵ from the Ordinance of the Lity performed in the Sabait monasteries, “evolution” which remains difficult to outline.

It should also be noted that the commemoration of those who were dead in the Ordinance of the Lity, which was celebrated on Sundays and the Great Saints, within the Lavra of St. Sabbas, as we could see from the text of codex *Sinai* 1096, a matter that no one talks about today, on the contrary, appears to be “excluded” from the Ordinance of the Lity, is, in fact, not just a reminiscence of this ordinance of service, as it may be believed, but an undeniable “usage”, which has survived until now in the structure of the Lity itself.

Here are some of the current references to the Lity, as well as a *The Little Lity for the Dead*:

a) - in the evening, at Vespers (or more precisely, during Vespers), which is confirmed by the current practice:

“When All-night Vigil is performed, and after Vespers the Matins service is immediately forthcoming, then the Lity is united with the Aposticha of the Vespers. So after the Exclamation: *Be the dominion of Your kingdom...* and the choir sings the sticheron from the Lity (or only *Gloria...*), we go out into the church narthex and perform the Lity. The holy doors being shut, the priest and the deacon with the censer, having the head covered, come out of the altar from the north door, carrying two candlesticks before them, and reaching

¹⁰ The celebration of this Lity takes place, according to the codex, “outside” (ἔξω), cf. А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 56, the third row, at the bottom; it is very likely that this expression also indicates, “the tomb of St. Sabba” (ἡ θήκη τοῦ ἁγίου Σάββα), location recorded each time.

¹¹ Cf. А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, pp. 56-57; this specification appears on Meatfare Sunday.

¹² Cf. А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 57; this specification appears on Cheesefare Sunday, in the evening, after the Vespers.

¹³ Cf. А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 58; this specification appears, in our opinion, after the First Hour, on Monday, on the First Week of Great Lent, although from the study of А. Дмитриевский, quoted above, this does not clearly follow.

¹⁴ “The Great Typikon – collection of monastic rules attributed to St. Sabbas (sec. V-VI), the organizer of the Palestinian monastic life and the founder of the St. Sabba Monastery near Jerusalem”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, p. 512.

¹⁵ More appropriate would be to mention here how *The Little Lity for the Dead* has become a service in itself, other than the Lity, which was celebrated during the Great Feasts and on Sundays in the Sabait monasteries.

the narthex, incense according to the custom. And, after that, we sing: *Glory...* from the Menaion, on the respective tone, *And now...*, of the Mother of God”¹⁶;

b) - in the evening, after Vespers:

b1) - on the Wednesday of the Cheesefare Week:

“Then Psalm 33: *I will bless the Lord at all times...*, then: *It Is Truly Right...* and the *Dismissal*¹⁷, the exit into the church porch and the usual Lity for the dead”¹⁸;

b2) - on Monday of the First Week of Great Lent:

“And Psalm 33: *I will bless the Lord at all times...* After that, *It Is Truly Right...* and we make a genuflection, then the other choir, *Glory...*, *And now...*, *Lord, have mercy...* (three times), *Father, bless...*, then the *Dismissal* (...) and we go out into the church porch; we sing according to the custom the Sticheron of the Saint celebrated that day¹⁹ and then the priest says the usual prayer for the dead and the *Dismissal*”²⁰;

b3) - an unusual indication, only recorded in the Great Typikon of Saint Sabbas (the Greek edition of the Tatarnis Monastery), is the one on Sunday evening (on Sunday of Orthodoxy, the first of the Great Lent), after the *Dismissal* of the Vespers (on Monday): “καὶ γίνεται ἀπόλυσις. Καὶ εὐθὺς ἡ λιτὴ κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν ἐν τῷ νάρθηκι”²¹ [“and then the *Dismissal* (the Apolis). And immediately after that, the Lity in the narthex (pronaos)”].

Although the mention does not refer directly to Lity for the dead, it only reminds the “the usual Lity from the church porch”, a confirmed feature by an explanatory note to the Typikon text, attached at the end of the chapter²², it is clear that the clarification refers to the practice of the Lity for the dead, as is apparent from the indications of the current cult books²³.

b4) - on Sunday of St. Thomas:

¹⁶ *Liturghier (Hieratikon)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2000, p. 47.

¹⁷ “Apolis (ἀπόλυσις, ἡ – apolisis = release; Slavonic otpust, opust) – prayer to end the divine service, when believers were freed to go; the Apolis is made by a blessing formula that the priest utters in front of the royal doors”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, pp. 42-43.

¹⁸ *Tipicon întru slava Sfintei, Celei de o ființă, Făcătoarei de viață și Nedespărțitei Treime, a Tatălui și a Fiului și a Sfântului Duh*, Suceava, Bucovina Istorică Publishing, 2002, p. 465; see also *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 298r and *Tipikon*, Iași, in the Printing House of the Holy Metropolitan in Iași, 1816, p. 486.

¹⁹ “Patron saint (the old Slavonic hramu = patron) – the patron of the church or the feast of the patron of the church (the protector of the church)”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, 195.

²⁰ *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 477; see also *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 306r and *Tipikon*, Iași, 1816, p. 502.

²¹ *Τυπικὸν τοῦ Ὁσίου καὶ Θεοφόρου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κάββα τοῦ Ἁγιασμένου*, Ἱερὰ Σταυροπηγιακὴ Μονὴ Παναγίας Τατάρνης Εὐρυτανίας, p. 347.

²² “Ψάλλοντες ἰδιόμελον τοῦ ἁγίου τῆς Μονῆς ἢ μηδὲν λέγοντες. Κλείονται αἱ βασιλικαὶ πόλαι καὶ ὁ ἱερεὺς λέγει τὰς συνήθεις εὐχὰς τῆς λιτῆς καὶ τελεία ἀπόλυσις” [Singing the idiomelon of the Saint, whom the monastery is dedicated to, or saying nothing. The royal doors are closed and the priest says the usual prayers of the Lity and the *Dismissal* (the Apolis)], *Τυπικὸν τοῦ Ὁσίου καὶ Θεοφόρου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κάββα...*, p. 350, note 20.

²³ See *Panihida adică slujbele înmormîntării și alte slujbe săvîrșite de preot pentru cei răposați (Panihida, that is, the Burial Services and Other Services Done by the Priest for the Deceased)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1980², p. 156; *Molitfelnic cuprinzând Slujbe, Rânduiești și Rugăciuni săvîrșite de preot la diferite trebuințe din viața creștinilor (Euchologion comprising the Sermons, Ordinances and Prayers of the Priest for Various Needs in the Life of Christians)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2006, p. 342 and *Aghiasmatar cuprinzînd slujbe, rînduiești și rugăciuni săvîrșite de preot la diferite împrejurări din viața creștinilor (Aghiasmatar comprising Priests' Sermons, Ordinances and Prayers under Various Circumstances in the Life of Christians)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1992⁵, p. 318.

“This is how the Vespers service is done in all Sundays, until the Afterfeast²⁴ of the Easter, only that the Entrance is not done. The Lity²⁵ is sung in the porch of the church, with the sticheron of the Patron saint, on the respective tone²⁶.”

c) - in the morning, after Matins:

c1) - on the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee:

“The Great Doxology, the Litanies and the Apolis. Then the usual Lity, in the church porch, when it is sung: *Glory...*, *And now...*, the Sticheron of the Gospel from the Matins²⁷;

c2) - on Sunday of St. Thomas:

“In the monastic churches, after the Apolis of the Matins, it is sung: *Glory...*, *And now...*, the Sticheron of the Gospel, first tone: *In the mountains going the disciples...*

To be noted: From this day we begin to make the Lity in the church porch again and read the usual Hours throughout the year. The Lity is done before Hour 1, and after Hour 1 we read from the Catechesis (The Words of Teaching) of Saint Theodore Studite²⁸.

d) - after the First Hour:

d1) - on the 2nd of September²⁹:

“And the First Hour and the Dismissal. And the usual exit into the church porch and the Lity for the dead³⁰;

d2) - on Monday of the First Week of Great Lent:

“And after the Dismissal (of the First Hour, *author's note*) we go out into the church porch and celebrate the Lity for the dead, reading the Teaching of Our Father Teodor the Studite, which is read in all the Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Lent³¹.”

3. THE LITY - ORIGINAL ELEMENTS AND ASPECTS OF ITS EVOLUTION

Returning to the structure of the Lity (first understood as a procession) we also want to state that little has been written, which is why it is quite difficult to interpret exactly the “changes” from the liturgical practice, which can be “justified” precisely on the basis of the “former” processions of the worship rules, recorded in time (some very early, the 10th century)³² and in the same moments of the day: in the evening, after Vespers³³, in the

²⁴ “Afterfeast or *otdaniye* (Slavonic) – is called the end, the release or the closing of the celebration (of a royal feast)”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, 325.

²⁵ In our opinion, it is quite difficult to say, given the lack of studies based on sources, which ordinance would be, more precisely, in this context.

²⁶ *Penticostar adică Sfintele slujbe de la Duminica Paștilor pînă la Duminica Tuturor Sfinților (Pentecostarion, ie the Holy Office from Easter Sunday to Sunday of All Saints)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1988⁷, p. 68.

²⁷ *Triodul care cuprinde slujbele bisericești de la Duminica Vameșului și a Fariseului până la Sfânta Înviere (Lenten Triodion that Includes Church Services from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee to the Holy Resurrection)*, Bucharest, Publishing House of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 2000, p. 15.

²⁸ *Penticostar... (Pentecostarion...)*, pp. 66-67.

²⁹ The celebration of the *Lity for the dead* after the Dismissal of *Hour 1*, seems to be mentioned for “the first time” in *The Great Typikon* of Saint Sabba († 532), on the 2nd of September.

³⁰ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 62; “And Hour 1. And the Dismissal. And the usual exit into the church porch. And the Lity for the dead”, *Tipikon*, Iași, 1816, pp. 60-61; “And Hour 1. And the Dismissal. And the usual exit into the church porch. And the Lity for the dead”, *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 38r.

³¹ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 473.

³² See *Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40* (dating back to the 10th century).

³³ *Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40*: 5r: Ἐσπέρας, εἰς τὴν παραμονήν, κατέρχεται ὁ πατριάρχης ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας μετὰ τῆς λιτῆς... [In the evening, on the eve, the patriarch descends from the church (Hagia Sofia, *author's note*) in procession...], cf. J. Mateos, *Le Typikon de la Grande Église. Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40, X^e siècle. Tome I. Le cycle des douze mois*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 165, Roma, Pontificium Institutum Orientalium

morning, after Matins³⁴, after Hour 1³⁵, after Hour 3³⁶ and even after the prayer of the pulpit during the Divine Liturgy³⁷.

In this context unclear and little researched by specialists, the statement of Father Professor Ene Braniște, on the close link between *The Little Lity for the Dead* and the “usual” procession (“the usual exit into the church porch”), which precedes it, actually manages to bring extra light:

“For the remembrance of the dead it is done in monasteries *The Lity-Procession* or *Little Lity* or *Little Memorial Service*, which is an abbreviation of the *Memorial Service* at large”³⁸.

Although it only succeeds in bringing to light some information, the precious clues above (in particular, those noted in codex *Sinai 1096*), the remark of Father Professor Ene Braniște is an essential one, and it allows us to see, among others, “that link”, even though it is really inscrutable between the Lity understood as procession (but also as a liturgical structure) at the tomb of Saint Sabbas, according to the “new” practice of his Lavra, and the so-called *The Little Lity for the Dead*, even if the former has a much deeper “dimension” (connotation) and unfortunately many of its original aspects escape us. But beyond all assumptions, we believe that the origin of the Lity or, more precisely, of the Lity’s procession is indeed a much older one, and we should look for it, if not in the Jerusalem practice of the Holy Land, already indicated by Egeria towards the end of the 4th century (years 381-384), at least in the Palestinian-type liturgical practices.

About these peculiarities N. Uspensky also recalls:

“The procession at the end of the Vespers - the Lity - which, after Egeria, was done every day at Jerusalem and was a fixed element of Sunday Vespers in the liturgical practice of Saint Simeon of Thessalonica, apparently survived only in the Palestinian monasteries -

Studiorum, 1962, p. 18; “The Apolis, exit into the church porch, and Lity for the dead, as usually”, *Triodul... (Lenten Triodion...)*, p. 70; see also *Penticostar... (Penticostarion...)*, p. 68.

³⁴ *Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40*: 2r: Καὶ τὸ πρωὶ μετὰ τὸν ὄρθρον, ἐν τῇ ἀγιωτάτῃ Μεγάλῃ Ἐκκλησίᾳ κατέρχεται ὁ πατριάρχης καὶ εἰσέρχεται διὰ τῆς πλαγίας εἰς τὸ ἅγιον θυσιαστήριον, καὶ ποιεῖ εὐχὴν τοῦ τρισαγίου. Καὶ ἄρχονται οἱ ψάλται ἐν τῷ ἄμβωνι ἀντὶ λιτῆς τὸ τρισάγιον... [And in the morning after Matins, in the Most Holy and Great Church (Hagia Sofia, *author’s note*), the patriarch descends and enters the lateral door into the holy altar, and says the prayer of the Trisagion. And the choir starts singing in the pulpit in response to the procession, the Trisagion...], cf. J. Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église* (tome I)..., p. 6; see also *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 551 and *Penticostar...*, p. 67.

³⁵ *Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40*: 34v: Γίνεται δὲ ἡ ἀκολουθία οὕτως: Περὶ ὧραν α΄ κατέρχεται ὁ πατριάρχης καὶ εἰσέρχεται διὰ τῆς πλαγίας εἰς τὸ ἅγιον θυσιαστήριον, καὶ ἀνέρχονται οἱ ψάλται ἐν τῷ ἄμβωνι, λέγεται δὲ τῆς λιτῆς... (The service is done as follows: At the first hour the patriarch descends and enters the side door in the holy altar, and the choir ascend into the pulpit, saying those of the procession...), cf. J. Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église* (tome I)..., p. 78; see also *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 62.

³⁶ *Ms. Sainte-Croix n^o 40*: 115r: Καὶ μετὰ τὸν ὄρθρον καὶ τὴν τριτοέκτην γίνεται εὐχὴ τοῦ τρισαγίου, καὶ ἄρχονται οἱ ψάλται ἐν τῷ ἄμβωνι τὸ αὐτὸ τροπάριον καὶ εἰς τὸν Φόρον δοξάζουσιν, καὶ λέγει ὁ διάκονος τὴν μεγάλην ἐκτενήν. Καὶ εἴθ’ οὕτως ἄρχονται οἱ ψάλται τὸ αὐτὸ τροπάριον καὶ κατέρχεται ἡ λιτὴ ἐπανακάμπουσα εἰς τὰ Χαλκοπρατεῖα, καὶ ἐκεῖ δοξάζουσι... [And after the Matins and the Hours Three-Six, the Trisagion prayer is said, and the choir begins to sing the same troparion, and the Forum sings *Glory*... and the deacon says the Great Litany. And then, in this way, the choir begins the same troparion and the procession descends, returning to Halcoprataia, and there they sing *Glory*...], cf. J. Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église* (tome I)..., p. 254; “And at the third hour of the day we go out with the crosses and Lity out of the monastery and, turning around, we go into the church and we sing the Hours 3 and 6...”, *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 295.

³⁷ *Penticostar... (Penticostarion...)*, pp. 54, 432-433; *Mineiul lunei lui Ianuarie (The Mineion for January)*, Church Typography from the Saint Monastery Cernica, 1926³, p. 131.

³⁸ E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, p. 262.

especially the Lavra of St. Sabbas the Sanctified. There, the Lity took place on Saturday to Sunday night Vigils³⁹ and, on some Sundays, after Vespers^{40,41}.

In our opinion, N. Uspensky's statement is undoubtedly a defining one, based primarily on texts, but more conclusive would be a detailed rendering of the passages to which he refers, which is why we will reproduce the description of Egeria and a text from St. Simeon of Thessalonica († 1429).

Here is the account of Egeria⁴²:

<<4. At ten, named here *licinicon*, λυχνικόν, and by us *lucernare*, all the people gather at Anastasis, all candles are lighted up and a huge light is made. And the flame is not brought from the outside, but it is removed from inside the cave, where always, night and day, shines a rush-candle inside the grille. The Vespers' Psalms are continually being said, as well as the antiphons. And the bishop who descends and sits on the throne is announced, and the priests also sit in their places, and they say hymns or antiphons. 5. And after all the words were said according to the ordinance, the bishop arises and stands in front of the grille in front of the cave, and one of the deacons reads the names one by one, as it was ordained. And when the deacon reads the names one by one, every time a group of little children, standing there, answers: *kyrie eleyson*, which to us means *miserere Domine*, and their voices are countless. 6. And as soon as the deacon finishes all he has to say, the bishop first says a prayer and then prays for all. And so they all pray, both believers and catechumens, together. Then the deacon again voices, asking that every catechumen, from wherever he stood, should bow his head. And the bishop, standing, says the blessing over the catechumens. Then a prayer is made, and the deacon speaks again, and urges the faithful who stand as one to bow their heads. The bishop blesses the believers and so is done the Liturgy⁴³ in Anastasis and they all begin to come one by one to the bishop's hand. 7. Later on, the bishop is led with hymns from Anastasis to the Cross and all the people go with him. As soon as he arrives here, the bishop makes a prayer and blesses the catechumens, and then, after another prayer, blesses the faithful. And afterwards, both the bishop and the whole assembly go back to the place behind the Cross, and again are done in here all the things that were done in front of the Cross. Then they all come back to the bishop's hand, as they did at Anastasis, the same in front of the Cross as well as behind the Cross...>>⁴⁴.

The other passage referred to by N. Uspensky is from St. Simeon of Thessalonica, Chapter 348⁴⁵, from the work titled "For the Divine Prayer"⁴⁶:

"... καὶ, <<Εἶη τὸ κράτος τῆς βασιλείας σου,>> ἐκφώνως καὶ ὀλοψύχως λέγοντος, εὐθὺς τὰ τῆς λιτῆς ὀπισθεν τοῦ ἁμῶνος γίνεται, εἰς ἰλέωσιν Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ πάντων πιστῶν"⁴⁷ ["...

³⁹ See *Sinai* 1096, cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, pp. 21-23.

⁴⁰ See *Sinai* 1096, cf. A. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 57; see also *Τυπικὸν τοῦ Ὁσίου καὶ Θεοφόρου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κάββα...*, p. 347 and *Penticostar...*, p. 68.

⁴¹ N. Uspensky, *Slujba de seară...* (*The Evening Service...*), pp. 91-92.

⁴² This passage appears in chapter 24 (XXIV) of the description, titled: *Liturghia cotidiană (Daily Liturgy)*, cf. *Egeria - Peregrinatio ad loca sancta: (Itinerarium et Missa) = Pelerinaj în Locuri Sfinte: (Itinerariu și Liturghie) A. D. 381-384*. 2nd edition, coordinated and cared for by Andrei Mărcuș, revised, corrected and supplemented with the Latin text by Cornelia Frișan, and with a critical study of the liturgy in Jerusalem of fr. José Raymundo de Melo S.J., Târgu Lăpuș, Galaxia Gutenberg, 2009, p. 165; to note that the term "Divine Liturgy" in the title of the chapter has the meaning of service, and not of the Divine Liturgy.

⁴³ In here, the term "Liturgy" has the meaning of service, and indicates, more exactly, the "Vespers".

⁴⁴ *Egeria - Peregrinatio ad loca sancta...*, pp. 167, 169.

⁴⁵ "Κεφαλ. τμη'. Περὶ τῶν τριῶν μικρῶν ἀντιφώνων τῶν ἐν τῷ ἁσματικῷ ἔσπερινῷ", *PG* 155, p. 632; "Chapter 348. For the three Antiphons that are said at Vespers with songs", T. Teodorescu, *Sfântul Simeon Arhiepiscopul Tesalonicului. Tratat asupra tuturor Dogmelor Credinței noastre Ortodoxe, după adevăratele principii puse de Domnul nostru Iisus Hristos și urmașii Săi (Saint Simeon the Archbishop of Thessalonica. Treaty on All the Dogmas of Our Orthodox Faith, according to the True Principles of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Followers)*. Reprinted after the original, translated from Greek in 1765, and sometimes improved, in the days of the High Lord of the United Principalities of Romania in the year 1865, Alexandru Ioan I (Alexander John Cuza), Bucharest, Tipografia Toma Teodorescu, 1865, p. 227.

⁴⁶ Cf. T. Teodorescu, *Sfântul Simeon Arhiepiscopul Tesalonicului...* (*Saint Simeon the Archbishop of Thessalonica...*), p. 191; "Περὶ τῆς θείας προσευχῆς – De sacra precatone", *PG* 155, pp. 535-536.

⁴⁷ *PG* 155, p. 633.

and, <<*Be the dominion of Your kingdom*>>, with a great voice and with all heart saying, and the Lity immediately after the pulpit, so that God may tame for all believers”⁴⁸.

Regarding the importance of the two texts mentioned above, it is worth noting that some of the very old clues they are recording are fundamental to the history of the cult; elements of these liturgical structures still remain in the ordinance of Vespers (or, more precisely, of the Lity)⁴⁹, such as the remembrance out loud of the faithful⁵⁰ (of the living)⁵¹.

4. THE LITY AND THE LITY FOR THE DEAD - “INDICES” OF A COMMON ORIGINAL LITURGICAL STRUCTURE

The most important aspect, in fact, is, in our opinion, the determination of the time of the so-called *Little Lity for the Dead*, as a service structure, a difficult moment to be supposed to be, probably due to the need to detach it from the common structure of the Lity, precisely so as to give as great attention to those passed to the eternal life. The reason why the Church considered that a separate ordinance should appear for the dead, that is what the current worship books call *The Little Lity for the Dead*, has its foundation, without a doubt, in the old practice from the Lavra of Saint Sabbas, although the significance of the presence of the demand inserted into the structure of the Lity, which also includes those who are dead, should not be ignored.

On the other hand, it must be noted that what definitely escapes us is the “actual” transition from the usual Lity in the church porch (originally at the tomb of Saint Sabbas), from the Sabait monasteries, to *The Little Lity for the Dead* celebrated, also, into the church porch. It therefore remains that the posterior studies confirm or disprove this hypothesis, which seems to have a fair reason, given the old structures and service orders, as well as the current ones.

Equally important appear to be the subsequent mentions of those indicated by the mentioned sources, regarding both the place and the time of the so-called *The Little Lity for the Dead* (order which will include par excellence the nominal remembrance of the dead), as well as the more precise indication of the liturgical days in which it could have been

⁴⁸ See also T. Teodorescu, *Sfântul Simeon Arhiepiscopul Tesalonicului... (Saint Simeon the Archbishop of Thessalonica...)*, p. 228.

⁴⁹ We have remembered here the Lity, because in the current order of the evening service (of the Vespers and of the Compline) there is no other nominal mention of the faithful than within the Lity (ordinance framed over time in the evening service but not only); “... it is united with the Vespers a special order, called Lity. It is not a separate, self-serving ordinance, having neither a blessing at the beginning nor a closing formula (dismissal); that is why it never acts on its own, but falls into the evening service (Vespers or Vigil), or (less often) in the morning one (Matins)”, E. Braniște, *Liturgica Specială... (Special Liturgy...)*, p. 76.

⁵⁰ “At the Great Church of the Patriarchate (Hagia Sofia, *author’s note*), at the blessing of the bread, it is not said the Litany: *God save Thy people...* But immediately after the sticheron of the Lity, it begins as follows: *Lord, have mercy...* and mentions the names and the others”, *Tipic bisericesc care cuprinde rânduiala Duminecilor, a Sărbătorilor Impărătești și a Sfinților aleși de preste tot anul (Church Typikon that includes the Sunday, of the Great Feasts and the Saints chosen for the whole year round)*, Church Typography from the Saint Monastery Cernica, 1925⁴, p. 19, note 2; unfortunately, it does not specify exactly which names (probably only of the living).

⁵¹ “... and after the choir had finished singing the sticherons (<<*Glory...>>)* from the Lity, the deacon (if there is no deacon, the priest himself) reads the Litany of the Lity, from the Hieratikon (<<*God save Thy people...>> etc.). At the last paragraph of the Litany is the nominal mention of those who brought the gifts to the altar and those for whom they were brought (usually only the living believers)”, E. Braniște, *Liturgica Specială... (Special Liturgy...)*, 78; the statement of Father Professor Ene Braniște allows us to understand, in our opinion, the complexity of this usage, which does not exclude a “possible” initial commemoration of the dead.*

celebrated⁵², particularities reproduced actually by *The Great Typikon* of Saint Sabbas, but about which, unfortunately, other sources and specialized studies do not remember anything.

The one who signals a few crucial clues in relation to the ones mentioned above, characteristics referring to the time and place of the celebration of an ordinance which he calls “lity-like” is Saint Simeon of Thessalonica; these particularities could “illustrate”, in our opinion, if not the evolution of these structures, at least a “form” of the shift from one service structure to another, that is, from the Lity celebrated on holidays and on Saturday evenings to the so-called every day “lity” (a service structure about which we do not know too much):

“Εἰ δὲ κοινὴ ἐστὶν ἡμέρα, λιτὴ οὐ γίνεται. Τὸ ἀπολυτικίον δὲ λέγεται, κατερχομένου τοῦ ἱερέως εἰς τύπον λιτῆς ὀπισθεν τοῦ ἄμβωνος, ψαλλομένου τοῦ, <<Θεοτόκε Παρθένε>>”⁵³
 [“And if it is an ordinary day there is not Lity, but the Troparion is sung, when the priest descends after the pulpit as a Lity and sings: <<Mother of God, Virgin>>”]⁵⁴.

This “service structure” which Saint Simeon recalls may represent an intermediate stage in the evolution of the order of Lity, but about the form of this “procession”, very interesting, Saint Simeon does not give us details, he simply calls it “Lity-like”; moreover, the troparion that he indicates, providentially, is precisely the one that is sung today during Lity, that is “*Mother of God, Virgin...*”. What is to be emphasized, however, is that in this context St. Simeon no longer remembers any nominal mention of believers.

In our opinion, it is very likely that this very structure (procession) of the day has been the origin of the so-called *The Little Lity for the Dead*, care which is still being done in the ordinary days, or it can be a “typology” of the former “processions” that were based on the very processions of the Lity; however, it is very difficult to say which of these structures were the original ones.

Another interesting detail, which Saint Simeon records, is the place where the “processions” indicated by him took place (both those from the Lity and those from the “Lity-like” procession), both of them being performed behind⁵⁵ the pulpit⁵⁶. Even though we can not precisely determine the space indicated by the phrase used by Saint Simeon when it speaks of the place of the Lity (“behind the pulpit”), we think, however, that it is very likely the church’s *narthex*; but the secondary meaning of the word “pulpit” can not be ignored either, which in the old books of service, as Professor Ene Braniște notes, meant *narthex* or *porch*; surprisingly, here too, the word “pulpit” (meaning *narthex* or *porch*) is also used in the context in which appears the ordinance of the Lity⁵⁷. Unfortunately, our statements

⁵² Probably in the ordinary days after Vespers, as already “anticipates” St. Simeon of Thessalonica, in the morning after Matins (clarification of cult books) or after the first hour, as recorded by *The Great Typikon* of Saint Sabbas.

⁵³ PG 155, p. 633.

⁵⁴ T. Teodorescu, *Sfântul Simeon Arhiepiscopul Tesalonicului... (Saint Simeon the Archbishop of Thessalonica...)*, p. 228.

⁵⁵ PG 155, p. 633: “... εὐθὺς τὰ τῆς λιτῆς ὀπισθεν τοῦ ἄμβωνος γίνεται...” [...immediately those of the Lity are said behind the pulpit] and “... Τὸ ἀπολυτικίον δὲ λέγεται, κατερχομένου τοῦ ἱερέως εἰς τύπον λιτῆς ὀπισθεν τοῦ ἄμβωνος...” [... But the troparion is said, and the priest descends behind the pulpit, as for Lity].

⁵⁶ “Pulpit (ἄμβων, ὁ – pulpit, d. ἀναβαίνω - anavaino = to climb, to go up) - is today a small balcony on the north wall of the church, inside the nave, closer or far from the altar, placed at some height, serving for church servants who go up in the pulpit to read the gospel and preach the sermon (...) Amvon is also called the middle of the enlarged room; in the old books of service, pulpit meant *narthex* or *porch* (v. *Mineiul pe Martie (The Mineion for March)*, Buda, 1805, f. 94, r. col. 12: <<We go out in the pulpit and celebrate the Lity...>>”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, pp. 29-30.

⁵⁷ “And after *Glory to God’s highest*: We go out into the pulpit, and celebrate the Lity according to the ordinance”, *Mineiul pe Martie (The Mineion for March)*, Buda, In the Princely Printing House of the

remain only simple assumptions, given the lack of obvious clues from sources and studies, which is why those interested could analyze these topics in the future in order to bring to light the full meaning of these ordinances and service structures.

On the other hand, we would like to point out that a true testimony of the “transition” we mentioned in the precedence (perhaps another stage in the evolution of these structures) or, why not, a reminiscence of the old common practice of the “processions” from the Lity, can also be the alternative singing of the sticherons from the Lity of the Patron saint from *the Little Lity for the Dead*:

“In the evening after the Apolis of the Vespers, or in the morning after the Apolis of the Matins, and after the choir says: Many years, the priest immediately takes the censer and the epitrachelion, and the chaplain takes the candlestick with the candle lit, walking before the priest; and when the choir goes, following them, singing a sticheron, which is from the Lity of the Patron saint, melodic itself; and another time, another sticheron, changing them one after the other, from the Lity of the Patron saint. And reaching the church porch...”⁵⁸.

Note that this peculiarity of the alternative song of the sticherons from Lity of the Patron saint of the Church during the procession of *the Lity for the dead*, is not explicitly recorded in *The Great Typikon*⁵⁹, although it is unprecedented in its way and quite important, but appears in our worship books, such as *Panihida*⁶⁰. But where it came from, it’s hard to say. On the other hand, we want to point out that there is also a “detail” in *Panihida*, which is devoid of meaning at first glance (... and after the choir says: *Many years...*)⁶¹, the so-called “polyhronion”⁶², which may indicate to us, to a certain extent, the origin itself of *The Little Lity for the Dead*, redactată în the *Panihida*⁶³, since it is recorded in a similar form and in the same context, in the *Great Typikon* of Saint Sabbas: “Follows the Litany and the First Hour and the Dismissal and *Many years!* And after its end, the usual Lity, in the nave^{64, 65}, as previously described”⁶⁶.

University of Peșta, 1805, p. 94r, lines 19-21; this is the case of the Lity ordinance on March 25th (The Annunciation), (“a night hour”), fiind încadrată în Slujba *Pavecerniței mari*, cf. *Mineiul pe Martie (The Mineion for March)*, Buda, In the Princely Printing House of the University of Peșta, 1805, p. 94r.

⁵⁸ *Panihidă sau Parastas împreună cu Litia Mică. În care se cuprinde toată rânduiala când se face pomenire pentru cei morți (Panihidă or Memorial Service with the Little Lity. In which all the Ordinance is Encompassed for when the Dead are remembered)*, Bucharest, Printing House of Church Books, 1922³, p. 5.

⁵⁹ Even if you do not know exactly where this usage was “borrowed”, it should be noted, however, that in the context of numerous explanations of this kind recorded in the *Great Typikon*, one could “infer” this practice without any difficulty, as we shall see.

⁶⁰ “*Panihida* is also called the church book of the burial service and other services that are done for the dead (memorial services, parastasis); originally this book was part of the Euchologion”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, p. 337.

⁶¹ “Polyhronion (πολύ – poli = many, and χρόνος, ό – hronos = for a long time, many years) - is called the final part of Tedeum...”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, p. 372.

⁶² Note that the precedent definition, and not only [see also L. CLUGNET, *Dictionnaire grec-français des noms liturgiques en usage dans l’Église grecque*, Paris, A. Picard et fils, 1895, p. 124] does not contain information about the form of this type of “polyhronion” (a practice well known in ancient times and recorded by old service books as well as by *Church Typikons*), although it has remained so far in the use of the Greek churches, and has recently been taken over by some of our churches.

⁶³ It should be noted that the first editions of the *Panihida* in Romanian do not contain a preface, which obviously hinders research.

⁶⁴ “narthică”, *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 16v; “Nartica (νάρθηξ, ό - nartix = the front entrance of a temple), the porch or the outer pronaos - it was a vestibule built on the west facade of the church, reserved for catechumens and penitents (in the early Christian ages)”, E. Braniște and Ecaterina Braniște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, pp. 315-316.

We would like to point out that the above mentioned appears in the typikon ordinance from Saturdays (see chapter 14)⁶⁷, not at all by chance, precisely in the context of recalling the so-called Lity; although the term indicated by the *Great Typikon* is a simple one, the one of *Lity*, it is obvious that it refers to the ordinance of *The Little Lity for the Dead*, if we notice, on the one hand, the logic of the sentence⁶⁸, which refers to an earlier similar indication (that is, the one in Chapter 11, where the ordinance for the ordinary days is reproduced⁶⁹)⁷⁰, and on the other, if we take into account the fact that the specification should, as it is natural, refer to a previously mentioned service order, but fully rendered, as is the case with the ordinance of the *Lity for the Dead*⁷¹.

Moreover, in the 2002 edition of Saint Sabbas' *Great Typikon*, a "controversial" edition, meaning that it has many inaccuracies, we also find, surprisingly, a "detail" that could help us understand the above, detail that the edition from 1857 from Kishinev⁷² (which we know that reproduces the edition from Iasi from 1816) does not record, unfortunately, that is the word "Lity"⁷³, reproduced in chapters 14 and 11 ("The Little Lity for the Dead")⁷⁴ with bold characters; in our opinion, this is a "detail" that should not be ignored at all, since, in the absence of obvious clues, these peculiarities can help us "somewhat" to set forth fair assumptions. The same edition of the *Great Typikon* (2002), as we said, has also inaccuracies, such as the use of the word "nave" instead of "narthex" (two different realities)⁷⁵.

One last important aspect, in our opinion, that we find in the two passages indicated above (the one in the *Panihida* and the one in the *Great Typikon*) and on which we would like to draw attention, is the use in some parish churches, where the *Lity for the Dead* takes place after the Matins (according to *Panihida*)⁷⁶ and not after Hour 1, as recommended by the *Great Typikon*.

To all these mentions, which were of particular significance at the time, there can be added another equally little known and studied ordinance structure, which can also bring an additional light, namely the Litany recorded on September 8, after the end of Matins:

"The Dismissal and the brothers anoint themselves with holy oil and we sing a samoglasnik sticheron of the Feast wanted by the Ecclesiarch. And the Prayer which is said by the priest, as is the ordinance, to the Lity at the service of the Resurrection Vespers, that is: *O, merciful Lord...* and Hour 1, in the church porch"⁷⁷.

⁶⁵ "Naos (from the Latin *navis ecclesiae* = ship; the Greek ναός, ό – naos) or the bosom of the church - is the central part of the Orthodox churches, surrounded by the iconostasis or the temple of the altar and the pronaos..." E. Branște and Ecaterina Branște, *Dicționar enciclopedic... (Encyclopedic Dictionary...)*, pp. 314-315.

⁶⁶ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 30; see also *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 16v.

⁶⁷ "Chapter 14 For Saturdays' service for Vespers, for Matins and for Liturgy when we sing: *God is the Lord!*", *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 29.

⁶⁸ Consider the final statement: "as previously described".

⁶⁹ "Chapter 11 Learning how to sing weekdays daily service of Vespers, Matins and the First Hour when we sing *God is the Lord!*", *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 22.

⁷⁰ Here it is mentioned the full title: "The Lity for the Dead", cf. *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 27.

⁷¹ See *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, pp. 27-28.

⁷² *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, pp. 14v, 16v.

⁷³ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 30.

⁷⁴ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 27.

⁷⁵ See previous notes.

⁷⁶ However, the Parastasis'celebration on Saturday morning after the Vespers, in some parish churches, where the Divine Liturgy is not celebrated, nor the First Hour, has its reason in the monastic liturgical practice.

⁷⁷ *Tipikon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 68; see also *Tipikon*, Kishinev, 1857, p. 42r.

According to the clues in the above-mentioned passage and to the principle of consistency, it could be said that this “ordinance” was celebrated also in the porch of the church, although no procession is clearly recalled, probably, since this usage was already well-known. It is also mentioned the singing of a samoglasnik sticheron⁷⁸ (it is unclear where) and a second prayer from the Lity from the Vespers of the Resurrection, that is on Saturday night⁷⁹.

In our opinion, the structures indicated on September 8 after the end of the Matins seem to be representative of the feast days in which the Lity is celebrated, and on the other days (called “ordinary”) to attend *The Little Lity for the Dead*, recorded on September 2, after the First Hour. Unfortunately, on September 2, the structure of the *Lity for the Dead* is not reproduced, which should have contained, essentially, at least four elements:

- a) the procession into the church porch;
- b) the singing of the sticheron from the Lity of the Patron saint;
- c) the Litany and the nominal remembrance of the dead;
- d) the concluding prayer.

5. THE LITY FOR THE DEAD - SOME TYPICAL EXPLANATIONS REGARDING THE CURRENT ORDINANCE AND THE WAY IT IS CELEBRATED

Returning to the current structure of *The Little Lity for the Dead*, we must admit that, as we know it today, it is without a doubt, of the Sabait origin (Palestinian), its ordinance being recorded, not at all by chance, precisely in the *Great Typikon* of Saint Sabbas, in chapter XI⁸⁰, after Hour 1:

“... then the prayer: *Christ, the True Light...* and the Dismissal and the usual exit into the church porch is performed and we sing the Lity for the dead. As the priest takes the censer, he goes out into the church porch, and before him is a bright candlestick, and, following him and singing the samoglasnik Sticheron of the Patron saint of the church, we go to the church’s narthex and the priest says: *Blessed is our Lord...* and we say *Amen! Holy God...* and, after *Our Father...*, the Exclamation: *That Thy is the Kingdom...* and then these Troparions: *With the spirits of the righteous..., Into Thy rest, Lord ..., Glory..., You are God Who have descended to Hell..., And now..., One pure...* After that, the priest says the Litany: *God, have mercy on us..., We pray for the rest of the sleeping souls of God's servants..., As Lord, our God..., God's mercy..., The Kingdom of Heaven..., then: Let's pray to God* and the prayer: *God of the spirits...* and the Exclamation: *That You are the resurrection and the life...* and, after the Exclamation, the priest says: *Glory to Thee, O Christ God...*, and we answer: *Glory..., And now..., Lord, have mercy* (three times), *Bless*. And the priest says the Dismissal: *He, Who has risen from the dead...* After the Dismissal, the priest says: *Your eternal remembrance, you worthy of the happiness of our Fathers and our brethren always remembered* (three times). Then he says: *May God reward and rest them and may He have mercy on us as He is good and loving of people*. And the choir sings: *Their eternal remembrance* (three times) and the final Dismissal⁸¹.

We also want to make it clear in this context that the celebration of the Lity (later probably of *The Little Lity for the Dead*), after Hour 1, seems to be of Sabait origin, and it is even noted by codex *Sinai 1096*:

⁷⁸ A similar practice is recalled also in our books of worship (*Panihida*), in the teaching about the *Lity for the dead*, as we have said above.

⁷⁹ See *Liturghier*, Bucharest, 2000, pp. 52-53; to be noted that in codex *Sinai 1096* we find broadly recorded the ordinance of the Lity from Saturday evenings.

⁸⁰ “Chapter 11 Learning how to sing weekdays daily service of Vespers, Matins and the First Hour when we sing *God is the Lord!*”, *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, p. 22.

⁸¹ *Tipicon (Typikon)*, Suceava, 2002, pp. 27-28.

“Κύριε εὐλόγησον καὶ εὐχή, καὶ λιτανεύοντες, ὡς ἔθος, ἐξερχόμεθα, καί, τελέσαντος τοῦ ἱερέως εἰς τὴν θήκην τοῦ ἁγίου τὴν ἐκτενήν, ἀπολύομεθα”⁸² [“*God, bless and the prayer, and we go out into procession, as usually, and the priest does the Litany at the grave of the Saint (Sabbas, author’s note), the Dismissal (the Apolis)*”].

In other contexts, we believe it is welcome to point out here also the teaching of the *Panihida* regarding the ordinance of the *Little Lity for the dead*:

“Here it is appropriate to show a brief teaching, for the reason of this ordinance, which is called *Lity for the dead*.⁸³ It is done every day, all year long, in the evening after the Apolis of the Vespers, and in the morning after the Apolis of the Matins, on the ordinary days, because in the feast days, that is on Sundays, and when we have Polyeleos, and in Doxologies, and in pre-celebrations, and celebrations, and the period of the celebration, we do not celebrate the *Lity for the dead*”⁸⁴.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is based on the assumption that “*The Little Lity for the Dead*” is a liturgical order of Palestinian origin (Sabait) by excellence.

Although the confirmation of this thesis is difficult to achieve, given that the specialists did not address this issue enough, but also because of the lack of clear indications, the present study succeeds, in our opinion, to highlight many of the peculiarities of this ordinance, which have not been debated so far. Moreover, the few clues (gathered from different sources and studies) make us really think of “*The Little Lity for the Dead*” as being probably a Palestinian liturgical structure (Sabait).

If the present study really achieves its goal, it onnly remains that further research (if they will appear) to confirm it; it is certain that the work opens new research perspectives on the so-called “*The Little Lity for the Dead*”, but not only.

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⁸² Cf. А. Дмитриевский, *Описание литургических рукописей...*, p. 58; this mention appears, in our opinion, after the first hour, on Monday, in the First Week of the Great Lent, although А. Дмитриевский’s study does not clearly show this.

⁸³ Very interesting (in the sense that it “hides” many meanings) but also defining for this service ordinance is the expression recorded in this teaching, namely “... because of this ordinance, which is called *Lity for the dead*”.

⁸⁴ *Panihida or Parastasis*, Bucharest, 1922³, p. 5; we chose this edition because it is, in our opinion, one of the best drafted.

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ROMANIA AND ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH THROUGH THE VIEW OF PATRIARCH CYRIL OF BULGARIA ACCORDING TO HIS “DIARIES”

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ABSTRACT

The present article discusses the attitude of Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria to Romania and the Romanian Orthodox Church. His attitude is reflected in his memories and impressions from the Romanian country, as he himself has preserved them in his "Diaries". These impressions were formed by his Romanian teachers - professors from the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi and his several meetings with the patriarch Justinian of Romania, Romanian clergy and lay people during his unforgettable visits to Romania. With much love and respect, he speaks about Romania, Romanian people, the achievements of the Romanian Church and about the friendship that has connected Bulgaria and Romania.

Keywords: Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria; Patriarch Justinian of Romania; Romanian Orthodox Church; Bulgarian Orthodox Church; church; monastery; communism priests; clergy;

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest names in the modern history of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church is that of Patriarch Cyril. An exceptional cleric, a Christian, a man, a scientist, he left a bright trace not only in the Bulgarian but also in the world history. For his readiness to sacrifice himself, but to save the Bulgarian Jews from a certain death, for the fact that thousands of people were saved by him and other Bulgarian clergy man, in 2001 the grateful state of Israel declared him "The Righteous Among The Nations".¹ Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria (birth name: Konstantin Markov Konstantinov) was born on 16.01.1901 in Sofia.

Some biographers who do not sympathize him are trying to discredit his person with the claim that he has Albanian origin and was almost unlawfully elected as Patriarch.² Their claim, which is based solely on the fact that Patriarch Cyril's father, Konstantin Pachu, is coming to Bulgaria from Albania does not automatically turn the Patriarch ethnicity into an Albanian. Moreover, the family of the father of Patriarch Cyril comes from the village of Granova (Albania), where the predominant population was Bulgarian, there were also Albanians, Greeks and Vlachs. The lack of sufficient documents and testimonies does not allow this issue to be finally resolved even today. There is evidence that the great-grandfather of Patriarch Cyril was a priest and his great-great-grandfather Michael was a

¹ Righteous Among the Nations Honored by Yad Vashem by 1 January 2017 <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/pdf-drupal/bulgaria.pdf> visited 06.04.2018.

² Димов, Я. Кирил „Патриарх Български“. София, 2005, pp. 67, 73 и сл. Димов, Я. Не си прави кумир. Ч. I, София, 1992, pp. 152-159.

bishop of one of the Albanian eparchies today.³ His primary education, future Patriarch Cyril, received in Sofia.⁴ He then enrolled in the Sofia Theological Seminary, which ended in 1920. In the period 1920 - 1923 he attended the Theological Faculty of the Belgrade University. On December 30, 1923, he was tonsured for a monk in the church "Holy Nedelya" in Sofia, where he was named Cyril. The next day he was ordained a deacon. He worked for a while in the office of the Sofia Metropolitan house and as a secretary in the office of the Rila Monastery, and then as a teacher at the Sofia Theological Seminary.

During the 1924 he studied in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Zagreb, and the following year in the Theological Faculty of the University of Chernivtsi, where in 1927 he was awarded a PhD in Theology. Between 1928 and 1929 he did a specialization in the Faculties of Philosophy in the Universities of Vienna and Berlin. On December 5, 1931, he was appointed a protosynkellos of the Sofia Metropolis, and in 1932 he was introduced to san archimandrite. From September 1932 to March 1935 he was Head of the Cultural and Educational Department of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and then until May 1938 he was Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. On July 12, 1936, he was ordained bishop at the temple "St. Alexander Nevsky" with the title "Stobijski".

On May 15, 1938, he was elected, and on 29 May he was canonically established for Metropolitan of city of Plovdiv. Between 1939 and 1945, he also ruled the Diocese of Maronia of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (today in Greece). From January 3, 1951 to May 10, 1953, he is a deputy chairman of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. After the restoration of the patriarchal dignity of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church during the Third Church-People's Council of Bulgarian church on May 10, 1953, with 104 from 107 votes, he was elected by three candidates for a Bulgarian Patriarch. Until his blessed death, on March 7, 1971, he was permanently occupying the Patriarchal throne in the Bulgarian Church. His rule coincided with the most difficult years in the history of the Bulgarian Church – the period of communism, which confronted Patriarch Cyril with numerous problems and challenges, most of which he managed to overcome with dignity. Patriarch Cyril is the holder of many prestigious Bulgarian and international awards, he is Doctor Honoris causa of the Sofia, Moscow and Leningrad Academies of Theology, author of dozens of scientific papers, books, articles and publications, academician of Bulgarian Academy of Science. Years of training in various leading Bulgarian and European educational institutions, besides the deep knowledge in various fields of theology, philosophy and law, also provided a rich foreign language training. One of the many languages that Patriarch Cyril knew and used was also the Romanian language.⁵ With the studying of the Romanian language, he was mainly involved during his specialization in Chernivtsi.⁶

During his journey to and from Chernivtsi, was his first acquaintance with Romania, with the Romanian people, with their life, culture and religiousness. Unfortunately, we don't have account of his impressions from this first trip through

³ Павлов, П. Патриарх Кирил: опит за жизнеописание. – В: Сборник в чест на Кирил патриарх Български. Пловдив, 2001, р. 13. Ковачев, М. Негово Светейшество Българският патриарх Кирил и преглед на книжовното му дело. – ГДА, т. XIII, 1964, р. 347.

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⁶ *Ibidem.*

Romania. But we have such from his subsequent trip in July 1948, when he visited Moscow as a member of Bulgarian Orthodox Church delegation for the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church autocephality.⁷ During this trip to Moscow, which took place on 5 July 1948, the plane landed in Bucharest for about an hour and took over the Romanian delegation headed by Patriarch Justinian (1901-1997).⁸ At the airport in Bucharest, the Bulgarian ecclesiastical delegation was solemnly welcomed by a large number of Romanian clerics led by the Vicar Bishop of Patriarch Justinian. Personally, here came the Minister of Religious Cults in Romania, Mr. Stăncu Stoyan, and his secretary father Vaska, something, which greatly impresses Patriarch Cyril.⁹ Patriarch Cyril kindly spoke about some of the members of the Romanian delegation, he obviously knew well from their previous meetings: Prof. T. Popescu, Prof. P. Vintilescu, Prof. Ioan Comana and others.¹⁰

The newly elected Romanian patriarch Justinian, along with his accompanying Romanian clerics, boarded the same plane and together they continued the trip to Moscow. Patriarch Justinian was a close friend of the future Bulgarian Patriarch Cyril, something that is evident not only from the subsequent conversation between them on the board of the plane, but also from many subsequent events. From their conversation on the plane, it became clear that Patriarch Cyril, then Metropolitan of Plovdiv, was part of the Bulgarian delegation for the enthronement of Patriarch Justinian a little earlier same year, on 6th of June 1948.¹¹ Patriarch Cyril reminded his interlocutor of his words during the enthronement speech at the Church of St. Spyridon in Bucharest on the occasion of the concordat between Romania and the Vatican, to which Patriarch Justinian responded: "While we are in Moscow, the concordat will be denounced".¹² Patriarch Justinian's words turn out to be prophetic, not only the concordat was denounced, but in 1950 Romania broke its diplomatic relations with the Vatican.¹³ Patriarch Cyril appears to be also well acquainted with the geography of Romania, and although from the air, from the porthole of the plane he knew well, when he flew over Galatz, over Braila or Blata.¹⁴ During the meeting in Moscow, as well as during the trips intentionally organized by the Soviet state, Patriarch Cyril repeatedly mentioned his personal meetings with Patriarch Justinian and the other members of the Romanian delegation, sharing his personal positive impressions from them.¹⁵ He also did not omitted to mention the solemn lunch given by the Romanian ambassador in Moscow, Prof. Vladesko Rakosha, in honor of Patriarch Justinian on July 19, 1948,¹⁶ as well as his conversation with Priest Prof. Vintilescu on the Higher Theological Education in Romania and the reforms in it.¹⁷

⁷ Деяния совещания глав и представителей автокефальных Православных церквей в связи с празднованием 500 летия автокефалии Русской Православной церкви 8 – 18 июля 1948 г. Т. 1. Москва, 1949.

⁸ Кирил Патриарх Български. Дневници (съст. И ред. Ж. Лефтеров, М. Методиев). София, 2018, р. 73.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp.73, 75, 83.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p.73

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ Stanciu, C. A Rebirth of Diplomacy: The Foreign Policy of Communist Romania between Subordination and Autonomy, 1948–1962. – *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol.24, issue2, 2013, pp. 253-272.

¹⁴ Кирил Патриарх Български. Дневници..., р.74.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 76, 82-83, 107, 110, 122.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p.110.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p.75.

On July 14, 1951, future Patriarch Cyril on his way to Moscow again landed shortly in Bucharest,¹⁸ and on July 17 he had a special meeting with Patriarch Justinian in Moscow, where they discussed the status of the theological institutes in Romania, the number and status of professors and students in the Theological Schools, the Church's social security funds, the auxiliary funds of the Church, Church workshops and other important issues.¹⁹ Describing Patriarch Justinian briefly, Patriarch Cyril says: "... a little gray beard. Diabetes".²⁰ On July 20, 1951, after the All-night Vigil at the Kremlin church of Epiphany in Moscow, Patriarch Justinian again talked with Patriarch Cyril and the topic of the conversation again was focused on the theological education and the problems with theological staff.²¹ On 24 July 1951 in Moscow, Patriarch Justinian visited Patriarch Cyril and talked again about the Church's problems and especially about the financial policies of Romanian church.²²

During the celebrations in Prague on the occasion of the proclamation of the Autocephaly of the Czech Orthodox Church in December 1951, Patriarch Cyril had an interesting meeting with Bishop Dr. Antim Nika, Vicar of Patriarch Justinian, who had written a PhD dissertation on Christianity among Muslims in the Near East, from which Patriarch Cyril was very interested.²³ Patriarch Cyril himself worked for a while on studying the life, language and traditions, as well as on the conversion to Christianity of Muslim Bulgarians in the Rhodope mountain area.²⁴

In July 1952, Patriarch Cyril on his way to Vienna again crossed Romania, but this time with a train on the Giurgiu-Bucharest-Arad route, having again in Bucharest a special meeting with his friends in the Romanian Patriarchate. In this case he met Patriarch Justinian and the Metropolitans Filaret and Teoctist, as well as the painter Konstantin Petrescu. The Bulgarian delegation was again very warmly welcomed, Patriarch Cyril laconically noted: "... 600 priests".²⁵ Because there is no clarification in Patriarch Cyril's Diaries, it is probably here mentioned, that only in Bucharest there are 600 priests and not that he was solemnly welcomed by such a large number of clergymen. In the Patriarchy they talked again about the finances of the Church, monasteries and other ecclesiastical problems.²⁶

The brotherly love and close relations between Patriarch Justinian and Patriarch Cyril were also marked by an extraordinary event in the recent history of the Bulgarian Church – Restoration of Patriarchal dignity of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the election of a new Bulgarian Patriarch on May 10, 1953. At the inauguration ceremony of the newly elected Bulgarian Patriarch, delegations from different Orthodox churches arrived in Sofia, but only the delegation of the Romanian Orthodox Church was headed by the Patriarch Justinian, all other delegations were led by Metropolitans.²⁷ In his speech on the election and enthronement of Patriarch Cyril, Patriarch Justinian emphasized the deep historical ties that connect the Bulgarian and Romanian people and our two Churches. His

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p.154.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p.157

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p.159.

²² *Ibidem*, p.161.

²³ *Ibidem*, p.74.

²⁴ Вж: Патриарх Кирил. Българомохамедански селища в Южни Родопи: Топонимно, етнографско и историческо изследване. София, 1960.

²⁵ Кирил Патриарх Български. Дневници..., p. 174.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ Деяния на III Църковно-народен събор 8-9 май 1953. София, 1954, pp. 186-189.

sincere words were an eloquent testimony to this: *"Our Holy Synod, inspired by great love, which has been experiencing for centuries to the Bulgarian Church, has empowered us to witness this love through live speech and to take part in these celebrations as a sign of great respect to Your Holiness, the First Hierarchy of the Bulgarian Church, when you, according to the Orthodox tradition receives from the Holy Synod, the installation and the enthronement ... The people living in today's territories of Romania and Bulgaria have fraternized and allied with the Slavs in the same Christian faith, the same priests in the same churches, around the same diocese. Among the most ancient Danubian dioceses there was the Drustar Fortress, where the first Bulgarian Patriarch Damyan headed over forty years the Bulgarian and Romanian Churches... The acts constitute the most vivid expression of feelings. For the unceasing love and brotherhood of the Romanian Church and the Romanian people towards the Bulgarian people, since they since they've got to know them and up to today, speaks the deeds recorded in the ecclesiastical and monastery written documents of your country, speaks the liturgical books and the church plate, portraits of church donors, the documents found embedded in the walls, the Bulgarian church archives, etc. All this will forever testify for the love and brotherhood of the Romanian people and the Romanian Church towards the Bulgarian Church and the Bulgarian people ..."*²⁸ In response to this message addressed to him and the Bulgarian Church, Patriarch Cyril said: *"With great gratitude are filled our hearts from these brotherly greetings of the Most Blessed Justinian, Patriarch of the Holy Romanian Orthodox Church, to which we have long been obliged with sincere love for the love that feeds on our Holy Church ..."*²⁹

On October 11, 1954, Patriarch Cyril made his first visit to Romania, as a Bulgarian Patriarch. He was solemnly welcomed on the Romanian coast of the Danube River by father Radu Pavel from Giurgiu.³⁰ In response to this kindly welcome, Patriarch Cyril said: *"To be blessed our step in Romanian land; to be blessed and your wonderful homeland"*.³¹

In Bucharest, in Patriarchal House, Patriarch Cyril was greeted by Patriarch Justinian and a large number of clerics. On the same day Patriarch Cyril was also accepted by the Minister of Cults of Romania – Academician Constantinescu – Iasi.³² On October 12, 1954, patriarch Cyril and the Bulgarian delegation worshiped in the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. St. Constantine and Helena at the relics of St. Dimitar Bessarbovski, who forever connected in Christ love the Bulgarian and Romanian people, after that they went on pilgrimage trip to the Tsiganesti, Plumbuita and Antim monasteries. In the monastery of Tsiganesti, Patriarch Cyril was pleasantly surprised by the fact that among the sisters of the monastery, which were 200 in number, there were also nuns with Bulgarian origin.³³ At the solemn lunch given by Patriarch Justinian, the two again discussed the financial status of churches and monasteries, the administration of the monasteries and the introduction of labor in the monasteries, despite the resistance of some monks who thought they would be diverted from their prayer duties.³⁴ Patriarch Cyril remained pleasantly surprised by the fact that the Romanian Patriarchate had a department that controls the iconography throughout the country in order to avoid deviations from the canon, as well as a Department of

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 186-187.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 204.

³⁰ Кирил Патриарх Български. Дневници..., p. 186

³¹ *Ibidem*.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 187.

³³ *Ibidem*, pp. 187-189.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

Architecture, where several architects worked.³⁵ The Bulgarian patriarch was heavily impressed by the many workshops at the Antim monastery, where were made from packing boxes, to priestly garments, plates and bells. In the memorial book of the monastery he recorded: *"We visited all the ateliers of the Patriarchy and are delighted with what we saw, that testifies to the great organizational and creative gifts of His Holiness the Romanian Patriarch Justinian. We pray for the Romanian Church, for new spiritual and material creative achievements"*.³⁶ Patriarch Cyril was also fascinated by the organization and number of religious books, magazines, newspapers and textbooks published by the "Printing and Publishing Department", headed by father Gregory Vurlușanu. In the memorial book he noted: *"Our impressions of the structure and activity of the Patriarchal Printing house and the other wards are wonderful. May God bless this work"*.³⁷

On October 13, 1954, Patriarch Cyril visited the city of Iasi, where he was welcomed at the station by a vast array of believers and clerics. In the Metropolitan house, Metropolitan Sebastian met Bulgarian delegation with a solemn greeting to the Bulgarian patriarch. The choir of priests was singing on Slavonic perennial (Many years).³⁸ In Iasi Patriarch Cyril visited the churches "The Three Holy Hierarchs", "St. Nicholas Royal", "St. Paraskeva" and the monasteries of Golia, Galata and Cetățuia, where Patriarch Justinian became a monk. In the church of "St. Paraskeva", the two Patriarchs served a solemn service in front of the saint's relics.³⁹ On the following day, Patriarch Cyril visited again the church of St. Paraskeva to worship the saint's holy relics and after that continued to the Neamț Monastery.⁴⁰ Patriarch Cyril was warmly greeted in the monastery by the monastery brotherhood, who were singing church songs for the Bulgarian patriarch. Eight deacons with censers in hand were built in two rows.

Patriarch Cyril was very impressed and with excitement pronounced a short speech in which said, that he finally visited this remarkable monastery, something, he wanted from his youth to do.⁴¹ During the solemn lunch, he was pleasantly surprised to see his professor from the Theological Faculty of Chernivtsi - Father Professor Vasily Georgiou. Iasi Metropolitan Sebastian was guilty for the surprise, he sent his private car to the village of Kut (some 50 km. from Neamt monastery), to make possible for Patriarch Cyril to see his 83 years old friend and professor. Prof. Georgiou also met with another friend, the famous Bulgarian scholar Priest Professor Stefan Tsankov. They have been close friends for many years and knew each other from numerous theological meetings and conferences in Europe. Father Prof. Vasily Georgiou taught Greek and New Testament in Chernivtsi and was a scientific tutor of Patriarch Cyril during his doctoral studies there. Later on Patriarch Cyril with interest looked at the library of the Neamt Monastery, which preserved many Slavonic manuscripts and represented tremendous wealth and interest for future research, but he also regretted that the library was not cataloged. During the dinner was raised by Metropolitan Sebastian and discussed a very important issue, which to this day has not found its solution - the Second marriage of the Priesthood.⁴²

³⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 191-192.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 191.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 192.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 193.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 195.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 197.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 198.

Patriarch Cyril also visited the monk seminary and the school for Church singers in the monastery. On the following day, Patriarch Cyril on his way to the monastery of Agapia went to the village of Humulesti, to visit and bow to the museum and home of the great Romanian writer Ion Creanga.⁴³ At the monastery of Agapia Patriarch Cyril was greeted by the monastery sisterhood headed by the abbess of the monastery. The Patriarch was again fascinated, the monastery had 550 nuns and novices. The church of the monastery "St. Archangel Michael "was wonderful. Church was painted in the middle of the 19th century by the notable Romanian painter Nicolae Grigorescu. Grigorescu painted the temple when he was only 19 years old. The frescoes, as noted by Patriarch Cyril, were wonderful, but not in Byzantine style.⁴⁴ Subsequently, Patriarch Cyril in his "Diaries" detailed the entire history of the monastery, from its foundation in the 16th century by the monks Agapius and Efrosin, to the present day.⁴⁵ Patriarch Cyril does not fail to note yet another very impressive fact, that in Oltenia all monasteries are dormitory and that there were more than 2,000 monks and nuns in the Moldavian diocese.⁴⁶ The next day, October 17, 1954, Patriarch Cyril headed a solemn Holy Liturgy in the Neamt Monastery, to which many nuns from the Agapit and Varatec monasteries came.⁴⁷ During the service, Patriarch Cyril tonsured the monk Victorine as a reader and subdeacon, and then ordained him a deacon.⁴⁸

From the Neamt Monastery, Patriarch Cyril briefly stopped in city Roman, where he was again greeted by thousands of people. There, in the local temple, he did a brief prayer and spoke briefly to the local citizens. The bishop of the city Roman - Theophilus and Metropolitan Sebastian also spoke shortly. From Roman Patriarch Cyril returned to Bucharest, where, after a short break, on 19 October 1954, he departed for Curtea de Arges.⁴⁹ In the monastery he was welcomed by his classmate from Chernivtsi, Bishop Paul. Patriarch Cyril did not save words of praise to describe the monastery church of the "Dormition of the Theotokos", the monastery itself and its large park, as well as the monastery's old literature richness.⁵⁰

Patriarch Cyril does not miss to mention the earliest frescoes in the old church from the 14th century, which were in Slavonic language.⁵¹ On October 20, Patriarch Cyril went to Craiova, and here he did not save his praise, both for the city itself and for the meeting organized by Firmilian, the Archbishop of Craiova and the Metropolitan of Oltenia. In Craiova Patriarch Cyril worshiped in the cathedral "St. Dimitar "at the relics of St. Neophyte patriarch of Constantinople, St. Sergius and Baccus and martyr Tatiana. In the cathedral he also pronounced a brief, but heartily speech: "*... here we also, coming here in your blessed temple, saw your piety and your love for the Church, to God, to us, who came from foreign country and represent a Sister Church ... Be blessed!*"⁵² Patriarch Cyril visited also the church of "St. Virgin Mary" - Mântuleasa ,where also spoke in a short welcoming speech. The visit is followed by a solemn lunch in the Metropolitan home with Archbishop Firmilian, the lunch went into a fraternal, intimate atmosphere. On the following day

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 199.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 200.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 200-201.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 201.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 201.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 202.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 203.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 204-205.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 205.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 206.

Patriarch Cyril visited four churches in Raminicu Valcea and then went to visit the Horezu Monastery, where again was greeted with great love.⁵³ Patriarch Cyril described in details the history and architecture of the monastery, as well as the holy relics that were preserved in it.⁵⁴

The next day Patriarch Cyril visited Bistritca Monastery, and on 23 October is again in Bucharest.⁵⁵ In Bucharest Patriarch Cyril spent a tiring, but extremely pleasant week, in which he was a dear guest of Patriarch Justinian, visiting a number of churches, meeting with many bishops, theologians, artists, etc. As he himself put it: "*We could see almost all the Diocesan archbishops. That was how Patriarch Justinian had ordered*".⁵⁶

In Bucharest, besides the regular worship services, he also had a number of conversations and was particularly impressed by the discipline in the Romanian Church, something that explicitly emphasized.⁵⁷ During this visit to Romania, as a sign of profound respect for Patriarch Cyril's personality and brotherly love for the Bulgarian people and the Church, Patriarch Justinian donated for use by the Bulgarian community in the city until the construction of his own temple, the church "St. Iliya".⁵⁸ On October 29, 1954, Patriarch Cyril flew back to Bulgaria in the early afternoon. At the airport was sent by Patriarch Justinian and a number of other Romanian clerics, as well as by the director of Romania's Ministry of Cults, Ion Dumuchuscu, and by the Bulgarian Ambassador Stoyan Pavlov.

CONCLUSION

In the following 1955, a delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church headed by Patriarch Cyril also visited Romania, but in his "Diaries" there are no pages for this visit.⁵⁹ Patriarch Cyril repeatedly through the years visited the city of Bucharest for a short time on his way to Moscow and repeatedly meets with Patriarch Justinian at various Orthodox forums and conferences around the world.⁶⁰

The last visit of Patriarch Cyril to Romania was in June 1968 at the celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of Patriarch Justinian's enthronement. For the strong spiritual tie that connected Patriarch Justinian and Patriarch Cyril speaks of the fact that not all the Heads of local Orthodox Churches were invited to the celebrations of this round anniversary. Amongst the uninitiated was and Serbian Patriarch German, who looked for advice and assistance from Patriarch Cyril how to deal with the case. Patriarch Cyril advised him to send Patriarch Justinian a congratulatory telegram.⁶¹

After the celebrations, Patriarch Cyril remained in Bucharest for a while, and with the assistance of Patriarch Justinian received permission to work in the Diplomatic Archive at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Patriarch Cyril was received with great attention by Minister Dionysius Ionescu, who fully cooperated his scientific research.⁶² In

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 209.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 211.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 215.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ <https://dveri.bg/abuda> посетен на 3.04.2018

⁵⁹ Кирил Патриарх Български. Дневници..., p. 586.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 307, 627.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 581-582.

⁶² *Ibidem*, p. 589.

his "Diaries", Patriarch Cyril laconically, but eloquently wrote: "*In the Archive, people were extremely careful to me, even more than I could expect.*"⁶³

On March 7, 1971, after a severe illness, the great friend of the Romanian people and Church died, Patriarch Cyril of Bulgarian. On March 26, 1977, the great friend of the Bulgarian people and Church presented himself to the Lord, Romanian patriarch Justinian (Marina). God to forgive and reassure their souls and may their holy prayers to continue to strengthen the bonds between the two sisters Churches, the Bulgarian and the Romanian.

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⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 590.

RELIGIOUS-MORAL TENETS IN THE SERMONS OF FATHER ARSENIE BOCA

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is centered on one of the outstanding figures of 20th-century Romanian preaching: Father Arsenie Boca, a great spiritual director, greatly revered by the Romanian people both in his lifetime and today, and a victim of communist persecutions. A brief biography is followed by a synthetic presentation of the religious-moral tenets put forth in his sermons: the Christian outlook on life (balance; attitude towards life; decision making; true freedom; the vice of idleness; rules to be followed in a Christian's life), a wide array of issues related to the family life (the sanctity of matrimony; the problem of abortions; family planning; the relationship between generations in the family line) or to pastoral activity (the relationship between a confessor and the young to be guided towards a meaningful life). Through all his efforts in the service of the Romanian Church and nation, Father Arsenie Boca stood out as a distinguished spiritual director, a guide of the souls and a convincing missionary.

Keywords: Father Arsenie Boca; religious-moral; spiritual; confessor;

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Preaching played a major role in safeguarding Orthodoxy in Romania, and in the development of the national language and culture, as note all the treatises of history of Romanian language and literature. Also, sermon preaching is acknowledged as an important factor in maintaining the national consciousness of Romanians on both sides of the Carpathian mountains. Since the content of the sermons mirrored the life of Romanian society at various times, many of the old sermons still surviving are today sources of information for historians, sociologists and philologists, reflecting long gone states of affairs¹.

20th-century Romanian sermon expressed, even more than the previous centuries, the cultural, social, economic and political challenges faced by our nation. Preaching was comparatively more cultivated in Transylvania, because of the proximity of the Protestant Church where simplified liturgical practices gave prominence to the sermon; this occasioned a true missionary competition among preachers, whose carefully devised sermons were published in the times' journals and in sermon books. Undoubtedly, all diligent preachers produced carefully structured texts, to pursue religious-moral aims and to address the realities of everyday life. One could categorize 20th-century preaching into three periods: from the turn of the century to the advent of communism (1945); the communist period

¹ Rev. dr. Nicușor Beldiman, *Predica în Biserica Ortodoxă Română din Muntenia în secolul al XX-lea – Analiză și evaluare*, Editura Episcopiei Giurgiului, 2013, p. 46.

proper (1945-1989) and the period 1990-2000, when freedom of expression was gained and exerted². From the 20th century onwards, the Romanian Orthodox Church has had outstanding preachers, erudite theologians and great in the missionary and national realm, whose sermons provided substantial Orthodox theological teachings, full of dogmatic and moral subtlety, which mirrored the authors' insights, beliefs and spiritual experience.

Some of them, aware of their responsibilities and understanding the „signs of the times”, foresaw the dangers of the atheist communism and by their sermons called to the safeguarding of the national-Orthodox consciousness, which later brought them many and various persecutions, including imprisonment, and even death³.

1.A BRIEF PORTRAIT

One of these erudite and brilliant preachers of this period was Father Arsenie Boca, who would mainly address the common people as they were the majority of worshippers, as they still are today; however, his words reached even the most aristocratic circles. It was by no royal whim that Princess Ileana invited him to talk before the royal entourage. Most likely, the impression made by Father Arsenie's words contributed to the tonsure into monasticism of Princess Ileana who later became Mother Alexandra. His words have endured through time and reveal to us the luminous entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

A great spiritual director of last century's Romania, an unforgettable figure for those who knew him as a „unique phenomenon in the history of Romanian monasticism”, Zian Boca (the Father's lay name) was born to a Transylvanian couple: Iosif and Cristina, in late September 1910. He attended the primary school in his native village, then became a student of the Orthodox High School „Avram Iancu” in Brad, established by the worthy of remembrance metropolitan of Transylvania, Saint Andrei Șaguna, and graduated with honors⁴. On 10 May 1929, in the courtyard of „Avram Iancu” highschool in Brad, the valedictorian of that year's class - Zian Boca, planted a durmast oak which was by unanimous decision named „Zian's Oak”. The man born in the heart of Transylvania, at Vața de Jos, close to Țebea, where „Horea's Oak” stands, was then performing a symbolic act, which reveals its full significance only today; not far from the durmast oak of the great martyr of our history, was planted another durmast oak by the one who would later become, by the monastic name Arsenie, the great charismatic confessor of our ancestral faith, at odds with his „crazy century”⁵.

He studied Theology and Fine Arts, but also passionately attended courses of Medicine, then became a celibate deacon in 1935, and in 1939 he set off for the Holy Mount Athos, where he lived ascetically for three months in preparation for monastic life. There, it is said that he encountered a very demanding, very strict elder who scolded him: „You are good for nothing, not even sweeping the floors!”, and his reaction was: „I have found the right elder!”. From a very young age he demonstrated the ascetical calling which he would later declare to be fiery: „Not all those living in the world are lost, and not all those living in a monastery are saved... Some monks are not true monks, but merely clothes hangers for the monastic habit... If you want to be a monk, then you must burn like fire!”.

² Rev. dr. Nicușor Beldiman, *Predica în Biserica Ortodoxă Română din Muntenia în secolul al XX-lea – Analiză și evaluare*, p. 46.

³ Rev. dr. Nicușor Beldiman, *Predica în Biserica Ortodoxă Română ...*, p. 47.

⁴ Vasile Manea, *Preoți ortodocși în inchisorile comuniste*, ediția a II-a, revăzută și adăugită, Editura Patmos, 2001, p. 52.

⁵ Dan Lucinescu, *Părintele Arsenie Boca, un sfânt al zilelor noastre*, Editura Siaj, București, 2009, p. 10.

According to Father Teofil Părăian, Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan was intent on making Sâmbăta Monastery into an exceptional monastic center, and he set off to achieve this goal by engaging „three great men” in the effort: Father Arsenie Boca, Father Nicolae Mladin and Father Serafim Popescu. Arsenie Boca joined the restored monastery of Sâmbăta de Sus, in the summer of 1939, and in the next year he was tonsured into monasticism and initiated what was later known as the movement of spiritual revival of Sâmbăta. The tonsure of the young celibate deacon⁶ Zian Boca was generally expected. „Revista Teologică [The Theological Journal]”, published at Sibiu, noted that on 3 May 1940 took place the solemn service of tonsuring one of the „enlightened graduates of Academia Andreiana”- the young hierodeacon Arsenie Boca. Known for his integrity of character and his spiritual loftiness, Father Arsenie was ordained a priest on the Friday celebrating the Healing Font of the Mother of God, 1942.

Once the communist regime was installed, which entailed concerted efforts to destroy religious belief in the people’s souls and turn them away from the Church of Christ, Father Arsenie became one of the victims of the Secret Services [the Department of State Security - „Securitate”]. He was first arrested in 1948, and charged with supporting the anticommunist fighters in Făgăraș Mountains. Both on these charges, and because of his increasing notoriety among the devout Christians, he was investigated by the political police. As he took a stand against communism, Father Arsenie was expelled from Sâmbăta, sentenced to prison and sent to the forced labor camp at the Danube-Black Sea Canal, where he was an epitome of dignity and offered much support to his fellows. Later, he was forced to move from Sâmbăta Monastery to Prislop⁷, where he became the abbot; after the monastery was turned into a convent, he stayed as a spiritual director and confessor for the nuns, until 1959, when the communist authorities forced the community to leave the convent. In the meanwhile, he had been again arrested and sent to the Canal, where he spent almost a whole year. Later he was sent to Bucharest, under the constant supervision of the political police. During the last part of his life, he was particularly fond of two places: Drăgănescu – in Giurgiu county, where he worked on the local church’s painting for 15 years, from 1968, and bequeathed to us a true, and singular, *sermon by means of images*; and Sinaia, where from 1969, he had his cell and his workshop and where he used to withdraw increasingly often, and where he also died in the early winter of 1989, aged 79. He was buried under the fir trees of Prislop, the monastery where he had been first exiled by the communist authorities and which ended up by becoming his preferred place⁸.

2.TOPICAL THEMES AND IDEAS

Such a personality is very difficult to describe by means of words; whatever one might say is too little, insufficiently relevant. The Father did not speak much, but his sermons were substantial. When he delivered more extensive sermons, at Sâmbăta Monastery, not everyone was able to understand him. However today, more than 60 years later, his writings demonstrate the topicality and relevance of his teachings. His writings – especially *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. Antologie de cuvinte duhovnicești ale Father Arsenie Boca [I Want to Turn Your Tears Into Joy. An Anthology of Spiritual Teachings of Father Arsenie Boca]*⁹ contain several extremely topical themes, as he

⁶ Dan Lucinescu, *Părintele Arsenie Boca, un sfânt al zilelor noastre*, p. 11.

⁷ Florin Duțu, *Părintele Arsenie Boca – o biografie –*, Editura Floare Albă de Colț, București, 2014, p. 55.

⁸ Dan Lucinescu, *Părintele Arsenie Boca, un sfânt al zilelor noastre*, p. 11.

⁹ Editura „Agaton”, Făgăraș, 2014.

addressed various aspects – and provided true lessons – of medicine, family life, monasticism, Church life, and so on.

Self-righteousness is a conceited, „holier-than-thou” attitude by which a person attempts to gain social recognition, without taking into account and showing any concern for the others’ needs and expectations, but considering one’s own ego to be strong and mature enough to dominate and control the social mechanisms within a group or a social environment¹⁰. Moreover, self-righteousness creates the illusion that everything is going your way, that you do not depend on anyone and anything; sometimes the closest persons begin to bother you, and you perceive yourself as a little „god” on which they rely or whom they should worship, etc. „When you fall into self-righteousness, you have closed all doors to self-improvement. When you are aware of your shortcomings and imperfections, then this proves that the Perfect One is beside you – and your conscience, the eye contemplating heavenly things, proclaims the difference between Him and you”¹¹.

About **abortions**, Father Arsenie shows it is a capital sin. It is „murder, nothing less. Listen carefully, everyone: the blood that has been shed calls to be avenged. Also, you will not have joys from your other children, but only sorrow. The punishment for bloodshed is merciless: either God takes away from you your other children too, or the mother herself is punished. Many mothers die even during their abortions. Or they have some other trouble, lose their heads and forget about the great mercy of God shown for all sinners, and the devil approaches them and makes them despair and even commit suicide.

Great trouble afflicts the mothers who kill their own children. And if you want to be saved, together with your other children, you must take in your care the same number of children as the aborted ones, from poor families, and have them baptized becoming their godmother – or even care for other children, already baptized. Care for them as for your own children, provide them with clothes, shoes, food, school fees, until they are able to earn their own living; offer them the same education as you give your own children. And all the troubles you might face during this time, be they from them or for their sake, accept and endure everything, trusting that the merciful God will forgive you for your sin, for in patience lies atonement for sin. Almsgiving and repentance outweigh the just punishment.

Teach other young women not to do the same as you have done, for you know how deeply you regret it. Abortion is worse than ordinary murder, because it is committed against a defenseless child. This is why it calls for the life of both mother and father. The children’s blood cries out to Heaven to be avenged, and few go unpunished. The disasters, the wars, bring the just punishment where there has been no repentance.

Therefore, repent and stop sinning! Run to the church, confess sincerely and receive the Holy Eucharist, because it is the only way to earn the protection of God for yourselves and your homes. Never forget, fasting is the gate and confession is the door. They bring about the protection of God, without which we are unable to achieve anything. „I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Psalm 31/32). We deserve punishment for our sins, so we must atone for them and cease to do them. „For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him”. See how our minds, hearts and bodies must be:

¹⁰ Rev. Arsenie Boca, *Cărarea Împărăției*, Editura Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române a Aradului, Arad, 1995, p. 22.

¹¹ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. Antologie de cuvinte duhovnicești ale Părintelui Arsenie Boca*, Ediție îngrijită de Natalia Corlean, Editura Agaton, Făgăraș, 2014, p. 22.

cleansed and purified, for God will not protect a defiled body and perverted heart and mind, and if we make amends our days will improve and and we will find our joy”¹².

Attitude towards life. Analysts of contemporary life have described youth as “The ME Generation”, a very appropriate term for today’s culture of narcissism, with its fascination with the self, which hinders a normal development of the human being. Others speak of the artificial universe or the virtual world of fantasy in which many people live now, unable to face or understand the reality of the surrounding world or their own problems¹³. Regarding these attitudes, Father Arsenie asserts that by our very nature we belong to the physical and the metaphysical realms at the same time. As such, we can survive without bread for a while, but we cannot live without an outlook on life. If we confine our origins and ultimate destiny to the physical realm, then a number of issues remain unaddressed and unsolved, we live immersed in secondary truths, whereas the fundamental Truth itself remains inaccessible to us¹⁴.

One’s attitude towards life has to integrate body and soul. This modifies in a positive way the structure of the cells in the entire body, harmonizing it and remedying the damage caused by pain and suffering¹⁵. The cause of „man’s disfigurement lies in the wrong belief that happiness can be found in the earthly things. One must live in the world, but always above the world. Do not impoverish the meaning of life, reducing it to worldly pursuits! Achieve them, but always be above them! Because of the instability and transience of things, because of the conflicts with the world’s meanness and infirmity, one must anchor one’s life in God who never lies, as does the earthly world. The only knowledge that is free of error and relativity, is God’s as He is the Absolute, the beginning and the end of the world. He is the only One who turns chaos into cosmos. When one entrusts oneself to the divine Providence, out of love for God, then that person overcomes the human condition freely and deliberately – of course, with the support of God’s grace – and can receive even in this life the foretaste of perfection, perceived as a sense of freedom, as a resurrection. Time, causality, the world, life and all human knowledge, so full of tormenting contradictions, fall behind like an egg shell after the bird has hatched, or like that instant when a hairy caterpillar – after the apparent death of a chrysalis – morphs into a rainbow-colored butterfly. In this life, man is like a vigil lamp, filled with oil and equipped with a wick, but still unlit. Once we become aware of what we really are, of the fact that we are always related to God, that God dwells in our spiritual structure, that we are called to make a free choice and opt for an attitude towards life, which we adhere to even if those around are against us, then God kindles the vigil lamp and enlightens our whole life with the Christian view on world and life”¹⁶. Generally, the Christian attitude is not taken to the ultimate level even by the devout people, and not even by those familiar with theology, but a great amount of selfishness is retained and very much „alive”. In other words, there are very few human beings who „risk” their whole life, putting everything at stake for the sake of God, fighting for the cause of God in the world. This, however, demonstrates only the human weakness – due to the disease of egotism – and not the weakness of Christianity, as value of light of life¹⁷.

¹² *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. Antologie de cuvinte duhovnicești ale Părintelui Arsenie Boca*, p. 23.

¹³ Rev. Arsenie Boca, *Cuvinte vii*, Deva, 2006, p. 21.

¹⁴ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie*, p. 43.

¹⁵ Rev. Arsenie Boca, *Cărarea Împărăției*, p. 47.

¹⁶ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie*. p. 43.

¹⁷ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.*, p. 43.

„The religious outlook on life must be deeply entrenched in one’s thinking and vocabulary; many are ashamed of their poverty of their religious life, and even when they do try their best, they find that their religious terminology dates from the time of their childhood”¹⁸.

Decision making. The way in which we make decisions in our daily life, from the most commonplace ones to the very important ones, greatly depends on each person’s education, circle of friends and social milieu, and degree of intelligence. In order to make the best possible decisions, each one must know oneself, and also possess a certain degree of intelligence. In making decisions, we refer to our past experiences. Father Arsenie considers that the best helper is that one which prompts you to make your own decision and take responsibility, not the one who decides for you. Why? Because, whatever direction you take, you will encounter unexpected difficulties, obstacles, adversities, temptations, trials and tribulations, and so on; and then you will lay the blame on the one who „helped” you make the wrong decision¹⁹.

A good helper „is the one who offers you the best knowledge of things and prompts you to the best self-knowledge, so that you can make an informed decision for yourself. The best decision is that one which is good under any circumstances and at any age. Thus, a good decision is the one which corresponds to your actual power to follow it without hesitation, without compromise and with undiminished joy, all your life long. Difficulties are certain to appear, and the bolder and loftier your decision, the harsher the obstacles. And if your power is not really up to the task, then you come to truly know yourself belatedly, because you have followed an illusion and deceived yourself, instead of discerning your real possibilities. You see, people may change their minds from one day to the next, from one event to the next, sometimes for no serious reason at all. And there are decisions that require constant progress, along an ascending line; because we are called to grow not only biologically, but also spiritually, as we meet the challenges of life and as we mature. Defeats can be beneficial, when they reveal to us our own shortcomings and make us humbler, when we start again setting more modest goals – but we do start again. On the other hand, they can also be detrimental, when we lose faith in the power of good and allow ourselves to become discouraged”²⁰.

Balance. The concept of „balance” is individual, personal, and not a universal constant which can be measured, corrected and maintained at an optimal level, once it has reached that level. On the contrary, it varies according to each one’s individual personality, context or expectations. Father Arsenie pointed out that „evil, madness, chaos, are not literature: they are realities which sometimes strike with full force and upset your precarious balance. Sometimes you find yourself in such a situation, that clearly only God can make you overcome the difficulties. The invisible order of things invites us to bring into the luminous sphere of consciousness, the latent potentialities of our being: once they are brought to actuality, they exceed in beauty and force everything we had acquired that far. Through their intrinsic beauty and force, they restore our peace of mind and our balance, which our human reason – however much we train it by means of science or philosophy – could never regain on their own. In physics, the balance of an object is ensured only if the vertical line drawn from its center of mass falls within the area of its base of support; similarly, one’s understanding of life, one’s intellectual horizon is one’s base of support.

¹⁸ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.*, p. 43.

¹⁹ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 58.

²⁰ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 58.

You must be aware of your own „center”, you must know yourself and must also be aware of the process of change and becoming you need, in other words to become centred, and so achieve balance”²¹.

The family is the oldest Christian establishment. No other institution plays such a decisive role for man and society, as the family institution. If the family is grounded in a healthy set of values, then the entire society can progress. Otherwise, everything falls apart. The fact that Jesus attended a wedding together with His disciples (John 2, 2) proves that the wedding is the first divine miracle performed for the good of mankind; matrimony prevents the human nature from taking a wrong path. That is why the wedding is elevated to the rank of Holy Mystery, one of the seven Mysteries, precisely so that people may understand this and depart from lust and self-indulgence²². Speaking about the Christian family, Father Arsenie Boca attaches great importance to the topic of matrimony, stating that „Christ has elevated marriage to the rank of a Holy Mystery. If the value and sacredness of matrimony is understood and lived by the spouses as a Mystery, then it can also carry fruit worthy of the Mysteries of God. Why does God scold people because righteous men are no longer born, and people ignore this? The answer is the following: the righteous are instruments of God, through them He directs the people and through them is His mercy manifest; if there are no righteous ones, then people will be rewarded according to His justice, each for their deeds. If the family is burdened by iniquity, then people are held responsible and they face the same punishment as the barren fig tree. When the family ceases to be grounded in the Mystery, then people will be like packs of debauched wild beasts”²³.

Father Arsenie saw family as the first and most important school of moral behavior. The dominant state of soul in the family, „especially the mother’s and especially during the pregnancy, will be characteristic for the entire life the offsprings”. The family is threatened by a crisis. Some proclaim „casual sex”, without any commitment or responsibilities; others are discouraged, as they witness the self-destruction of this institution. The fruit of marital love is the child, who is the expression of the „divine intention”, as Father Arsenie Boca puts it. The spouses do not merely collaborate with each other in their marriage; they collaborate with God here on earth, as they pursue the goal for which God has instituted matrimony. Because it is a Church Mystery, marriage must always be regarded as holy, the Father says. Through all its Mysteries, „the Church acknowledges and sanctifies all aspects and functions of human life”, so that living according to „the spiritual sense of Matrimony” can be pursued by all those married in the Church. Obedience to God makes a marriage durable and acceptable to Him. No progress can be obtained without self-control and without the sense of responsibility for the family”²⁴.

True freedom. God respects the freedom which He Himself has granted to us. In creating the man, God made a free being, not a machine. The people, unlike plants and animals, enjoy this great divine gift: we have the ability to direct ourselves, according to our own free will and conscience, according to the lofty commandments coming from within us. Father Arsenie categorically states that God does not want to enforce His will; he wants no worship coming from mere puppets. Instead, he wants to be worshipped out of man’s free will. Even when man turns his freedom against God, He still allows that freedom to man and does not deny it. „On the threshold of human soul, God suspends His dominion, because He

²¹ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 81.

²² *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 90.

²³ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 90.

²⁴ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 90.

seeks man's friendship. Here, in man's soul, God wants to be received at man's initiative. Freedom of conscience is a special gift granted to man, so that through it man may progress and reach perfection. But the same gift also enables man to go against God, leaving some with the impression that there is no God, but they are „gods”. At this point, freedom is lost and man falls into chaos, in „sinning against the Holy Spirit”. People have become slaves of their passions. In the case of this bondage caused by passions, the control of the mind is considerably weakened and the passions govern man's mind, and so man loses his freedom”²⁵.

Christianity was the first to make people aware of their liberty. Freedom is a great gift, exceptionally great. However, the very magnitude of this gift of freedom can be detrimental if man uses it to do evil, because then he is no longer free, but a slave. Freedom can lead to salvation only if it passes through sacrifice. Self-sacrifice is the test. A man becomes truly free only if he renounces everything and especially himself. Through Baptism we are freed from the bondage of sin. The New Testament commandments are the commandments of freedom, commandments of the grace, not commandments of the law. However, if we fail to obey them, we lose our freedom again. Compliance with the New Testament commandments ensures the freedom of the spirit, while failure to comply returns us under the tyranny of sin. In the religious realm, freedom is not an abstract notion, as it is in sciences; here, it is ingrained in the structure of the spiritualized man, who is in possession of the truth even in this earthly life. Such a man, even if he remains silent, testifies before his fellow people about Jesus, who has set him free²⁶.

Divine power is self-evident and „needs no further demonstration. However, we see that lack of faith hinders people from perceiving it as obvious. Consequently, faith is a decision made in free will. Because only man's freedom sets a limit (only up to a point) to God's omnipotence. The decision to believe in God, or the decision to be an atheist, is an act of freedom – in the positive, respectively the negative sense of freedom. Jesus appeared to lack power; actually, He chose not to manifest His omnipotence and His glory, which He will only on His second coming, when the negative decisions made by human freedom will no longer be accepted. Those who fail to renounce their own egos, cannot be free. The whole world is yours once you have given it up. Then you are stronger than the world, and the world obeys you”²⁷.

Idleness. Father Arsenie's sermons do not only preach virtues, but also fight against this sin, which is very detrimental to the religious-moral and social life of the faithful. The author points out that *the life of our Saviour sets the most beautiful example of a life spent working*. It sets an example also by the fact that everything is given due measure. Today, we find that „idleness, comfortable life, pleasures, honors, will never lead us to God. We fail to find God, because we are not obsessed with this, we are too complacent in our sordid lives, too satisfied with our flesh, and we have not vowed to break with these banal ways”²⁸.

Work brings to the true Christian the satisfaction of ensuring the happiness of loved ones, the possibility to educate and raise children in obedience to God, and to do good to the fellow people, and thus to gain the salvation of soul. By working, a Christian can do such deeds that are acceptable to God and able to ensure the happiness for both himself and his descendants. In contrast, idleness „makes the soul weak and forgetful; unable to undertake

²⁵ Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. p. 141.

²⁶ Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. p. 141.

²⁷ Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. p. 141.

²⁸ Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie. p. 140.

any effort, incapable of obeying God and complacent. Lazy, idle souls do not free themselves from passions, and do not raise above the earthly matters. Idleness is the climate in which passions thrive; the body is weakened and the soul is impoverished. More and more other passions develop, distract and pervert the mind”²⁹.

The family line. Our present has been the future of a past – our own past, or that of our ancestors. In the present, we meet the future of the past; often, it is the result of ancestral past, comprising many generations. Vices, especially alcoholism and debauchery, cause the degenerescence of the descendants. When a man dies, his weaknesses are passed down to his descendants, who have to fight against them. If they succeed in overcoming them, then their victory also helps the soul of the one who has died. When a man fights against „his weaknesses” and overcomes them, with God’s help, then an endless number of his ancestors rejoice, too. Such victories are the strongest prayers we can make for the sake of our beloved deceased³⁰. This action of God, „by which people control their deeds because of their have consequences, is called atonement. Atonement is God watching over the individual destiny and the destiny of a family line. Evil-doing is punished through its own consequences, but divine love still offers a way to obtain forgiveness, provided that one member of that family does what is good before God. Those with a wicked life, when God decides to punish them, cannot be defended by anything, wherever they may be; however, those who lead a pure life are protected by God Himself, better than any defense of the world. The family lines have a destiny which is known to God. When they follow their destiny, they have God’s protection; when they betray it, the punishment follows”³¹.

Family planning. Pointing out that people who marry must bring new people into the world, just as those who join the army must learn how to use weapons, Father Arsenie opposes the erroneous idea of family planning, considering that a Christian family ought to produce children. The topic is as relevant as ever, for just as the role of school is to impart knowledge, the role of courts is to impart justice, similarly the role of the family is to impart new life by having children. There are also couples which cannot procreate, and this is God’s will. Those who believe in God and His providence should resign themselves, overcome their sorrow and adopt orphaned children, or do acts of mercy to those deprived and unloved. There are, however, countless other cases of spouses who refuse to become parents. They perform the life-giving act, but reject its natural consequences. They taste the pleasure, but shun responsibilities. Some do not want to have even one child. They marry for various reasons: pleasure, vainglory, wealth, the intention to join two dowries, the desire to bear a particular name, or to be safe in old age. There are many causes for the refusal to have children. First, there is the modern man’s pursuit of pleasures. Having and raising children involves many efforts, forces the parents to give up many things. They can hardly rest, they sleep badly. They must work harder, in order to provide for several others; they must renounce expensive clothes in order to dress their children instead. People want to enjoy themselves, to party, to travel, to afford luxuries. „You, just starting married life, may be tempted to think that you are too young to start having children from the first year of marriage; you might want to enjoy life for a while, and start a family later. If you accept this idea, you pave the way to sinning and to a suite of troubles which are bound to follow. To avoid taking a wrong path, you should from the very beginning adopt the right position

²⁹ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 140.

³⁰ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 161.

³¹ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 161.

concerning children – the fruit of marriage, blessed by the Church. Children are the fruit of love; rejecting them is not love, but a crime. Seeking only pleasure, and avoiding the natural function of the instinct, is a vice and a sin and is punished by the all-seeing Law. So, if you are not determined to start on the right path from the very beginning, you will very easily make mistakes in your life together, and these mistakes will bring about trouble and problems which are inevitable. Divorce does not remedy any mistakes. Their consequences affect your later marriages and your later life, whatever you do. Not even prayers can help. Only the Holy Confession makes you aware of your transgressions of the Law given by Matrimony, and provides God's forgiveness for your ignorance (if you have erred from ignorance), or for your weakness (if this has been the cause) and also gives you the power to make atonement, if you mend your ways. God forgives you (if you pray for forgiveness through Confession), but nothing can go unpunished and without atonement³².

Rules for the Christian life. The author notes that man always wants to find happiness in himself, in the love for oneself – which is but a shadow of the true love, instead of seeking happiness in God and His love, which is the only true and lasting one. Some believe that self-indulgence, passions, lust, debauchery, are the best way to happiness. However, self-deceit is as great as the pleasure obtained, because man believes he has found happiness while it actually eludes him. Man finds that what he has is nothing, compared to what he wants to have. This is why whoever seeks happiness in himself, will never find it³³. Our life depends on the goals we set for ourselves to attain. As your goal is, so your life will be. As the spring is, so is the water coming forth. If the spring is clean, then the water is pure as crystal. If, however, the spring is muddy, then the water flows dirty, as the mire in which man sinks. True life is not that lived according to the body, not the life governed by the pleasures of the body and the satisfactions of this world, because we are made of both body and soul. The true life is that lived according to the soul, which is much loftier, much more beautiful, much richer than bodily life.

Based on these realities, Father Arsenie says: „Would you like to see your inward sun rising on the sky of your life? Then try to examine your own conscience every night, make prostrations, read a psalm, say a prayer, all in humility, easing the burden of your soul and gaining more and more love for your fellow people. Live every day in self-awareness – you will gain courage and will feel that the divine grace is working with you. Human life is like a furrow made by a plough. So strive to make your own life into a straight furrow; remove any mistakes, any deviations from the right path; correct your furrow before darkness and frost come, by doing all the good you can do, as long as the plough of your soul is still able to work upon your life. Under the guidance of a clean conscience and with the mercy of our Great God, always remember how good in the sight of God are the peacemakers. To reach God you need not travel near or far, because He is everywhere and closer to you than your very own body and soul – all you need is awareness of this, through faith and a prayerful state. The Lord is near all those who cry out to Him with all their heart³⁴. Those who worship their bodies are present for this world, and absent for the rest of the world. In contrast, as Father Arsenie shows, the others understand that spiritual life is not only a joy but actually a highly precious God-given gift; precisely because it is a gift, we must cultivate it carefully. People who do so are aware that the world is transient and deceitful and that putting all your hopes and expectations into it is tantamount to dying – not only here in this

³² *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 174.

³³ Rev. Arsenie Boca, *Cuvinte vii*, p. 157.

³⁴ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 203.

world, but also in the world to come: „When you awake in the morning, think that God is offering you a day which you could not offer to yourself by your own powers, and set apart the first hour of the day or at least one quarter of this hour, and give it as a sacrifice to God by prayers of thanksgiving and petition, asking for the good things. The more you do this, the more you will sanctify you day, the more protected you will be from the temptations you face during that day. The morning prayer is like the morning dew for the plants. Whoever prays to God in the morning, with due attention, will be more peaceful and more serene for the rest of the day. God does not expect miracles from our part. He is the one who works miracles. God simply asks us to live our lives as the Gospel teaches us to, live in accordance with it. This is the miracle He requires from us. All the rest are His work. If so, then why is there so little faith on the earth? One explanation is that very few lives are offered to God: very few people give Jesus absolute authority on their lives; and they are not hindered by any difficulty or fear, but by love for themselves, which grows like a weed in the soil of life. Begin and end your day with God. The most beautiful gift we can offer God is ourselves, and our whole lives. Do not hope to receive Heaven for free, without living a life worthy of Heaven”³⁵.

Young age. The Church cannot be unresponsive to the challenges of today’s world, because its mission lies precisely in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ’s merciful love for the world, and preaching the way of life in compliance with this Gospel. Father Arsenie addresses the young people of all times, quoting the wisdom of thinkers and the lives of the Holy Fathers: Young age sets the foundation for the rest of man’s life. God forgives ignorance, but not cunningness. And a cunning person is that who gives his youth to the devil, and offers to God only his wrecked old age. Will not such old age be rejected, just like the wicked youth? If you give your youth to the devil, you shall see it has been a wrong choice. But will you still have enough days to live, to offer them to God? And will He accept shreds and broken pieces, instead of the whole life? These words are harsh, yet this is the answer to the question: why do people fail to come to Confession in the spring and summer of their lives? They offer the prime of their lives to the serpent! Young age believes that it can beguile God, leaving Him only the old age. But will you even reach old age, and will such wrecked pile of shreds be able to repent and become acceptable? Those who postpone repentance and put it off till old age, are like the people who want to cross a river, but wait on the river bank for all the water to flow away. Most people fall into this trap”³⁶.

As spiritual parents, the priests must be concerned with the spiritual growth of children and the youth. In young age, every person experiences a great urge for giving and receiving love, a strong desire to live a meaningful life. The Church must be attentive and care for the needs of the young. Often they face fear, disappointment, loss of love, are wounded and mistrust their fellow people, have difficulties in communicating with their parents and teachers. They thirst for authenticity and for the essential truths.

They long for such spiritual guidance that can teach them how to live in loving communion, and can bring meaning into their present and future life. Father Arsenie points out that „the young people seek pleasure, rather than denying it. Who can be safe from all its traps? Only those who are practicing Christians, living according to the teachings of the Church. The religious outlook on life must be deeply entrenched in one’s thinking and vocabulary; many are ashamed of their poverty of their religious life, and even when they do try their best, they find that their religious terminology dates from the time of their

³⁵ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 203.

³⁶ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie.* p. 257.

childhood”³⁷. In response to young people’s enthusiasm, the spiritual director must be open and friendly, sensitive to their needs and inquiries, and above all he must demonstrate a sacrificial spirit, patience and generosity: „As in all fields, in the realm of the faith there is a practical and an abstract aspect. Mistakes can be made on both levels, but they can be corrected. In order to learn the tenets of the faith and put them into practice in everyday life, one needs to choose a spiritual director. This appellation derives from Spirit – the Holy Spirit: a spiritual director is a man who regards life in a different spirit than that of flesh and earthly things. This understanding of life, according to the Spirit of God, cannot be derived from mere readings or from attending the Church services, but only by becoming an earnest disciple of a director with rich spiritual life. His role is extremely important for our soul. Our confessors, or spiritual directors, have been granted the power to forgive and heal our failures, our moral defeats. They can bring peace to our souls and help us overcome crises. However, as the option for pleasure, „chosen” as a life principle, opens the path to moral decay and as all spiritual directors strive to free the human soul from this bondage, this is the reason why many young people do not go to the confessor”³⁸.

CONCLUSIONS

An outstanding personality among the 20th-century Romanian preachers, Father Arsenie Boca was a charismatic speaker. A priest endowed with great persuasive power, he was a fearless defender of the ancestral faith, and of the Christian ideal, against the atheism championed by the communist authorities, falling victim to their persecutions. The literary style of his sermons is characteristic: concise, eloquent sentences, a vocabulary both refined and understandable, a straightforward manner of addressing his audience, creating the impression of a dialogue with his listeners. The writings of Father Arsenie Boca prove him to be a master of the perlocutionary act, especially in the concise and memorable form of the so-called „chapters”. Responsive to all the great aspirations of his times, and the major concerns of his epoch, Father Arsenie endeavored to provide answers to the great problems of life, based on the Christian teachings, in order to elevate and infuse with morality the society he belonged to. Through all his efforts in the service of the Romanian Church and nation, he stood out as a distinguished spiritual director, a guide of the souls and a convincing missionary.

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³⁷ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie*. p. 257.

³⁸ *Vreau să schimb lacrimile voastre în bucurie*. p. 257.

EMPIRICAL THEOLOGY, THE ONLY DYNAMIC REALITY VITALIZING THE SYNERGY BETWEEN ACADEMIC THEOLOGY AND THE CHURCH MISSION IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

Spiritual experiences of the Church Saints and the Church teachings are stored in various testimonies (texts, monuments, artistic expressions etc.) about the Church presence and walk in the world. Theology, as a science, under the form of curriculum disciplines, searches for answers, draws conclusions, rehabilitates in a critical manner, studies and interprets all these testimonies or draws arguments from them in the endless dialogue between the Church and the world. The framework of this approach, aimed at studying the Church testimonies, also includes the education offered in the Faculties of Theology. This education transmits to students, on the one hand, knowledge obtained as a fruit of scientific theological research, and, on the other hand, gives them orientation in the Church life, namely in the life according to Jesus Christ's teaching, as it has been lived and experienced by the Saints. Theology, in all its manifestations, represents a Church function, and its space is the Church body, consequently it is related to the Church mission in the world. For this reason, the function of the Church, as place of worship and of healing for man, and the function of School, be it Faculty of Theology or Theological Seminary, are related, being one. Both the Faculty of Theology and the education it provides belong to the vocational domain, which supposes not just external training, namely the appropriation of knowledge, but especially inner training, spiritual transformation and ascension, because the graduates' role, regardless of whether they become clerics or religion teachers etc., is to be a catalyst in the society and to promote a fundamental thing: man's salvation. Due to this thing, the mission of the Faculties of Theology belongs to the framework of the Church mission, and the student's life to the sacramental and liturgical space of the Church. Consequently, the scientific and positive character of academic theology, as theological function of the Church and of her mission, must have in view the aim of the theological education received in a Faculty of Theology, namely, the cultivation of the therapeutic-ascetic function of the Church, in other words, the student's integration in the spiritual life of the Church, which is expressed by the living of the states of purification, illumination and deification, namely his integration in the Church spirituality, where he ought to feel the Saints' communion. All these confirm the reality of empirical theology, as a binder between academic theology and the Orthodox Church mission, but

also the relation that ought to exist between the place of worship and the Faculty of Theology, in other words, yet, starting from the latter, the relation between academic theology and Church life or between erudition and the way of living and thinking of the Church. Neglecting the role of empirical theology, as the only dynamic reality vitalizing the synergy between academic theology and the Church mission in the contemporary society, will trigger many negative consequences, by the materialization of certain trends that many theology teachers have drawn our attention to.

Keywords: Church; Orthodoxy; mission; spirituality; academic theology; empirical theology; theology teacher; holy-spiritual life (life in the Holy Spirit); purification; illumination; deification;

1. In the *Blessing discourse* of His Eminence Teofan, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina, at the opening of the International Symposium “Dumitru Stăniloae”, third edition, entitled *Academic Theology and Its Responsibility in the Church Mission*, organized in Iași, during the period 14-16 May 2015, which prefaces the proceedings of this *Symposium*, His Eminence asked himself and, in the same time, addressed to those present at the respective academic reunion certain questions, actually justified: *to what extent does today’s academic theology manage to be as close as possible to what God wants this so important missionary arm of His Church to be? How is theological education articulated to what the Church Fathers of yore or those contemporary to us have thought? How could one avoid the danger of transforming theologizing into a discourse and into an approach leading to an external reference to God, but also to man and to the world? What is the place occupied by ascesis and the purification from sinful passions in the academic theological approach so that it may not drift away from the word of Saint Gregory the Theologian who says that “we need to purify ourselves and then speak with the Pure One”¹? How can one fulfil Father Dumitru Stăniloae’s word about the study of theology in the spirit of prayer? How can the Faculty of Theology fulfil its mission in the higher education area, so as to bring its specific contribution in the dialogue with the other faculties? Finally, what can be the bishop’s expectations from a Faculty of Theology that is under the aegis of the eparchy that he serves and how can these expectations come true so that together bishop and teachers may give a good answer at Christ’s dreadful Judgement?²*

The foundation of these questions consisted, on the one hand, in the differentiation of theology, as an academic research domain, from any other discipline of the university

* This study was first presented in a Romanian variant (*Teologia empirică, singura realitate dinamică și vitalizatoare a sinergiei dintre teologia academică și misiunea Bisericii în societatea contemporană*) at the International Symposium entitled *The Faculty of Theology: academic status and ecclesial mission*, organized by the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of Craiova (4-7 October 2017). Later on, I improved this study and I presented it, but under a short form and in English, at *The Inaugural Conference Pan-Orthodox Unity and Conciliarity*, organized by the International Orthodox Theological Association (IOTA) and the Metropolitanate of Moldavia and Bukovina, Archdiocese of Iași (9-12 January 2019).

¹ His Eminence Teofan paraphrases the text of SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, *Λόγος ΑΘ΄*, 8-9, in: *Patrologia Graeca* (= PG) 36, 344 B, and the translation closer to the original is: *for this reason, one has to purify himself first, and then he ought to draw close to the Pure One.*

² † TEOFAN, Mitropolitul Moldovei și Bucovinei, “Cuvânt de binecuvântare la deschiderea Simpozionului internațional «Teologia academică și responsabilitatea ei în misiunea Bisericii» (Iași, 14-16 mai 2015)”, in: Pr. ION VICOVAN, Pr. PAUL-CEZAR HĂRLĂOANU, EMILIAN-IUSTINIAN ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică și responsabilitatea ei în misiunea Bisericii*, Colecția *Episteme* 22, Ed. Doxologia, Iași, 2016, p. 10.

domain, due to the simple reason that its *research domain* – if we can call it so – goes beyond the framework and the logic of this world, namely: God, deliverance from sinful passions, man's deification, eternal life, all these representing realities that can be neither evaluated, nor known by purely human means and methods and, on the other hand, in the weight and responsibility on the theology teacher's shoulders, called not so much to talk to the students about God, but rather to lead them to finding God, to the meeting with Him³.

2. It is not the aim of this study to analyse the answers that His Eminence Teofan received, by the presentation of the communications made on the occasion of the above-mentioned Symposium and of their publication, a mission undertaken, under a certain form, by Father Professor Ion Vicovan, who was at that time and still is at present the Dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of Iași⁴, but I want to reconstitute, as far as I can, one of the answers awaited, within the time granted by the participation to the International Symposium organized, this time, by the Faculty of Theology of Craiova, with a related topic: *The Faculty of Theology: academic status and ecclesial mission*.

The beginning of my approach starts from the definition of two terms, *theology* (θεολογία) and *knowledge of God* (θεογνωσία). As we know, between these two terms, expressing the reality of the holy and spiritual life, there is an interconnection, since *theology*, in its etymological sense of *word* or *discourse about God*, anticipates a *knowledge of God*, of the one true God, according to the Christian teaching, Who unveils or reveals Himself. This knowledge, according to the Holy Fathers' testimony, *can never be the fruit of rational, intellectual, metaphysical research, but of the holy-spiritual experience*⁵. In this sense, often cited is Saint Gregory the Theologian, according to whom theologizing is a premise of *those put to the test and advanced in contemplation*, in other words, in the vision of God, and, first of all, of those who have purified their soul and body or are purifying them, as appropriately as possible⁶. One can draw, therefore, the conclusion, from the narration of this experience of Saint Gregory the Theologian, that the common experience of all the Saints of *the one Church*, identified with the Orthodox Church, relies on the purification of man in his entirety, soul and body, a state representing the first level of the holy-spiritual life, through which man reaches the second level of this life, illumination, namely the vision of God's glory, under the form of His uncreated Light. This spiritual reality means that only the communion with God, by the work of the uncreated divine grace, beyond any thought or feeling based only on reason or on a sentimentalist kind of living, since *God is not identified with the notions held even by the highest theological thought*⁷, gives man the quality of theologian, "*since theologian is the Saint*"⁸. In other words, theologizing means living the manner of life which is the Orthodoxy, namely acquiring the holy-spiritual life specific to the Orthodoxy, with its three stages or states: *purification, illumination and deification*. Consequently, *the communion with the uncreated divine grace*,

³ † TEOFAN, Mitropolitul Moldovei și Bucovinei, *Cuvânt de binecuvântare*, p. 9.

⁴ See Pr. Prof. Dr. ION VICOVAN, "Cuvânt înainte", in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, pp. 11-32.

⁵ Pr. Prof. Dr. Emerit GHEORGHE METALLINOS, "Teologul în slujirea Bisericii", translation from Greek and completions of some notes by Lect. Dr. ION MARIAN CROITORU, in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 94.

⁶ SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, *Λόγος ΚΖ'*, 3, in: PG 36, 13 D.

⁷ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΠΑΠΑΠΕΤΡΟΥ, *Πίστη και γνώση*, Αθήνα, 1987, p. 8.

⁸ Idem, *Η οὐσία τῆς Θεολογίας*, Αθήνα, without year, p. 119.

as partaking of the Church mystery, leads man to the entire truth⁹, so that for the Orthodoxy another way of knowing God does not exist¹⁰.

By virtue of this fact, the Orthodox Christian believer, namely the one confessing Jesus Christ as He established, by His Holy Apostles and Fathers, in His Church, which means that such a believer *follows in the Saints' footsteps and walks together with all the Saints, even before getting to experience deification*, yet fully living the experience of purification, so, such a believer *theologizes in an Orthodox manner, based on the experience of glorification, namely of deification, of the Saints and not due to his eventual rationalist-metaphysical pursuits*¹¹. When man cultivates his *heart's purification*, his way opens not onto theological rationalization or a rationalist "theologizing", but *onto authentic illumination and theologizing*, and, what is more, towards experiencing deification, a state in which God's *revelation* and [man's] *understanding are identical*¹².

3. The Orthodox theology, as holy-spiritual experience of the relation with God, goes beyond any science, by the fact that its subject is multiple, on the one hand, God Who reveals Himself, and, on the other hand, man who ascends, by the work of the uncreated divine grace, to His knowledge, by the method of hesychastic living or of the acquisition of the holy-spiritual life, whereas in the other sciences, the subject is man, who researches and investigates, using specific methods, while the object is God's creation. For this reason, when theology was "conceived" or "received" as a science, catalogued among the *positive sciences* for its "experimental" and practical character¹³, and cultivated in the academic environment, it was called *the highest of all sciences*, according, for instance, to the oath of doctor in Theology practiced in the Faculties of Theology from Greece¹⁴, being, at the same time, considered *science in fact and in truth*¹⁵, *science of sciences* and *an immense social conquest of Christianity*¹⁶, which means, according to Father George Metallinos' words, *a social recognition of the Church*¹⁷ and of her presence in the higher education environment. In this way, theology received, *historically, also the sense of the method of drawing close to God, but also that of research and scientific contribution to the ecclesial reality and the systematic presentation of the Christian faith*¹⁸.

The spiritual experiences of the Saints of the Church and her teachings are stored in different *testimonies* (texts, monuments, artistic expressions etc.) of the Church presence and walk in the world, as *body* of the Saviour of the world Jesus Christ. Theology, as a science, under the form of the disciplines that are part of the curriculum, *searches [for answers], draws conclusions, critically rehabilitates, studies and interprets all these testimonies or draws from them in the uninterrupted dialogue of the Church with the world*. Consequently, *the part concerning the historical presence of the Church, which can be researched with the means of science and be perceived rationally, represents the subject of the theological*

⁹ Ioan 16: 13.

¹⁰ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 94.

¹¹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 94.

¹² Πρ. ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΡΩΜΑΝΙΔΟΥ, "Κριτικός έλεγχος τών εφαρμογών τής Θεολογίας", in: *Πρακτικά τοῦ Β' Ὁρθοδόξου Θεολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, Αθήνα, 1980, p. 423.

¹³ Π. Ν. ΤΡΕΜΠΕΛΑ, *Έγκυκλοπαιδεία τής Θεολογίας*, Αθήνα, 1980², p. 137.

¹⁴ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 94.

¹⁵ ΤΡΕΜΠΕΛΑ, *Έγκυκλοπαιδεία*, p. 136.

¹⁶ ΗΛ. Β. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΥ, *Αί Θεολογικάί Σχολαί είς τήν διακονίαν τής Εκκλησίας*, Αθήνα, 1981, pp. 8, 94.

¹⁷ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 94.

¹⁸ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 93, note 1.

scientific research, this research being important not just for the past of the Church, but also for her present in history¹⁹.

This approach studying the Church testimonies also includes the education offered in the Faculties of Theology, an education, on the one hand, transmitting knowledge from the fruits of the theological scientific research to the students, and, on the other hand, guiding them in the Church life, namely in the life according to Jesus Christ's teaching, as it has been lived and experienced by the Saints.

4. Theology, in all its manifestations, represents a function of the Church, and its space is the Church body, being therefore related to the Church mission in the world. For this reason, the function of the Church, as place of worship, and the function of school, be it Faculty of Theology or Theological Seminary, although today's Seminary, and I refer to the Orthodox Church of Romania, is, to a great extent, laicized, are intertwined, as it has been demonstrated by the lives of the Saints (see, for instance, Saint Photius the Great, who combined the function of *teacher* and *theologian* of the Church with that of servant of her, becoming patriarch of Constantinople). Due to this intertwining, theological education must not be *religious*, but *ecclesial*, namely it must not be *pietist*, but *spiritual*. Given these reasons, the bishop, in whose eparchy there is some theological school and not just him, ought not to remain indifferent to the function of theological education, but also the theological world, in its entirety, *cannot disregard the bishop, when the Orthodox conscience has established*²⁰ *that without the bishop no one should do any of the things belonging to the Church*²¹. The problem is, however, delicate, because, according to the same Orthodox conscience, this is not just about *obedience and attachment to the bishop's person*, but especially about *loyalty and attachment to the apostolic and patristic tradition of the Church, which, by definition, the bishop has the duty to embody and serve, being the bearer of the apostolic succession, consisting not only of interrupted historical continuity of cheirotonias (ordinations), according to Father George Metallinos, but [also] of the tradition and taking over by the bishop of the manner of existence of the Church, as life in the Holy Spirit*. The deviation from this principle signals the appearance of centrifugal tendencies, met as well at the beginning of the 21st century, trends that are not *always the fruit of laicization and revolt, but also of shortcomings and exaggerations* sometimes coming even from those *shepherding the one Church of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world*²². I want this affirmation to be understood not as incrimination, against any cleric, from any level of the Holy Mystery of Priesthood, but only as a warning concerning these tendencies, which can be, skilfully and with pastoral tact, turned into the beneficial work of the Church.

One can note that the Church mission often represents the *image of contemporary theology*, being, at the same time, also its *consequence, since mutual influence is inevitable*²³, and some of the Church shepherds manifest themselves, sometimes, *as a despotic authority and a worldly, laicized, power, using behaviour means and methods that deny the Church paternity and spirituality*²⁴. Given this situation, many are wondering what

¹⁹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 95.

²⁰ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 97.

²¹ Sfântul IGNATIE TEOFOUL, *Epistola către Smirneni*, 8, 1, in: idem, *Epistole*, translation, notes and indices by Pr. D. FECIORU, *Părinți și Scriitori bisericești* 1, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1979, p. 184.

²² METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 97.

²³ Π. ΦΙΑΘΕΟΥ ΦΑΡΟΥ, „Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ζωὴ καὶ Θεολογία”, in: *Σύναξη* 38 (1991), p. 50.

²⁴ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 103.

the relation between the Church theology and the life of those pastured may be, being noticed, which is actually a sad thing, that theology, *as ecclesial word, has substantially stopped moving the soul of the contemporary man, and theological education is taken as a professional answer and solution*, which makes one notice, in the case of many graduates of the Faculties of Theology, a *marked absence of the spiritual life*²⁵.

However, even in the case of the theology professors on the university level, be they teaching assistants, lecturers etc., one can note the lack of brotherhood and objectivity, the greedy desire for position and the presence of a behaviour without spiritual milestones, situations that have a negative influence on the student's image on the sense of theological education in his life, as the student sees himself integrated in a *tired and self-sufficient higher education area, with few special and enthusiastic professors*²⁶. By the decisions of certain "commissions" one can note, for instance, that the accent falls more on research and lesser on teaching, and here I refer to the education in the Faculties of Theology from Romania; a difference, somewhat unjust, is made, between the languages of the peoples of Europe and those from other parts of the world, the Westerners' languages being considered first-rank and the Easterners' being seen as second- or even third -rank languages, getting, oddly enough, to cultivate the fashion of preferring to print the fruits of the research of the Romanian academic theology in one of the first-rank languages, because, anyway, in Romanian, considered as a last-rank language, no one would read. One can get, in this rhythm, to forget the writing in Romanian, since many of the young men from Romania prefer a language full of neologisms and agrammatisms. For this reason, it would be good to ask the question, sincerely and manly, with responsibility and commitment, *Where is the Romanians' society going to?*, in which there is the presence of the Religion Class in schools and the work of so many institutions of pre-university and university theological education, since churches are getting increasingly empty, villages and small towns are increasingly devoid of the youngsters' presence, in the context of the emigration increase and of the observation of a *stable demographic decline* in Romania, after 1990²⁷. Under these circumstances, pastoration, reduced in many communities to funerals, commemoration of the dead and social and spiritual care for the elderly²⁸, has two facets, one to the rich and another to the poor, being perceptible as well certain innovations introduced in the accomplishment of the Church services²⁹.

Therefore, it is precisely the accentuation of the scientific character of academic theology that creates centrifugal tendencies and a distantiation from the real Church mission, because, in the above-mentioned situations, Saint Basil the Great's warning becomes topical: *the apostolic traditions are annihilated, modern people's inventions are brought in*

²⁵ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, pp. 103-104.

²⁶ Pr. prof. dr. DANIEL BENGA, "Teologia academică română contemporană. Câteva reflecții autocritice și gânduri pentru o teologie misionară", in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 127.

²⁷ Pr. lect. dr. CRISTIAN SONEA, "Misiunea creștină într-un context eclesial și global în continuă schimbare. Rolul teologiei ortodoxe academice", in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 165.

²⁸ SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, p. 165.

²⁹ For instance, the commemoration of the names of the living and of the dead during the *Divine Liturgy*, but not at *Proskomede*, but after the reading of the *Holy Gospel*, during the *Litany of Fervent Supplication*, out loud. This innovation can take scores of minutes (between 20 to 45 minutes), breaking the unity of the *Divine Liturgy* and reducing the time allotted to the sermon.

churches; people technologize instead of theologize; the world's wisdom has priority, having pushed aside the praise of the Cross³⁰.

These observations are not meant to ignore the importance of the Romanian theological higher education, rich in historical and social milestones, which fully illustrate its missionary character. The problem that emerges is, however, not just about safeguarding this character, but also about strengthening it in front of the challenges coming from the society and the different regimes and types of governance³¹, and also, more recently, following the contact with the Eastern migration phenomenon. An important factor towards the realization of this thing will be the recognition, not just *de facto*, but also *de jure*, of the fact that the Faculty of Theology and the education it undertakes *belongs to the vocational domain*³², which supposes not just an exterior training, namely knowledge acquisition, but especially an inner training, in other words, spiritual transformation and ascension, since that the graduates' role, if they become clerics or religion professors etc., is one of catalyst in the society and of promoter of a fundamental thing: man's salvation. Due to this thing, the mission of the Faculties of Theology is part of the Church mission, and the student's life is part of her sacramental and liturgical space.

5. *The high form of the Orthodox theology is that of the theologian who is in contemplation, which means continuation of the Pentecost event in history*³³. This continuation is not at all a simple commemoration or reminder of the Pentecost, but the living of this event as personal experience, which means feeling the conscience of belonging to Jesus Christ's Church and living the states of purification, illumination and, where God allows it, deification. *Theology from the vision of God is prophetic*, and the one who lives it is a *prophet* and can talk about God's revelation from his own experience, since *the fact of prophesying is identified, as it is known, in the Holy Scripture, with the fact of theologizing*³⁴. Therefore, academic theology *does not initiate in the Church experience, but supposes it*. The initiation comes by empirical theology, namely by thinking and living the same things *with the Prophets, the Apostles, the Fathers, actually*, according to Saint Gregory Palamas, *with all by whom the Holy Spirit testifies that He has spoken both about God and about His creations*³⁵. Tragedy intervenes when the *appointed teacher of Orthodox Theology functions as a representative of the Church tradition*, but, in reality, he is a *false prophet*, namely a *theologian without faith* or even *completely atheist and immoral*, states rebuked both by Father George Metallinos³⁶, by the words cited above, and by Father Dumitru Stăniloae³⁷, by his words rendered in note, because in the person of such a teacher

³⁰ SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, 'Επιστολή κ' (XC), in: PG 32, 473 B.

³¹ Pr. prof. dr. ȘTEFAN BUCHIU, "Misiunea Facultăților de Teologie Ortodoxă în context contemporan", in: VICOVAN, HÂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 108.

³² BUCHIU, *Misiunea Facultăților*, p. 108.

³³ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 93, note 1.

³⁴ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 94.

³⁵ SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS, *Λόγος ὑπὲρ τῶν ἱερῶς ἡσυχάζοντων* 2, 1, 42, in: *Συγγράμματα*, Α', εκδ. Π. Χρήστου, Θεσσαλονίκη, 19882, p. 504.

³⁶ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 98.

³⁷ Pr. Prof. DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, "Reorganizarea facultăților de teologie", in: idem, *Cultură și duhovnicie*, articles published in *Telegraful român*, vol. I (1930-1936), edition arranged, introduction and notes by ION-DRAGOȘ VLĂDESCU, Ed. Basilica, București, 2012, p. 315: *I believe it is not necessary to underline too much the self-obvious absurdity of the thesis that theology is a science that has nothing at all to do with religious life, that you can be the greatest theologian and, at the same time, completely atheist and immoral. Whoever has no religious experience is no theologian either, because he does not understand the contents of the formulas he is*

or Church servant are intrinsically denied the science of theology and the Church mission in the world³⁸.

The scientific and positive character of academic theology, as theological function of the Church and of her mission, needs to have in view the aim of the theological education received in a Faculty of Theology, namely, the cultivation of the *therapeutic-ascetic* function of the Church, in other words, the student's integration in the spirituality life of the Church, which is expressed by the living of the states of purification, illumination and deification, namely his integration *in the spirituality of the Church*, where he ought to feel *the communion of the Saints*³⁹. It is evident that a Faculty of Theology *does not make Saints*, but, by the theological, pastoral and missionary education that the students receive, it can orient them *to the experience of the Saints, source of Theology, and to the method of healing-deification of the human being by the work of the sanctifying and healing divine grace*⁴⁰. This role of education can be assumed and exemplified by the *theology teacher / scientist* with spiritual experience similar to that of the Saints, in other words, by the spiritual or pneumatophoros teacher / professor⁴¹, who integrates his students, by his courses and his own example, *in the practices of the Holy Tradition* of the Church, whereas the *theology teacher / scientist* who keeps himself, with good intentions, only in the spirit of the Orthodox faith, introduces the students *theoretically in the Holy Tradition*⁴², without convincing them of the reality of the spiritual life.

Actually, the observation of many theology teachers / scientists is that the scientific-academic research of Orthodox theology represents just an *introduction* to the true theology of the Church⁴³ and not a *premise of ecclesial theologizing, namely original [theologizing], as revelation, in other words, of divine knowledge*⁴⁴, while the methods of scientific academic theology, as parameters needed in the research process, are different from the empirical theology methods⁴⁵. Consequently, the academic theological research ought to be objective and ought not to pursue anyone's ideology, in order not to get to be *unfaithful* to the Church treasury, because the theology researcher / teacher is not unbound from

handling. It ought to be mentioned that Father Dumitru Stăniloae refers by the term *religious life* to the holy-spiritual life, belonging to the Orthodox Church.

³⁸ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 98. About the visions of Father Dumitru Stăniloae on theological education and tuition, by which he recommended, according to Father Ioan Teșu, *the synthesis between science and piety, between knowledge and living, between information and prayer, between knowledge and practice, between culture and life in the Holy Spirit*, see Pr. prof. univ. dr. IOAN C. TEȘU, "Nevoia și sensul reformei educației religioase și a învățământului teologic în concepția Părintelui Profesor Dumitru Stăniloae", in: *Teologie și viață* 23 (89)/1-4 (2013), pp. 145-169 (the text cited above is at p. 161).

³⁹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 99.

⁴⁰ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 99; see also Prof. dr. CHRYSOSTOMOS A. STAMOULIS, "The Contribution of Academic Theology to the Mission of the Church", in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 117.

⁴¹ Namely a bearer of the Holy Spirit.

⁴² METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 99.

⁴³ ADRIAN MARINESCU, "Ortodoxie și ortopraxie. Reflecții privind importanța, autoritatea și actualitatea Părinților pentru omul contemporan (II) – Cu un studiu de caz privind fenomenologia patristică și (re)contextualizarea ei în societatea contemporană", in: *Tabor* 6/7 (2012), p. 30, note 50.

⁴⁴ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ Δ. ΜΕΤΑΛΛΗΝΟΥ (Πρωτοπρ.), "Λατρεία και άσκηση στὸν ὀρθόδοξο Μοναχισμό", in: idem, *Ἀντιμέτωποι μετὴν πλάνη...*, Ἐκδόσεις «Ὁρθόδοξος Κυψέλη», Θεσσαλονίκη, 2013, p. 25.

⁴⁵ ΣΤΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ Γ. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ὁρθοδόξων πορεία. Ἐκκλησία καὶ Θεολογία στὸν 21^ο αἰῶνα*, Ἐκδόσεις Γρηγόρη, Ἀθήνα, 2012, p. 69; see also Lect. dr. ION MARIAN CROITORU, "Teologia academică și teologia empirică în Biserica Ortodoxă. Congruențe și diferențe", in: VICOVAN, HĂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 177.

faithfulness to the Church life and mission either. Otherwise, the respective theology researcher / teacher gets to be *unfaithful* to the Church and her head, Who is Jesus Christ the Lord⁴⁶, and, in this way, out of the desire of vain glory, he drifts away from the Church conscience and blurs the image of the Holy Trinity's charismata's work in the world. The need for faithfulness to the Holy Fathers' way of thinking and living, which also amplifies the theology researcher's / teacher's thinking and brings his academic contributions to the correct approach of the Church teaching, as a whole, is often highlighted by the Holy Church Fathers. Characteristic is Saint John Chrysostom's remark: ... *for such is the nature of our mysteries. Thus, in a different state am I and in another state is he who is an unbeliever in relation to them. I hear that Christ gave Himself to be crucified and immediately I admire the love for the people; that one hears and considers the same thing as being powerless... That one, hearing about the Resurrection, says that the respective thing is a myth; while I, after having received the evidence through things, I bow to God's oikonomia... On the one hand, the unbelieving, although hearing, seem not to hear; on the other hand, the believers, having the experience by the [Holy] Spirit, see the power of the things that are within*⁴⁷. In other words, only those who have been healed spiritually, be they simple believers or theology teachers, can discern the *power* and the significance of the things hidden in the acts and events from the history of mankind's redemption, by the work of God's Son and Saviour of the world Jesus Christ, namely to know *God's Kingdom's mysteries*⁴⁸.

At this point in the study, it ought to be remembered the fact that the empirical theology is a *medical-therapeutic science* and it uses the *method of pure science, namely "observation" and "experiment"*⁴⁹, which means that *the Orthodox teaching does not rely on rationalization or imagination*⁵⁰. Regarding the scientific but also patristic language, *scientific observation* focuses on the fact of *seeing the uncreated divine grace*⁵¹, namely the uncreated Light, a state of which the Orthodox Christians are reminded during each *Divine Liturgy*, by the troparion: *We have seen the true Light, we have received the heavenly Spirit, we have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided Holy Trinity, Who has saved us*⁵². The things included in this troparion are not *simple metaphors but spiritual states that man ought to live* along his life on Earth, all the more during his participation in the *Divine Liturgy*⁵³, so that *observation* comes as a result of experiencing the medical-therapeutic education of the Church. Based on this reality, the *experiment* is equal to *entrusting yourself* to this education, which leads to personally living the *observation* and justifies the use of medical terms, but filled with spiritual meanings from a patristic perspective, such as *doctor, healing or medical therapy*, in relation to the aspects concerning *the psychical and bodily, noetic and spiritual healing*, a fact for which the Church is called *spiritual hospital*⁵⁴. All these represent the confirmation of the reality of empirical theology, as a binder between academic theology and the Orthodox Church mission, but also *the relation that ought to exist*

⁴⁶ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 100.

⁴⁷ SAINT JOHN THE CHRYSOSTOM, *Ὀμιλία Ζ' εἰς Α' Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Κορινθίους*, 1, 2, in: PG 61, 55-56 (α'-β').

⁴⁸ Luke 8: 10.

⁴⁹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 100.

⁵⁰ CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, p. 177.

⁵¹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 100.

⁵² *Catavasier sau Octoih mic*, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2002, p. 91.

⁵³ See CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, p. 189.

⁵⁴ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 100.

between the place of worship and the Faculty of Theology, in other words, but starting from the latter, the relation between academic theology and the ecclesial life or between erudition and the way of living and thinking of the Church⁵⁵.

In the empirical or holy-patristic-charismatic theology, considered the only saving reality, man lives the revelation of the knowledge of God and recapitulates, on the personal level, the content of the Pentecost, namely he empirically knows the God-Who-revealed-Himself in the framework of the hesychastic way of living and acquires, by means of this experience, the *charismata* of the Holy Spirit⁵⁶. These *charismata* represent, by reference to the same scientific language, characteristic of the contemporary society, the *scientific spiritual tools* necessary to every believer, because, using them, he can contribute both to facing the crisis of perception and of living of the Truth, and to his own salvation and, consequently, to that of his fellows⁵⁷.

According to the Holy Church Fathers, as deified and charismatic people, there is a distinction between man's mind and man's reason or intellect, a fact corresponding to the distinction between empirical theology or empirical knowledge of God and academic theology or the interpretation of the content of faith according to philosophic rationalism. This thing leads, consequently, to the distinction between knowledge of God and knowledge of the surrounding world. By the illumination of his mind by the Holy Spirit, the Orthodox Christian believer acquires the experience of God's uncreated grace into his heart, namely in his entire being, and by reason and thinking, in other words by logical series and analyses, he transfers this experience to those around him. This explains the fact that the theologian, in the proper sense of the word, namely he who has the holy-spiritual experience of the knowledge of God and of the vision of His uncreated Light, can have a knowledge of a thing in a scientific way and become a scientist by knowing the respective science, whereas the scientist, to get to know God, and not just to get to be aware of God's presence in the creation, a fact that he can attain as well by the research specific of his science, needs the help of the Orthodox method of knowing God, a method consisting, as we have mentioned above as well, in the acquisition of the states of purification, illumination and deification, in order to get to live *the divine things*⁵⁸.

Expressions of this living are *the theological notions* and *dogmas of the faith*, which neither mean *scientific knowledge of an object*, nor describe only something from this world, but are symbols leading man to God, represent the functions of man's relation to God, show the way to salvation. For this reason, their role is not gnostic, in the worldly sense of knowledge, but soteriological, since God's knowledge is not some rational knowledge of an object, but man's salvation, namely his sanctification and deification, which also imply his attainment in history⁵⁹.

One can note, from the Holy Fathers' experiences, that the pedagogical act of the theology and teaching of the Church, perceived, therefore, as a *special spiritual communion*, implies a serious training different from the lay pedagogical act. *It is not enough* for the theology teacher / *pedagogue to become a participant in and a bearer of the Truth*, namely a

⁵⁵ CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, p. 189.

⁵⁶ CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, pp. 177-178.

⁵⁷ CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, p. 178; see also ΣΤΥΛΙΑΝΟΥ Γ. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Πατρολογία*, Α', Έκδόσεις Παρουσία, Αθήνα, 1997³, p. 77.

⁵⁸ Părintele IOAN ROMANIDIS, *Teologia patristică*, translation from Greek, notes, bibliographic completions and afterword by ION MARIAN CROITORU, Ed. Bibliotheca, Târgoviște, 2012, pp. 25-31, 62-64; CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, pp. 180-181.

⁵⁹ ΠΑΠΑΠΕΤΡΟΥ, *Πίστη και γνώση*, pp. 8-9.

bearer of the Truth revealed in history⁶⁰, and, then, to transfuse to the student *this spiritual experience*⁶¹. Saint Basil the Great, for instance, yokes this experience *from the life according to God* to the one acquired *in the daily life*, in his case involving as well the intellectual training that he received: *Because also the fact of having reached now a certain age, and the fact of having already practiced many things, and certainly also the fact of having taken part, in a satisfactory manner, to one and the other transformation [of life] which educate everyone, have made me experienced in the knowledge of the human things, so that I may indicate precisely the safest way to those who are now just entering life*⁶².

As a consequence, theological education, based both on empirical theology, but also on the experience of daily life, *does not consist in the search of the perfect thing on an ideatic level, as it happens with philosophy, but in the framework of the historical reality, without, however, identifying this thing with the changing and unstable nature of things*⁶³; the theology teacher, as a pedagogue-theologian, is not *a simple teacher* or *a passive bearer of scientific-religious knowledge*, but he who, having the experience of the Holy Spirit's charismata, and the experience, as Saint Basil the Great puts it, of this world's vanity and of the instability of things⁶⁴, leads the student to the spiritual life, namely to living the *rebirth* in Jesus Christ⁶⁵; *a criterion necessary* to the theology teacher consists, therefore, in the experience or the experiences he has and by which he can *discern the important things of life and, consequently, stable and permanent, as opposed to the unimportant and transitory ones, which are, more often than not, also destructive*⁶⁶. The work of the discernment charisma is *not the result of some philosophic thinking or of some academic curiosity*⁶⁷, but the fruit of the holy-spiritual life, which indicates the fact that man has acquired *divine wisdom*, which Saint Basil the Great considers to be *the science of the divine but also human things, and of the reasons per se*⁶⁸.

6. Ignoring the role of empirical theology, as the only dynamic reality vitalizing the synergy between academic theology and the Church mission in the contemporary society, will trigger many negative consequences, by the materialization of certain trends to which many theology teachers have drawn the attention during the recent years, such as: the tendency of religious transformation of Theology or of theological education, because of the exacerbated desire of some regarding its modernization and social recognition; the tendency of separating Theology from the life of God's people and its autonomization, no longer taking into account God's work in the Church, and by the Church, in the world; the tendency of copying foreign models⁶⁹ or inventing others, with no practical adaptation to the Orthodox

⁶⁰ ΠΑΠΑΠΕΤΡΟΥ, *Πίστη και γνώση*, p. 17.

⁶¹ Prof. univ. dr. NICOLAE XIONIS, "Învățător sau pedagog? O abordare teologică a rolului de pedagog al teologului", translation from Greek and notes by Assoc. Prof. dr. ION MARIAN CROITORU, in: *Misiune, Spiritualitate, Cultură. Simpozion Internațional. Tinerii și educația religioasă-morală în contextul lumii contemporane. Contribuția Bisericii la cultura universală*, Ed. Valahia University Press, Târgoviște, 2016, p. 226.

⁶² SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, *Ὁμιλία πρὸς τοὺς νέους, ὅπως ἂν ἐξ Ἑλληνικῶν ὠφελοῖντο λόγων*, 1, in: PG 31, 564 C.

⁶³ XIONIS, *Învățător sau pedagog?*, p. 227.

⁶⁴ See SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, *Ὁμιλία IB'. Εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν Παροιμιῶν*, in: PG 31, 417 BC.

⁶⁵ XIONIS, *Învățător sau pedagog?*, p. 227.

⁶⁶ XIONIS, *Învățător sau pedagog?*, p. 228.

⁶⁷ XIONIS, *Învățător sau pedagog?*, p. 228.

⁶⁸ SAINT BASIL THE GREAT, *Ὁμιλία IB'. Εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν Παροιμιῶν*, in: PG 31, 389 C.

⁶⁹ METALLINOS, *Teologul*, p. 104; BUCHIU, *Misiunea Facultăților*, p. 109.

believers' needs. In relation to this tendency, one can observe the need to *rethink the research and teaching methods, in order to maintain an Orthodox theological specific, consisting in the inseparability between theology, worship and spirituality*⁷⁰. The accomplishment of this aspect is realized if academic theology shows itself loyal to the *divine Revelation* and its two organs, the *Holy Scripture* and the *Holy Tradition*, by which the discovery of God and the work of the Church become known in the world, so that the mission of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology may represent *a part or a segment-manifestation*, according to Father Ștefan Buchiu, *which belongs both to the Church and implicitly to the dynamic aspect of the Holy Tradition*⁷¹.

Without *criticism* and *self-criticism*⁷² regarding the way theological education takes place, and regarding the forms of expression of academic theology, one can note the risk that academic theology, as it is promoted by the Church clerics and scholars of the present epoch, might attain, according to Father Daniel Benga, the same state of *petrification against which our Saviour Christ fought, and the consequence is simple and awful: Look, your house is left to you desolate (Matthew 23: 38)*⁷³. At the same time, without a culture of debate⁷⁴ and of objective expression, the academic theological discourse deforms *theology into ideology* and reduces it to *a propaganda expressed by a discourse made up of a series of verbal or written clichés*. According to Mister Adrian Lemeni, *such a theology risks deforming*, in fact, it does not inform⁷⁵.

In the context of the cultivation of academic theology, one can note, lately, the consecration of the organization of international and national Symposiums and Conferences by the Faculties of Orthodox Theology of Romania, which is actually a positive thing, yet many shortcomings can be noticed. For instance, the proceedings are printed in a very limited number of copies and often cannot be found even in the great Libraries of the country (The Library of the Academy of Bucharest, The Library of the Holy Synod etc.), or even in the Libraries of the respective Faculties. Consequently, it would be very useful for the organizers to propose to one another an exchange, for these volumes to be found at all the Libraries of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology, in a larger number of copies, in order to be available to the students and even to the teachers, with the evident goal of healing the autism that can be noticed on the level of the communication and appropriation of the latest research in the domain of academic theology. At the same time, the Romanian participants to these reunions demonstrate, increasingly often, a lack of academic seriousness. I do not have in view the quality of the presentations, because they depend on the intellectual training and

⁷⁰ BUCHIU, *Misiunea Facultăților*, p. 115.

⁷¹ BUCHIU, *Misiunea Facultăților*, p. 109. Related to this aspect, academic theology must meet, according to Father Valer Bel, three conditions: 1) *be faithful to the Revelation given in Christ and transmitted by the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition and lived with no interruption in the Church life*; 2) *be responsible to the believers of the time when it is made, in the sense that it must be a theology that is actual, making the content of the Revelation accessible to the people of the respective time*; 3) *be open towards the eschatological future, having the obligation to guide the believers towards their true perfection in that future*. Without meeting one of these three conditions, academic theology is *insufficient and useless, sometimes even harmful to the Church and the believers* [Pr. prof. dr. VALER BEL, "Vocația misionară și doxologică a teologiei academice", in: VICOVAN, HÂRLĂOANU, ROMAN (editors), *Teologia academică*, p. 153].

⁷² BUCHIU, *Misiunea Facultăților*, p. 113.

⁷³ BENGA, *Teologia academică română contemporană*, p. 125.

⁷⁴ BENGA, *Teologia academică română contemporană*, p. 129.

⁷⁵ Conf. dr. ADRIAN LEMENI, "Exigențe misionare ale învățământului religios și teologic, asumate în relația dintre parohie și școală din contextul actual", in: ADRIAN LEMENI, pr. DAVID PESTROIU (coord.), *Relația dintre parohie și școală în viața și misiunea Bisericii din contextul actual*, Ed. Basilica, București, 2015, pp. 114-115.

inner life of each of them, but “the fashion” of doing one’s presentation, after which, invoking certain reasons, one withdraws or leaves the respective reunion⁷⁶. In this way, unique opportunities of going deeper into various topics are lost, and the foreigners participating to these events are faced with delicate situations, noticing this “fashion”, which tends to become a habit. Another observation refers to the time dedicated to the presentations and, consequently, to the discussions. Every time, some afford to take as much time as they wish and no one dares to draw their attention to the fact that they should limit themselves to the time allotted, others talk only in the presence of sympathizers, while the time limit is strictly imposed on others, which creates the image of the promotion of an academic theology on one’s own, in the first case, or of an academic theology based on sympathizers, in the second case, or of a “hasty” academic theology, in the third case, and when the time of discussions comes, the “we-have-no-more-time” is easily invoked, so that so many aspects remain in suspense and are left to the public’s free imagination. This shortcoming of the time allotted for discussions reveals, on the one hand, a spirit of self-sufficiency, harmful, however, not just to maintaining an elevated academic atmosphere, but also in relation to the spiritual life, and on the other hand, shows the lack of interest for dialogue and debate, lest the “ideology” of some person or the other not to be disturbed, by taking or clarifying certain positions, all the more so if the respective person is part of the clergy, probably, in order not to harm his “infallibility”.

Let us not be amazed of the fact that depending on the quality of the academic theology, namely on the extent to which it is objective, done with seriousness and related to the empirical theology, it will be possible to feel the force of the mission of the Orthodox Church in the Romanian society, and, moreover, it will be possible to note among the Romanian Orthodox Christian believers the presence or the absence of charismata, with a major effect on the good functioning of the Faculties of Theology, namely, the vocations for monastic life and priestly service. These vocations will remain in the people for as long as it will be aware the good work of the Faculties of Theology, together with other factors that are easy to understand, or will be taken away by God, their Giver, if selfishness, particular interests and many other situations will push the approach of academic theology to a distantiation from empirical theology.

The force of academic theology comes not just from the multitude of the studies and books published, but especially from the permanent connection with the empirical theology, forming a common body of the Orthodox Church mission in the world, in order to avoid the evaluation according to which, in the not very far future, the main preoccupation of the Orthodox communities even from the traditionally Orthodox countries of Europe *will be the*

⁷⁶ At the beginnings of the organization of these reunions, the situation was completely different. I have my personal experience not just as a speaker, but also as a companion and translator for guests from Greece. One could feel even a joy of the communion and of the spending time together for a period of time as long as possible, all these being accompanied by thirst for knowledge. Yet, as the years have gone by, this enthusiasm has vanished, the academic events have become a routine, giving the impression of their organization for the simple recording of an activity and the “relay race” for taking the floor exceeds any imagination. For example, there have been situations when on the last day of the scientific event remained only the guests from Greece and I, or those who had done their presentations during the first part of the day left the conference hall and the Conference after the midday meal, while, during the second part of the day, the speakers from the first session were no longer in the conference hall after the coffee break, in order to participate to the following session.

survival and not the mission, which would justify the characterization that the Orthodox Church will be in a situation with a *glorious past, but an uncertain future*⁷⁷.

7. The mission of a theology professor, regardless of the discipline taught, is to rebirth the students to the life in Christ. In order to do this, it is necessary for the teacher himself to be a *confessor of God, not just in the sense of someone who talks about Him, but in the patristic sense of someone who first talked to God to then tell about this wonderful conversation to his disciples*⁷⁸. This thing means that such a teacher has the empirical theology, in other words, he has the experience of the *divine things* by the *noetic eyes* or the eyes of the mind, so that by the work of these spiritual eyes, as a power given by the Holy Spirit and by this power, he sees the all-holy and above-the-material-eyes uncreated Light⁷⁹, and then comes the thinking about the *divine things*. In this way, one gets to live the words of Saint Gregory Palamas, who says: *and listening about the eyes of the soul, which know by this experience the heavenly treasures, you should not imagine that this is about thinking. Because the latter itself*, says Saint Gregory Palamas referring to thinking, *meditates by itself both to the sensible things, and to the noetical things. Yet, just as with a fortified city that you have not seen yet, if you think about it, you have not experienced it by the fact of thinking about it, it happens just the same with God and the divine things, you do not experience them by the fact of thinking and theologizing about them. And just as it happens with gold, if you do not have it in a sensible manner and do not have it palpably in your hands and do not see it concretely, even if you were to have in your thinking its significance a thousand times, by no means [can you say that] you have or you see or you possessed gold, similarly if you were to think thousands of times about the divine treasures but you do not experience the divine things, and you do not see them with the noetical eyes that are above thinking, then you neither see, nor have, nor really possessed any of the divine things*⁸⁰.

Since the theology professor has not just erudition but also holy-spiritual life, namely *personal spiritual experience*⁸¹, he grows and changes himself together with his students under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, by a personal relation of communion and of meeting in love, *committing not just to the communion of the same answer, but also to the communion of a search for the profound meanings of theology*. The professor's commitment is not just temporary, but forever, because at the judgement, in front of Christ, he goes accompanied by his students, uttering, like Joseph in front of Jacob: *they are my sons, that God has given me (Genesis 48: 9)*⁸². To avoid a self-referential language devoid of any connection with the Holy Fathers' way of thinking and living, the theology professor *ought*

⁷⁷ PATRICK JOHNSTONE, *The Future of the Global Church: History, Trends and Possibilities*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2011, p. 106; SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, pp. 158, 161. On the level of the year 2011, one can note that in Romania, a country that has an Orthodox majority, the Pentecostals represent the only Christian community which has grown as number. Although the number of the Orthodox converts has increased a lot by comparison with the previous centuries, considering the migration phenomenon, only a part of them continue to remain Orthodox, because the priests do not have *enough experience in the pastoral counselling of the converts* (SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, pp. 163, 166). About the evangelical movements' success in proselytism even among those who are nominally Orthodox, see SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, pp. 168-169.

⁷⁸ BENGA, *Teologia academică română contemporană*, p. 136.

⁷⁹ SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS, *Λόγος ὑπὲρ τῶν ἱερῶς ἡσυχάζόντων* 1, 3, 34, in *Συγγράμματα*, Α' ..., p. 445.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁸¹ SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, p. 167.

⁸² BENGA, *Teologia academică română contemporană*, p. 136.

not to theologize without the motion of glorification in his heart⁸³, because theological education must aim at the essence of theology, namely to train the students in how to become eternal. Actually, theological education does not have in view only the future of *time* (χρόνος), with its three temporal dimensions (*past, present and future*), but especially the reality of the time or of the age of God's Kingdom (καιρὸς τῆς Βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ), in which the future is in the present and the present is eternal⁸⁴.

Consequently, theological education has as a purpose the preparation for the real participation, even since the time of the life on earth, to the mystery of God's Kingdom, and reducing it only to the teaching of some notions connected to this approach, *recoverable as theological information and, therefore*, according to Father Răzvan Ionescu, *formalizable by an academic type of knowledge*, has as immediate effect the abandonment of the work of the uncreated divine grace for the dry gesture of the transmission of knowledge and the transformation of theology into information leading to the emergence of a new "species" of professor, like, for instance, the thinker, as Father Philotheos Pharos calls it⁸⁵. Seizing this danger, Father Cristian Sonea draws the attention to the fact that *such a theological teaching would lead to the shaping of "professional" priests and missionaries, equipped very well with the tools of preaching and confession, yet without the life of the Spirit, which needs to be transmitted by these tools. The danger of our theological schools is that of building only efficient "channels" for the transmission of information of theological nature, without making one feel the work of grace. Without renouncing the academic demands, let us not forget, however, that the essential component of theological training is the Christian priest and missionary's spiritual experience*⁸⁶.

When the erudite or academic theologian, namely the theology professor / scientist, has no holy-spiritual life, this representing *the fundamental premise of the fact of theologizing in an Orthodox manner and with no mistake*⁸⁷, then he has the duty to have the humble living and thinking (ταπεινὸν φρόνημα) and to apply the ecclesial method, as it is recorded in the well-known holy-patristic formula: "being followers of the Holy Fathers (ἐπόμεινοι τοῖς Ἁγίοις Πατράσι)"⁸⁸. Otherwise, when the experience is not his own, but someone else's, the theologian making reflections on it, makes a dead theology⁸⁹.

8. Many times, I have accompanied Greek professors at various Symposiums and Conferences in Romania. More often than not, they would hear, from the Romanian professors of theology, references to Father Dumitru Stăniloae and they would ask me:

⁸³ GRIGORIE MOȘ, "Vocația doxologică a teologiei", in: IOAN TULCAN, CRISTINEL IOJA, FILIP ALBU (coord.), *Teologia ca vocație eclezială, pastoral-misionară și dimensiunea sa academică*, Astra Muzeum, Sibiu, 2012, pp. 378-379.

⁸⁴ SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, p. 172. Father Dumitru Stăniloae even makes the mention that for the great reality of time, lived in the Orthodoxy, the word *time* represents the term for physical measurement for time, while the word *age* indicates the spiritual living of time (idem, *Ortodoxie și românism*, Seria Opere complete VIII, Editura BASILICA, București, 2014, p. 115).

⁸⁵ SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, p. 172. It is about the Greek Father Philotheos Pharos, an Orthodox priest in Athens.

⁸⁶ SONEA, *Misiunea creștină*, pp. 172-173.

⁸⁷ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΤΣΕΛΕΓΓΙΑΗ, „Μετα-πατερική ή νεο-βαρλααμική θεολογία; Άγνοια ή άρνηση τής αγιότητας; Κριτήρια του Όρθοδόξως και άπλανώς θεολογεΐν”, in: Ίερά Μητρόπολις Πειραιώς, *Πατερική Θεολογία και μεταπατερική αίρεση*, Πρακτικά Θεολογικής Ήμερίδος, Πειραιεύς, 2012, p. 38.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 38, 41; CROITORU, *Teologia academică*, pp. 183-184.

⁸⁹ Pr. DUMITRU STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate și comuniune în Liturgia ortodoxă*, Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 2004², p. 15.

Father Stăniloae says very well what he says, yet do the Romanian theologians read only him today? Do they ignore his exhortation to read the Holy Fathers or to turn directly to their writings and lives?

The sense of these questions or the interpretation key is that both Father Dumitru Stăniloae in the Romanian theology or in the Orthodox Church of Romania, and Father Georges Florovsky in the Russian theology or Father John Romanidis in the Greek theology had a point in common, namely the exhortation for the people in their time, but also for those after them, to rediscover not just the Holy Fathers' teaching, which would lead to a dry academic theology, but their holy and spiritual experience or experiences, namely for every one of the believers to relive the content of the divine Revelation and the moment of the Pentecost, all the more those teaching the Church doctrine on the academic or university level. In other words, their exhortation is to live empirically the content of the *divine Revelation*, in order to feel and make visible, and here I refer to the theology professors, the relation between academic theology and Church mission in the contemporary society.

To exemplify this connection, please allow me to present an example entrusted to me, while I was accompanying a theology professor arrived from Greece to Romania, whose father, being a priest, when he was celebrating the *Divine Liturgy*, would see the Angels and their work in the Holy Altar, during the *Divine Eucharist*⁹⁰. The respective professor, who is a layman, had to provide an urgent answer to a very important problem, that the Orthodox Church of Greece was faced with, at that moment. He remembered that somewhere, in a Holy Father, he had read something regarding the respective matter, and his memory had retained the name of Saint John Chrysostom. However, he had not been able to identify that passage of Saint John Chrysostom's writings and, in this situation, he prayed that God may send to him someone with a holy-spiritual life, to be sure that he would not go wrong with the solution he was going to give to the respective matter. This attitude shows, therefore, the professor's humility, who did not trust only his memory, on the one hand, and on the other hand, his propensity to prayer. After having finished the prayer, the telephone rang and at the other end of the line was – by divine oikonomia, I shall add – none other but a famous disciple of Father Paisios the Hagiorite⁹¹.

The two knew each other, and the respective disciple invoked to him the reason that he was coming out of the Holy Mount to Thessaloniki, to solve different problems, and on this occasion, he would like to visit him at his home, because they have something to talk. Great was the joy of the theology professor, and the moment of their meeting took place in a special spiritual atmosphere, full of emotions and special discussions. Among them, the professor also brought into focus the matter of concern for him. That disciple, having the same spiritual state and the same charismata like Saint Paisios, confirmed to him the

⁹⁰ It is about the illustrious erudite Demetrios Tselengidis, professor of Dogmatics at the Faculty of Theology of Thessaloniki, now retired. His father, Father John, had a holy-spiritual life. Mister Tselengidis told me that one day, when his father was celebrating the *Divine Liturgy*, and he, being young, was in the pews, he entered, after a while, in the Holy Altar. He sat down piously on one side of the Holy Altar, and the moment of the *Divine Liturgy* was drawing near to the invocation of the Holy Spirit over the Honourable Gifts. His father waved to him to stand up, but he did not understand the gesture. After the *Divine Liturgy* came to an end, Father John asked him if he was, maybe, ill. *No*, he replied. Then Father John told him: *Well, did not you see that at that moment, when you were sitting down, all the Angels in the Holy Altar had turned their wings towards the Holy Table?*

⁹¹ In a first form of this essay, presented at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology from Craiova, during the **International Symposium The Faculty of Theology: academic status and ecclesial mission (4-7 October 2017)**, I made a confusion between this disciple and Saint Paisios the Hagiorite, a fact clarified following my meeting with Professor Demetrios Tselengidis in Thessaloniki, on 5 June 2018.

solution, and the professor tells him: *I think I have read what you are saying in Saint John Chrysostom, but I can no longer find the respective passage.* The discussion was taking place by the library of the distinguished professor, exactly where he had the volumes of Saint John Chrysostom's writings from the *Greek Patrology*, no less than 18 in all. And as the professor was moving his hand next to the respective volumes, not knowing which one to draw out, the respective Father, namely Saint Paisios the Hagiorite's disciple, suggested to him to draw out the volume next to which the professor's hand was at that moment. Drawing it out and putting it in his hands, the volume opens precisely at the passage he was looking for, yet whose content had been related to him as well, a bit earlier, by the Father. The professor looks at him in awe, and the Father tells him: *Why are you amazed, the same Holy Spirit, Who was then, is now as well.* In other words, those who seek spiritual perfection and come to it, partake of the same content of the *divine Revelation* and, implicitly, of the *Pentecost*, by the personal experience of the work of the uncreated divine grace.

To conclude, Jesus Christ's Church, namely the Orthodox Church, being *the one, holy, universal and apostolic* Church, steps in the world by the steps of yesterday's, today's and tomorrow's Saints, so that the reference to their experiences needs to remain a constant of theological education, because *God is not the great absent of man's historical endeavours*, on the contrary, He is present in history and the One Who inspires man⁹². For this reason, the Orthodoxy *does not represent an epoch of history, but its truth*, because it has a past but, what is much more, a present and a future, and its guarantor is the conscience of the Church⁹³. In this sense, edifying is an apophthegm of the *Egyptian Pateric*, which His Eminence Teofan, blessing the works of the Symposium reminded at the beginning of our study, put in the participants' souls. Avva Isidore of Pelusium said that *life with no word is of more use than the word with no life. Because life is of use even keeping silent, while the word bothers even when calling out. But if the word and life should meet, they paint the icon of the whole philosophy*⁹⁴.

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⁹² ΠΑΠΑΠΕΤΡΟΥ, *Πίστη και γνώση*, p. 7.

⁹³ ΠΑΠΑΠΕΤΡΟΥ, *Πίστη και γνώση*, pp. 17, 19.

⁹⁴ † ΤΕΟΦΑΝ, Mitropolitul Moldovei și Bucovinei, *Cuvânt de binecuvântare*, p. 10; see also *Pentru Avva Isidor Pelusiotul*, 1, in: *Patericul ce cuprinde în sine cuvinte folosite ale Sfinților bătrâni*, Col. *Izvoare duhovnicești* 1, Alba Iulia, 1993/1994, p. 107.

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THE CHRISTIAN ROOTS OF EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

Among the challenges that Europe must face today is the recognition and valuing its Christian roots. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (The Lisbon Treaty) has avoided direct reference to the Christian roots of Europe, but has mentioned the religious heritage as the origin of the development of universal values on the basis of which the European project has been able to build its future. Many critical voices, such as that of Jacques Chirac and the Pierre Moscovici, denied the contribution of Christianity to the formation and development of the European Community. But the denial of Europe's Christian roots implies a betrayal of its culture and history. Christianity has united and given to the Europe meaning for all peoples to live in communion. Europe needs the affirmation of its Christian origins, the valorisation of moral values that have been planted from the beginning, which have developed and have been born for centuries. Europe needs Christianity to exist, to not sink, to be able to live in peace and build a civilization of good understanding between its citizens.

Keywords: Christian roots; Europe; The Lisbon Treaty; cultural heritage; unchristianizing;

INTRODUCTION

“Europa Christiana” today is facing a wave of challenges that it needs to manage and solve in the prospect of a stronger unit. In fact, a question that has troubled the minds of those who are concerned about the future of this continent, and especially of the European Union, is “what really unites us?” Is the European Union a structure that is based exclusively on economic and political factors, or what brings unity is the cultural and spiritual background? Therefore, one of the pressing problems that prompted a great deal of pro and contra reactions was that of the spiritual “roots” that led to the formation of Europe, especially the recognition of the major contribution brought by Christianity to the evolution of this continent, and of the good progress of the European project.

1. THE TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION (THE LISBON TREATY) AND EUROPE'S CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

The Treaties of the European Union have over time seen some reforms that have taken into account many changes dictated by new and new challenges, such as the extension of the borders from 15 to 25 and then to 28 states. The latest revision of the European Treaties had as its starting point the European Council held in Laeken (Belgium), in 2001, lasted almost eight years, until late 2009, when the Treaty signed in Lisbon in December 2007 came into force after all Member States have ratified it. The Laeken Council made the

decision to establish a Convention on the Future of Europe, which led to the drafting of a Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, also known as the European Constitution, which aimed at replacing the old European Treaties.¹

The Lisbon Treaty (the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) reformed two European Treaties: the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community.

In the “Preamble” of the Lisbon Treaty, among others, the following words are written:

“DRAWING INSPIRATION from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.”²

We must note that there is no direct reference to Christianity, but the religious heritage is mentioned as the origin of the development of the universal values upon which the European project was able to build its future, otherwise, the Article 2 of the Treaty states:

“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”³

Also, in the context of assuming, although not explicitly, the values that Christianity has promoted, in Article 3 of the same Treaty, paragraph 1, the European Union undertakes to “to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples”⁴.

The Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union highlights the status of churches and of non-confessional organizations within the European Union:

“1. The Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States.

2. The Union equally respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations.

3. Recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations.”⁵

The first two paragraphs are only take-overs from the Amsterdam Treaty, specifically from Declaration no. 11 of the Final Act of this Treaty. Also, the first part of the second paragraph, which recognizes the identity and contribution that Churches have brought to society, is found in the 2001 White Paper on European Governance. The novelty brought about by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, of Lisbon, is that in the second part of the third paragraph, the dialogue between the European Commission and the churches within it is legally grounded. And from the use of the term "Union" we deduce that

¹ Sorin Șelaru, “*Dialogul dintre Uniunea Europeană și Biserici*”, in the volume Iulia Badea-Guéritée, Alexandru Ojică (coord.), *Dialogul religiilor în Europa unită*, Ed. Adenium, Iași, 2015, see the web address: <https://books.google.ro/books?id=1P-UCwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=dialogul+religiilor+in+Europa+unita&hl=ro&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjciZmAo6HdAhXRJFAKHTinDIsQ6AEIJzAA#v=onepage&q=dialogul%20religiilor%20in%20Europa%20unita&f=false> (accessed on 04.09.2018);

² ***, “The Lisbon Treaty Commentary and Comparative Text. With an Introduction by Renato Schifani, President of the Senate”, in *Quaderni europei e internazionali*, nr. 16, December 2009, p.75;

³ Ibidem, p. 79;

⁴ Ibidem;

⁵ Ibidem, pp. 166-167;

the dialogue is assumed by all European institutions. Indeed, in the first years after the ratification of the Treaty it was found that things did not go as churches wanted. That is why certain discussions were needed to clarify how should be applied the Article 17, paragraph 3 of the Treaty.⁶ Thus, the theme of the first meeting of the Committee of Representatives of the Orthodox Church to the European Union (CROCEU) (Brussels, 17 March 2010) was “Implementation of Article 17 (3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union”⁷. In the communiqué of the meeting, among other things, it was transmitted that “the dialogue between the political community and the Churches underscored by Article 17(3) is very welcome as a manifestation of mutual respect and as a sign of hope for a better Europe and a sustainable world” and the “dialogue in view of the implementation of Article 17(3) (is) a challenge and an opportunity for promoting the fundamental values and principles upon which European culture has based itself and along which it has developed, such as justice, peace, protection of the environment, sensitivity in front of situations of poverty and suffering, reasonable distribution of financial assets, condemnation and avoidance of all sort of violence, protection of children and women, access to education for all, standing in solidarity with one another, freedom of communication and expression, protection of religious freedom concerning both minorities and majorities and the rule of law”⁸.

The Orthodox Churches are struggling for a most fruitful dialogue in order to achieve a clear European gain: peace and unity. The waves of immigrants who have arrived in Europe in recent years have led some European leaders to remember the spiritual roots of Europe. The Judeo-Christian heritage must not be neglected but strengthened. We need a reevaluation of the Christian moral principles that were given to Europe and the world. Without deep anchoring in a Christian experience, peace will be lost, and with it a division will occur. We want a united Europe, but in order for this to be fully realized and sustained, it requires a sustained effort and a common interest. Economic and financial factors are important, but without social stability, without a climate in which peace and good will govern, the European project will know the “taste” of failure.

2. WILL WE SEE THE UPROOTING OF EUROPE?

Although the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in Lisbon seemed, to some extent, the Christian heritage, that underpinned the formation of what is today Europe, has been valorized, although it was not clearly mentioned in the Treaty, to the joy of many, such as the President of France, Jacques Chirac, who had fought for not mentioning the Christian roots in the Preamble, many voices continued the denial process.⁹ Such a voice was that of the European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs, Pierre Moscovici, former Minister of Economy and European Affairs in France, who when asked what he thought about the election of a Muslim mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, a premiere in the history of Western Europe for a capital, replied: “Europe, even if it’s true that on our continent a majority of the population are, let’s say of Christian religion or culture, Europe is

⁶ Sorin ȘELARU, *art. cit.*;

⁷ ***, “*The first meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Orthodox Churches to the EU (CROCEU). COMMUNIQUE. Subject: Implementation of Article 17(3) of the TFEU*” see the web address: <http://www.orthodoxero.eu/pages/posts/the-first-meeting-of-the-committee-of-representatives-of-orthodox-churches-to-the-eu-croceu11.php> (accessed on 06.09.2018);

⁸ Ibidem;

⁹ Jean-François CHEMAIN, “*L’actualité des racines chrétiennes de L’Europe*”, Smart Reading Press (site: srp-presse.fr), published on 12.01.2018, see the web address: <https://srp-presse.fr/index.php/2018/01/12/lactualite-des-racines-chretiennes-de-leurope/> (accessed on 06.09.2018);

not Christian. I don't believe in the Christian roots of Europe. I believe Europe is diverse, united and diverse... There is no perfect fit between the accession to Europe and the Christian faith ... Europe - and this time I am talking about the community project, it has no Christian roots, but political ... And then, no, the 12 stars of the European flag do not symbolize the crown of the Virgin Mary! ... Those who constantly evoke the exclusiveness of Europe's Christian roots are often the heirs of the political currents that once wanted a Europe without Jews and today dream of a Europe without Muslims”¹⁰.

The denial of Europe's Christian roots implies a betrayal of its culture and history. As far as the European flag is concerned, it must be known that it was created in 1955 as a symbol of the Council of Europe, an institution that defends human rights and promotes European culture. Subsequently, the European Parliament decided in 1983 that the Council of Europe flag be used by all European Communities. In 1985, the 27th golden flag on azure background became the official emblem of the European Communities, ie the European Union today.¹¹

The one who drew the flag was Arsène Heitz, a European official and a fervent Catholic believer. Later, he told that he was inspired to create the flag of the iconic “Miraculous Medal” of the Virgin Mary, surrounded by twelve gold stars, and a religious text describing the Virgin Mary as a woman dressed in the sun's rays, having a moon under his feet and a crown of twelve stars on his head. The blue color is associated in Christianity with the Mother of God, to whom the Orthodox and Roman Catholic religions are given a cult of over-worship. The official website of the European Union does not make any religious reference on the flag: “The European flag symbolises both the European Union and, more broadly, the identity and unity of Europe. It features a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background. They stand for the ideals of unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of Europe. The number of stars has nothing to do with the number of member countries, though the circle is a symbol of unity”¹². Moreover, Turkey, which is a member of the Council of Europe, has agreed to use the stars on the flag, refusing more explicit religious symbols. The Lisbon Treaty omits any reference to the flag. However, in one of the relevant Treaty Statements (No 52), sixteen countries recognize the flag as a symbol of EU membership: Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia.¹³

Regarding the so-called “dream” to a Europe without Muslims, according to Mr. Moscovici's accusation (see his statement quoted above), we can say that Europeans, in Christian spirit, were as benevolent and hospitable with those who have settled in this area, regardless of their race or number, helped them to integrate and they have respected their faith and traditions. It is appropriate to be treated as well as any good host deserves: with respect, morality, gratitude, faith, etc.

¹⁰ Cristian UNTEANU, “*Identitatea creștină a Europei Unite, o utopie?*”, published on 10 September 2016, see the web address: https://adevarul.ro/international/europa/identitatea-crestina-europei-unite-utopiei-1_57d3cc5a5ab6550cb88aaa12/index.html (accessed on 06.09.2018);

¹¹ ***, “*The European flag*”, on the official website of the European Union (europa.eu), see the web address: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/flag_en (accessed on 07.09.2018);

¹² Ibidem;

¹³ Anne-Aël DURAND, “*Le drapeau européen a-t-il une origine catholique?*”, in *Le Monde*, 12.10.2017, see the web address: https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2017/10/12/le-drapeau-europeen-a-t-il-une-origine-catholique_5200019_4355770.html (accessed on 08.09.2018);

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has often qualified the European Union as “a Christian club” and has demanded that a first condition for his country's accession to the European project, “not to mention the historic roots of Europe in the Constitution”¹⁴.

We can firmly say that the Christian religion played a crucial role in the construction of the European project. In fact, how can we define what the European Union is? If we define it in terms of geographic space, then Turkey has every right to be part of it. If we take into account the ethnicity or the language (Indo-European), then we should also think of the Iranians, Indians, Kurds, Armenians, etc. If the European project is an exclusively institutional one, then why does Norway refuse to join and why Britain is about to leave it? Certainly all those who deny the importance of Christianity in building a Union among the peoples of Europe should answer the questions above.¹⁵

Europe was built through the common historical experiences, on the ruins of the ancient Roman Empire, through the classical Greek heritage, having as a link the Christian religion that coalesced distant spaces and managed to build a true civilization. The inheritance of the Roman Empire continued to be present in what was called the Byzantine Empire, where Christianity had its imprint, then continuing in successive stages with the medieval period, the Renaissance, the Reformation period, then the Counter-Reformation, the Age of Lights (or The Age of Reason) and that of Romanticism. Wherever you go to Europe, even in the most isolated village, we will find symbols of Christianity, such as the Holy Cross. Also, if we analyze any political entity built after the fall of the Roman Empire, we will find that it bases its unity and legitimacy on the basis of Christianity. If we remember the difficult times of the Middle Ages, with chaos, invasions, destructions, we will easily discover that the cultural and spiritual heritage has been kept in Christian monasteries and churches. In fact, priests in churches and monasteries were the first teachers, they have been caring for the sick and cultivating philanthropy. Christianity, with all its rituals, was deeply impregnated in the everyday life of people who had the deep faith that everything that happens to them is due to divine intervention: epidemics, healing, good or bad harvests, military victories or defeats, etc. In addition to a simple analysis of the European architectural heritage, we will see as a common feature the presence of churches throughout the continent. Christianity has united and given Europe meaning for all peoples to live in communion.

French politician and essayist Philippe de Villiers, a member of the European Parliament in 2004-2009, denounced the danger of denying Christian roots and said the following words: “... this Europe in thirty years will be Islamized. Europe loses its identity, loses its spirituality, no longer knows where it comes from. Paul Valéry said, «I call Europe all the land that has been romanized, christianized and subjected to the spirit of Greek discipline». If she no longer knows this, if she does not want to acknowledge her Christian roots, Europe will be Muslim, Europe will be Islamic; she will be Islamic in thirty years. It's a matter of demography. Pierre Chaunu, Fernand Braudel, the great French historians, who

¹⁴ Philippe de VILLIERS, *Les turqueries du grand Mamamouchi: Adresse à Jaques Chirac*, Éditions Albin Michel S.A., 2005, see the web address: <https://books.google.ro/books?id=Wf4EDAAAQBAJ&pg=PT43&dq=M.+Erdogan++%C2%ABclub+chr%C3%A9tien%C2%BB&hl=ro&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiGv7Kw2KjdAhULbFAKHaxiD2sQ6AEIJzAA#v=onepage&q&f=false> (accessed on 08.09.2018);

¹⁵ Jean-François CHEMAIN, *art. cit.*;

were our teachers when we were students, a few years ago, said: History is demography. History is demographics!”¹⁶

Europe needs the affirmation of its Christian origins, the valorisation of moral values that have been planted from the beginning, which have developed and have been born for centuries. The dominant ideology in Europe today seems to promote the concept of “tabula rasa” among citizens, inherited from the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century. It seems that we are part of a process of cultural degradation and, implicitly, unchristianizing, with the ultimate goal of creating a “new”, “perfect” European man, emptied of religious, cultural and intellectual heritage. This new man only has to fulfill the functions of consumer and economic agent, not to discern between good and evil, to be the exponent of ideological manipulations of all kinds, including the extremist, regardless of whether they are right or left.¹⁷

CONCLUSIONS:

Europe is “alive” because it still draws its sap through its Christian roots. Indebtedly, the Christian heritage of this continent can not be denied, despite many voices that deny this evidence. This is not a matter of faith, but of evidence, it is a historically conclusive fact. Pierre Moscovici's assertions that he “does not believe in the Christian roots of Europe” must be considered ideological words, based on a personal judgment that does not take into account historical reality. Europe needs Christianity to exist, to not sink, to be able to live in peace and build a civilization of good understanding between its citizens. The multiculturalism does not provide the optimal way of living together, the evidence in this regard is well known. The denial of historical truth is aimed at removing Christianity to make room for a multicultural society.

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STRESS, PSYCHOSOMATIC DISORDERS AND THANATOPHOBIA SYNDROME

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ABSTRACT

Estimates of care for Medically Unexplained Symptoms, account for between 15% and 65% of the cost of primary cares provided. Evidence-based medicine has demonstrated the link between psychological stress and psychosomatic disorders. Tanatophobia Syndrome (DCPR) or death anxiety is an absolutely natural human experience, fitting into the normality of psychological conditions. Fear of death is coexisting with fears about the disease. In the case of patients with psychosomatic disorders, tanatophobia is closely related to disease denial and non-acceptance of diagnosis. Does tanatophobia influencing the decision making in medical context of communications with psychosomatic patients? The aim of the article is to show the liaison between somatisation and tanatophobia syndrome, in bio-psiho-social approach of patient. This substudy is part of a larger work, a prospective, mixed study, carried out in 2008-2016, including 200 subjects belong to the two categories assigned to its design. We used as clinimetric tools, three psychological questionnaires. In the analysis of each of the branches, we structured syndromes according with the DCPR (Diagnostic Criteria for Psychosomatic Research). The results of the present study reveal that tanatophobia syndrome is present in the largest proportion of the psychosomatically affected patients profile as they age and they have a number of peculiarities. Acceptance of diagnosis and choice of therapy is influenced by personal, social and environmental factors, and it must be essential to integrating and analyzing data in a biopsychosocial context.

Keywords: Thanatophobia; Psychosomatic Patient; Medical Communications; Somatisation;

INTRODUCTION

Classical medicine draws a clear line of delimitation between somatic and psychological pathology. The concept underlying this type of approach is based on somatic / psychic dualism, the human being made up of two distinct parts. However, the current trend is to draw a clear line between psychiatric and psychosomatic disorders, which are now increasingly attributed to internal medicine (Zipfel S., Herzog W., Kruse J., Jenningsen P., 2016). Modern medicine uses new concepts in diagnostic and therapeutic approach, recognizing that the health care structures are confronted with the variability and multidimensionality due to decipherment of complex human-world / medium interaction mechanisms at all levels, from micro to macro, from cell to socio-cultural. Currently, psychosomatic research tries to find arguments in favor of a bio-psycho-social approach using biomedical models, leading to specific quantifiable mechanisms that reveal a causal chain of events (Smith & Dwamena, 2007).

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the many controversies resulting from the use of psychosomatic terminology, psychosomatic medicine can be defined as a comprehensive interdisciplinary field that assesses psychosocial factors that influence individual vulnerability and can trigger any kind of disease (Conley & Bishop, 2016). In other words, it is about holistic patient care in patient - centered therapy and is a way of integrating psychological therapies into prevention, treatment and recovery in medicine (Fava & Freyberger, 1998).

Psychosomatics medicine places the individual in the center of its concerns, and addresses the contextual influences on health in an integrated manner according to the biopsychosocial model. In other terms, we can conclude that current medicine has become an integrated science where the main directions of interest are represented by the ethical approach to the concept of illness, the establishment of an optimal therapeutic relationship, the application of evidence-based medicine's principles in medical practice and the individualization of treatment and last but not least the increase in the quality of life. For this reason, in the sense of psychosomatics medicine, health is the only status that integrates into an ideal form the psyche and the somatic (Alexander F, 1950).

Somatic pathology appears as an effect of disrupting this steady state. Considered as a heterogeneous domain, psychosomatic medicine, the mind-body domain, includes "classical" psychosomatic disorders, but also sporadic episodes in which the body has an inappropriately answer to the action of psychic aggression factors. Currently (Levenson L, 2007), clinical and theoretical medical research, based on the biopsychosocial model, proves that psychosocial factors can be causes, co-factors or sequelae of many diseases. Regarding the nature of stressors, they may be psychological factors or other factors among which we can include genetic factors or life experiences that can alter the stress response system (Porcelli & De Carne, 2014). The benefits of the psychosomatic approach have also been recognized in palliative medicine. In this context, the notion of salutogenesis is increasingly used. According to Antonovsky's theoretical model, salutogenesis is "the ensemble of personal resources, psychological and cultural factors, mentality, values and beliefs that give us resistance and support us in successfully confronting with stress" (Antonovsky A., 1979).

What determinant factor that triggers the individual's attitude (defensive or offensive) in the patient's role? The core of any patient's behavior is the fear of suffering (pain) that conceals the fear of death.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of this study was to identify the obstacles that interposed between patient and physician in terms of diagnostic and therapeutic acceptance in psychosomatic diseases based on the therapeutic relationship. The research questions of this sub-study were as follows:

- What social variables could contribute to this?
- What is the role of anxiety triggered by the prospect of death in the health care economy?

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis of the present thesis is to demonstrate that there is a direct causal link between the therapeutic relationship and the acceptance of diagnosis and, implicitly, of the specific therapy for psychosomatic disorders. Beyond the theoretical part, this paper refers to the practical implications for the role of "patient", assumed consciously, starting from the therapeutic relationship, considered the central element of the medical act in all its complexity. In this sense, the patient actively contributes to his / her own healing, to the

prevention activity, to the evaluation of the therapy beyond the reductionism / limits imposed by the pharmacological treatment (Dawson D, Moghaddam N, 2015) and at the understanding of the psychosocial context of the psychosomatic diseases (Kallivalayl RA & Varghese PP, 2010). Its purpose is not limited to basic research, its extension being represented by a diagnostic algorithm of patients with psychosomatic disease, which has utility in clinical practice.

The motivation of the chosen approach was that psychosomatic disorders are often undiagnosed, the mechanism being the patient's refusal to accept the diagnosis (Schumacher S & Rief W, 2013). In most situations, this creates a number of problems in the therapeutic relationship, in the sense of deterioration up to destruction. One reason for not accepting the diagnosis is stigmatizing the patient with psychological problems / mental illness (Fava & Porcelli, 2010).

Therefore, there is a need for a new type of approach that emphasizes that the psychosomatic does not identify with border psychiatry, it can not be limited to it, but can target any other field of medicine. The general approach to psychosomatic medicine field has led to a number of sub-disciplines in its fields of application: psychology, psycho-psychology, psycho-neuroendocrinology, psycho - immunology, psycho - dermatology. The current study is in the category of those whose results can be used in clinical health services, addressing a specific phenomenon and how to apply it, through testing hypotheses and providing explanations.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

1. Research Design

The study has been achieved in the period 2008-2016, being included in the prospective and mixed studie's category. Design in the form of a mixed study model was based on the need to meet both quantitative and qualitative criteria (phenomenological feature). Qualitative research has provided an opportunity to decipher how patients perceive the health and illness experience as well as the interaction between the "actors" involved in the therapeutic relationship.

The collected data was processed using a GRETTL software (statistical analysis software) combined with a quantitative one developed by the author in both Microsoft Excel (we programmed the information in the questionnaire using the functions available in the program) as well as in GRETTL. The target group consisted of 100 adult patients with psychosomatic disorders, the control group comprised for the validity of the study an equal number of patients without psychosomatic disorders. In the sample of patients with psychosomatic disorders, we structured three sub-profiles to better quantify the degree of psychosomatic affecting: demoralized-worried, demoralized - disappointed and demoralized-desperately. We used three questionnaires (Scale of Attitude to Disease, Determinants of Patient Satisfaction in Relationship with Doctor, GPAQ- General Practice Assessment Questionnaire).

The chosen questions have been opened to encourage patients to give honest, spontaneous answers. The realization of this study required a participatory collaboration from the author, being in this context a participant in the study (investigator and executor of the medical act), but also an observer. Due to the peculiarity of the research theme, the qualitative component prevailed in the study, determined mainly by the research question. Patients were informed of all aspects of the study, thus meeting the ethical and legal criteria for studies on human subjects.

2. Research Construct

According to the principles of the qualitative approach, we emphasized the subjective experiences experienced by people, generating data about inter-human relationships in different social contexts. Through this study, I tried to generate depth information, difficult to quantify, such as meanings, understandings and experiences. The argument in favor of qualitative research in the case of the study of relational phenomena and the implications arising from this type of relationship was that only "the researcher who uses the qualitative method is the instrument sufficiently complex to understand and draw conclusions about human existence and the rules which governs relations between individuals" (Lave & Kvale, 1995). The DCPR (Fava et al. 1995), is structured as a set of 12 psychosomatic syndromes used since 1995 as operational tools with prognostic and therapeutic implications. It has been used as a diagnostic and conceptual framework, in the study. We reported the study to the last two editions of the DSM (initially at DSM-IV, since the start date of this paper was prior to DSM-V's entry into force) (Demazeux & Singy, 2015).

5. FINDINGS

The results of the study have shown the implication of some social factors such as news and the existence of practices (obituaries etc) in triggering tanatophobia. In addition, the increase of biological age is incriminated in tanatophobia's growth. In addition, the global analysis of the study confirmed that adherence to a range of risk behaviors (healthy eating and smoking) is related to tanatophobia and psychosomatic illness.

CONCLUSION

Tanatophobia Syndrome is based on three items, according to DCPR:

S13. Are you scared of news that reminds you of the existence of death (funeral, obituaries)?

S14. The death's idea scares you?

S15. Does scare you the thought that you might soon die?

The statistical processing of the responses received from the respondents belonging to the studied group led to the following conclusions:

1. Fear of death is present in a higher proportion in patients with psychosomatic disease, as compared to the control group of psychosomatically unaffected patients, for all three items.

2. Tanatophobia syndrome occurs with the highest frequency in relation to the significance of death per se (item S14).

3. Regarding the general average or the deviation of the psychosomatically affected behavior to the psychosomatic unaffected behavior, we found that the greatest deviation from the general behavior is found in the case of item S13, item a whose significance refers to the social component of the phenomenon tanatophobia (news, obituaries).

Regarding the analysis of the distribution of the tanatophobia syndrome among the psychosomatically affected patients with reference to the salutogenesis correlation, we found that there is a concordance of the salutogenetic behavior in relation to the two analyzed elements (avoidance of unhealthy food and smoking's behavior, which are considered risk behaviors) to the general profile and the psychosomatic affected profile. Although psychosomatic disease does not alter salutogenesis of general's profile, compliance at salutogenic behavior decreases as compared to the profile of patients without psychosomatic

disorders. Regarding the comparison of the two behavior, we noticed that salutogenesis adherence is higher at smoking than in unhealthy food, in other words, patients consider smoking more harmful than eating unhealthy foods. This finding is valid for all three profiles analyzed: general (whole sample), profile with psychosomatic disorders and profile without psychosomatic disease.

Analysis of the S15 item on the general profile and the three sub-profiles mentioned led to the conclusion that the tanatophobia, characteristic of the psychosomatic disorders, does not reach the maximum odds in this context, namely that there is no direct relation of the proportionality between the level of psychosomatic affectation and the fear of death.

6. Regarding the frequency of tanatophobia in the general population, we noticed an increase with aging.

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MODES OF PERSUASION IN THE SERMONS OF FATHER PROFESSOR CONSTANTIN GALERIU

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ABSTRACT

Father Professor Constantin Galeriu is one of the outstanding figures of the Romanian Orthodox Church, mainly due to his fervent preaching activity, but also due to his oratorical talent evident in his sermons and catecheses. His homiletic work, of such impressive extent, offers the reader rich study material from which to extract teachings that prove useful in everyday activity, but especially in the pursuit of immortality. An extremely cultured man, concerned with the study of philosophy, medicine, psychology, Father Galeriu proposed a new comprehensive approach to these domains in the light of theology, directing man to the source of creation - God. In his sermons we can easily identify the sources the author compiled, such as the Holy Scripture, the writings of the Holy Fathers, treaties of philosophy, ethics, psychology etc. They all provide solid grounds to the sermon, but also ensure the accurate understanding of the message that the preacher wishes to convey, in all its complexity. Moreover, the spiritual condition of Father Galeriu as well as the knowledge he acquired through incessant study contributed to the development of certain sermon topics such as salvation, love, faith, family, all rooted in the text of the Holy Scripture. The message of the sermon is profoundly Christian and always topical and relevant – in the light of the new research and discoveries, because it relates to God and to the crown of creation – Man, a dynamic being always in search of truth and perfection. This desire of man, to attain fulfillment through God, to aspire towards likeness to the Creator (Gen. 1,26) is addressed by Father Galeriu, as that it is the only way man can remain an active member of Christ's Church.

Keywords: Father Constantin Galeriu; sermon; homiletic sources and topics; the Holy Scripture; sin; atheism; selfishness;

1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The sermon is a type of discourse delivered in the ecclesiastic environment, conveying religious and moral teachings useful to those who find themselves on the pathway to perfection. It is not meant merely to convince the audience of certain truths, but also to make such truths be followed and fulfilled. In order to achieve this goal, the preacher must prepare and present a speech of well-grounded theological content, and this becomes possibly using sources characteristic for this type of discourse. The originality of a sermon will lie in the manner in which the preacher elaborates on the contents, the entire material being processed and conveyed in a coherent form. Thus, in preparing the sermon, “the

Christian orator uses various sources: the Holy Scripture, books of sermons, textbooks, liturgical books, specialized research etc. Yet, in the sermon he is putting together the priest must show what makes him unique, he must leave the mark of his particular style. All his thoughts shall be filtered through his mind and ideas will then be ordered in writing”¹.

2. SOURCES OF THE SERMON

The sermons of Father Constantin Galeriu are speeches of outstanding homiletic value, *“the contents of the Father’s preaches, based on the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Fathers, the meditations of the greatest philosophers of the world, and to no lesser extent, his own clerical feelings and experiences, were presented in a refined liturgical language, in harmony with an adequate personal style, and, additionally, with discreet gestures and a facial expression that emphasized the truths he was preaching”*². The first part of the study presents the main homiletic sources identifiable throughout his speeches. By using such sources the author attempts to present the Gospel message in well-designed form, firmly supported by arguments. Father Constantin Galeriu was one the few who built bridges between theology and sciences such as philosophy, medicine, psychology, sociology, physics etc, showing that there has never truly been any contradiction between them, but rather, that these sciences have found their true meaning in light of theology. We note that the Father’s sermons include references to various personalities that worked in different fields and who were in search of the truth but who placed their search in ongoing dialogue with theology. This characteristic of the sermons of Father Galeriu is, as we will see further on, a consequence of the fact that the Holy Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers are thoroughly known by the author, whose theological culture does not allow for any dogmatic errors. These considerations will be substantiated by presenting the main sources that Father Galeriu uses in writing his sermons:

The Holy Scripture

Whatever type of sermon Father Galeriu delivered, be it moral, historical, dogmatic, or apologetic, he turned to the Holy Scripture as the main homiletic source in producing his work. The scriptural text’s profound significance needs to be explained and for this reason the sermon can be considered an extension of the Gospel. That the sacred text is well known by the preacher can be seen from the impressive number of verses encountered in its contents. The speeches show that the comprehension of the text is attained in an authentic manner, according to the teachings of the Church, and this is due to the fact that Father Galeriu lived for the Word, was pervaded by it, because the Savior’s words are “spirit and life” (John 6, 63). We shall present here a fragment which quotes, in a completely logical sequence, texts from the New and Old Testament, as well as explanations to the point required in order to understand these texts:

“The soil, the oxen, the woman, in other words: the earth, the creatures, our human family. Again, some words: the entire world. Was the Creator ignoring this world, His own world? «Through Him all things were made» (John 1, 3). And all that He loves. He names the earth «His footstool» (Matthew 5, 35). «The ox and the donkey warm his body in the cave of the Nativity», because in their stable they have recognized their Master (Isaiah 1, 3). And also, He, the Son of God Himself is born from the womb of a woman, He blesses the wedding, He loves the family: «And Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus» (John 11, 5). Therefore, all these – the soil, the oxen, the

¹ Pr. Vasile Gordon, Pr. Adrian Ivan, Pr. Nicușor Beldiman, *Homiletics*, Ed. Basilica, Bucharest, 2015, p. 467.

² Pr. Nicușor Beldiman, „The Homiletic Activity of Father Prof. Constantin Galeriu (Ph.D.)” în *Teologia*, 1 (2018), p. 73.

woman, he holds in His divine care and love. But, above all, as the Scripture states, they, the creatures, are God's gifts to man – «to rule... over all creatures..., over the entire world» and «taste of all the fruit trees of the Paradise», as He commands Adam. All I have given to you, He tells Noah. Adam knows that even Eve, his woman, is a *gift* to him, and for that he speaks to the Creator: «The woman you have given me...» (Genesis 3, 12). God says that His very Son is a gift offered to us: «God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in Him shall have eternal life...» (John 3, 16)³.

Patristic Theology

The genuine knowledge of the text of the Holy Scripture is based on in-depth study of patristic literature. A hard-working preacher will seek that his interpretation of the scriptural fragments be one in *the spirit of the Church Fathers*. The risk of putting forth a personal exegesis, which is not anchored in the tradition of the Church, may have serious consequences, and this is easily noticed in the neo-Protestant milieu. Father Galeriu mentions the Fathers of the Church such as Saint Gregory the Theologian, Saint Basil the Great, Saint John Chrysostom, Maximus the Confessor, Saint Isaac the Syrian and others. When speaking to the Christians about man's soul, he presents before them the reflections of those who were enlightened by God to decipher the depths of man:

“Oh, Lord, how wonderfully Saint Maximus the Confessor explains the mystery of the soul! Let's understand now. And by understanding part of the mystery of the soul, let's raise to the superior level and understand some of God's mystery. Saint Maximus the Confessor says: «Our soul is simple, one and indivisible; but it finds itself in a body made up of so many parts». Therefore, the soul is indivisible in a divisible body. The second quality of the soul: our soul, infinite, dwells in a body inhabiting one particular place; but the soul spreads its wings beyond that. Let's allow ourselves to feel, because then we will understand. And the third quality of the soul: it is moved by someone towards a purpose, a goal. What is the goal? Oh, Lord, after Saint Maximus, Father Calist so beautifully puts it: «God gives us movement!». But movement differs with each creature. The stars move in a certain way, for example; they move according to a certain order; living creatures move in a different way... What about man? Does the movement of man's mind ever stop anywhere? Then, as Father Calist says, it is certainly mad to move endlessly (to reach the margins of the world and beyond). Because my soul is caused by Somebody to move endlessly, to move towards Him for it was made in His image”⁴.

Also, speaking about the people's cooperation with Holy Spirit, he said:

“That's why our Saviour say: «Receive the Holy Spirit; If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven...». And listen to Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, how beautifully he says this: «Because the first breath was darkened by the voluntary sinning, only God with His grace, with the divine eternal light could once again restore the being». Referring to the same moment, let us hear the wonderful words uttered by Saint Gregory: «Creation becomes new once more when it shares in the Spirit, the absence of which made it old. For we need to work with the new from the beginning»⁵.

Christian worship

Prayers, chants and liturgical texts are elements that can be integrated in the contents of sermons. Living in a liturgical atmosphere where God is an intimate presence within each one of us, will contribute to the making of a live sermon, impregnated with spirit. Father Galeriu was a man of the Church who devoted his life to serving the Holy Altar, and his preaching is the expression of this way of life. Quite often he would insert in his speeches

³ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XXVIII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 28rd Sunday following Pentecost), *Glasul Bisericii [Voice of the Church]*, 10-12 (1977), p. 831.

⁴ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica Femeii Samaritance” (Sermon on the Sunday of Samaritan Woman), în *10 predici de părintele Galeriu la 10 ani de la mutarea sa la cer (10 sermons by Father Galeriu, marking 10 years from his passing)*, Ed. Lumea Credinței, Bucharest, 2013, pp. 65-66.

⁵ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica Sfântului Apostol Toma” (Sermon on the Sunday of the Holy Apostle Thomas), în *10 predici de părintele...*, p. 45.

excerpts of liturgical texts, thus demonstrating showing the unity between liturgy and sermon, while at the same time using this as an opportunity to explain the word of the Gospel. As an example we quote extracts from a speech delivered by Father Galeriu on Saint Thomas's Sunday:

“Eight days later, the disciples were once again gathered... now Thomas was with them. And Jesus came. With the doors locked, He stood amidst them and said: «Peace be with you!» Then he addressed the man that had doubted him: «Thomas, put out your finger, and see My hands; reach out your hand, put it into My side. And be no longer in doubt, but believe». The Church so enlighteningly tells us: «Thomas, who was also named the Twin, was not with them when you entered, Christ, through the locked doors, and for this and because he did not believe what they had told him, You turned his disbelief into belief and, oh, my Good Lord, You did not consider it demeaning to show him Your pure side and the wounds in Your hand and Your feet. And he, upon touching and seeing them, confessed that You are not only God and not only Man and exclaimed: «My Lord and my God!»”⁶.

When reminding us of the fact that prayer must accompany us at all time, Father Galeriu shows that the offices of the Church hours are occasion for us to share in the grace of the Holy Spirit, just as the text of the hymns says, for,

“You begin your day by sanctifying it with *Our Father*, then from the *Horologion* – the richest book of prayers an Orthodox Christian has – you read the Hours, ordered in a certain way, to mark our time, wherever we are. Because the texts of the Hours – the first, the third, the sixth, the ninth – are hymns referring to the life of our Savior, my beloved brethren. At the first hour: «In the morning, my Lord and God, hear my voice». At the third hour, what event took place? The descent of the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost. And there is the hymn: «Oh, Lord, You have sent your Holy Spirit to your apostles at the third hour, do not take Him, my Good Lord, from us, but renew Him in those of us who pray to You». The sixth hour, as we read in the *Horologion*: «You, the One who in the sixth hour on the Cross nailed the sin boldly committed by Adam in Heaven and abolished our errors, O Jesus Christ, our Lord, redeem us». Here we comprehend that our Savior, being nailed onto the Cross as You were, abolished our errors, our curse. And at the ninth hour, three in the afternoon: «You who at the ninth hour for us tasted death in Your body, kill our bodily conscience, oh Christ, our Lord and save us». In other words, at any time during the course of a day, wherever you may be, think and pray”⁷.

Devotional Literature

Devotional writings are a highly useful source in preaching the Gospel. With their aid the preacher can address the intellect and the spirit at the same time, awakening deep insights in each and every believer. By presenting various stories, events, testimonies of the saints, the believer is provided with examples of virtue that he has the obligation to follow in his spiritual ascent. By preaching about grace and the fact that the Spirit is present where there is holiness, Father Galeriu narrates an episode of the *Paterikon*, highlighting its significance:

“Once a year a disciple would come to Saint Anthony ... Many others would ask him: «Father, tell me the answer to this or that question!». But this disciple never asked him anything. He simply sat by him. «Do you have nothing to ask me, nothing to say to me?», and the man answered: «Father, sitting by your side is enough for me». He felt the presence of grace, of light, of holy peace. That's how the saints were. One prayed to God: «O, Lord, give me the strength to take upon me the disease of this leper, and may he receive my health». What a state of grace!... Imagine someone, for example a person suffering from AIDS nowadays, receiving this state a grace from a doctor. In

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 47.

⁷ Părintele Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XXVII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 27th Sunday after Pentecost) <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/sarbatori/duminica-27-dupa-rusalii/tamaduirea-femeii-garbove-98087.html>, 12.06.2017.

other words, imagine how would it be for someone to share in the peace of God that exists inside you, because this is what our Savior desires”⁸.

When preaching about the virtue of faith, he brings forth as a testimony the pure life of Saint Maximus the Confessor who was persecuted because of the tenacity with which he defended the Orthodox faith:

“Faith transformed the law of your nature from corruption to incorruption... This is where the law of God’s nature intervenes, the power of God, and, as Saint Maximus said, faith turns the law of nature into the law of God, the Creator, the All Powerful, but only once you have freed yourself from all that weakens you and all that makes you doubt. Only when I read these profound thoughts did I realize. This man, Saint Maximus actually experienced this: the soul transcended the afflictions of the body. Trials, tribulations, suffering... For the sake of his faith you know how far he went. The emperor himself opposed it. But he never wavered. And in order to stop him from speaking and writing, he was threatened: «If you cling to your belief, which you claim to be the truth, you shall suffer the following punishment: your tongue will be torn out and your right hand will be cut off». Saint Gregory the Theologian, whom he knew by heart, had said: «The Lord asks for the truth from the tongue, the faith from the soul and the restraint from the body». He was given the choice to be silent, to stop bearing witness to the truth or to maintain this testimony. And his right hand was cut off, and his tongue was torn so that he would stop preaching. But his faith remained in the godly light”⁹.

Church History

The speeches of Father Galeriu present events from the History of the Church. The teachings of the Church were established over the centuries by those who served it, guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Father Galeriu, guided by the same grace, often refers to the important moments of the history of the Church and to the teachings established during such moments, thus showing that his sermon is consistent with the truth of the Gospel, defended and sacredly preached by the Holy Fathers. In this respect, we present an excerpt referring to the reasons for the assembly of the Ecumenical Councils and the importance of the dogma defined at such assemblies:

“We know how Arius opposed the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, born from the Father, not made, one with the Father, true God and true man. And, following the confession at Nicaea in 325 (under the rule of Constantine the Great), the first part of the Creed, up to the verses containing the confession of the Holy Spirit, while in 381, at the second Council (during the reign of Theodosius the Great), the second part of the Creed was formulated: «And in the spirit of the Holy Spirit, the Lord, maker of life, who from the Father proceeds...», as we all confess. Then, in 431, the Council of Ephesus convened, where it was confessed that: the Son of God descended from heaven and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and from the Virgin Mary. And where did this union occur, His Incarnation from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, His assuming of a body? In the Virgin’s bosom. Let us cherish, as we would a sacred gift, this idea because some Christians – in their own way, being separated from the Church – do not understand how the Mother of God is truly the *Theotokos*, the bearer of God. For where did this union between God and humanity take place? In the bosom of the Mother of God. She gave birth to God-the Man. We can understand the truth and logic that lie in this fact. Therefore, in Ephesus, the belief in the Mother of God was confirmed. But it was in Ephesus also that misunderstandings occurred. How could God and humanity, the divine and the earthly be united in the bosom of the Virgin? Two sides were formed: one of them, according to the School of Antioch, believed that in Christ there are two natures, both divine and human, which are joined by will, or as they said, morally. In which sense?

⁸ Părintele Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XIX-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 19th Sunday after Pentecost) <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/sarbatore/duminica-19-dupa-rusalii/predica-pe-munte-iubirea-vrajmasilor-96932.html>, 12.06.2017.

⁹ Părintele Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XVII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 17th Sunday after Pentecost) <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/predici/predici-duminica/duminica-femeii-cananeence-123259.html> , 12.06.2017.

Particularly Nestorius, who became patriarch of Constantinople, said: They are united but morally; the man in Christ, with His human nature, cleansed from the evil, suffered on the cross as man. Because of this they opposed the tenet of the Virgin as Mother of God... The sister of the emperor, Pulcheria, a very religious woman, mentioned also in the calendar, was married to the leader of the army - Marcian, a general, of course. And both believers decided the assembly of the Council in Chalcedon, in 451. 630 bishops gathered – the greatest assembly of bishops in those times in the world. They prayed and reached an understanding. The assembly was held in Chalcedon in the Saint Euphemia Church... And they said: «Following the Holy Fathers, we all teach and confess to the One and Same Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, perfect in His godliness and perfect in His humanity, true God and true man, having a rational soul and body, the same nature as the Father, according to His divinity, and the same nature as us according to His humanity, being entirely like us, with the exception of sin. Because the Lord was begotten before all ages from the Father, according to His divinity, and as a man He was born in our days and for our salvation from the Virgin Mary, Mother of God – *Theotokos*, One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, known to possess the divine and the human natures, unconfused and unchanged and undivided and unseparated, the difference between the natures not being destroyed by their union, preserving in particular the characteristics of each and joining together in the same individual and in a single state, not in two people, divided or separated, but One and the Same Son, Only-Begotten, God-the-Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what we learned about Him from the prophets and our Lord Jesus Christ Himself so conveyed to us, the Symbol of the faith of our parents »¹⁰.

Lay Literature

The theological and lay culture of Father Galeriu was one of the reasons why his sermons were followed with great interest not only by those drawn to oratorical talent, to his devotion and gentleness, but also by those who found in sermon a source of information and knowledge. The great amount of information, from various domains – literature, art, philosophy, physics, medicine, etc., is given accessible and coherent form, theologically and scientifically. Being concerned with the research conducted in these fields, by referring to the writings of scientists, poets, philosophers, he shows that between theology and science there is an indissoluble relation. In this respect, when speaking about the order imposed by God in creation, he quotes a great Romanian physiologist, Nicolae Paulescu, whose pure life and research work dedicated to man and God, he highlighted on every occasion:

“Beloved, this man – and it is an example – attained the truth by means of an enlightened reason, revealing the truth to his fellow people with his mind, but at the same time by keeping himself pure, virgin, in virginity. Just as the Mother of God is a virgin and a mother. Only in chastity and maternity the truth is fulfilled. How can that be: by preserving her pure being, not defiled by the rottenness of the world. In the mud of passions, how can the truth be visible? It is only in the pure soul, the chaste heart and the mind in search of truth can one reach the truth. This was Paulescu. This is how he came to the truth, so that, by knowing the truth of man with a mind enlightened by God, as a physiologist, he came to know the human being in its morphology and in its physiology. For each organ, each tissue, each cell, each element in our being, has a superior purpose. There is harmony, there is an entirety. This harmony is not placed by me. When I come to the world, I am already created. Another has created this harmony – God. He placed harmony in the entire being, a conscience in man, and for this reason Paulescu says that the soul of man is the *agent of purpose*. That is, my spirit, enlightened by God, perceives this order, ascends to God and, by ascending to God my soul enlightened by the divine light, by divine love, by faith in truth... my thinking ascends and creates me. This *wonderful artist*, as Paulescu says it, which is the soul of man, at the

¹⁰ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a VI-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 6th Sunday after Pentecost), <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/predici/predici-duminica/vindecare-slabanogului-capernaum-96267.html>, 12. 06. 2017.

same time creates my body. And my being starts, from the point of its source, as it was created by God, on the path to perfection, to resemble God”¹¹.

He often recited from memory verses that he inserted in the sermon, showing the depth of the poet who, with his mind, comprehended *Christ's mind* (Philippians 2, 5):

“God prepared the kingdom before we came into the world, it is God’s gift. And we are its heirs. He is the Beginning and the End. The prophet Isaiah says: This is what the Lord says: I am the First and the Last and there is no God other than Me. I am Alfa and Omega, the beginning and the end. Coșbuc also expresses his musings, in the spirit of the Scripture: *Tu tot ce-ți pui în gând e numai vis./ Căci Dumnezeu te poartă-n voia Lui* (*All that you have in mind is but a dream/ Because God drives you according to His will*). In our being there is aspiration, there is desire, but God carries you according to His will. He is also your Creator and the goal towards which you direct your life”¹².

2. MAJOR THEMES OF THE SERMON

Father Constantin Galeriu stood out within the Church as an exceptional preacher and a scholarly theologian. His style in preparing and delivering speeches will constitute a model to be followed by those who are concerned with the preaching of the word. A sermon, no matter how well delivered, remains a fruitless oratorical undertaking if it is not filled with equally superior contents. The speeches of the reverend Father are characteristically rich, conveying a profound message to the audience; this is owed to the fact that they originate in the pure soul of the author, who constantly tapped into the ever flowing source of the Gospel.

In the sermon, the reverend Father tackles topics that concern each and every single Christian, contemporary issues referring to spiritual life, family life, living in society etc. The manner in which certain concepts and teachings are presented, so as to be understood also by those who do not possess extensive theological knowledge, portrays him as an experienced teacher who manages to awaken in every person the conscience otherwise muted by passions. In addition to themes that are normally debated within any sermon: salvation, good deeds, love, faith, sin, virtue, the father professor focuses on issues that involve knowledge from various fields, such as philosophy, ethics, ecclesiology, medicine, psychology etc.

Father Galeriu’s interest in studying is revealed by the complexity of the contents of his sermons. His views were always fresh and original, seeking to enlighten the listeners and convince them of the truth preached by the Gospel. Although he spoke before a heterogeneous audience, comprising both simple and educated people, his word was one, persuasive in its simplicity and coherence, and it addressed everybody. By offering answers supported by arguments to the various questions that arose in the minds of his listeners, the sermons of the Father were occasions for meditation and accumulation of new knowledge. We will present some of the important themes encountered in the sermons of the reverend Father, with a view to showing the depth and originality of his thinking.

God’s Existence

Often Father Galeriu was concerned with complex topics, which required explanations well supported by arguments, such as that of the existence of God. A spiritual

¹¹ Părintele Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica dinaintea Înălțării Sfintei Cruci” (Sermon on the Sunday before the Exaltation of the Holy Cross) http://www.agoracrestina.ro/biblioteca/constantin_galeriu_1918-predica-la-duminica-dinaintea-inaltarii-sfintei-cruci.html, 27. 07. 2017.

¹² Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 12th Sunday after Pentecost), în *10 predici de părintele...*, p. 103.

comprehension of the world and of the purpose for which it has been created, namely to fulfill itself in God, made Father Galeriu assert that our attempt to certify the Creator's existence is a nonsense. What should drive us is another type of knowledge, not of intellectual nature but of spiritual nature; not by attempting to comprise God conceptually, with scientific arguments, but by means of faith. Christians have overcome the state of uncertainty and now seek union with God, not at conceptual level, through intellectual arguments, but personally, by spiritual feeling:

“For the believers – especially for us, Easterners –, the great problem, my beloved, is not the existence of God. Because only the foolish man- poor soul, can deny the existence of God, which is so utterly obvious. I truly lament this, because I pity the foolish man. But in the West this problem is raised, unfortunately. But what do I mean? The problem for the believer is not this. God exists whether or not I give him a *Certificate of Existence* – in the Fundamental Theology course that I am teaching I have ceased to raise the problem of rational arguments supporting the existence of God. All that is alive and living is a testimony to God. So, in our case, this is not an issue, God exists! The other problem of great depth for us is the one that refers to my relationship with God. This is the true problem: how I stand before God; how I feel God”¹³.

Man's communion with God is what convinces us of this truth, because, through faith, we feel how Christ is more and more present in our life, as the Holy Apostle Paul says: “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2, 20). Father Galeriu warns of the risk entailed by the stance we take before God, as a consequence of our freedom, for “all that is important is how I stand before God and not how God stands before me. Let us retain this idea: God exists, but how do I stand before Him? I can be open or reject Him; my freedom, the freedom that God gave me, sometimes makes me withdraw”¹⁴.

Atheism – an avatar of passions

Faith in God eliminates any doubt regarding His existence. The Holy Apostle Paul defined faith as “the substance of things hoped for, assurance of things not seen” (Hebrews 11, 1). Atheism is a decisive refusal of some people to believe in the True God – the guarantor of freedom (II Corinthians 3, 17), and becomes a way of living in which the man finds a fake freedom and delusive happiness in passions:

“Most often someone is said – or he declares himself – to be an atheist. There are no atheists! Such a man rebels against God the Living and the True, but makes other gods for himself. He creates a kind of happiness of this world. Or an idol of this world: a pleasure, a passion. This is how idols were created, from this rebellion and original fall. But the idol you build for yourself is no longer God, it is from this world and will bury you in this world. This is something all atheists should know. They are not Godless, they deify something else. And what they deify are whitewashed graves”¹⁵.

Father Galeriu shows that through atheism one separates oneself from God, but not from gods, and these gods are the passions, more precisely, they are man's attempt to detach himself from God's eternity and to join the temporality of the immanence. Man is thus isolated, not only in space but in time, everything is contained in this *hic et nunc*. Overcoming this state is possible by following the reverse path, and Father Galeriu shows

¹³ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a VIII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 8th Sunday after Pentecost)<http://vremurivechisinoi.blogspot.ro/2013/08/predica-la-duminica-viii-dupa-rusalii.html>, 12. 06. 2017.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a X-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 10th Sunday after Pentecost)<http://www.crestinortodox.ro/sarbatori/duminica-10-dupa-rusalii/vindecarea-lunaticului-96535.html>, 12. 06. 2017.

that man must seek virtue in order to re-enter the eternity offered by the communion with God:

“The virtues, as the Holy Fathers say, are older than us, because they are godly qualities. That is why we confess light, the divine grace, uncreated and eternal. And you, the transient being, share in God’s eternity. This is the beauty of the soul. Reflect on it, my beloved! It beautifies you at any age, because it comes from eternity, it is timeless, ageless... If we wish for beauty, let us share in the holy gifts of the divine virtues, which recreate in us the image by which we were made – of Christ the Savior”¹⁶.

Selfishness, the cause of the original sin

As the Holy Scripture tells us, the sin of our ancestral parents, Adam and Eve, originated in their wish to be like God, knowing good and evil (Genesis 3, 5). This implies that man should forsake his own condition, that of created being. Man, at the snake’s suggestion, closed himself to the world, attempting to become a center, like God, to become independent, to impose his own laws onto creation. Thus, man, by this attempt, creates a rupture, a gap between himself and God. Father Galeriu explains the words of patriarch Abraham (Luke 16, 26) as referring to this condition of man:

“«Between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to pass from one side to another, cannot». What is it with this chasm? It is explained by the Holy Fathers, particularly by Saint Maximus the Confessor: It is the gap so deeply dug by my selfishness, by my self-worship and by the worshipping of earthly, ephemeral goods which become my grave unless I transform them into my path to eternity. For the gap between the unhappy rich man and Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham is not as great as the gap existing between us and God, due to the lack of love, by closing oneself as in a grave. The Fathers testify to it and we continually repeat it: the sinner does not fall from the arms of God, but closes himself as in a grave. This is the gap that only love and divine light can abolish. These two can abolish the chasm”¹⁷.

Once they committed the sin, Adam and Eve were faced with its effects, because they were naked (Genesis 3, 7), for, though they became gods for themselves, they did not become like God. They experienced failure, disillusionment. Through sin, the two became guiding principles and began to organize their life according to their own laws, with no God, but aware of their status as limited creatures. The words of Father Galeriu describe this state of uncertainty of the first people:

“What does sin, in its working, in its appearance, consist of? Sin, as Scripture reveals it, making it clear for everyone, is instilled (not inspired – only God inspires us) by the devil, who put on the form of the snake, telling Eve: «Has God told you that should you taste the fruits of the tree of good and evil you will die? No, you will not die, but you will be like gods, knowing good and bad». This is the picture and a kind of beginning of the sin: *You shall be like gods*; you will be gods (written in the plural in the Scripture; that is why idols appeared), knowing good and evil – you will decide what is good and what is evil. Let us consider this for a moment: *like gods*. You shall become your own God ... In God’s place you are tempted to make a new start, therefore. On another occasion we explained pride. When Lucifer wanted to place his throne next to the Almighty, he, Lucifer, the bearer of light, next to the Almighty, and the prophet says: *Oh, how low you have fallen, Lucifer!*, and our Savior saw him fall, as we find in the Holy Gospel of Luke: «I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven». God enlightened us on how to explain the sin of pride, which is caused by our attempt to place the beginning of everything in ourselves. But understand, once and for all that you are not your beginning: There was a time when you did not exist”¹⁸.

¹⁶ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XXIII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 23rd Sunday after Pentecost) <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/sarbatori/duminica-23-dupa-rusalii/vindecarea-demonizatului-tinutul-gherghesenilor-97100.html>, 12. 06. 2017.

¹⁷ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XXII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 22nd Sunday after Pentecost) <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/sarbatori/duminica-22-dupa-rusalii/bogatul-nemilostiv-saracul-lazar-97225.html>, 12.06. 2017.

¹⁸ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica după Înălțarea Sfintei Cruci” (Sermon on the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Once he became aware of his condition, man looked to his Creator, to the principle of his existence. The incarnation of our Savior Christ opened the path to a new ontology, and man has to preserve this relationship with God. The new man, created in Christ, has overcome selfishness, and has found the sense of his existence in the Creator. The Savior's words "You can do nothing without me" (John 15, 5) shows this limitation of ours, and Father Galeriu insists on this, showing man's impossibility to live independently of his Creator and find happiness in this limited world:

"You cannot save yourself by your own powers; you have come from non-being and became a being. He continues with strong and profound words: «What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeit his soul? Or what could anyone give in exchange for their soul?». More words of great wisdom! The soul, together with the body in which it lives, as a kind of dwelling place of the soul. The soul is united with the body, but is not one with it. It is united and different at the same time. Oh, the mystery of the soul! And I constantly carry this grief, that I confess: We do not experience enough of the mystery of our soul, that is why we don't really feel its truth in its depth, its reality. We live contemplating our body for too long, and so we have come to say that matter is everything. And the poor people say it without thinking that nothing would have been created without the soul, without thought. That is why we come to be so brutish, like beasts, because we have no consideration for the soul. Nothing is created without the soul, without thought, which is the fruit of the soul. Everything is thought. Any creature is a masterpiece, it is the idea of the Creator"¹⁹.

Prayer

In order to regain the communion he had enjoyed prior to sinning, man must resume his dialogue with his Creator. Prayer is a means of conversing with God, certainty based on faith being a mandatory condition. God made us eternal dialogue partners, and through our prayers we have a foretaste of eternity. The exhortation of the Holy Apostle Paul: "Pray incessantly" (1 Thessalonians 5, 17) means that we open to God, it entails a desire that we need to act on, every day. Father Galeriu, whose life became a living and continuous prayer to God, confessed to believers:

"When you pray you feel that you have passed to the other side, crucifying this world. «The world is crucified and I am crucified to the world» (Galatians 6, 14), says Paul. This means the world of limitation, of death. In prayer you feel you have passed beyond the threshold, beyond the world of death, because you are praying to the living God. And by uttering each word of prayer, with holy strength, focusing your mind on every word of the prayer and reflecting, you have passed over the threshold into the world of Divinity, into the world of omnipresence and eternity of God; and when you receive communion, you have a foretaste of the Resurrection. If the law of sin has kept you here, in the limited world, then the law of God, the logic of God will raise you to God's eternal *today* given to you as a preliminary glimpse of the Resurrection. This was given to the disciples on Mount Tabor and it is given to anyone who is holy, here, in this world. We felt and we confessed; let us each experience this: when you are baptized, when you pray, when you read the Gospel, when you confess, when you share and strongly believe, as you do in the morning, you open the room where you sleep and all of a sudden fresh air comes in, in its freedom: so does the Holy Spirit embrace the entire heaven ... As you pray: «Oh, Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, you who are everywhere present and fills all things, come and dwell unto us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save our souls!». By strongly saying this and opening the window of your heart through faith, then, just as the fresh air enters the room so does the Holy Spirit, the grace of God, the divine light and you feel invigorated, resurrected. Then you come to believe just as the saints believed"²⁰.

<http://www.crestinortodox.ro/predici/predici-duminica/luarea-crucii-urmarea-hristos-96804.html>, 12.06.2017.

¹⁹ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica după Înălțarea Sfintei Cruci” (Sermon on the Sunday after the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)...

²⁰ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XX-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 20th Sunday after Pentecost),

Life and death

Man can perfect himself and he owes this possibility to the Sacrifice and Resurrection of our Savior Christ, who opened the path to salvation for us. Through the Holy Baptism man is born to a new life, which is a preliminary stage of eternal life. The man who is engaged in this dynamism imprinted through the act of creation, of gaining likeness to God (Genesis 1, 26), will attempt to exceed the biological level of living, choosing to care for his soul and to cleanse it. It is in this sense that life must be understood. Father Galeriu showed that our purpose is to practice virtue in order to attain it: “Sharing in God’s grace opens for us the path to a new life, but it must not be understood as the mere existence of the individual:

“When we say life, we feel in this word our own life. But not life in the biological sense, or in the zoological sense, not this simple life is sought, but rather eternal life, everlasting life, God’s life. And we feel the longing, the aspiration to the life beyond this earthly life, spanning just a number of decades. This life is in us, and nobody, should he think logically, will be able to deny it because the thirst for full, true, immortal life, the thirst for truth is structural to our calling, to our vocation”²¹.

By incorrectly relating to life and to its significance, man will come to misunderstand death. The conception of biological death as a transformation into a non-being cannot be accepted by Christianity. Death is the end of life on earth, but at the same time it is its extension, a continuation of our dialogue with God. Father Galeriu illustrates that the novelty which Death and the Lord’s Resurrection contributed to creation consists of killing death and its power: “Death should not be understood as an end, as we might think, but as a purpose, as a transformation, as a transfiguration, death taken by Jesus, lived by Him, transfigured through Him. Whereas Adam transfigured love, the sacrifice to the Father and the world through death, Christ, on the Cross and in the grave transforms death into sacrifice – a state of sacrifice, of love, which is the truth of existence – and further transfigures it into love”²². For those who have wasted their life in passions, death appears to be an end, because they need to separate from their sinful life which generated so much pleasure for them. The end of life and the imminence of death urge man to reflect, make him realize that he is a limited creature. Believing he is free, man enclosed himself in selfishness and passions, but once he becomes aware of death, he comes out of this state and steps towards God. Father Galeriu drew attention to man’s temptation to consider himself independent and to reflect on death as a punishment for sin, but also an end of sin.

CONCLUSIONS

The speeches of Father Professor Constantin Galeriu had a major impact on the believers who listened to them, because he knew the soul and needs of every person, and his words were intended to heal the soul of those in pain. By preaching in a times that is not so remote in the past, his voice still echoes in the ears of many believers who listened to him, even if only once. Although his speech would often last for one hour, the audience did not show signs of being tired. With well chosen words, in easily comprehensible terms, with explanations that removed any lack of clarity, he would lead his believers towards a full understanding of the truth.

<http://www.impantokratoros.gr/fiul-vaduvei.ro.aspx>, 12. 06. 2017.

²¹ Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica a XII-a după Rusalii” (Sermon on the 12th Sunday after Pentecost), în *10 predici de părintele...*, p. 102.

²² Pr. Constantin Galeriu, „Predică la Duminica Pogorârii Sfântului Duh” (Sermon on the Sunday of the Descent of the Holy Spirit), în *10 predici de părintele Galeriu...*, p. 70.

The sermon opened the path to a dialogue for those present. Although, at first sight, the sermon seemed to be a mere monologue that served a teaching purpose, “the interaction of homiletic nature shows perceptive manifestations similar to those of conversation”²³. From the altar, Father Galeriu related to each believer, because his love embraced all those present, connecting them to the sermon, but especially to the preacher, who uttered his words more with the soul than with the tongue, and this was owed to the fact that “the word must be celebrated so that it will be truly heard”²⁴. He addressed the crowd, but each person felt the word as being addressed to him or her personally. The sermon thus became the most appropriate means of conversing with the believers, because it was comforting even when it was harsh. The philosopher Petre Țuțea, noting this gift, said: “Father Galeriu connects you to God when he speaks. Compared to him, all the other priests seem not to preach but to simply utter syllables...”²⁵.

What made the Father’s preach really special was the natural way in which he uttered it, the attention he paid to his statements, the clarity of his words, the contents elaborated with such care and thoroughly documented. The speeches were addressed to all believers, because he manifested his love equally. The universal nature and the truth expressed in the Father’s sermons originate in the teachings of the Holy Scripture which preach God as the One and Only. The importance of the word of the Gospel is showed in the contents of the sermons not only through the impressive number of occurrences of biblical quotations, but also through the method in which it is construed, so characteristic of the Holy Fathers of the Church. The knowledge of these two sources of theology made the dialogue with other subjects possible, subjects which although sought the truth never came to know it. The holistic view of Father Galeriu identified in the sermon made it possible for the Christians to explain and understand these connections. The various themes approached in the contents of the sermons, always up to date, had a teaching and moralizing role, because believers had the possibility to gain new information, but at the same time they were given the possibility to reflect on their own spiritual state. By understanding the nature and causes of the appearance of the sin, Father Galeriu warns the believers about the manner in which man allows the devil to seduce him, believing that in this way he earns his freedom and dignity. The sermons of the Father have this role of making man aware of sin, making him commit it no more and, helped by God’s grace, choose virtue.

These characteristics of the sermons entitle us to assert that Father Galeriu was not only a priest endowed with oratorical energy, but also a scholar of his time, who understood the importance of the contents of a speech, especially in a world of uncertainty and ignorance. The valorization of the teachings comprised in the sermons becomes a necessary undertaking, especially when their message was a contemporary one, related to the evolution of society and of the whole world.

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