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An Important Episode in the Evolution of Romanian Identity in the 18th Century: from *Uniatism* to the *Transylvanian School*

Historically, the terms *Uniatism* and *Uniation* indicate the union of some Eastern Rite Churches with the Roman Catholic Church, a union by which those Eastern Churches accepted the four doctrinal points formulated during the Council of Florence (1439) as a necessary step towards the reconciliation after the Great Schism of 1054. The four points were: 1. Papal supremacy; 2. the existence of the purgatory; 3. the asymes in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; 4. the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son also (*Filioque*).[1] In the article I will present the main characteristics of the particular *Uniation* process that took place in Transylvania at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. I will try to show that the union of a part of the Romanian Orthodox Church with the Catholics raised questions, among Romanians in Transylvania, for the first time on a large scale, concerning their national identity. From this point of view the "Uniation" represented a challenge for the identity of Romanians, to which they responded in asserting their fidelity to the "faith of their forefathers". However, the content of the faith of the forefathers was defined differently by members of Orthodox and Uniate confessions, something which determined an identity crisis among Romanians in the 18th century. By the end of the century, the crisis would be overcome especially given the cultural program initiated by the *Transylvanian School* movement.

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[1] For more information see Deno J. Geanakoplos, *The Council of Florence (1438–1439) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Latin Churches*, "Church History" 24 (December, 1955) № 4, pp. 324–346.

The Political and Confessional Context that preceded the *Uniation* of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan of Transylvania with the Roman Catholic Church

One of the main motives of the willingness of the Romanian clergy at the end of the 17th century to hold talks with the Jesuits concerning a possible union with the Catholic Church was the perspective of obtaining the same political rights and privileges as those of the clergy of the other three major *Estates* (i.e. official *nations*) in the Principality of Transylvania. The traditional privileges of the three official *nations* had their roots in the *Unio Trium Nationum*, a pact of mutual aid concluded in 1438 between Hungarian, Saxon (German) and Szekler nobles. The aim of the pact was to provide mutual aid against Ottoman military campaigns and against the revolts of Hungarian, Romanian, Szekler and Saxon *serfs*, a category which lacked political rights.[2] At the beginning of the 15th century in Transylvania it was not uncommon for Hungarian, Szekler and Saxon *serfs* to be considered not as members of the three *nations*; the term *nation* indicated mainly a social group which enjoyed special privileges.[3] This content of the term was still in use at the end of the 17th century, when exclusively the three *nations* were represented in the Transylvanian Diet. The last time the existence of the Romanian *nation* had been officially recognized, was in 1291, when Andrew (András) III, the king of Hungary, had summoned a partial assembly at Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia), entitled *universis nobilibus, Saxonibus, Syculis et Olachis*.[4] But since then, the Romanian noble class, referred to as *Olachis*, hadn't been included anymore amongst the official *nations* of Transylvania.

The main reason consisted in the inclination of Romanian voievodes to independence from the crown of Hungary. For example, the voievode Basarab is called in a diploma of Charles I of Hungary (Károly Róbert) (1324), "Bazarab Transalpinum sancte regie corone infidelem."[5] In 1330, at the head of a small and untrained Valachian army, Basarab succeeded in defeating his overlord at Posada, thus becoming the founder of an independent Wallachia.[6] In a similar manner, the noble Bogdan, who lost his voievodeship in Maramureş because of his "unfaithfullness" to the king of Hungary, Louis (Lajos) I[7], crossed the Carpathians towards the East and overthrew Balc, the vassal of Louis I, thus

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[2] *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, ed. B. Köpeczi, Budapest 1992, pp. 219–222.

[3] *Histoire de la Transylvanie…*, op. cit., p. 218.

[4] *Histoire de la Transylvanie…*, p. 196.

[5] "Transalpine Bazarab, unfaithful to the king's holy crown" – I. Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars. Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365*, Cambridge 2005, p. 150.

[6] N. Djuvara, *Thocomerius – Negru Vodă. Un voivod de origine cumană la începuturile Ţării Româneşti*, Bucureşti 2007, pp. 184–186.

[7] I. Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars…*, p. 159.

inaugurating the independency of Moldavia.[8] Probably as a consequence of the rebelliousness of the Romanian voievodes, the Transylvanian nobility considered, in the act of 1484, addressed to the king Matthias Corvinus (Corvin Mátyás), that the Romanians (Vlachs) "are neither called nor born for liberty".[9]

The denial of political rights to the Romanians in Transylvania did not mean, however, the immediate abolishment of the traditional Romanian social layers: at the end of the 17th century there was still some social differentiation, even though it was hardly distinguishable and based on local traditions. For example, the greater part of the original Romanian nobility had been assimilated into the Hungarian over the course of the previous centuries[10], but in the 14th and 15th century the remaining number was reinforced by the Wallachian voievodes, during their extended authority over the district of Făgăraş. Consequently, these nobles adopted the Wallachian nobility name, boyar (*boier*). But by the time Făgăraş was again part of Transylvania, the boyars were asked to justify their titles with concrete documents in order to be exempted from taxes. Consequently, their number was again reduced. The general census conducted in 1721–1722, registered only 725 nobles in Făgăraş.[11] We have a similar situation in Oltenia, a part of Wallachia, which was occupied by the Habsburg power and became officially part of the empire after the peace of Passarowitz (1718). Because Oltenia had become a part of the imperial fiscal and administrative system, the ancient privileges of the Vlach boyars were also abolished.[12]

In the context of their official serfdom, the traditional Romanian boyars, free peasants, merchants[13] and clerics enjoyed, however, certain rights, but unofficially. The key element according to which these rights were granted throughout the 17th century was religion. As in the case of social status, the Orthodox confession of Romanian population in Transylvania did not have the status of an *accepted*

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[8] I. Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars…*, p. 159.

[9] "Sunt Valahi nec ad libertatem vocati nec ad libertatem nati" – E. Hurmuzaki, *Fragmente zur Geschichte der Rumänen*, Bucureşti 1891, p. 285 (Documente Privitoare la Istoria Românilor, 2).

[10] The Hunyadi family itself is thought to have Vlach roots, even if the Romanian origin of this family was subject to debates between Romanian and Hungarian historians. The Romanian historian Petre P. Panaitescu considers that John Hunyadi (Iancu de Hunedoara), voievode of Transylvania, and his son Matthias Corvinus (Matei Corvin), king of Hungary, are of Vlach origin. The authors of the book *Histoire de la Transylvanie*, edited in Hungary, believe also that János Hunyadi (Iancu de Hunedoara) was of humble origin, probably from a family of boyars from Wallachia. See P. P. Panaitescu, *Istoria Românilor*, Bucureşti 1990, p. 109; *Histoire de la Transylvanie…*, p. 223.

[11] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation chez les roumains de Transylvanie (1691–1849)*, Bucharest 1987, pp. 16–17.

[12] I. Costea, *The Romanian Principalities in the 18th Century*, [in:] *History of Romania: Compendium*, ed. I.-A. Pop, I. Bolovan, Cluj-Napoca 2006, p. 398.

[13] For more information about the weak distinction in the traditional social status of the Romanian population in Transylvania in the 18th century see K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 16.

or *received* religion (*religio recepta*). This status had been granted only to four confessions: Catholic, Lutheran, Calvin and Unitarian. Their origin can be found in the propagation of the Reformation in Transylvania after the defeat of King Louis II of Hungary by the Ottomans at Mohács (1526), which was the cause of the separation of Transylvania from the kingdom of Hungary. At the time the battle was fought, the members of the three *nations* were under the religious jurisdiction of the Catholic bishop in Alba Iulia (*Gyulafehérvár*). But in 1542 the Lutheran theologian Johannes Honterus published in Braşov (Kronstadt) his *Formula reformationis ecclesiae Coronensis ac Barcensis totius provinc*iae. In 1556, the Catholic bishop was banished and the Catholic monasteries were transformed into schools. Lutheranism was especially adopted by the Saxons.[14] In 1564 the Diet in Turda officially proclaimed the adoption of Calvinism by the Hungarian *nation* and in 1568 it officially recognized also the Unitarian confession. In fact, the official acquiescence of Unitarianism was proclaimed simultaneously with what is known today as the *Edict of Torda*, the first legal act guaranteeing religious *toleration* in Christian Europe. But this *toleration* was granted in consistency with the established rights of the three nations: the protection was awarded only to the four confessions mentioned above, whereas the Orthodox Church was not protected, because the Romanian population was not represented in the Diet. Moreover, the edict granted freedom of religion only to preachers and congregations, not to individuals.[15]

A short change in the status of the Orthodox confession came during the short reign of Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul) over Transylvania (November 1599–September 1600), who succeeded in unifying for the first time Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldavia but only for a few months (May–September 1600). Even though he placed a number of his boyars from Wallachia in important places, and even though the Orthodox confession was declared among the official confessions, Michael the Brave didn't change the previously established system of the three official *nations*.[16]

Immediately after the conversion of the Saxons to Lutheranism, the Romanian population also faced the wave of Reformation, but the Lutherans, and later the Calvinists, obtained poor results for two main reasons. One was the fact that the Romanian population, having been maintained for centuries in the status of serfs, lacked an intellectual elite. The most important reason, however, was an element with which Catholics were to have to confront later also, at the beginning of the 18th century in their efforts to spread *Uniatism*: the attachment of the

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[14] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină şi unirea românilor transilvăneni cu Biserica Romei, in interpretarea lui Zenovie Pâclişanu – Repere teologice pre si post eventum*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 9/II (2005), p. 126.

[15] M. Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary*, Cambridge 2001, p. 110.

[16] *Histoire de la Transylvanie…*, p. 288.

Romanian population to popular traditions, which were mainly Orthodox, but also pre-Christian.[17] The first attempts to convert Romanians to Lutheranism were made by employing Romanian as the language of instruction: in 1544 the Romanian Catechism (*Catehism Românesc*) was printed at Sibiu (Hermannstadt), being the first printed book in Romanian (a translation of the *Small Catechism* of Martin Luther). The translation of some Protestant ritual books followed with the goal of implementing them in the Orthodox ceremonies, because the translators mentioned that the content was based on the doctrine of the Holy Fathers (Basil, Gregory, Cyril, Athanasius, John, etc.).[18] Calvinist propaganda used also the means of language, but this time the greater part of the printed books contained a curious mixture of Orthodox and Protestant doctrines and practices.[19] After John II Sigismund Zápolya's death (*János Zsigmond Zápolya*), King of Hungary (1540–1570) and Prince of Transylvania (1570–1571), who was born and raised Catholic, but became successively Lutheran, Calvinist and Unitarian, the throne of the principality of Transylvania was occupied by the Catholic Stephen Báthory, who had no interest in continuing the Reformation process, and consequently the pressures made on the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan to adopt Protestant innovations manifested a relative slowing down.

However, at the beginning of the 17th century the pressures continued, this time mainly with the proposal that the Romanian clerics, free peasants and boyars may obtain, unofficially, some political rights, in exchange for accepting Calvinism or mere Calvinist influences in Orthodox rituals. The promises made to clerics mainly allowed them the same rights as the Calvinist priests and the liberty to choose independently their archpriests (*protopopi*) and hierarchs.[20] In the first part of the reign of Gabriel Bethlen (*Bethlen Gábor*) (1613–1629) Romanians were not constrained to adopt Calvinist elements in rituals: for example, the appointment confirmation "diploma" given for the newly elected Teofil as the head of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan contained no innovations whatsoever. A change came, however, with the confirmation of the hierarch Ghenadie II, who undertook some modifications in rituals. The changes made were to resound loudly through Orthodox Churches. Consequently the prince Bethlen had to hold talks with the Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril Lucaris, a sympathizer of Calvinism. But Gabriel Bethlen died before passing on to more

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[17] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină…*, p. 131.

[18] Z. Pâclişanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române Unite, Partea I-a, 1697–1751*, "Perspective" July 1994–June1995 no. 65–68, pp. 25–27.

[19] For example *Molitvelnicul* (1564) and *Tâlcul Evangheliilor* (ca 1567) sustained the principles of *Sola Fide* and *Sola Scriptura*, denied the role of the saints and priests for personal salvation, and criticized the Orthodox tradition of conducting prayers for the dead. Z. Pâclişanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române…*, pp. 29–30.

[20] Z. Pâclişanu, *Istoria Bisericii Române…*, pp. 46–47.

active efforts for the conversion of Orthodox Romanians to Calvinism.[21] Under
George I Rakoczy (Rákoczy György) (1630–1648), the Calvinists returned
to the method used during the reign of John II Sigismund (printing ritual and
doctrinal books in Romanian), but kept the idea of awarding exemption from
taxes for the Orthodox clerics and added a relatively reduced cultural program
for the Romanian population, in order to facilitate the reception of Calvinism:
the new hierarch had to establish a school, to have a printing press for printing
books in Romanian, his priests had to celebrate rituals in Romanian. This time
the Calvinist superintendent included among his titles the appellative *Bishop
of Orthodox Romanians*. Concerning the rituals, a number of innovations were
planned, which had to be gradually introduced: a participant in the Liturgy
would have to eat the bread and wine separately, the baptism would have to
be conducted in a simple form, without ceremonial and without candles, the
burials would have to be conducted without purification, without candles,
without sermon or other "superstitions", etc. Ideally, the fast and the veneration
of the saints had to be eliminated. A *New Testament* in Romanian appeared in
1648.[22] An important new measure adopted in order to facilitate the conversion
of Romanians to Calvinism was taken under the prince Michael I Apafi (Apafi
Mihály) (1661–1690): each convocation of the Metropolitan synods and their
measures had to be approved by the Calvin superintendent.[23]

The policy intended to convert Romanian population to Calvinism enjoyed
limited success, mainly because of the incompatibility between Calvinist doctrine
and practices and the popular culture of Romanian population, profoundly
attached to the veneration of icons, the veneration of the saints, the prayers for
the dead, and even to the influences derived from pre-Christian occult practices,
which had been integrated in their traditions from ancestral times. Amongst
a population that largely lacked the ability to write or read, these elements helped
if not to rationally understand their religion, then at least to live their difficult
life with a form of an experience of faith.[24] In the new conditions inaugurated
by the Habsburg domination of Transylvania, Romanian parishes which adopted
Calvinism returned rapidly to the Orthodox confession or preferred the *Uni-
ation* with the Catholic Church. Generally after 1730 references to Romanian
Calvinist parishes disappear from the preoccupations of the Calvinist Church
of Transylvania.[25] The Romanian population's major gain from the Calvinist

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[21] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină…*, p. 128.

[22] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină…*, pp. 128–129.

[23] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină…*, p. 130.

[24] For more information see A. Buzalic, *Particularităţi în gândirea Greco-Catolică la jumătatea
secolului al XVIII-lea*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 10/II (2006), p. 73.

[25] S. Gábor, *Relaţiile Bisericii Reformate Ardelene cu Bisericile româneşti în prima jumătate
a secolului XVIII*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 10/II (2006), p. 11.

influence was the adoption of the Romanian language in ritual. Other Calvinist elements were also integrated into the Transylvanian Orthodox ritual, though their signification was completely changed, as it is the case with the ritual, still extant today, of the solemn offering of the blessed bread (given usually instead of the Eucharist and called *anaforă*) at the end of the Easter Liturgy, which at first was meant to be the Eucharist itself.[26] Another Calvinist influence still extant is the tradition of the "three shouting" (*trei strigări*) during the Orthodox Sacrament of Marriage in Transylvania.[27]

The difficult *Uniation* process, the Calvinist, Orthodox, and Uniate protests

Although official recognition of Habsburg domination over Transylvania was obtained with the Peace of Karlowitz (1699), Leopold I had offered imperial protection to the Transylvanian prince Michael Apafi by the treaty of May 9, 1688. Consequently, the emperor issued in 1691 the so-called Leopoldine Diploma, in which the privileges of the three *nations* and of the four *received* religions were confirmed. The diploma served for 150 years as a constitution for this new autonomous province of the Habsburg Empire.[28] The Habsburg reign found the category of Transylvanian serfs in a deplorable situation, because the days of work for the nobles had not been previously clearly established, a fact which resulted in the continuous exploitation of the serfs and the phenomenon of runaway Romanian serfs in Wallachia and Moldavia. However, it was only during the reign of Maria Theresa (1740–1780) that their situation improved. Until then, the Habsburg emperors Leopold I (1658–1705), Joseph I (1705–1711) and Charles VI (1711–1740) had introduced minor economic, social and fiscal reforms.[29]

The main concern of the Habsburg emperor during the first years of domination over Transylvania was to secure the control over the province. This is why, after Michael Apafi's death, the title of "prince of Transylvania" was added to the emperor's titles. A governor of Transylvania was appointed from the pro-Habsburg aristocracy, the authority of the Diet was reduced by the founding of the Gubernium, in 1692, and of the Aulic Chancellery in 1694, which had its headquarters in Vienna and was Transylvania's supreme institution. Another important loss was in 1713, upon the death of Michael Apafi II, when the court in Vienna denied the Diet its most important prerogative, the *libera electio*, i.e. the appointment of the prince. In 1712 the imperial and the local army were placed under a common command, with the headquarters in Sibiu

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[26] A. Buzalic, *Particularităţi în gândirea…*, p. 73.
[27] I. Mitrofan, *Influenţa calvină…*, p. 129.
[28] I. Costea, *The Romanian Principalities…*, p. 417.
[29] I. Costea, *The Romanian Principalities…*, p. 417.

(Hermannstadt) and directly subordinated to the War Council in Vienna. In this plan of consolidation of Habsburg authority over Transylvania, the problem of the religious confessions was highly important, since the Habsburg family was Catholic and since the Catholic Church had been largely marginalized during the reign of the Calvinist princes in Transylvania. The court in Vienna needed a clear superiority in the position of the Catholics in the principality in order to secure its fidelity.[30]

Among the studies demanded by the Court in Vienna on the institutional, social and confessional situation in Transylvania, two important documents were elaborated by General Antonio Caraffa and, respectively, by Leopold Kollonich, the primate archbishop of Hungary. Whereas the first report paid attention almost exclusively to the privileged estates, and made recommendations concerning a possible long-term compromise between the emperor and the Transylvanian nobles[31], the document of Kollonich, entitled *Einrichtungswerk des Königreichs Ungarn* (1688) largely presented the confessional situation in the principality and suggested that the existence of a large number of Orthodox Romanians could represent an important opportunity for the Habsburg Empire, in the event of their joining the Catholic Church. He proposed an incorporation of the Orthodox Romanians within the Catholic Church, on the models of the union of Brest (1596), of the union of the Ruthenians (1646–1692) and of the Serbs in Hungary (1688).[32]

The emperor Leopold I decided to back Kollonich's idea. He had already issued a resolution in 1692 in which he had promised privileges to all the priests who would accept the Catholic religion.[33] The document was used by the Jesuit priest Paul-Ladislau Barany as a basis during the discussions with the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan, Teofil, who at the time was under the authority of the Calvinist superintendent.[34] After four years of discussions, the Metropolitan convoked a synod in 1697 with a reduced number of archpriests, but with the meetings conducted this time by Barany himself instead of the Calvinist superintendent. This synod, in which only 12 archpriests participated, is known by the name "the Small Synod" (*soborul mic*).[35] But Teofil died

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[30] I. Costea, *The Romanian Principalities…*, pp. 412, 413, 419.

[31] I. Lumpedean, *Nation et confession au XVIIIe siècle. Options et préoccupations pour l'union ecclésiastique des Roumains de Transylvanie*, [in:] *Ethnie et Confession en Transylvanie (du XIIIe au XIXe siècles)*, ed. N. Bocşan, I. Lumpedean, I.-A. Pop, Cluj-Napoca 1996, pp. 63–64.

[32] D. Tollet, *La reconquête catholique en Europe centrale (fin XVIIe siècle-début XVIIIe siècle)*, "Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée" 109 (1997) № 2, pp. 839–840.

[33] N. Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii Româneşti*, vol. 1, Bucureşti 1995, p. 424.

[34] M. Bernath, *Habsburg und die Anfänge der rumänische Nationsbildung*, Leyden 1972, p. 78.

[35] M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit la realizarea unirii. Contribuţia vistiernicului Ştefan Apor şi a iezuitului Ladislau Paul Baranyi la realizarea unirii religioase (1697–1701)*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 9/II (2005), p. 35.

soon after the synod, and the position of Atanasie Anghel, the new elected Metropolitan, was ambiguous: during his ordination, a ritual performed by the Vlach Metropolitan Teodosie and Dositheos II, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Transylvanian elected Metropolitan signed an Orthodox Confession in 22 articles, without informing the two Prelates of the situation of the Romanian Church in Transylvania. The Voievode of Wallachia, Constantin Brâncoveanu, gave him also (as he had previously done with Atanasie's predecessor) books of Orthodox ritual, robes, a domain, and promised an annually help of 6000 coins (*bani*) as a reward for the efforts of the Orthodox Church in Transylvania to maintain among the Romanian people "the faith of the forefathers".[36] Back in Transylvania, Atanasie, who had been elected with the help of the Calvinists,[37] faced the pressures for a clear position concerning the union of his Church with the Catholics. While he was in Wallachia, Paul Barany had presented to the Court in Vienna the document signed during the Small Synod, but because of the Calvinist protests, the Emperor issued in April 1698 the first decree in which it was stated that Romanians were free to adopt *one of the four* official religions.[38] Considering that the Emperor's decree was not enough to convince Romanians to convert to Catholicism, archbishop Kollonich issued in June the same year, the Encyclical *Ad clerum valachicum*, in which he promised his personal help for the Romanian priests that decided to accept the union with Catholics, and guaranteed that they would receive the same privileges as the Catholic clergy.[39] In these circumstances the Metropolitan Atanasie convoked at Alba Iulia a synod, which was attended by 38 archpriests. The synod adopted on October 7, 1698 the "Uniation Manifesto"[40], where the Romanian clerics stated that they would accept the union under the condition that they maintain all the ceremonies, feasts, fasts, and the calendar of the Orthodox Church. The future Metropolitans had to be ordained by an Orthodox hierarch from the Habsburg Empire. The act was conceived so as to keep unaltered the faith of the "forefathers", as the voievode Constantin Brâncoveanu had demanded from Atanasie. However, the Romanian text contained no direct reference to the acceptance of the four points elaborated at the Council of Florence (1439), the acceptation of which was central at the Small Synod. Instead, the Latin version of the same act explicitly made reference to the fact that the Romanian clerics received "*everything* that is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church […] and

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[36] M. Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 2, București 1994, pp. 292–293.

[37] M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit…*, p. 36.

[38] M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit…*, p. 36.

[39] M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit…*, p. 36,

[40] N. Nilles, *Symbolae ad illustrandam historiam ecclesiae orientalis in terris coronae S. Stephani: maximam partem nunc primum ex variis tabulariis, romanis, austriacis, hungaricis, transilvanis, croaticis, sovietatis jesu aliisque fontibus accessu difficilibus erutae*, Innsbruck 1885, pp. 202–212.

especially the four points" (…omnia admittentes, profitentes et credentes, quae ilia admittit, profitetur et credit, praesertim vero ilia quattor puncta in quibus hac tenus dissentire videamur …). In addition, in the Latin text the Catholic Church is referred to as "Mother" (*Sanctae Matris Romano-Catholicae Ecclesiae*), whereas in the Romanian text, oriented towards the maintenance of the religion of the *forefathers*, the appellation is absent.[41] These discrepancies allowed some Greek-Catholic historians to consider the manifesto of 1698 as merely confirming the earlier act signed at the Small Synod, and that the Romanian text implicitly accepted what had already been declared in 1697.[42] Basing their arguments on these discrepancies, on the fact that only a printed edition of the Latin text was sent to Vienna, whereas the original act was not made public (it was discovered in 1879 in the Library of the University of Budapest by the Greek Catholic historian Nicolae Densusianu), some Orthodox and Greek-Catholic historians condemned the Latin version as being a fraud.[43] Moreover some Orthodox historians went even further, considering even the first document, the one of 1697, to be a fake.[44]

It remains clear, however, that since the issuing of the second act (the Manifesto) the *Uniation* process started to be effective. The Latin content of the Manifesto provoked stupefaction amongst the Calvinist members of the Diet, and when Archbishop Kollonich insisted that the Romanian clerics should obtain the same privileges as the Catholic priests, the Diet ordered an investigation in order to ensure that the clerics, with their parishes, had indeed accepted the union. The results of a first survey, conducted in January and February 1699, were far from conclusive: they showed an acute disorientation of the population and the lack of doctrinal content in their faith. The majority declared that they will keep the Orthodox confession, but their main reason was the consistence with the faith of their forefathers. There were also contradictory assertions: for example the archpriest Mihai of Calata (in the Cluj county) confessed that he would keep the Orthodox faith even if he would have to die for it, but when asked if he prayed for the Pope he responded affirmatively; a priest from Agârbiciu expressed the wish to remain Orthodox, but he also stressed: "we are united

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[41] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania încercare de dezbinare a poporului român*, București 1973, pp. 27–28.

[42] L. Stanciu, *Între aderare şi asumare. Punctele florentine pentru greco-catolicii transilvăneni în secolul al XVIII-lea*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica", 10/II (2006), p. 23.

[43] The Greek-Catholic historian Nicolae Densusianu, who found the original act, considered that the Latin version is "one of the most dastardly and criminal translations". N. Densuşianu, *Independenţa bisericească*, Braşov 1893, p. 28, cited in Romanian in D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 29.

[44] See D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 25; S. Dragomir, *Românii din Transilvania şi unirea cu Biserica Romei*, "Biserica Ortodoxă Română" 80, № 9–10 (1962), pp. 865–880.

with the Pope of Rome and it is our duty to conduct prayers for him".[45] Another common attitude was to express the submission to the hierarchy: some peasants stated that they would do what their "Vlădică" (the Metropolitan) would tell them to do. But there were regions (Mureş, Cojocna) where the population made no concession: some asserted that it was the "priests' business to accept innovations or not, but if they [the clergy] would accept the union, they would not be our priests anymore". Others declared that, if constrained to accept the union with Catholicism, they would leave for Wallachia or Moldavia. In other regions, however (Fildul din Mijloc, Lăpuş, Cubleş), the population expressed the wish to remain Orthodox, but considered that they would accept the union if constrained to do it. In sum, the greater part of the population and a small part of priests preferred the Orthodox confession.[46]

However, on February 16, 1699 the emperor issued what is considered to be *The First Leopoldine Diploma*, which sanctioned the union of the Ortho- dox Romanians with the Catholics and promised to the Romanian clergy the privileges of the Catholic priests.[47] This time the Diet had to express its direct refusal to accomplish the orders of the emperor: "We are far from having any intention of opposing the orders of His Majesty. Nevertheless as regards this problem, we ought not to give so much consideration to the religious question. We have decided humbly to beg His Majesty not to allow that nation a greater freedom than it has possessed up to the present time, because this would be to the detriment, unhappiness and prejudice of the three nations. Our forefathers never *received* that nation and its clergy; they never incorporated it and far less did they allow the Romanians and their clergy to partake of the same liberties as ourselves."[48] Leopold I issues in August 1699 a new decree by which he announces punishments for those who try to hinder the union of the Romanians with the Catholic Church.[49] A new investigation was planned for the fall of 1699, but this time ten mixed commissions were formed with representatives from each official religion, not like the first time, where only Calvinists conducted the investigation. The large absenteeism of the peasants at the second investigation, the fear of a greater part of those that were present to sign the declarations made, the ignorance of those from isolated villages who were convinced that the Metropolitan did not accept the *Uniation*, and, finally, the protests of those

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[45] R. Câmpeanu, *Unire religioasă şi mental public la începuturile Catolicismului românesc în Transilvania*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 10/II (2006), p. 98.

[46] The quotations are given in Romanian in R. Câmpeanu, *Unire religioasă…*, p. 98.

[47] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, pp. 30–31.

[48] Cited in S. Dragomir, *The Ethnical Minorities in Transylvania*, Geneva 1927, p. 25.

[49] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 31.

that declared that they would keep the religion of their forefathers until the end of their lives, made the results as inconclusive as the first ones.[50]

According to Catholic perception however, the results incriminated the Uniate Metropolitan Atanasie Anghel, because it showed confessional chaos in Romanian communities and, as the Calvinists suggested, a union made only to obtain the promised privileges.[51] As a consequence Atanasie was called to Vienna. Concerned at what might happen there, the Metropolitan convoked, before his departure, the synod in January 1700, where all the participating archpriests signed the document in which they reaffirmed their exclusive loyalty to Atanasie, and emphasized the exclusive right of the synod (council) to judge the acts of the Metropolitan.[52] In Vienna Atanasie had to respond to 22 accusations in front of the commission conducted by Archbishop Kollonich. Among these accusations were the criticism for the continued ties, following *Uniation*, with the voievode Constantin Brâncoveanu and some alleged acts of greediness and immorality.[53] The commission decided that the hierarch should choose whether to leave in perpetual exile, or to accept the union after the model of the Council of Trent.[54] In March 19, 1701, Atanasie was confirmed as *bishop*, not as Metropolitan, and subordinated to the Archbishop of Esztergom, Leopold Kollonich. He received a golden chain and the title of Imperial Counsellor for his "wisdom and erudition, for his exemplary life, good manners, and his other virtues".[55] On March 24, Atanasie was re-ordained priest, and the next day he was made *bishop* after the Roman-Catholic ritual, in contradiction to the Catholic doctrine of the validity of the Orthodox sacraments and contrary to the protests of the Catholic congregation *De Propaganda Fide*.[56]

The confirmation of the ex-Orthodox Metropolitan Atanasie as Uniate *bishop*, on March 19, 1701 was given by the emperor within the framework of what is considered to be the *Second Leopoldine Diploma*, containing 15 articles, by which both rights and obligations for the Uniate Romanians are prescribed. The novelty of this second diploma was that, under Article 3, it extended also to the Romanian laymen, even to the poor, the privileges initially promised exclusively to the clergy.[57] As Keith Hitchins suggests, it is possible that this Article was

[50] Ş. Meteş, *Câteva contribuţii la istoria Unirii românilor cu Roma*, "Revista Arhivelor" 3 (1939) № 8, pp. 364–365.

[51] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, pp. 30–31.

[52] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 33.

[53] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 33.

[54] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 33.

[55] N. Nilles, *Symbolae ad illustrandam…*, p. 307, cited in Romanian in D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 35.

[56] G.-M. Miron, *Ultimul act al unirii românilor din Transilvania cu Biserica Romei. Spre un nou concept de unire*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 9/II (2005), p. 51.

[57] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 34. K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, pp. 26–27.

a sort of artifice conceived by Kollonich in order to make the estates (the three *nations*) more willing to collaborate with the imperial authority, or to convince the Romanian peasants to accept quickly the union. But, it could have been also, according to this American historian, a mistake of the Court, due to the precipitated emission of the diploma.[58] Given the fact that the second Diploma contradicted the Constitution of Transylvania, first by awarding the Romanians the statute of *nation*, and second because the content of this idea of *nation* was different than the traditional one, the emperor avoided any subsequent reference to the diploma. In Transylvania the Diet refused to accomplish the demands of the third article, but the fifth article had juridical consequences, as it was in perfect agreement with the goals of the Court and of the Catholic Archbishop. By this article the Uniate bishop had to accept the assistance of a theologian (a Jesuit), whose main tasks were to exercise control over the activities of the bishop and of his priests, to propose priests for the function of archpriests, to give his consent to the convocation of any synod, to read the correspondence of the bishop, especially that with the Orthodox hierarchs and voievodes, in order to maintain the fidelity of the Romanian *Bishopric* in its union with the Catholic Church. Because of its strange content, the original of the second Leopoldine Diploma was not kept with the official documents, and eventually was lost. The subsequent Uniate bishops tried to search for it, with no chance of succeeding.[59] It was discovered in 1938 in the Bruckenthal Library in Sibiu.[60]

The application of the obligations stated by the second Diploma, without the awarding of benefices, conditioned protests from the subsequent Uniate bishops, at first, more hesitatingly, but afterwards with more courage. After Atanasie's death, the Catholics and the Court in Vienna found the ideal candidate for the vacant seat in the person of Ioan Patachi, of boyar lineage, with degrees from the Jesuit College in Cluj, the Pázmáneum in Vienna and the Gregorian College in Rome. He was the first Romanian to obtain the title of doctor in theology, in 1710.[61] It was during Ioan Patachi's episcopate that the Pope officially recognised the creation of a Romanian Greek-Catholic bishopric. He was ordained in 1715, his bishopric being officially recognized in 1721 by the Pope Clement XI. The designation of Ioan Patachi by the Court in Vienna infringed Article 12 of the Second Diploma, which stated that the synod of the Romanian bishopric had the right to elect three candidates, one of them having to be confirmed by the emperor. The synod in 1714 designated three candidates, but Patachi was not among them. The favourite was the ex-secretary of Atanasie, Wenceslaw Frantz

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[58] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 27.

[59] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 27.

[60] K. Wessely, *A doua diplomă leopoldină*, "Analele Academiei Române, Secţia istorică", Bucureşti 1938, S. III. t. XX.

[61] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 30.

of Bohemia, a man who knew profoundly "our language and our Vlach rite".[62] The Court advised the synod to make a new designation, and suggested that Patachi's name should be also included. But the synod refused, citing that Patachi had abandoned the Orthodox rite, and that he was a Roman Catholic priest. As we have seen, the basis of the synod's decision were the *Uniation Manifesto* and the document signed by the archpriests before Atanasie left for Vienna, in which they explicitly defended the right of the council to elect the new hierarch. Concerned with confirming a well-educated bishop who could bring about effective progress within the union, the emperor Charles VI (1711–1740) imposed the appointment of Ioan Patachi. As expected, the new bishop was loyal to the cause of expanding *Uniation* among the Romanians, but sometimes used violent means, which obliged the Court in Vienna to remind him that the use of force in obtaining members for the Greek-Catholic Church might have unexpected results.[63] Patachi banned the Orthodox ritual books that came from Wallachia on the premise that they contained "schismatic" practices and established that all the priest that had been ordained in Wallachia or Moldavia were required to ask for his confirmation. He attempted to introduce modest changes in the Byzantine ritual, as is the case with the elimination of the epiclesis in 1724 from the Liturgy officiated in the Metropolitan cathedral.[64] But even if he was generally loyal to the Court's interests, Ioan Patachi made repeated demands for an independent Uniate Church.[65]

These demands were to be continued and were to be developed in the most original way during the episcopate of Inocenţiu Micu-Klein (1729–1751). He is the most illustrious among the Uniate Bishops of the 18th century and a central figure in the modern development of the idea of the Romanian unity. He demanded in 1735 from the emperor Charles VI a place for him in the Gubernium in order to better represent the interests of the Romanian *nation*.[66] In 1739 the synod conducted by him confirmed the decision that the Orthodox Canon Law, named in Romanian *Pravila*, remained the official Canon Law of the Romanian Uniate Church.[67] In 1741, in a memoir to the empress Maria Theresa (1740–1780), the Romanian bishop argued that the treatment of the Romanian Uniate Church by the Catholic Archbishops was unfair, because other Greek-Catholic bishops across Europe (he mentions Polish, Greek, Ruthenian bishoprics and the bishopric of Mukachevo) were not under the authority of

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[62] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 31.

[63] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, pp. 31–32. See also O. Bârlea, *Ostkirchliche Tradition und Westlicher Katholizismus*, Munich 1966, p. 79.

[64] K. Hitchins, *L'idée de nation…*, p. 33.

[65] N. Nilles, *Symbolae ad illustrandam…*, pp. 418–422.

[66] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 57.

[67] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 59.

a theologian.[68] In 1743 the Aulic Chancellery in Vienna decided again not to officially recognize the Romanian *nation*. Inocenţiu Micu addressed a protest to the empress. Obtaining from the empress a confirmation of the first Leopoldine Diploma, Inocenţiu entered into direct conflict with the Transylvanian Diet. The Court called him back to Vienna, partially because of his conflict with the Diet, and partially because of the Romanian uprising under the leadership of the Serbian monk Visarion Sarai.[69]

As it had been done by Atanasie before, the bishop Inocenţiu Micu convoked a synod before his departure, but this time not with the goal of obtaining confirmation of the submission of the archpriests to him, but to write a resolution where the Romanian Uniate bishopric demanded rights for the Romanian *nation*.[70] The same year he was sent in exile to Rome, but continued to hold the Bishop position until 1751. In 1745 Inocenţiu addressed a memoir to Pope Benedict XIV which had a historical preamble where he emphasized the dignity of the Romanians, as being the descendants of the Latin colonies founded by the Roman emperor Trajan. According to him the Romanians became "schismatic" only because they were for centuries under the dominion of the Greek emperors of Constantinople. After the Transylvanian Romanians were delivered from the Ottoman "slavery", they were finally free to unite with the Catholic Church. The Catholics of the Greek rite are, according to him, like the Catholics of the Latin rite, the sons of the same Mother, the Church, and consequently they need to have the same rights and privileges.[71] The document shows that the Romanian bishop, while recognising the Orthodox as "schismatic", sustains also the main principle that animated the Byzantine delegates at the Council of Florence: the recognition of the equal dignity of the Orthodox Church with the dignity of the Catholic Church.[72] During his exile Inocenţiu Micu-Klein engaged in rich correspondence with his Archpriests, with the Transylvanian authorities and with the court in Vienna.[73] He died in Rome in 1768.

The Ambiguity of the Central Criteria of Romanian Traditional Identity

As we have seen in the previous chapter, when challenged to define their identity, the Romanian population responded ambiguously: while the majority

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[68] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 64.

[69] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 61.

[70] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 62.

[71] Cited in Romanian in L. Stanciu, *Între aderare şi asumare…*, p. 26.

[72] C. Barta, *Dialectica unirii celei dintâi şi a unirii celei de-a doua în concepţia lui Samuil Micu*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica" 9/II (2005), pp. 87–88.

[73] *Corespondenţa din Exil a Episcopului Inochentie Micu Klein (1746–1768)*, ed. Z. Pâclişanu, Bucureşti 1921.

preferred the faith of their forefathers, they had serious difficulties in explaining what this faith really meant. Their central argument was that this faith was the *law* of their forefathers, so it would be also their *law* until the end of their lives. The argument which I will develop in this chapter is that the *law of the forefathers* had been a central criterion for defining the identity of both Orthodox and Uniate Churches in the first half of the 18th Century, but its ambiguity conditioned the Orthodox population to deny that the Greek-Catholic believers were still their brothers, while the Uniate asserted, on the basis of the same criterion, that they had kept the original *law* and that the Orthodox believers were the ones who had to return to it.

Because of their interpretation that the founding documents of the *Uniatism* were fraudulent, Orthodox historians in the 20th century had the tendency to consider even the Uniate bishop Inocenţiu Micu-Klein to be a representative of the Orthodox protests and efforts to obtain political rights and religious freedom for the Romanian population. Their argument was that the Catholic accents in his memoirs are due to the fact that Inocenţiu did not know the original Romanian version of the *Uniation* Manifesto of 1698 which was not discovered until 1893.[74] Today Catholic historians sustain that, even at the *Small Synod*, the Romanian clergy considered themselves already Uniate.[75] As I have tried to show in the previous chapter, the *Uniation* became effective only after the Uniation Manifesto, and that Inocenţiu Micu expressed the opinion that it was the Orthodox who were "schismatic". This brings us to the point of departure of the discussion of this chapter: at least until the end of 1698 there was no difference in the understanding of the *law of the forefathers* between the clergy that had signed the founding documents and the clergy that had not signed them. What determined the split in understanding was, for the Orthodox, the investigations ordered by the Transylvanian Diet at the beginning and at the end of 1699, the subsequent efforts of the Uniate bishop Ioan Patachi to force them to accept the union with the Catholics, and the Romanian uprisings under the Serbian monk Visarion Sarai (after 1744) and under the Romanian monk Sofronie of Cioara (1759–1761). The Uniate understanding of the *law of the forefathers* had also evolved under the pressures exerted by the Catholic Archbishopric of Ezstergom (re-ordinations following the Latin ritual, the elimination from the doctrine and, sometimes from the ritual, of what was contradictory to Catholic theology), but especially according to the necessity of responding to the Orthodox arguments that the Greek-Catholic had replaced the *law of the forefathers* with the law of the Pope.

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[74] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania*…, p. 59.
[75] M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit*…, p. 36.

The core element of the discussion which preceded and animated the Small Synod in 1697 was the keeping of the *law*. During the sessions of the synod Paul Barany assured the participants of the "integrity and purity of the Greek rite".[76] The sole condition for the Romanian archpriests was to accept the four points that had been elaborated during the Council of Florence. The original Romanian version of the *Uniation* Manifesto in 1698 displays also the efforts of the clergy to maintain the union in the spirit of the Florentine Council: any future "vlădică" (a term by which they understood "Metropolitan"), would have to be elected by the Metropolitan synod, to be confirmed by the emperor and ordained by an Orthodox hierarch from the Habsburg Empire. The clergy also emphasized that "all our *law*, the services of the Church, the Liturgy, and the fasts, and our calendar must remain as they were".[77] Unfortunately all these details were not translated into Latin, so the Catholics from Vienna understood that the Romanians wanted a union after the model of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) i.e. the assimilation of the Orthodox Church in Transylvania as a Uniate bishopric, subordinated to a Roman-Catholic Archbishopric. The misunderstanding of the Romanian clerics' intention comes from the fact that, after the Reformation, the Catholic Church paid lesser attention to the model of *Uniation* that was conceived during the Council of Florence (1439), in favour of the more rigorous approach of the Council of Trent (1545–1563).[78]

The content of the documents of the first two synods shows that the participants identified themselves as Orthodox and they understood that the union would preserve the liberty and the dignity of the Transylvanian Metropolitan, as unsubordinated. They thought that the preservation of the entire *law of the forefathers* would maintain them in unity with the Orthodox Churches from Wallachia and Moldavia, and the acceptation of the four points of the Council of Florence would inaugurate the *Uniation* with the Catholic Church. On the basis of the results of the investigations made by Calvinists, and of the content of the two primary documents, we may consider that, in essence, the priests asserted the same thing as the peasants who declared their Orthodoxy: *they will never change anything in the law, but they were agreeing to pray for the Pope.*

As I said, the distinction in the way the *law* was defined appeared later. We may consider that the Orthodox were the first to introduce changes in the traditional understanding of the *law*. However, this change appeared after the great reactions stirred in the Orthodox Churches (not only Transylvanian, but also Russian and Greek) by the re-ordination of Atanasie in 1701, first as a priest, and the next day as a Bishop, after the Latin ritual.[79] In the *History*

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[76] Cited in M. Jozsef, *Instituţii care au contribuit…*, p. 35.
[77] Cited in Romanian in D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 26.
[78] C. Barta, *Dialectica unirii…*, pp. 87–90.
[79] A. Buzalic, *Particularităţi în gândirea…*, p. 78.

written by the Orthodox Archpriest Radu Tempea II of the Church of Şchei, in Braşov, in 1742, it is mentioned that already in 1701 the Romanians of Braşov decided not to accept "the points given by *vlădica* Atanasie". It is mentioned also that in 1723 the clerics and the laymen of Braşov swore that "we will not move in other dogmas".[80] It is clear that in their new perception, the *law* was not anymore something that could be dissociated from the dogmas, as was thought before 1698. In 1746 a certain priest, Vasile, kept record of a dispute between Orthodox and Uniate priests. The Orthodox priests asserted: "But you, the Uniate, you are neither in the law of the Pope, neither in *our law*, but you are as the Christians about whom it is written in Apocalypse III, 15: You are neither warm, nor cold."[81] The Uniate replied that in the first millennium of Christianity "the Greek Church from the Orient was one with the Roman Church from the Occident […]. [The faith of the Church of the Orient] was the *Uniation* or our faith, that we, the Uniate priests, possess nowadays."[82] But the Orthodox replied that it was the Pope who had ended the union with the Orthodox Church, as he was a "rotten organ and worthy to be cast out". Accordingly "your *Uniation* (…) is not like the first one, when the Church of the Orient was one with the Church of the Occident."[83]

To sum up, the Orthodox Romanians evolved in the understanding of the *law of the forefathers*, in adding the idea of the important place that the *dogma* had in the *law*, an aspect which had been largely absent before. The Uniate remained generally with the same concept of the *law* as before 1698, but this time with the conviction that they returned to the original unity of the Churches. That the Greek-Catholic clergy had kept the original idea that the *law of the forefathers* could be dissociated from the dogmas, is shown by the measures of the bishop Inocenţiu Micu-Klein, who convinced over 600 priests which had previously abandoned the *Uniation*, to return under his authority, by showing them that, by adopting the union, they would not have to abandon the Greek rite. But even this mode of thinking imposed dogmatic limits: in 1738 Inocenţiu Micu convoked a synod when he demanded from the Catholic theologian (imposed by the Second Leopoldine Diploma) not to exert pressures upon the Uniate clergy to accept anything beyond the four dogmatic points which had been accepted in 1698.

After the defeat of the uprising of the Orthodox Romanians under the monk Sofronie of Cioara (1761), and after some Romanian Orthodox monasteries had

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[80] Cited in Romanian in P. Brusanowski, *Biserica Română Unită: păstrarea "Legii Strămoşeşti" sau o "a treia lege" Viziunea ortodocşilor şi greco-catolicilor din sec. XVIII*, "Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica" 10/II (2006), p. 60.

[81] P. Brusanowski, *Biserica Română…*, p. 61.

[82] Cited in Romanian in P. Brusanowski, *Biserica Română…*, p. 61.

[83] Cited in Romanian P. Brusanowski, *Biserica Română…*, p. 62.

been destroyed by general Adolf von Buccov[84], the Court in Vienna still decided to bestow on the Orthodox population of Transylvania what they demanded during the uprisings, in order to pacify the region: an Orthodox bishop, in the person of Dionisie Novacovic.[85]

Up to the *Uniation* confessional homogeneity helped the Romanians over the centuries to maintain the awareness of the powerful ties that held them together in the same *law of the forefathers*, irrespective of the geographical region which separated them *de facto* (Transylvania, Wallachia, Moldavia). From the *Uniation* onwards, the criterion of the *law*, being already ambiguous, instead of contributing, as it had previously done, to the unity of Romanians, was the cause of a form of national schism. As we will see in the next chapter, the element of the *law of the forefathers* continued to be maintained within the discourse of the Romanian intellectuals that arose as a positive effect of the *Uniation*, though this time it was revised in order to produce the desired unity.

Towards a New Common Identity

Whether the Article 3 of the Second Leopoldine Diploma had been a mistake or an artifice in order to determine an easier acceptation of the *Uniation*, it is not clear. However, the promise that even the Romanian serfs would have their burdens eased, had nourished the ideals of the first representatives of the Uniate clergy. Inocentiu Micu-Klein harboured the ideal of a Romanian *nation* without serfs or nobles. He repeatedly demanded from Vienna and Rome the recognition of the rights of the Romanian *nation*, using arguments that already transcended the medieval conception of a *national* dignity reserved only for a certain category of individuals. His main argument pointed to the idea that Romanians as an ethnic group had a special dignity, because they were the descendents of the Romans, and to the idea that all Romanians deserved to be called a *nation* in virtue of their number that surpassed the number of the other populations in Transylvania and in virtue of their ancientness. His arguments will subsequently be borrowed by the Transylvanian Uniate intellectuals who developed in the second half of the 18th century an entire cultural program with the goal of promoting an aspect that remained secondary in the idea of the *law of the forefathers*. Instead of emphasizing the centrality of the *law*, they made efforts to present the *law* only as a historical cultural product of the forefathers. In this sense they continued the idea of the bishop Inocentiu Micu that Romanians had become "schismatic" only because they were under the influence of the Byzantine Empire. In this perspective, any cultural product was acceptable if it conducted to a better understanding of the identity of the

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[84] G. Castellan, *A History of the Romanians*, New York 1989, p. 109.
[85] K. Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774–1866*, Oxford 1996, pp. 202–203.

Romanians, as the descendents of the Romans. This cultural program is known in the Romanian history of ideas as *Şcoala Ardeleană* (the Transylvanian School). Its most illustrious figures in the second half of the 18th century were Samuil Micu (1745–1806) (the nephew of the bishop Inocenţiu), Gheorghe Şincai (1754–1816) and Petru Maior (1756–1821). All three were Greek-Catholic monks. However, Samuil Micu translated into Romanian the *Ecclesiastical History* of the Galican monk Claude Fleury, a book which stands in contradiction with the principle of papal primacy[86]. It appears that he continued to observe the *principle* asserted by some Romanian peasants during the investigations in 1699 and assumed by the Archbishops assembled in the Small Synod in 1698: he prayed for the Pope, but he remained Orthodox. If in his work the idea of *law* was still present (he translated the canons of the seven Ecumenical Councils and a wide variety of texts from the Eastern Fathers)[87], his main concern was the cultivation of the idea of the Romanian nation. As a result of this concern he was opposed to the practice of sending young Uniate students to Occidental schools, because, in his opinion, a great part of these students abandon "not only the *law*, but also the Romanian nation (*neamul românesc*)" because "they are ashamed to call themselves Romanians, and they prefer to present themselves as part of another nation (*neam*)."[88] Of course, we must not consider that he was opposed to academic research conducted in other countries, but simply to those ashamed of their origins. Together with his friend, Gheorghe Şincai, he wrote the first academic treaty on Romanian Grammar, as a consequence of which Romanian was incorporated among the Romance languages.[89] The treaty was called *Elementa linguae daco-romanae sive valachicae* (The Elements of the Daco-Roman or Romanian (Vlach) Language) and was first published in 1780. In 1791 and 1792 the three personalities of the Transylvanian School, together with other Uniate and Orthodox intellectuals such as Gherasim Adamovici, the Orthodox bishop of Transylvania, wrote down, on the basis of the arguments of the Uniate bishop Inocenţiu Micu-Klein, two petitions, known under the name *Supplex Libellus Valachorum Transsilvaniae*, which were sent to the emperor Leopold II (1790–1792) and in which they demanded political rights for the Romanian *nation*. The *Supplex* was rejected by the emperor, the political status of the Romanians remaining the same, but greatly influenced two important figures of the Revolution of 1848, Andrei Şaguna, an Orthodox bishop and Alexandru Sterca-Şuluţiu, a Uniate Bishop. Both fought for the independence of their Churches and for the rights of the Romanians in Transylvania.

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[86] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 117.

[87] D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 120; C. Barta, *Dialectica unirii…*, p. 90.

[88] Cited in Romanian in D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania…*, p. 121

[89] M. Zdrenghea, *Elementa linguae la 200 de ani*, [in:] *Elementa linguae daco-romanae sive valachicae*, ed. S. Micu, G. Şincai, Cluj-Napoca 1980, p. VI.

Conclusions

At least before 1701 the majority of the Romanian population had the conviction that the *law* was good because it came from the forefathers, without being preoccupied to strictly define it. This attitude had the advantage of leaving open the possibility of assimilating new elements in ritual and possibly even in doctrine. However, the Romanian mentality was open to such innovations only to the extent that they were assimilated naturally and were not imposed. Because of its specificity, the Romanians in Transylvania selectively assimilated parts of the Protestant traditions, but the elements never kept their original meaning. Given the historical circumstances, the efforts to spread the Reformation amongst the Romanian population rarely and discontinuously imposed Protestant elements. This situation gave enough room for the religious mentality of the population to assimilate what was felt compatible with the general *law* of the forefathers. That was not the case anymore with the *Uniation*, because this time the entire Romanian population had to explicitly take notice and publicly confess the acceptance of the four dogmatic Catholic points.

This constituted a real cultural shock whose first consequence was the evolution in the understanding of the law of the forefathers. The Orthodox majority became more aware of the doctrinal content in their *law*, whereas the Uniate minority tried to maintain at least one major element from the previous understanding of the *law*, i.e. the ritual and, eventually, Canon law. The importance of the *Uniation* can be seen in the fact that, while it distorted the traditional mentality, it had as a secondary effect the development of the Romanian intellectual elite in Transylvania. The Uniate bishop Inocenţiu Micu-Klein reasserted the idea of the Latin origins of the Romanians, an idea already present in the traditional understanding of the *law of the forefathers*, but which could not develop sufficiently because the Romanians knew that their fathers had the *Greek* law. Because of this, bishop Inocenţiu argued that it was a historical accident that the law was Greek, the dignity of the Romanians as the descendents of the Romans being essential in his eyes. However, Inocenţiu did not want to say that the Greek law could be removed from the identity of the Romanians, but he wanted only to offer a new criterion of identity. The representatives of the Transylvanian School understood his intentions and whereas making efforts to write a Romanian grammar, they translated also a number of works of the Greek Fathers and the Canon law used in the Eastern Church. The Romanian intellectuals tried also to present a new content for the notion of *nation* as being the totality of the individuals with the same origin, irrespective of their social status, but it was too early for them to have a decisive voice within European culture.

Abstract

The article focuses on the process, events and attempts from the end of the 17ᵗʰ and the beginning of the 18ᵗʰ century to unite the Romanian Orthodox Church or rather a part of it belonging to the Orthodox Metropolitan of Transylvania with the Roman Catholic Church. The author analyzes the challenges and consequences of such a union for the Romanian identity. To overcome the controversies and strengthen a common Romanian identity, the cultural program of the Transylvanian School movement was initiated.

Keywords

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