

ABSTRACT

Ph.D. Thesis

NATIONAL-STATE CONSTRUCTION AND THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH: FROM AUTOCEPHALY (1864-1885) TO THE RANK OF PATRIARCHATE (1925)

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In particular, the 19th century - but also the following one - is characterised in the area of universal Orthodoxy by the support offered by the "local/national church" to the national-state construction initiated in that period. The Orthodox area includes the territories of states with Orthodox religious majorities, i.e., mainly the Balkan Peninsula, which at the beginning of the 19th century was part of the Ottoman Empire and by "local church" we refer to the church that became "national" with the consolidation of the state in question (Greece, Serbia, Romania, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Albania, and nowadays Macedonia, as well as Ukraine, formerly part of the USSR until 1991).

Why did I choose this subject for the PhD thesis?

First of all, our interest was imposed by the observation that, in the context of the above-mentioned secular process of the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the state during the national-state construction, the **Romanian case was unique in the Orthodox area**. I refer to the fact that, in the case of Romania, this process had two distinct stages: The first one covers the period 1859-1918, when the modern Romanian state, i.e., the Old Kingdom, was built and consolidated, while the historical provinces where the Romanian nation was founded and where Romanians were natives and represented the majority population (Transylvania, Banat, Bukovina and Bessarabia) were under foreign rule; the second stage began with the Great Union of these provinces occupied by the neighbouring empires - Russia and Austro-Hungary - with the Old Kingdom, marking the emergence of the unitary Romanian nation state on the map of Europe (1918).

Secondly, this particular historical situation also involved a tailor-made evolution of the Romanian Orthodox Church, reflecting the majority confession of the Romanian nation. Thus, during the construction of the Old Kingdom, with the unification from 1859, the Romanian Orthodox Church (BOR) was created through the unification of the secular metropolises of Moldavia and Wallachia, a fundamental institution of the state, whose autocephaly, declared by

the Romanian state in 1864 (the said united ecclesiastical structures had been *de facto* autocephalous since their foundation - 1359 in Wallachia and 1402 in Moldavia), was recognised by the *tomos* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1885. At the same time, according to the geopolitical situation at that time, in the Habsburg Empire there were two other Romanian Orthodox autocephalous metropolises, in Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian areas since 1867 and in Bukovina since 1873, in specific relations with the state - Austro-Hungary - while in Bessarabia, the Romanian eparchy was a suffragan of the Orthodox Church of Russia. This "map" of the Romanian national Orthodoxy until 1918 is unique in the Orthodox area - the case of Serbia being particular by the fact that the provinces united in the Yugoslav state, Croatia and Slovenia, were predominantly Catholic - and the state-church relationship revealed different solutions depending on the existing particularities: one solution is the "free" national state and another one with a foreign state in the others.

Thirdly, with the Great Union of 1918, the unification of these Romanian Orthodox Churches into a single national Church was imposed, which required a seemingly sinuous process, successfully completed in 1925 with the proclamation of the National Patriarchate. It was not only a short time, but it took place at a time when Romania had gone from being an overwhelmingly Orthodox country to one in which Orthodox made up almost 75% of the population. At the same time, the process of religious unification and the establishment of the relationship with the unitary Romanian state took place on the background of the existence of a Romanian church united with Rome, founded in 1701, after the occupation of Transylvania by the Habsburg Empire, to which more than 1.4 million Romanians belonged. It should be noted that this feature - again unique in its proportions in states with an Orthodox majority - was not a significant impediment to the unification of national Orthodoxy in Romania after 1918.

Constructivism as a theoretical orientation. Taking into consideration the scope of the chosen subject, its problematic connected to the national-state construction and the role of an institution as important as the Orthodox Church- by seniority, influence and historical status- in the foundation of our doctoral approach we opted for the theory of constructivism. The concepts we used- 19th century "*nationalism*", "*nation-building*", "*modernisation*", "*secularism*", "*globalisation*" and, above all, "*national identity*" - fully justify this choice, which is also consistent with similar procedures in similar scientific endeavours. One study in the field states: "*Scholars have argued that nations should not be seen as static cultural units in history, but rather as fluid and shifting categories articulated through nationalist narratives and symbols in politics and society. The emergence of nationalism studies, this interdisciplinary sub-discipline in the early 1980s, came about largely because of constructivist thinking that was critically applied to the*

*history of nations and nationalism during the transition from pre-modern to modern society.*¹

Thus, the movement of ideas and the importance of symbolism in the historical perimeter of the emergence of nations and states, including in the Orthodox space, shape, fix and consolidate the national identity in the era of "nationalism", and the constructivist theoretical toolkit is best suited to discover and define them.

The theoretical choice is supported by the fact that, while realism (offensive or defensive) "reads" the events and interprets them through the material force that is involved (physical "power" expressed militarily, more recently in the size of the GDP, technological level and performance, etc.) in order to achieve a large-scale political design (the building of an empire or the systemic installation of regional or universal hegemony), constructivism identifies historical development in the course of ideas, beliefs, traditions. Their movement *over the long course of history*, and of the institutions that are built up as a result, define relations of a certain kind with the state, which give shape and social content to the state-national construction that took place in the 19th century. Such mutations, observed over long periods of time, can be properly accessed and evaluated by using the constructivist theory, and in this context, it becomes necessary to call on history, including its specific scientific research methodology. In this way it is possible to identify this evolution of ideas and beliefs in the social framework and, at the same time, it facilitates the actual understanding of the architecture of the identity of a human community, founded over time and not generated spontaneously, on command or by chance. Besides, a special mention is necessary with regard to institutional symbolism, in our case the Autocephaly and Patriarchate, specific to the Orthodox Church. This plays a major role in affirming the independence and importance of states in the continental space of Orthodoxy and convincingly defines the relationship between the state and the religious institution, calling not for power relations but for harmonious national and social cooperation.

A mention is necessary: the application of constructivist orientation in the Romanian case to the state-Church relation in the national-state construction process, allows the identification of another particularity present in Romania. Thus, unlike other cases- Serbia, Greece or Bulgaria, where the strength and influence of the Orthodox Church (Greek case) or the incidence of deeply religious orientations in this process (millenarian ideas in the case of Serbia) - in Romania, the establishment at the head of the unified state in 1859 of an elite secularly educated in Western universities determined a different evolution. Namely, the development of a state-church relation

¹ Victor Rudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy. 'Unthinking' the 'Clash of Civilizations' in Southeastern Europe*, în „European Journal of Social Theory” 2(2): 233–247, Sage Publications: London, 1999.

intended to ensure, without great obstacles, the pre-eminence of the state in national-state construction and the cooperation required by this troublesome and rapid process.

Methodology The study of a very rich bibliography, especially in Romanian language, and the research of the information thesaurus of the two main national archives (General State Archives and Archives of the Ministry of External Affairs), facilitated me the fluent development of the doctoral endeavour, this being oriented naturally on the line of national historical traditions in the field, making possible a synthesis rich in conclusions. The application of justified comparisons with similar developments in other countries in the Orthodox area was natural, so that conclusions on the Romanian case and its specificity were facilitated, in addition to the fact that the rich historical relations with these countries over the centuries could be mentioned. An interesting side of these multiple relations with the states of the Balkan area, the majority Orthodox, was the understanding and enrichment with new data and elements of interpretation on the position of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the evolution of the state pluralism of medieval Romania, also in relation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate after the collapse of Byzantium in the 15th century. It was particularly convincing, especially in the light of new research in the archives of Orthodox monasteries throughout the Balkans, carried out by Serbian or Bulgarian, Greek or French specialists, that during the 15th and 16th centuries, the institution of the rule and the Romanian Church were their main supporters, decisively contributing to maintaining their individuality and Orthodoxy in its traditional structures under the domination of the Ottoman Empire. This had an impact on the maintenance and consolidation of the Orthodox community in the Balkans, and also had a significant impact on the evolution of political thought and practice in the Romanian area, as well as on economic activity. In the first case, it imprinted in Romanian political thinking the trait of responsibility towards the fate of Orthodoxy under Ottoman domination, including the Ecumenical Patriarchate while the state actions in this regard enjoyed significant popular support, repeated to this day, as demonstrated by the annual national pilgrimage to Saint Paraskeva in Iași, instituted in the time of Vasile Lupu, the 17th-century Moldovan ruler with Byzantine imperial aspirations. In the second case, a direct relation is explicitly identified with the complex case of the monasteries, whose solution required vigorous action by the ruler A. Cuza, closely linked to the issue of the proclamation of the autocephaly of the BOR in 1864 and its recognition in 1885 by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The holistic approach of the subject, i.e. "the pack" of ideas, confessions, notions and customs perpetuated in time, that accompany the evolution of the Romanian ecclesiastical institution, as well as the links between this institution and its own statehood throughout the area inhabited by Romanians, made it possible to draw some defining concepts for this field of scientific

research. Of course, the concepts of "*autocephaly*" and "*patriarchy*", which constitute the main subject of our doctoral approach, traditionally existing in the secular history of the BOR, are at the forefront. But, together with them, we must mention, following the results obtained by Romanian medievalism, those of "*inner Byzantium*" and "*translatio imperii*", in addition to that of the main and defining "*Byzantine symphony*" from the beginnings of medieval Romanian statehood in the 14th century. The concepts of "*Inner Byzantium*" and "*translatio imperii*" reflect an aspiration of the Romanian statehood (by no means intermittent and widely cultivated over the centuries) to play a major role in the Balkan Orthodox area with ancient historical roots. This aspiration was vigorously renewed and became more complex with the collapse of Byzantium under Islamic domination, enriching itself in political and promotional actions for massive societal support, as demonstrated by the pilgrimages that also contributed to keeping this state project alive in the population. Lastly, the concept of the "*Byzantine symphony*" reflects the traditional state of the state-church relationship, which has remained unchanged to the present day, with nuances of expression in the various historical periods that have allowed for additions of substance and refinements of form. We will come back to these concepts shortly.

At the same time, this holistic approach allowed us to discover "files" of great historical interest with reference to the state-church relationship, with specific features in the occupied provinces, where they reflected the impulse of national liberation from the authority of a foreign state - as was the case of the Orthodox Metropolises of Transylvania and Bukovina - translated into the assumption of a broad autonomy in their own affairs, but also those of the identical structures of the autonomous medieval states in the extra-Carpathian area. The strong and uninterrupted links established between them, despite the particular geopolitical situation, played a cardinal role in maintaining the historical individuality/identity of the Romanian people in the face of successive trends of foreign assimilation and were crucial during the period of national-state building in the 19th century, facilitating the start of the second phase of this process, with the Great Union of 1918. It was also possible to identify periods of tension in the state-church relationship during the national-state-construction phase, such as in the Old Kingdom after the peasant uprising of 1907, when a veritable "ecclesiastical crisis" (in the estimation of contemporaries) had to be overcome by appropriate legislative measures, or in the first years after the Great Union, when institutional religious unification had to face difficulties and heated debates.

Also, from a methodological point of view, we have taken into account the observation of a famous researcher of the state-church relationship in the Orthodox area. According to him, there is a tendency to consider that the Orthodox religion was hostile to modernisation and was practically a brake on these processes that were unleashed in many such states in the 19th century.

The observation to which I refer is the following: *"it is necessary – A.N./ to accept the basic premise that Orthodox Christianity has a multi-faceted relationship with society and culture - similar in this respect to the other two major branches of Christianity / Catholicism and Protestantism - A.N./ It is necessary to emphasise from the very beginning that the full picture of this branch of Christianity requires an examination of its relations with the state, society and political culture over a "longue durée"/ long term- A.N./ and those interpretations which select an unduly restrictive time frame fail to understand historical developments and to paint an undistorted picture of the Orthodox faith."*² In the course of our doctoral endeavour, we have taken into account - especially as far as the literature of the problem is concerned - this sharp and justified methodological observation.

Objectives and research inquiries. In our doctoral endeavour- and it is our intention to continue the research, since the subject is fascinating and far from exhaustion- we have pursued, first of all, the objective of revealing an issue of interest (rather addressed by theological specialists) with the tools of political science. Consequently, I had to catch up with the literature from this perspective, which gave me the opportunity to note both the benefits of this type of approach and the shortcomings that need to be explained and corrected.

Among the benefits of using political science tools, I would firstly mention that the diversity of existing theories in political science offers the possibility of a thorough and rewarding choice. I found, for example, that assuming constructivism as a theoretical basis gave me the opportunity to resort to the detachment and analysis of concepts related to the topic at hand, thus overcoming the habit of a narrative devoid of the interrogation of reality. In my case, since I had to use religious symbolism in a political sense - the very autocephaly of the "local church" and the "patriarchate" have their own canonically fixed symbolism, and the Orthodox religion gives them their own importance and significance, distinct from those granted by the Catholic Church - such a theoretical basis helped me navigate more easily through a vast and eventful bibliography.

But I also had to note that - precisely because of the differences in canonical tradition and historical development between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, as well as with the Protestant or neo-Protestant cults - a member of the Orthodox Church has a more nuanced (not to say more adequate) understanding of a subject such as autocephaly, which is strictly specific to the Orthodox Church, but whose historical development is still a subject of debate. Along the same lines, the

² Idem, *Church, State, and Political Culture in Orthodox Christianity*, in DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.743, online publication date: February 2019 – OXFORD RESEARCH ENCYCLOPEDIA, POLITICS (oxfordre.com/politics). (c) Oxford University Press USA, 2019.

question of the church's autonomy from the state is studied, treated and conclusions are drawn in a very different way in the case of the Orthodox churches, heirs of the original "Byzantine symphony", than, for example, in the case of the Protestant churches, for which the very avoidance of any interference by the state has become a guiding principle. Perhaps it is not superfluous to mention here that, at the time, the Organic Statute, drawn up by Andrei Saguna for the Transylvanian Metropolis, the basic document of its own historical development up to the Great Union, which, with great reluctance, he had to amend in the process of unifying the BOR, was criticised by Romanian theologians precisely for the Protestant inspiration it portrayed. The criticism of the Romanian Orthodox theologians was based precisely on the fact that the dimensions of autonomy from the state in this Statute went beyond the Orthodox canonical patterns of the "Byzantine symphony", which was not far from the truth, namely that the state with which the church entered into a relationship was a hostile one, seeking conversion to its own confession (Calvinist or Catholic, in this case).

But the objectives of the research- the reconstitution of a picture as close as possible to reality of the Romanian Orthodox situation in the national-state construction area in the 19th- 20th centuries, of its relationship with the state in different aspects (national or foreign); the identification of the main theoretical trends within the Romanian Church from this perspective; features of the church legislation promoted by the state; the relevance of the Romanian case in the context of similar processes in other states with Orthodox confessional majorities, etc. - have been constantly followed throughout the research endeavour.

Research questions have been addressed to ensure the coherence of the doctoral endeavour and to answer its objectives. Thus, among them, I quote: what is (canonically, historically and legally) the **autocephaly** of an Orthodox "local church" and when did this concept emerge?; does the **patriarchal** rank of a "local Orthodox church" make it equal to the Ecumenical Patriarchate or the traditional "pentarchy"?; what is the historical origin of this exclusively Orthodox symbolism - specific to the Orthodox space/countries - and how has this tradition been prolonged until today? (see the *tomos* granted to the Patriarch of the Ukrainian Church in 2019 by the Ecumenical Patriarch); what was the historical relationship between the Church and State in the Romanian Middle Ages?; what is the explanation for the fact that, with the Union of 1859 and the construction of the modern Romanian state, the autocephaly of the BOR was immediately declared and the monastery estates were secularised, and what was the reaction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate? What were the main trends in the establishment of the state-church relationship in the era of state-building, both internationally (in the Orthodox area) and in the Romanian case, and what was the legislative activity in this field? What were the coordinates of the unification of the

Romanian Orthodox Churches in the liberated provinces with the Romanian Orthodox Church after 1918? What were the characteristics of the relationship between the state and the Orthodox Church that marked both the proclamation of the autocephaly of the BOR and its elevation to the rank of Patriarchate?

The hypothesis of our approach can be briefly stated as follows: **"The Romanian Orthodox Church, in the period of the national-state construction of modern Romania (19th century - 1918), followed the secular tradition of observing the "Byzantine symphony" in its relationship with the Romanian state".** As a subsidiary addition: **"The Romanian Orthodox churches in the occupied provinces were in a special situation, as they fought for the consolidation of their national identity against the injunctions of the oppressive foreign state".**

Two explanations, somewhat detailed, are necessary to show how we set this hypothesis (main and subsidiary) to be demonstrated in the research approach. Both belong to the geopolitical domain.

The first refers to the external circumstances in the Orthodox area in which this successful national-state construction of Romania took place during 1856-1918. This overwhelmingly important process took place in the context in which the Romanian statehood was directly in the midst of the *"Eastern Crisis"*, as the *"sick man"* of Europe at that time (18th -19th centuries), the Ottoman Empire, was being disintegrated. In a few milestones chosen to simplify a process of such dimensions, which culminated in the formation of modern states in Southern-Eastern Europe and preoccupied continental diplomacy for almost two centuries, we present the picture of this complex situation in the vortex of which the process of national-state construction of modern Romania found itself.

One first such milestone is the Treaty of Kuciuk-Kainargi of 1774, by which Russia, after a victorious war with the Ottoman Empire, received the right recognised by the European powers to be the protector of the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire. In this context, the Romanian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, were granted secular autonomy in the Sultan's empire and the Russian protectorate was established over them, which, according to its grand strategy, tended to gain a foothold in Constantinople. This grand strategy of the Russian Empire was closely linked to the symbolism of the Orthodox religion, since Russia considered itself the heir of Byzantium, which had fallen under Ottoman rule in 1453. The theory of the "third Rome" (after the first, Western-Italian, and, second, Byzantium) was the Tsarist ideology of southwards expansion towards the Balkans from the 16th century until its collapse in 1917. In line with this imperial project, once it reached the shores of the Black Sea, by conquering, at the end of the 18th century,

the North Pontic Novo-Russia and eliminating the Crimean Tatar khanate from history, Russia continued its advance southwards and, in 1812, occupied Bessarabia, an integral part of historical Moldavia. After the next war with Turkey, at the Peace of Adrianople in 1828, Russia established its physical protectorate, not just its right of control, occupying the two Romanian states of Moldavia and Wallachia for more than a decade.

With this development comes a very important turning point. The new milestone is the formation of modern Greece in the 1830, which signifies a fundamental change in the strategy of the Greek elites in relation to the historical recovery of Byzantium ("Megali idea"), which will be consolidated throughout the 19th century. The formation of the modern Greek state also meant the abandonment of the project of recovering Byzantium by reoccupying Constantinople with the support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, traditionally led by the Hellenes in accordance with this desideratum. On one hand, this change was brought by the realisation that the "Megali idea" conflicted with Russia's grand strategy of establishing itself as the "Third Rome" in Constantinople, and on the other by the new orientation of the Greek elites who sought, for the recovery of Byzantium, not the support of Russia, as before, which had suddenly become a rival, but that of the West.

The next important milestone in the geopolitics of the region was the Crimean War (1853-1856), determined by Russia's wish to hold the "keys" of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, thus legitimising its aspiration to become the "Third Rome" according to its own ideology. Russia's defeat in this war led to the West's first intervention in regional geopolitics, and the Peace of Paris placed great restrictions on Russia's southward march by encouraging the formation of the modern Romanian state in 1859, which expanded its territory by recovering Bugeac from Russia (Cahul, Ismail and Bolgrad counties). At this point, the process of national state-construction was a great success, and in 1857, during the national consultations of the ad hoc Divans, a great Romanian strategy was established: the union of the two principalities into a single state, Romania, led by a foreign prince from an independent Western ruling family, and the proclamation of the kingdom.

In this context, the problem of state and church relationship became extremely important in the evolution of modern Romania. The existence of a regional competition for the heritage of Byzantium between pan-Slavism (promoted by Russia) and pan-Hellenism (the "Megali" ideology, supported by the West), thus the revival of Orthodox Byzantium, was seriously complicated by the policy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. A relatively recent survey of this state of affairs in the Balkans records: *"In the 19th century, the "Great Idea" ("Megali Idea") or Greek national identity developed with the aim of restoring the Byzantine Empire and uniting all the historic Greek territories into a single state with its capital at Constantinople. The*

*first concrete step in the realisation of this project was the Greek War of Independence of 1821-1829 and the founding of an independent Greek state. Until the early 19th century, the Greeks expected their liberation to be brought about by Russia, however, starting in 19th century onwards, they relied on the support of Western powers, primarily Britain. The result was the confrontation of two imperial ambitions for the formation of an Orthodox Empire, the Russian imperial one and the Greek national one"*³.

Thus, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, on one hand, opposed the state-construction processes in the Balkans (Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria), under the pretext that this undermines the ecumenicity of the Orthodox Church (in 1872 it founded the concept of "*phyletism*", i.e. nationalism hostile to the Orthodox Church), on the other hand, forced by historical developments, it established that recognition of the independence of states and the non-attachment of the local/national church (considered by the Ecumenical Council as a "separation" from the universal church) should be conditional on the granting of the patriarchal *tomos* (document of recognition). The secular symbolism of the dependence of these states (and churches) on Byzantium was thus maintained. The literature in the field thus records that "*The Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with the monks of Mount Athos over whom it had jurisdiction, represented strict, traditional Orthodoxy, for which spiritual freedom is much more important than national freedom. /... / As such, it resisted the liberal, Westernising tendencies that were gradually taking shape in Athens, Belgrade, Sofia and Bucharest.*"⁴. On these historical evolutions, it is recorded, perhaps with exaggeration, the very complex situation in the Orthodox area: the "*Eastern Issue*" limited to: *which power was to rule Constantinople? Or: were the Orthodox nations subject to the Ottoman Empire to be liberated of their own free will, at the hands of the Russians, or by concerted pressure from the great powers on Turkey?*"⁵.

Russia's victorious war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877-1878 (during which Romania proclaimed its independence and took part in military operations against the Turkish armies) was another important milestone in this evolution of the "Eastern Crisis". Russia removed the constraints that had been imposed on its southward advance after the Crimean War (it had the right to remilitarisation of the Black Sea, obtained the retrocession of the Bugeac, and thus access to the mouths of the Danube). After this war, the Russian imperial ideology, which had previously emphasised brotherhood with the Slavic peoples (pan-Slavism), began to be dominated by clear

³ Lora Gerd, *Russian Policy in the Orthodox East: The Patriarchate of Constantinople (1878-1914)*, De Gruyter Open Ltd, Warsaw/Berlin, 2014, p. IV (preface).

⁴ Vladimir Moss, *The Eastern Question, Pan Hellenism and Pan-Slavism*, 2019 (https://www.academia.edu/40031373/THE_EASTERN_QUESTION_PAN_HELLENISM_AND_PAN_SLAIVISM).

⁵ *Ibidem*

overtones of great power with the clear aim of conquering Constantinople and dominating the Straits. In this context, the Russian plans included both the creation of a Greater Bulgaria (as proclaimed by the Treaty of San Stefano after the war in 1878, but had to back down under the pressure from the Western powers, which consecrated, according to their own interests, the provisions of the treaty signed after the Berlin Congress) and support for Serbian national unification.

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 gave Russia (in 1915) the right, recognised by Britain and France, to occupy Constantinople and settle on the Straits (Sykes-Picot agreement). The outbreak of the Russian Revolution (February 1917) and the rise of the Bolsheviks to the leadership of the Russian state put an end for two decades to Russian plans in the Balkans, which were resumed on a different scale and in a different geopolitical context at the end of the 1930s and, in particular, after the Second World War (the "Truman Doctrine" has its roots in 1947, in the USSR's policy of occupying the Straits by destabilising Turkey, which had been launched by Stalin as part of the huge plan to reconnect Russia with the geopolitical situation that existed on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution).

Thus, for the Romanian elites of the nation-state-construction period, the challenges of the external environment were extraordinary and it took great diplomatic skill and involvement in wars, including the first conflagration, to carry out their own strategy. In this context, the state-church relationship had to evolve in line with national interests, which were constantly threatened by the contradictory developments in the policies of the great powers in the Balkans, particularly Russia.

The second explanation refers to the overall situation of the Romanian Orthodoxy, the leading Christian confession of the Romanian people then as now. Almost half of the Romanian demographic potential was not in the Old Kingdom, but in the occupied provinces, within the Habsburg and Tsarist empires. As is well known, Transylvania and Banat were the first to suffer foreign occupation, and the fact that the original Daco-Romanian homeland was occupied resulted in medieval state pluralism itself (the two extra-Carpathian countries were founded, according to tradition, in the 14th century by mythical "*descălecări*" from Transylvania). In 1848, the European liberal revolution was the first vigorous manifestation of the Romanian people's desire for unity, throughout its area of habitation, in various forms. In Moldavia (partly also in Bukovina) there were revolutionary movements that issued documents containing demands that emphasised the will of unity of the "national party"; in Wallachia, in June 1848, the revolutionaries took over the state for a short time, and in Transylvania the Romanians organised themselves throughout the province, including militarily, to fight against the annexationist tendencies of Hungary. What was

remarkable in 1848 was that both confessions to which the Romanians had adhered, the ancestral Orthodox one and the united (Greek-Catholic) one organised by the Habsburg occupation at the beginning of the 18th century, mobilised the Christians in common national assemblies, presenting the same national demands.

The historical circumstances were adverse, while the national revendications of Romanians in the province were not fulfilled. But this did not mean the end of the fight for national liberation in Transylvania. It was continued on two distinct levels, political and religious, with remarkable successes in both. Thus, on the political level, a political party, the Romanian National Party (in the 1960s), was organised, which carried out a vigorous internal action of organisation and national reawakening, and on the international level it made known the intolerable situation in which the Romanian people found themselves under occupation (the Memorandum movement of 1892). At the religious level, under the leadership of a visionary leader, Bishop and later Metropolitan Andrei Saguna, a vigorous action was launched to liberate the Romanian Orthodox Church from the Serbian Patriarchate of Karlowitz, founding the autocephalous Orthodox Metropolises of Transylvania (1865) and Bukovina (1873). This success was of particular significance, because it removed the Romanian Orthodoxy from the assimilating leadership of a foreign hierarchy and allowed even the political organisation of the struggle for liberation and national unity. If in the Old Kingdom, the "*Byzantine symphony*" characterised the state-church relationship until the Great Union of 1918, in Transylvania and Bukovina, the situation was different. On the contrary, the foundation of these metropolises - part of the broad movement of national liberation - was based on a substantial autonomy from the Habsburg and Hungarian state, defined in detail in the "Organic Statute" drawn up by Andrei Saguna. This considerable autonomy made it possible to considerably increase the national liberation effort, to counteract the assimilation/conversion actions of the authorities, to strengthen the national identity and to raise the standard of education of the masses of believers. A similar process took place in Bukovina, an Austrian duchy, until the union of 1918, where the political authority of Vienna made things somewhat more bearable than in Transylvania under Hungarian rule, but where the efforts to split the Romanian Orthodoxy (the Romanian bishop was persuaded to rise up against a single metropolis of Romanians in the entire Habsburg Empire, as willed by Saguna) or to dissolve the Romanian unity and diminish its influence in the empire (the Serbian bishops of Dalmatia and Croatia were subordinated to the Orthodox metropolis of Cernăuți) never ceased.

The situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Bessarabia was without precedent and an example of devotion to the nation. As part of the Orthodox Church of Russia, the Bessarabian eparchy had to adapt to the many changes in the Russian state's policy towards the church in the

19th century and after the 1905 revolution, but it managed to maintain and substantiate the national identity of its parishioners through its constant and successful efforts to conduct religious services in Romanian, through its own printing and literature, by encouraging the foundation of Orthodox settlements (monasteries, churches) by Romanian believers, etc.

The fact that, immediately after the Great Union in 1918, all Romanian Orthodox Churches voluntarily engaged in the BOR unification process, the initiative being determined precisely from Transylvania and Bessarabia, confirmed that the differences derived from their geopolitical statute (free country and provinces occupied by neighbouring empires) did not alter in any way the constant unity of militant attitude for the formation of the Romanian national unitary state.

The structure of the doctoral endeavour comprises seven chapters intended, on one hand, to answer the research questions, mainly to decipher the Orthodox state-church relationship in the process of the construction of modern Romania, and, on the other hand, to consecrate the importance of what meant both the proclamation of autocephaly (1864 and 1885) and the Patriarchate (1925), from the point of view of the history of the national Orthodox Church.

After a first chapter which presents both the motivation for the choice of this topic and the theoretical and methodological direction of the doctoral approach, chapter 2 focuses on the specific bibliography.

Firstly, the Romanian one has, naturally, the main role, because in our approach we try to elucidate an important chapter of national historical evolution, from the perspective of the relationship between the state and the church in the era of modern state building and the launching of the process of modernisation of the Romanian society. The most valuable and exhaustive bibliographical reference concerning the key concepts of our doctoral approach, namely **autocephaly and the elevation to the rank of Patriarchate of the Romanian Orthodox Church**, is the three massive volumes published in 2010 by the Romanian Patriarchate, on the initiative of His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The monumental work is in many ways the result of scholarly research up to that time on the history of the BOR and the issues related to its role and influence in national history. The first volume, entitled *Autocephaly. Liberty and Dignity* („*Autocefalie. Libertate și demnitate*”), offers a wide range of studies on the concept of autocephaly, written by the most prominent theologians, church historians and Romanian specialists on this issue⁶. Among the studies in this volume, we would like to highlight the contributions on the antiquity and canonical character, identifying forms and states of historical manifestation of autocephaly, as well as on the rank of Patriarchate, as the highest expression of the BOR autocephaly. Most representative for our theme are the studies

⁶ *Autocefalia, Libertate și Demnitate* /în continuare: ADL/, Editura „Basilica” a Patriarhiei Române, București, 2010.

signed by Patriarch Daniel⁷, Liviu Stan⁸, Veniamin Goreanu⁹, Emilian Popescu¹⁰, Mircea Păcurariu¹¹, Nicolae V. Dură¹², Ioan Moldoveanu¹³, Paul Brusanowski¹⁴, Mihai Săsăujan¹⁵, Irime Marga¹⁶, and others. As can be seen from their titles, the studies cover the main issues mentioned (especially the basic concepts from the ecclesiastical perspective (autocephaly, the rank of Patriarchate, the "Byzantine symphony"), also providing the accumulated bibliography. Their authors are renowned specialists, university professors at theological institutes in the country, historians of the Orthodox Church mastering their own field of research. The commemorative volume of the 125th anniversary of the proclamation of the autocephaly of the BOR is an expression of the high level reached in the study of this issue, including a series of clarifying documents. The second volume of the series, *Autocephaly and Responsibility* ("*Autocefalie și responsabilitate*"), details the history and achievements of the historical metropolises of the BOR, as well as those of the Romanian metropolises, archdioceses and dioceses outside the borders of Romania, from the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of Germany, Central and Northern Europe, to the Romanian Archdiocese of the Americas, and from the Diocese of Dacia Felix, to the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Australia and New Zealand. The third volume in the same anniversary series is entitled *Autocephaly and Communion* ("*Autocefalie și comuniune*") and deals with the external relations of the Romanian Orthodox Church, its links with Orthodox Churches sisters, with other Christian Churches, with international ecumenical organisations, with European institutions, as well as with Romanian communities outside Romania's borders (with Romanians in the Diaspora).

As shown in the work, through the references to the most important journals of BOR- of theological faculties or printed under the aegis of the Patriarchate or the metropolis of the country - today there is a very important and competent contingent in the study of the national ecclesiastical past, expressing new points of view not only on aspects of Orthodox dogma, but also on the international relations of the BOR or on its own positions on various current ecclesiological issues

⁷ Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, *Autocefalia bisericească: unitate de credință și libertate de conducere*, în ADL, pp. 11-17.

⁸ Liviu Stan, *Despre principiile canonice fundamentale ale Ortodoxiei*, în ADL, pp. 18-25.

⁹ Veniamin Goreanu, *Autocefalia în Biserica Ortodoxă*, în ADL, pp.50-64.

¹⁰ Emilian Popescu, *Începuturile îndepărtate ale autocefaliei BOR: Tomisul – arhiepiscopie autocefală*, în ADL, pp. 85-100.

¹¹ Mircea Păcurariu, *Câteva considerații cu privire la vechimea „autocefaliei” Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, în ADL, pp. 101-112.

¹² Nicolae V. Dură, *Forme și stări de manifestare ale autocefaliei BOR. Mărturii istorice, ecleziologice și canonice*, în ADL, pp.113-155.

¹³ Ioan Moldoveanu, *Tipărirea cărților de cult în limba română – premise ale autocefaliei BOR*, în ADL, pp. 264-279.

¹⁴ Paul Brusanowski, *Autocefalia de facto a Bisericii Ortodoxe a Transilvaniei (1864-1925). Statutul canonic al Bisericilor Ortodoxe din Imperiul Austro-Ungar*, în ADL, pp. 369-389.

¹⁵ Mihai Săsăujan, *Autocefalia BOR în corespondența diplomatică românească (1885)*, în ADL, pp. 354-368.

¹⁶ Irime Marga, *Instituția patriarhatului în Biserică*, în ADL, pp. 444-454

or on the attempts at religious detainment of the two great churches of Christianity (three, if we include Protestantism).

Following the observation of an expert in the history of the Orthodox Church, who mentioned that, in order to satisfactorily explain how the Orthodox Church acted in the "century of nationalities", it is necessary to investigate it over a "long period of time", right from the beginnings of Christianity, we have proceeded accordingly. Of course, such a vast bibliography cannot be sufficiently penetrated in only three years of research. But in order to get an idea of this bibliography, I would like to refer to an important publication in the field, which appeared in two successive issues of the "*Greek Orthodox Theological Review*" in 2005¹⁷: The reference entitled "*Modern Orthodox Church History: A Bibliography of Works in Western Languages*", is by nature a limited working tool, since it is limited to works published in the modern period in Western languages (English, French, German), without mentioning the large number of works published in other languages. The reference to this general bibliography (the only one of its kind we identified) has several motivations: it highlights the volume of research in the field of the historical evolution of Orthodoxy, mentions the main research directions, including the most recent ones, reveals the priority linguistic and geographical space in general scientific research, also highlighting important national schools, including the Romanian one.

The paper contains 231 pages in which almost 2400 titles are inserted. It should be mentioned that the structure of this bibliography stops in 2004 (there are few books published in 2005), while the way in which the quoted works are catalogued reveals the extraordinary variety of research directions. For example, under the heading "*Reference and general works*" there are around two hundred works, the oldest dating from 1899 and the newest from 2004. Of these, almost 20 titles are themselves bibliographies¹⁸, so keeping proportions and avoiding overlaps, several thousand other titles can be consulted, some of them indispensable for understanding the progress made in the field over the last century¹⁹. In the category "*Specific Regions and Churches*", the works dealing with Albania or the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Americas, the Patriarchate of Antioch, Athos (Monastic Republic of the Holy Mountain), Australia, Austria and the Austro-Hungarian Empire²⁰ are listed under "A"; under "B" are listed: the Patriarchate of Bulgaria, then

¹⁷ Jack Fairey, *Modern Orthodox Church History: A Bibliography of Works in Western Languages*, in „Greek Orthodox Theological Review”, vol. 50, no.1-4, 2005.

¹⁸ York and Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987; Sturdza, Mihail-Dimitri, *Dictionnaire historique et généalogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople*, Paris, M. Sturdza, 1983

¹⁹ Obolensky, Dimitri, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1971.

²⁰ For example, regarding Romania there are several references to Andrei Șaguna, including: Hitchins, Keith, „*Andrei Șaguna and Joseph Rajacié: The Romanian and Serbian Churches in the Decade of Absolutism*”, „Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes”, 10, no. 3 (Bucharest, 1972), pp. 567-579 și idem, *Orthodoxy and Nationality: Andrei Șaguna*

under "C": China and Japan, the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Ottoman Empire and Turkey), Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia; then, in alphabetical order, Finland and Estonia; Georgia; Greece; Italy, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem; FYROM/Ohrid (for the name of today's North Macedonia, according to the era)²¹; Patriarchate of Romania (about 150 Romanian and foreign titles are listed); Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate (over 500 titles); Patriarchate of Serbia and Montenegro (over 130 titles); Sinai, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus and Poland²²; Western Europe. It is worth mentioning that several works from the 17th century, republished in the 20th or 21st century, are also referred to. In the section on the Modern Age, the author of the bibliography also includes works relating to the 13th and 15th centuries, which study important events such as the fall of Byzantium and the development of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in that period.

In the structure of the bibliography, the sections in which we found interesting works for our subject are the following: "*Special topics in the history of Orthodoxy*"; "*Orthodoxy and Judaism*²³"; "*Orthodoxy and the material world (witchcraft, occultism, science and medicine)*²⁴"; "*Orthodoxy, nationalism, justice and the state*"; "*Orthodoxy and society (women and family)*", where a Romanian contribution is listed²⁵.

As I have said, the presence of Romanian literature in this bibliography is notable, with almost every section including Romanian authors, with works published in foreign languages in foreign publishers, but also in Romania, which argues the need for this effort of our specialists -

and the Romanians of Transylvania, 1846-1873, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ. Press, 1977; Bocșan, Nicolae, Ioan Lumperdean and Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Ethnie et confession en Transylvanie: du XIII^e au XIX^e siècles*, translated by Ana Rodica Tomoiagă, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Fundația Culturală Română, Cluj-Napoca, România, 1996; Păcurariu, Mircea, *The Policy of the Hungarian State Concerning the Romanian Church in Transylvania under the Dual Monarchy, 1867-1918*, Bucharest, Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, 1986; Papacostea-Danielopolu, Cornelia. *L'Organisation de la Compagnie Grecque de Brașov (1777-1850)*, „Balkan Studies”, 14, no. 2, Thessaloniki, 1973, pp. 313-323 ș.a.

²¹ Apud Maxim, Mihai, *Les relations des pays roumains avec l'archevêché d'Ohrid a la lumière de documents turcs inédits*, „Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes”, 19, no. 4, Bucharest, 1981, pp. 653-671

²² Connections of BOR to this space in history are discussed in the study of Matei Cazacu, *Pierre Mohula (Petru Movilă) et la Roumanie: Essai Historique et bibliographique*, Harvard, „Ukrainian Studies”, 8, no. 1-2, Cambridge, Mass., 1984, pp. 188-222, sau de Teofil Ionesco, *La vie et l'oeuvre de Pierre Movila, métropole de Kiev*, Paris, Impr. Nidot, 1944

²³ See studies: Volovici, Leon, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s*, Oxford and New York, published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem by Pergamon Press, 1991; Iancu, Carol, *Jews in Romania, 1866-1919: From Exclusion to Emancipation*, translated by Carvel de Bussy, „East European Monographs”, 449, Boulder, Colo., East European Monographs, 1996

²⁴ Ryan, William Francis, *Alchemy and the Virtues of Stones in Muscovy în: Alchemy and Chemistry in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, edited by Piyo Rattansi and Antonio Clericuzio, pp. 149-159, Dordrecht, Netherlands, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994; idem, *Alchemy, Magic, Poisons and the Virtues of Stones in the Old Russian Secretum Secretorum*, Ambix, 37, no. 1, Cambridge, UK, 1990, pp. 46-54; Stewart, Charles, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton Univ. Press, 1991

²⁵ Stan, Maria Mihaela, *Frauenrollen und Frauenrechte in der Rumänisch-Orthodoxen Kirche, Kanon: Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für das Recht des Ostkirchen*, Egling an der Paar, Germany, 2005, pp. 122-139

historians, political scientists and prelates - to be continued and expanded. In order to have a picture of the concerns in the field of Orthodoxy as religion, we must appreciate the huge publishing activity (books, monographs, studies, articles) in Romanian during the period covered by the Fairey bibliography, totalling tens of thousands of titles.

Several mentions on the section entitled: „**Orthodoxy, nationalism, justice and state**”, are imposed as they are connected to our topic; moreover, they include references to „autocephaly” and „patriarchate”. The most references to "autocephaly" were identified in the bibliography on Ukraine, and this has a convincing explanation. Having proclaimed its state independence with the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine embarked in the early 2000s on a vigorous "*nation building*" project, which put at the forefront, from an ecclesiastical point of view, what was traditional and characteristic of the Orthodox states that emerged in the 19th and 20th centuries and embarked on the modernisation process, namely the acquisition of the "autocephaly" of the national Church. Current events - the war that began with Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th 2022 - are by no means unrelated to this process.

Without a doubt, it should be mentioned that the studied bibliography made it possible to clarify the basic concepts used in the doctoral approach. Thus, with regard to "autocephaly" and "patriarchy", essential for the individuality of the Ecumenical Orthodox Church, both Romanian and foreign research was useful²⁶. Also, the accurate establishment of the concept of "*Byzantine symphony*", crucial in the canonical and historical understanding of the relationship between state and church, from Emperor Justinian's Novel VI in the first half of the 6th century to the present day, has been greatly helped by works published in various linguistic horizons²⁷. In the case of the concepts of "*nationalism*", "*modernisation*", "*state-building*", and for the period close to us, of "*globalisation*", we have discovered studies and monographs that are consistent and solid in their interpretation²⁸, as well as those that enabled us to identify in the Romanian area our own concepts

²⁶ Among these works: Pedro Ramet, *Autocephaly and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction*, „Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century”, Durham, Duke University Press, 1988; Victor Roudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy: 'Unthinking' the 'Clash of Civilizations' in Southeastern Europe*, „European Journal of Social Theory”, nr. 2, 1999; Alfeyev, Hilarion, „*La notion du territoire canonique dans la tradition Orthodoxe*”, „International Symposium of Canon Law at the Catholic Theological Academy of Budapest”, 7 February 2005, identified by us in [Canonicité du territoire dans la Tradition orthodoxe](https://www.forumorthodoxe.com/~forum/viewtopic.php?p=6246&sid=c5a73bd7aae3aea4f9b1aabfd6dbd78a#p6246), French-speaking Orthodox forum, on which this text is reproduced in full, on March 2nd 2005: <https://www.forumorthodoxe.com/~forum/viewtopic.php?p=6246&sid=c5a73bd7aae3aea4f9b1aabfd6dbd78a#p6246>; Malešević, Siniša, *Did Wars Make Nation-States in the Balkans? Nationalisms, Wars and States in the 19th and early 20th Century South East Europe* in „Journal of Historical Sociology”, vol. 25, no. 3, September 2012, pp. 301-302.

²⁷ Vladimir Moss, *The Byzantine Symphony of Powers*, website on Orthodox Theology and Church History - <https://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/587/-byzantine-symphony-powers/>; Pilat, Liviu, *Între Roma și Bizanț. Societate și putere în Moldova (secolele XIV-XVI)*, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2008; Păcurariu, Mircea, pr., *Studii de istorie a Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. I și II, București, 2005 și 2009;

²⁸ Victor Roudometof, *Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy: 'Unthinking' the 'Clash of Civilizations' în „Southeastern Europe. European Journal of Social Theory”, nr. 2, 199, pp. 233-247; Keith Hitchins, *The Idea of Nation**

- "*translatio imperii*" and "*Inner Byzantium*" -, subjects of in-depth research in Romanian medieval studies.

The numberless titles of studies and monographies of foreign authors- most of them within the ecumenic Orthodoxy however- I evoke not out of a "parade" of depth of research - many have not been studied in depth - but out of the need to acquire a picture as close as possible to reality in the whole of this vast literature, which would give me an understanding of the meaning, in the era in question, of the concepts identified and currently used. The effort in this direction was rewarding, for example, in the case of "autocephaly", as it revealed the perspective of an interpretation other than the usual one perpetuated by most specialists. As well known, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, faced with the "separation" of the "national" churches with the extensive *nation-building* process in the Balkans, took defensive measures, such as, for example, the launching of the concept of "*phyletism*" in 1872, incriminating as hostile the "separation" of national churches. A thesis with limited circulation, but which corresponds to the logic of historical evolution, is that "*autocephaly*", an ancient Orthodox concept, was reactivated and imposed as a "passing bar" for the "national" churches in the second half of the 19th century; until then, its applicability, through the attribution of a "*tomos*" of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, was understood for the suffragan metropolises (Wallachia, Moldavia, in our case). This resuscitation of "*autocephaly*" was prompted by the long-standing dispute with the Greek nation-state over its own "national" church. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has for decades fiercely opposed the non-attachment of the Greek church, under the underlying reasons of diminishing the importance of the plan for the Hellenic recovery of Byzantium and confusion in articulating the ideology of the "Megali idea". It was not until 1852 that an agreement was reached whereby this Greek church was granted the patriarchal tomos of "autocephaly", while the rank of patriarchate was preserved for the Ecumenical Patriarchate (a situation which still applies today). The Romanian case - Cuza declaring the BOR "autocephalous" and resorting to the secularisation of the worshipped

among the Romanians of Transylvania, 1700-1849 în *Nation and National Ideology Past, Present and Prospects*, Bucharest, „The Center for the History of the Imaginary and New Europe College”, 2002, pp. 80-81; Constantin Schifirneț, *Orthodoxy, Church, State, and National Identity*, în „Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies”, vol. 12, issue 34, Spring 2013, Clark, Roland, *Orthodoxy and Nation-Building: Nichifor Crainic and Religious Nationalism in 1920s Romania*, 2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2012.685057>, [http://www.tandfonline.cm.](http://www.tandfonline.cm;); Schifirneț, Constantin, *Spiru Haret, Reformatorul societății românești*, în *Operele lui Spiru C. Haret*, ediție îngrijită, studiu introductiv și note de Constantin Schifirneț, prefață de Remus Pricopie, Volumul I – *Oficiale*, Editura Comunicare SNSPA, București, 2009; Schifirneț, Constantin, *Formele fără fond, un brand românesc*, Editura Comunicare, SNSPA, București, 2007; Sugar, Peter F., *External and Domestic Roots of Eastern European Nationalism*, în *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, ed. by Peter F. Sugar and Ivo John Lederer, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1994; Hovorun, Cyril, *Nation-building versus nationalism: difficult dilemmas for the Church*, în „Icoana Credinței”, 6, no. 11 (2020), pp. 5–16, <https://doi.org/10.26520/icoana.2020.11.6.5-16>; Rus, Constantin, *Caracterul național în Biserica Ortodoxă*, în „Teologia”, anul XII, nr. 1, Arad, 2008

monasteries - demonstrated to the Ecumenical Patriarchate the great danger of the separation of the national churches and, as such, the loss of its international significance (already threatened by the competition of the Russian Patriarchate). The emergence of the "*phyletism*" concept at the Ecumenical Council of 1872 is only a consequence of this intense opposition to the independence of the national churches, which was, however, in contradiction with the canons of the first Ecumenical Councils concerning "*Byzantine symphony*"²⁹.

The next two chapters of our endeavour study the problem of BOR autocephaly, its historical roots, the state- church relation ("ruler-metropolitan") in medieval times, as well as the file of the period 1864-1885, from the moment when the BOR proclaimed itself an "autocephalous church" (during ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza) until its recognition by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the reception of the canonical *tomos* (chap. 3: *Autocephaly of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the state-church relationship: from the Middle Ages to the "century of nationalities"*; chap. 4: *From the de facto "autocephaly" of the Romanian Orthodox Church (1864) to its de jure recognition (1885). The Romanian Parliament has been debating and approving church legislation since 1864*). This is a substantial part of the doctoral thesis, in which particular emphasis was placed (in chapter 3) on the fact that the Orthodox Church was constantly a reliable support of the protector state (only the country's army played such a role until the Phanariot era), and that autocephaly was a main indicator of the autonomy of the Romanian medieval states during the period of Ottoman rule. The medieval period of Romanian statehood, from the establishment of the two extra-Carpathian states, gained international recognition not only through the military effort applied in the first centuries, but also, concomitantly and inseparably, through the unattached nature of the metropolitan territories of Moldavia and Wallachia in the historical evolution, until the birth of modern Romania.

Three issues of interest are detailed in this part of the doctoral thesis: on one hand, the fact that the Romanian Orthodox Church has been autocephalous, *de facto* and *de jure*, since the foundation of the metropolitan territories (1359 in Wallachia and 1402 in Moldavia); on the other hand, the situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania has been particular, with a process of assimilation (by absorption or dissolution), which engaged a continuous struggle of resistance; finally, the historical reconstruction in Romanian historiography of this period in the evolution of the national church and its relationship with the 'civil' domination is contradictory.

²⁹ Extensively, at Daniel P. Payne, *Nationalism and the Local Church: The Source of Ecclesiastical Conflict in the Orthodox Commonwealth*, in „Nationalities Papers”, vol. 35, no. 5, November 2007, p. 835

Regarding the first matter, apart from other documents supporting the permanence of the church's autocephaly since the foundation of the metropolises of Curtea de Argeș and Suceava, we have a definitive proof provided by the ruler Dimitrie Cantemir. Autocephaly, i.e., the independence of the church, consists in the fundamental fact of the election/appointment of the metropolitan by the ruler, itself a sign of the autonomy (self-sufficient existence) of the Romanian medieval states. In his "Description of Moldavia", the ruler wrote the following: *"In the external affairs of the Church in Moldavia, the Lord exercises superior care. /.../ He ensures that the priests, both in their deeds and in their teachings, correspond to the precepts of the Orthodox religion, and that none of them deviate from the path of truth, nor hide the heart of a wolf in sheep's clothing, nor neglect the flock entrusted to their shepherding, nor give scandal to it by evil examples. The Metropolitan rules in internal affairs. To him is entrusted the care of souls, how to direct them on the path that leads to heaven. He, as a faithful shepherd and servant of God, visits the churches subject to him, appoints bishops, who, though they have no knowledge, yet are filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit. /.../ The Metropolitan of Moldavia occupies a special position in the Eastern Church, which no other metropolitan has /.../ he is not obliged by any law to ask the patriarch about things that have been done or are to be done in the Church of Moldavia, and he has the same freedom in his Church /that/ the patriarch of Ohrida has in his diocese /.../ But, besides this great power which the Metropolitan of Moldavia has, he can neither appoint nor dismiss his bishops. Only the Lord has this right. He alone has the power to examine the life and erudition of candidates for the episcopate; he alone examines the cause of those who are to be dismissed and he alone pronounces sentence"*³⁰.

Thus, the essential feature of autocephaly is clearly set out by one of the most educated rulers, namely, that in the "Byzantine symphony" the harmonious but firm "emperor-patriarch" relationship regarding the primacy of the worldly ruler is embodied in the appointment of the metropolitan, the latter being in charge with the management of the internal affairs of the church.

³⁰ Speech delivered in the Senate by Dimitrie A. Sturdza, Senator of Ialomița County, with appendices: Article 21 of the Constitution and the various bills for the improvement of the material situation of the clergy from 1882 to 1893, in "Biserica Ortodoxă Română", Bucharest, 1893, pp. 4-5; another passage from the "Description of Moldavia": "All the offices of the country, political and in the army, are at the pleasure of the lord, he gives them to those who are dear to him and takes them away from those he hates. /.../ The same power he has not only over the common monks, but also over the metropolitan, bishops, archimandrites and egomaniacs, as well as over all those of the ecclesiastical rank. If they have committed any wickedness, wronged any of the people, or plotted against the lord or the country, the lord may remove them from their ecclesiastical office and rank without hindrance and without the permission of the patriarch of Tsarigrad, but he may not take away the gift of the priesthood from them; he may, however, condemn them to death if necessary. The monks choose new rulers for themselves, but only when the lord gathers them together for this purpose; his permission is also required, which he gives in this way: the lord gives the chosen one, with his own hand, the rod of shepherding. This right is taken after the custom of the investiture of Roman emperors by popes, and none of the Christian princes have it but the Russian tsar".-

https://www.bibliotecapemobil.ro/content/scoala/pdf/Descrierea_Moldovei_Dimitrie_Cantemir.pdf.

Of course, this autocephaly of the Romanian church has not been consistently applied with clarity. On one hand, after the collapse of the Byzantium, the Ecumenical Patriarchate needed resources, in the 16th-17th centuries procuring them from Romanian countries, and its interference in the appointment of metropolitans, bishops or even at lower levels is documented. At the same time, we note resistance movements within the church when the lord failed to make use of his prerogatives, allowing Patriarchal appointments as a result of a veritable process of "grecisation" of its own structures. Especially after the installation of the Phanariot dominions in both states, at the beginning of the 17th century and the invasion of the royal relatives in the Principalities, it represented a consolidation of the interference of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the affairs of the Romanian Church, a situation that would take a decisive turn after Tudor Vladimirescu's revolution in 1821 and the consolidation of the national identity.

After the Phanariot period, the explosion of Romanian national consciousness generated in accordance with the period subsequent to the French Revolution in 1789 and the advance of political and economic liberalism – of certain great acts leading to the formation of modern Romania. First there was the 1848 revolution, then the consultations of the ad hoc Divans, which decided the unification of the two Principalities and the formation of the modern Romanian state. Among the first acts issued in this new state, there were the unification of the ancient metropolises and the affirmation of autocephaly, together with the secularisation of the monastery estates dedicated to the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Its opposition was ignored, and in 1872 Romania issued a first law devoted to the organisation of the national ecclesiastical institution. In 1866, with the Constitution adopted by the Romanian Parliament, the BOR was declared an institution of the Romanian state, accompanying the process of implementing the great 1848 strategy: independence and the proclamation of the Kingdom, considered at the time as a necessary and irreplaceable tool for the consolidation of national identity and international affirmation on positions of systemic equality. It was a decision that took into account the geopolitical situation of Romania, as almost half of the Romanian nation was under foreign rule, and therefore also visionary in its reference to the unity that would be achieved.

The situation of Romanian population in occupied provinces, especially Transylvania, was endangered, as the only untouched institution representing them, the Orthodox Church (the Greek-Catholic Church was led by the Pope from Rome), was subjected to a long process of conversion, lasting several centuries, in order to speed up the denationalisation of this part of the nation. First there was the Calvinist attempt, encouraged by the Hungarian ruling class, to subordinate (eventually convert) the Orthodox Church, to which Michael the Brave (*Romanian: Mihai Viteazul*) had re-established the secular metropolis in 1600. In the face of the unity of the Orthodox

hierarchy in the two extra-Carpathian Romanian countries - Metropolitan Varlaam of Moldavia being the initiator of the resistance movement as early as the 1730s - this attempt - which aimed far towards the establishment of a "Calvinist Dacia", as Gabriel Bethlen, the Transylvanian Voivode, had hoped - failed. This was followed by the Habsburg attempt to convert the Romanian Orthodox Church of Transylvania to Catholicism, with the support and at the behest of the new imperial occupant (1699), but this too was unsuccessful. Of course, some of the high Orthodox clergy were attracted to form the United Romanian Greek Catholic Church (1701), but this partial success proved to be more of a failure of the plan. This conversion was not total, but a Transylvanian Orthodox Church continued to function and strengthen, and from the first decades of its existence this Greek Catholic Church produced the first generation of the "Transylvanian School", which would fundament, through its leaders, a genuine programme of the national liberation struggle. Among these visionary leaders of the united church, Bishop Inochentie Micu Klein, who drafted the first national project to reclaim the ancient rights of the Romanians as the original and majority population in the province, soon distinguished himself.

The Transylvanian Orthodox Church continued to be suppressed, being subordinated to the Serbian Patriarchate at Karlowitz. Under the impact of the liberal transformations in Europe, the Orthodox Romanians demanded, since the end of the 18th century, to have exclusive control of their own church affairs, and in 1848-1849, the leaders of the two national churches agreed on the imperative of a common struggle for national affirmation. The activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church was from this event entirely devoted to the formation of a representative metropolis for all Orthodox Romanians in the Habsburg Empire (in 1775, the Habsburg Empire had occupied the northern part of Moldavia, to which it gave the name of Bukovina). It was the Bishop of Sibiu, Andrei Saguna, who led a relentless struggle to achieve this goal in those years - N. Iorga called his vision the "Saguna ideology", which also influenced developments in the newly formed Romania - trying to overcome all difficulties. The success was the foundation of the autocephalous Metropolis of Transylvania, Banat and parts of Hungary inhabited by Romanians in 1865, with a wide autonomy from the Hungarian state, liable before the Emperor in Vienna. The machinations of the occupying power and certain group interests prevented the establishment of a single metropolis of Orthodox Romanians in the Habsburg Empire, but in 1873 an autocephalous Orthodox metropolis was established in Bukovina, representative of the population of this denomination in the province.

The entire historical battle of the Romanian Orthodoxy, represented above in a simplified manner, eventually translated into the establishment of the two autocephalous metropolises, with a huge role in maintaining and consolidating the national identity in these provinces occupied by

Austro-Hungary, constitutes a substantial chapter of the national liberation struggle. In these cases, in Transylvania, Banat and Bukovina, the church was the key institution in mobilising the nation against the occupying state/empire. Thus, a radically different situation compared to the Old Kingdom, where the broad autonomy envisaged by the "Saguna ideology" was used in the occupied provinces to promote national interests against the oppressive state. From this perspective, we have also documented the special situation of the Bessarabian diocese (a province occupied by the Tsarist Empire in 1812), which for a century was the main institution that managed to maintain the national identity of the Bessarabian branch of the nation in difficult conditions.

Finally, with reference to the contradictory aspects identified in the Romanian medievalist literature regarding the state-church relationship in the period, we found with surprise that there is a real "dispute" regarding the existence of the autocephaly of the BOR in the period. A part of the specialists rightly claims that autocephaly was always present in the Middle Ages, being the expression - with the establishment of the metropolises of Wallachia and Moldavia, heirs of the oldest pre-state ecclesiastical structures on the Romanian territory (the metropolis of Vicina, in the South of the country) while another orientation - with fewer partisans - denies the existence of this rank, in the absence of a legitimate "tomos". I mention this "dispute" of the Romanian medievalists not to reproach its existence - thus advancing in the deeper and more realistic knowledge of the past - but because it gives me the opportunity to note that both camps are found in the affirmation and substantiation of concepts of great significance for the greatness and exceptional achievements of the national medieval orthodoxy, such as "*translatio imperii*" or "*Inner Byzantium*", true monuments of medieval political thought, precursors to the formation of the nation.

Another two chapters are dedicated to the study of the state-church relationship in the years immediately after the Great Union and until the proclamation of the Romanian Patriarchate at the same time with the unification of the Romanian Orthodoxy in the entire national legitimate territory (*Romanian Orthodoxy at the time of the Great Union and the Unification of the Romanian Orthodox Church (1919-1925): the problems of the state-church relationship after the Great Union* (chapter 6) and the *Unification of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the proclamation of the Romanian Patriarchate - a sovereign act of state* (chapter 7). With these two chapters, the doctoral approach is nearing the end of its research, being the opportunity, for more than a quarter of it, to highlight the state-church relationship in a short but crucial period in the secular history of Romanian Orthodoxy, triggered by the Great Union of 1918.

Firstly, I wish to mention that, in both chapters, we find a detailed reconstitution of the particular situation of the Romanian Orthodoxy in the 19th century, with its historical roots, so that at 1918, the BOR unification had to proceed with the negotiated amalgamation of four distinct

purely national Orthodox structures: the BOR of the Old Kingdom, the two autocephalous metropolises of the former Habsburg Empire - Transylvania and Bukovina - and the eparchy of Bessarabia. The difficulty of the unification process becomes clear once, immediately in 1919, this process corresponding, in religious terms, to the institutional unification of Greater Romania was set in motion, when a detailed historical overview - undertaken mainly in these last two chapters - reconstructs in general terms the history of the four entities, the specificities of each one, its role in the respective territory, their different material situation, the way they functioned in the free country or under the occupying state, the aspirations triggered by the Great Union, etc. A distinctive aspect of this reconstruction is the angle of the state-church relationship applied to each of the four structures, with the revelation of interesting peculiarities. The most striking of these peculiarities was the degree of internal autonomy, which proved to be one of the main sources of the unification process, initiated in 1919 and completed in 1925, with the adoption by the National Parliament of the *Law for the Unification of the Romanian Orthodox Church*. In accordance with the country's Constitution, adopted in 1923, this fundamental law of 1925 stipulated in Article 1: "*The Romanian Orthodox Church, being the religion of the great majority of Romanians, is the dominant Church in the Romanian State. It is and remains autocephalous, i.e. unattached to any outside kyriarchy, while preserving its unity with the Ecumenical Church of the East in matters of dogma*" (see Annex no. 8 of the thesis).

A necessary mention must be made of the fact that the positions of the Orthodox Churches in the occupied provinces played a significant role in the process of national unification of the BOR, especially on the issue of internal autonomy. Immediately after the Great Union in 1918, these churches demanded the process be launched as soon as possible, announcing that there should be no further delay in the consultations between the church leaderships for this purpose. From this point of view, the action of the Transylvanian Metropolis was remarkable, and it also outlined a work programme, which was largely implemented in the years that followed, by electing and setting up special decision-making bodies on the main issues under discussion. The political response from Bucharest was initially disappointing, as the whole process was seen as nothing more than a bureaucratic formality (the inclusion of the hierarchs of the new provinces in the BOR Synod, the appointment of a metropolitan primate, and then the passage through Parliament of a law detailing the component structures and lines of operation). These measures once taken, the law unifying the Orthodox Church having already been passed by the Chamber of Deputies, but the inconsistency of such a solution, which increased tensions in the church institution and in its relations with the state, was realised, it was stopped from being debated in the Senate and the

bodies designated to reach a general consensus were again consulted (a "commission of 15 hierarchs" had previously been set up for this purpose).

In our endeavours, we presented this situation, since the motivation for the change of action of the Romanian state in this regard was due to the constant and vigorous argumentation of these churches on the issue of internal autonomy. Accustomed to the status of the BOR in the Old Kingdom, without taking into account that it had often been criticised, either by prelates or politicians, with attempts of improving it through successive legislative changes from 1892 to 1911, especially after the peasant uprising of 1907, the politicians initially considered that the state-church link found in the Constitution of 1866 - by which the BOR was designated as a state structure - should be maintained after the Union of 1918. Despite having the experience of drafting the Constitution in 1923, in which the politicians had to acknowledge the enormous complexity of the problem of ecclesiastical unification, the fact that the question of the status of both BOR and the Romanian United Church (subordinate to the Pope) was now being raised simultaneously in the Romanian state, the initial preference was for unification action on the dimension rooted in 1866. In view of the geopolitical situation that developed in those years around Romania - the huge Bolshevik danger in the East, war with one of the neighbours in the West, external attempts to unleash large-scale subversive movements in the country, such as the 1924 Tatar-Bunar Bolshevik putsch in Bessarabia, the revisionist incursions in the South - the position of the political power may have had the argument of the imperative to solve the unification issue without delay, but it did not take into account the evolution of an institution of considerable national significance. Any splits or different positions taken by certain ecclesiastical figures had to be taken into account, especially as there were signs that the decision to switch from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar had not met with the unanimous approval of the clergy and the general public.

The memorialist literature of the time also shows another cause of this political resistance to the claim of church autonomy. Namely, the achievement of the Great Union, the new country having 25-30% of its population minorities - some of them well organised, politically experienced and familiar with the existing palette of state organisation - quickly raised the fear of regionalism or administrative autonomy in the eyes of the politicians, so that just the word "autonomy" aroused the rejection of the politicians. It was the normal reflex of an elite for whom the unification and standardisation of the administrative-political management of the historically sedimented diversity of regional patterns in a single homogeneous and efficient state body demanded a negative reaction to everything that meant autonomy and seemed to oppose centralism.

The resumption of the debates among the representatives of the churches involved in the BOR unification process was beneficial, reaching a relatively acceptable consensus regarding the

internal autonomy of the Orthodox church, the participation of the laity in the election of high hierarchs or the management of their own institutions of education and public action. The status inherited from the Old Kingdom was abandoned, but not entirely, being within the reasonable limits of the "Byzantine symphony" corresponding to the long evolution of Orthodoxy and its distinguishing mark from the Catholic Church.

The proclamation of the Patriarchate once again showed the decisive application of the principle of "*Byzantine symphony*" in united Romania. Here is how the first Patriarch of the BOR, Miron Cristea, describes the details of the decision to elevate the BOR to this rank and how it was implemented: "*The idea of the Romanian Patriarchate was born in the minds of many, immediately as Romania was united. /.../ When we began the meetings of the commission of fifteen for the drafting of the project of unitary organisation of the Church, the idea was launched. The Bessarabian people even made a written memorial and took decisions in their church assemblies at home. I didn't give the thing the go-ahead, so as not to appear that I wanted it and forced it /.../ The idea caught on, it was ripe. They wrote the magazines. /.../ The realisation took the Minister President I. I. C. Brătianu in hand. /.../ The Synod - seeing the idea ripe - knew it was time to decide. /.../ The matter was prepared during the synodal assembly of November 1924. /.../ Professor Iorga, Dr. Lupaş wrote preparatory articles. /.../ I convened the synod on February 4th, 1925. Unfortunately, the Turkish government expelled the new Patriarch from Constantinople. /.../ Archbishop Gurie of Chişinău presided. Everyone was excited. /.../ In the Senate it passed with the approval of all parties... In the House something solemn. /.../ All unanimous. Everyone speaks prepared. Standing ovations, on the gallery some weep with joy /.../*³¹.

In our endeavour, we have presented in detail the internal and, especially, international conditions of the proclamation of the Patriarchate of Romania. In particular, I insisted on the fact that the Greek-Turkish war of 1919-1922, concluded with the Peace of Laussane, added to the attitude of the Bolshevik regime towards the Moscow Patriarchate, and in general towards the clergy and the Church, led to a serious crisis of Orthodox ecumenicalism, even leading to the expulsion of the Ecumenical Patriarch from Constantinople by the Turkish government. It is therefore acceptable that the decision taken by the Romanian state and ecclesiastical authorities to proclaim the Patriarchate of Romania, essentially aimed at the traditional affirmation of the country's systemic status through the rank of the dominant church - which is specific to the Orthodox area - was also intended to eliminate the serious disruption caused by this crisis in the Orthodox *Commonwealth*. It must be mentioned - and certain acts subsequently carried out at the

³¹ Miron Cristea, *Însemnări ascunse*, p. 94, 95.

international level, in which the Romanian Patriarchate was involved, confirm it - that this decision and its implementation were beneficial in overcoming one of the most serious crises that the Ecumenical Patriarchate went through after 1453. The Romanian state acted, as before, in support of the ecumenicity of Orthodoxy by strengthening the patriarchal rank, which was in danger with the situation of the Church in Bolshevik Russia and the consequences of the Turkish victory over Greece in 1922.

Finally, I inserted the conclusions of the doctoral endeavour (pages 222-239). I quote here some of them, mentioning that they are the fruit of the bibliographical research, that they do not intend any kind of polemic intentions and that they may undergo, with the deepening of the interpretation of the very rich past of the BOR, extensive additions or even modifications. I would also like to mention that these conclusions are my own views on the addressed issues, as I have reconstructed and presented them with my modest means, thanking my predecessors and contemporaries who, through their factual and interpretative contributions, have guided me along the path of finding my own perception.

Thus, in the end, I summarised not only the foundations of the uniqueness of the Romanian case of manifestation of the ancient principle of the "*Byzantine symphony*" in the construction of modern and united Romania until 1925 in universal Orthodoxy, but also the historical events that determined and concretised in the BOR the symbolic affirmation of autocephaly and the rank of Patriarchate consonant with the international status of the Romanian state. At the same time, we have revealed the internal and international requirements that imposed the creation, in practice, of two models, corresponding to the two stages of the national-state construction of Romania in the 19th and 20th centuries. The first was the model of the Old Kingdom of the application of the "*Byzantine symphony*" in the conditions of the modernisation that began at that time and characterised by the close link between the state and the church (in the constitutional formulation the church being an "organ of the state"); the second model, a superior form of the first, of United Romania, imposed by the new conditions of the remarkable diversity of Romanian society, the historical heritage being given substantial attributes of internal autonomy of the church institution, which makes it distinct.

Both models were determined historically by several factors- I mention the geopolitical situation of the Romanian Orthodoxy, which followed the medieval statal pluralism, as well as the avatars of the foreign occupation of a good part of the national territory, released and united in 1918; the regional particularities of the Romanian Orthodox Church evolution in the occupied provinces, which were imposed by the demands of the struggle for national liberation and the counteracting of the assimilationist efforts promoted by the foreign government; the specificity of

the modernisation process of the Romanian society, triggered simultaneously with that of national-state construction, the free country being led by secular elites, and in the occupied provinces the Orthodox Church played the role of essential support of the national identity, etc. - and further research is needed to obtain a clear picture of a troubled but beneficial era in national history.

The "*Byzantine symphony*", the ancient principle of the state-church relationship in the Orthodox area, therefore has a specific application in the Romanian case and is to be found in the genetic map of the formation and evolution of modern Romania until today.