

# Argument

**T**HE SECOND supplement to the *Transylvanian Review* for the year 2023 covers a wide range of topics pertaining to history and to the autonomous spinoff disciplines devoted to the study of the past. The frequent recourse to the latter during the various stages in the development of historiography, with nuances dictated by the ethical and intellectual affinities of the various authors, as well as by their particular attitudes towards the conceptual framework or by the administrative pressure specific for the time when their studies were written, made it possible to draw new conclusions and formulate new insights that contrasted with the previous historiographical positions, resulting from debates hosted by various academic bodies, from the publication of sources or more recent research programs. The studies grouped into the three sections of this publication are intended for the professional historians, familiar with the demands related to the critical reading of the sources, but the very nature of the covered topics is likely to also draw the attention of the reading public interested in history. This possible appeal is also increased by the wide range of covered topics and by the diverse origins and backgrounds of the authors.

The first section is devoted to two important moments in the history of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church: its early days and the time when it was banned by the communist regime (1948–1989). In point of fact, these are quite recurrent topics in the historiography devoted to the Romanian Greek Catholic Church.

The article signed by Cristian Dumitru Crişan deals with the synods of the religious union convened in 1697–1700, looking at the elements that shaped the identity of the new Church: Catholic in faith and under the authority of the Roman pope (the successor of St. Peter), but Oriental by virtue of its Byzantine-Romanian rite, as it manifested itself in Transylvania. The study details the historical context of the founding of the Church, with a focus on the religious configuration of Transylvania in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, without disregarding the local implementation of the framework provided by the Council of Ferrara-Florence. The local and regional historical context and the involvement of those who made possible the religious union led to the outcome of this process: a Church that accepted the four Florentine points while maintaining its specificity in terms of rite and calendar, as well as a certain autonomy in the functioning of its traditional institutions and when it came to the appointment of its bishops.

Cristian Barta writes about the 1773 Synod of Vienna, which shaped the development of the Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania, and about the personality of Grigore Maior, who attended the aforementioned synod. The author presents us with the outline of a complex character, with a remarkable intellectual background and with an outstanding ecclesiastical and administrative career, marked by a succession of ups and downs, a worthy successor to Bishop Inochentie Micu Klein. The piece also highlights the con-

tribution brought by Bishop Maior to the work of the Synod of Vienna and the consequences of the decisions made on that occasion (introduction of the reference to *Filioque* and the mentioning of the pope in the liturgical service) on the later development of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church.

The study signed by Alfredo Canavero analyzes the manner in which the Vatican press covered the persecution of the Romanian Catholics in 1945–1952, at a time when the communist regime gradually took over the country. Romania received less attention from the periodicals operating around the Holy See than other countries in the region (Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Yugoslavia). The author discusses a succession of significant attacks directed against the Romanian Catholics (the suspension of the Concordat with the Holy See, the new Law on Religious Denominations, the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church, the arrest of the bishops of this denomination as well as of the Catholic ones—all in the second half of 1948) and the limited attention paid to them by the Vatican press.

The next two pieces deal with the Greek Catholics in exile. The Greek Catholic Church was abolished by Decree 358 of 1 December 1948. Like other organizations who found themselves in such a situation, this Church was forced to devise survival strategies outside the country. Anca Stângaciu's article presents the activity of Greek Catholic resistance groups in Rome and Paris, operating in close proximity to the institutions that had traditionally educated the Romanian Greek Catholic elite (pontifical colleges and academies, the Vatican Tribunal, etc.). Also drawing on declassified Securitate documents, the author highlights the actions taken by the group led by Vasile Cristea, whose members included some prominent personalities of the Romanian and Greek Catholic exile: Mircea Alexandru, Ovidiu Bejan, Pamfil Carnațiu, Gheorghe Cosma, Aloisie Tăutu, Carol Capos, and others. Laura Stanciu turns her attention to theologian Vasile Bărbat. He began his studies in Blaj, practically at the time when his Church was banned in Romania, and continued them in Rome, later pursuing a career in the theological institutes of the Italian capital, devoting a significant part of his research to the relation (sometimes thorny and much questioned in the historiography of the field) between the Jesuits and the Greek Catholics of Transylvania.

Cristian Vasile approaches, from several directions, the manner in which the historiography produced after 1989 dealt with the situation of the Greek Catholic Church under the communist regime. Without intending to perform an exhaustive or even a strictly chronological investigation, the author focuses on several topics or sources that have been in the attention of historians: the recourse to memoirs, the Soviet-style show trial of Bishop Alexandru Rusu, the issue of the underground bishops of the communist period and the controversies around it, the beatification of the seven martyr bishops (2019) and its historiography, and the generations of historians interested in the past of the Greek Catholic Church.

The second section of the supplement brings together six articles devoted to various topics related to the multicultural material and immaterial heritage of Transylvania created by the ethnic groups present on its territory.

Alina Elena Voinea writes about the Saxon culture and civilization in Transylvania, seeking to outline a historical and cultural synthesis on the heritage of the Saxon ethnic group in the intra-Carpathian region.

Ferenc Dániel Páll-Szabó, Ágnes Orsolya Páll-Szabó, and Kinga Melinda Szabó provide a scholarly approach to an exotic spice employed in Transylvanian gastronomy starting with the 16<sup>th</sup> century—saffron, as it appears in the cookbooks and the recipes of that time.

Nicolaie Hodor and Vasile Grama contributed a historical-cultural study on the Jewish cultural heritage in Oradea. Starting from the historical data regarding the Jewish population in this multicultural city, the article surveys the representative buildings of this community which have become tourist landmarks.

Raluca Rogoveanu discusses a specific chapter in the history of the Romanian (chiefly Transylvanian) immigrants to the USA, more precisely to Philadelphia, gathered in an association called Bănăţeana—Vasile Alecsandri, in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Ivana Ivanić and Nenad Ninković discuss the efforts made by the Austrian authorities to recover the Orthodox believers in the Bihar (Bihor) County in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Vasile Todinca, Delia-Maria Radu, and Maria Flavia Pop are featured with a monograph on the village of Fughiu (Fugyi) in Bihor County, following the development of this settlement from a historical, social, cultural, demographical, and political perspective.

The third section of the supplement includes eight studies devoted to various personalities, men and women, some with a considerable presence in the public space and in the historical memory, others more discreet and undeservedly forgotten nowadays.

Starting from the recent discovery of an unknown silver denarius issued by the great crusading hero John Hunyadi in his capacity as governor of Hungary, Mihai-Bogdan Atanasiu and Liviu Cîmpeanu discuss the matter of the coins issued by him, a topic almost completely disregarded in historiography.

In the Ottoman chronicle of Idrīs Bidlīsī (1457–1520), *Hašt Bibišt*, written in the Persian language (and also using some Arabic words), Mustafa Dehqan identifies a number of references to the Romanian Voivode Vlad II Dracul, called Diraqūla in the said chronicle.

Sorin Şipoş analyzes the studies published by the historian Silviu Dragomir in the 1920s, which provide the outline of his future synthesis on the Revolution of 1848–1849. Drawing on mostly unpublished texts, his contributions amounted to a modern approach to the revolutionary movement, to the Transylvanian strife and to the elation, hope and disappointment experienced by the Transylvanian revolutionists.

Mihaela Mudure writes about Elisabeth (1843–1916), the first queen of Romania and the wife of Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, and her efforts to bring together the East and the West, focusing on two main elements: the revisitation of the Romanian nationalist canon for the international public and a discreet feminism grounded in Christian values. A writer and a public figure of great importance for *La Belle Époque*, the queen, who adopted the penname Carmen Sylva, sought to create a cultural and social place for herself in the patriarchal society of that time. She was more than just a patron

of the arts, significantly contributing to the creation of a network of women writers who supported each other through translations, critical essays, or paratexts.

Laura Gheorghiu's article discusses the relations between some leading representatives of Romanian medical science and Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch, highlighting the role played by the Romanian diplomats in facilitating these contacts and in providing information about the outbreaks of infectious diseases in other countries.

George-Bogdan Tofan evokes the personality of Adelina Olteanu (1877–1910), a descendant of the scholar Petru Maior. Her short life was dedicated to children's literature, as she edited four volumes of the *Biblioteca pentru copii și tineret* (Children and youth library).

George-Bogdan Tofan and Adrian Niță's paper devoted to scholar and politician Octavian C. Tăslăuanu (1876–1942) discusses one of the first Romanian geopolitical designs, *The United States of the Orient* (1924), pleading for the country's orientation towards the European integrative trends of that time.

Alexandru Păcurar presents us with the biography of an unjustly forgotten personality, geographer Marius Mihai Bizerea (1916–1980), a representative of the Cluj Geographical School. He was conscripted and sent to fight on the Eastern Front, but in September 1944 he was taken prisoner and deported to a camp in the USSR. Released in 1946, he obtained a degree in geography and history and was granted a professorship at the Institute of Geography of Cluj University, where he taught for only one year (1946–1947), being purged in the autumn of 1947.

**T**HE SEEMINGLY eclectic nature of this volume, compounded by the differences in terms of style and discourse between the contributing authors, is compensated for by the unity conferred by the editing standards and by the critical thoroughness demonstrated by both authors and editorial staff. Under these auspices, the texts gathered together in this volume once again prove that the publishers remain faithful to the legacy of the founders of the *Revue de Transylvanie* (1934), whose successor, as a matter of fact and of right, is the *Transylvanian Review*. The founders' intent was to provide scholars—and, though them, the general public—with factual information about the history of Transylvania, objectively, without anger or passion, beyond the multitude of existing conflicts and disputes, within an approach absolutely necessary to the understanding of the history of this region of multiple contacts.



THE EDITORS