

## ON THEACHING RELATED ASPECTS IN ALBA DE JOS COUNTY IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup>-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES: ROMANIAN CONFESSIONAL SCHOOLS.

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### ABSTRACT:

*DURING THE 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES, SCHOOL AND CHURCH REPRESENTED SPIRITUAL FOCAL POINTS FOR THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT OF THE TRANSYLVANIAN ROMANIANS. WHILE THE GOVERNING LAIC STATE INSTITUTIONS TOOK OVER FROM CHURCH SOCIAL PREROGATIVES, SUCH AS: CIVIL STATUS, SOCIAL ASSISTANCE, CHARITY AND EDUCATION, IN THE CASE OF THE ROMANIAN POPULATION CHURCH CONTINUED TO BE THE PROTECTOR AND SUPPORTER OF THE EDUCATIONAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS. THIS SITUATION WAS THE RESULT OF THE POLITICAL-RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TIME, WHEN ROMANIANS WERE GIVEN THE STATUS OF "TOLERATED-ACCEPTED" ETHNIC GROUP, ASIDE FROM THEIR DIFFERENTIATION FROM RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW.*

*ACCORDING TO THEIR CONFESSION, I.E., GREEK-CATHOLIC OR ORTODOX, ROMANIANS HAD MORE OR LESS ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE, TO EDUCATION. THE LEADERS OF THE TWO ROMANIAN CHURCHES WERE CONFRONTING WITH THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND APPLICATION OF THE IMPERIAL POLICIES CONCERNING THIS ETHNIC GROUP. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT IN THE BEGINNING THE TWO APPROACHES WERE INDIVIDUAL; NEVERTHELESS, AFTER A WHILE THEY GATHERED INTO A COMMON VOICE TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE ROMANIAN NATION. ALBA DE JOS COUNTY PROVIDES SOME OF THE BEST EXAMPLES OF THIS BICENTENNIAL POLITICA, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STRUGGLE. NOT ONLY THAT ALBA DE JOS WAS ONE OF OLDEST ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN TRANSYLVANIA, WITH ONE OF THE LARGEST ROMANIAN COMMUNITY, BUT IT ALSO PRODUCED A LARGE NUMBER OF HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES. MANY OF THESE HEROES WERE EITHER MEMBERS OF THE ROMANIAN CLERGY, OR THEY WERE TRAINED IN CONFESSIONAL SCHOOLS FROM ALBA DE JOS COUNTY.*

*WHILE THE PRESENT-DAY ROMANIAN SOCIETY SEEMS NOT TO BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITION, AND THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SEEMS TO BE BANKRUPT, AN OVERVIEW ON THESE TWO CENTURIES OF INSTRUCTION AND FORMATION OF STRONG CHARACTERS COULD PROVIDE VALUABLE EXAMPLES. WHILE SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE OFFSPRING OF THE CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM LEAVES THE COUNTRY WITHOUT RETRIEVING ANY BENEFIT, SUCH HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF COHERENT EDUCATION POLICIES TOWARDS THE NATIONAL INTEREST SHOULD BE AN INSPIRATION FOR THE PRESENT GENERATIONS.*

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**KEY WORDS:** EDUCATION, CONFESSIONAL SCHOOLS, ALBA DE JOS COUNTY.

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## INTRODUCTION

In Transylvania of the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries, school and church represented the spiritual leadership of the Romanian Resistance. The educators and the priests, “genuine apostles of belief and knowledge, have preserved the aspirations and hopes of the Romanian community, while also building-up knowledge, attitude and characters”<sup>2</sup>. During these two centuries, the laic state gradually tried to take over most of the traditional social attributes of church, such as: *civil status, charity, assistance and education*, in the process of “becoming the new protecting and paternal authority”<sup>3</sup>. In the case of Transylvania, when addressing the topic of *Romanian schools*, one has to mention that during the 18<sup>th</sup>, but also the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this institution was closely related to church.

We have decided to study churches and schools in the former Alba De Jos County based on the fact that it is the oldest county in Transylvania<sup>4</sup>, officially attested in 1117<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Romanian population represented an overwhelming majority<sup>6</sup>. For example, in 1857 *Alba Prefecture* had a population of 174,282 of which 151,625 (86.99 %) were Romanians. Thus, the Alba de Jos County provides the best case study for studying education in Romanian in those times. Additionally, when observing the administrative situation and evolution of this county, independent on the imposed imperial or Hungarian administrative reforms<sup>7</sup>, one can notice two important centers for Romanian school and church, and overall history in general, i.e., Alba-Iulia and Blaj were located here.

<sup>2</sup> Florin Zamfir, *Scoala si societatea din Comitatul Timis*,

<sup>3</sup> Simona Nicoară, *Națiunea modernă. Mituri, simboluri, ideologii*, (Cluj Napoca, :Accent, 2002), 183.

<sup>4</sup> Concerning the procedure of administrative dissolution of other counties from Alba County, see also Josif Benkő, *Transilvania sive Magnus Principatus olim Dacia Mediteranae*, Vinndobonae, 1788 vol.I chapt. IV, cart.VI, M.a chapt.VI, pp 3-8, apud Gheorghe Anghel, *Alba Iulia*, București 1987, 5-37.

<sup>5</sup> V. Meruțiu, *Județele din Ardeal și din Maramureș până în Banat*, (Cluj 1929), 15-18.

<sup>6</sup> The only county in Transylvania with a larger Romanian population as compared to that of Alba de Jos was Zarand County. The latter was dissolved by the Austrian-Hungarian authorities via the last administrative reform of the 19th century, in 1876, being considered „too Romanian”.

<sup>7</sup> Mathias Bell, *Compendium Hungariae geograficum, Posonii et Casoviae*, 1779, p 144; for the same evolution trend, see also Cserni Béla, *Alsófőhér Vármegye Monografiája*, vol I, part 1, Nagy-Enyed, 1896, pp 3-7; Lucas Iozeph Marienburg, *Geographie der Grossfürstentums Siebenbürgen*, Hermanstadt, 1913,II, pp 1-13; Rotariu Traian, *Recensământul din Transilvania 1869*, (Presa Universitară Clujeană 2008), 7-37; V.Meruțiu, op cit, pp 144-150; Virgil Ciobanu, *Statistica românilor din Ardeal făcută de administrația austriacă la anul 1760-1762*, excerpt from the "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională", Cluj, III (1924-1925), 9-17.

## 1. CULTURAL LIFE BETWEEN ALBA IULIA AND BLAJ

The first aspects related to independent cultural life in Alba-Iulia town are represented by the continuity of the “ancient Dacian-Roman culture”<sup>8</sup> during the 10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> centuries. In those times, Alba-Iulia represented an important centre of the Principality of Transylvania,

hosting the first schools in connection to the monastery churches<sup>9</sup>.

Genuine cultural dimension is present only in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the first humanistic influences led to teaching Latin and German in the Catholic schools in Alba and its surroundings during the leadership of Bishop Gheorghe Lepeș. Financial support for schools, originally provided by clerical authorities only, started to be covered also by laic administrative authorities<sup>10</sup>. In the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, a school connected to the Roman-Catholic Church was created, aimed at teaching the seven liberal arts<sup>11</sup>.

This situation changed in the period of the Transylvanian Principality, when education in *towns* improved under the influence of the new political-economic-religious conditions created following the *Reform*. Additionally, Alba-Iulia was elected as the capital of the new Principality. The starting point was represented by the Diet meeting in 1557, when several monasteries were transformed into Protestant colleges, among them being also the Alba-Iulia one. Prince Ioan Sigismund even intended to proclaim the Alba College a high education institution. In response, in 1579 Prince Stefan Bathory asked for the help of the Jesuits, whom he installs in Alba-Iulia, as well as in Cluj and Cluj-Mănăștur, in the view of creating new schools. In Alba-Iulia, starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the most prolific educational activity took place on the *Jesuit Gymnasium*, supervised and financially supported by the *regional (“gubernial”) and royal (“aulic”) Austrian authorities*. The curriculum here included *writing, Latin and Religion*<sup>12</sup>. For example, by mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, about 100 pupils were registered at the Jesuit Gymnasium. Concerning the Romanian schools required by the Greek-catholic church leaders and guaranteed by the *Leopoldine Diplomas* for the Romanians in Alba-Iulia, they were left on stand-by. Accordingly, the only solution for the young Romanians interested in getting an education

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<sup>8</sup> N. Albu, *Istoria învățământului românesc din Transilvania până la 1800*, Blaj 1944, Tip. Lumina, p 144.

<sup>9</sup> Iacob Mârza, *Aspecte din istoria învățământului la Alba Iulia sec.XVI-XVIII*, 73.

<sup>10</sup> *Istoria României*, II, Bucuresti 1962, 687-688.

<sup>11</sup> Constantin H. Economu, *Viața culturală a orașului Alba Iulia până la 1700*, in "Apulum", 1, 1939-1943, 233.

<sup>12</sup> N. Albu, *Istoria invatamantului romanesc din Transilvania pana la 1800*, Blaj 1944, 144.

was represented by the Jesuit Gymnasium; there, about 30 Romanians were registered as pupils each year<sup>13</sup>. This situation continued also under Ioan Bob as Greek-catholic Bishop, who was financially supporting with fellowships the Romanians studying at this gymnasium in Alba Iulia<sup>14</sup>.

The scholastic history of Blaj<sup>15</sup> starts with the Greek-catholic Bishop Ioan Inochentie Micu Klein who managed to bring the United Bishop Seat here between 1728, the year of his nomination, and 1736. The opening of the first schools in Romanian was also tested in Blaj. We will come back in the following chapters to the importance of this locality for confessional education; nevertheless, here we would like to mention that until the Great Union of Transylvania with Romania in 1918, Blaj represented the only urban community from Transylvania dominated by a Romanian majority<sup>16</sup>.

## 2. SCHOOL LEGISLATION.

For long-term, the Habsburg Empire was restricting the access to education and the usage of their language in public life for the Romanians in the Transylvania, Banat and Crişana provinces. Thus, the reforms introduced by Emperor Maria Theresa and then especially by Joseph II marked a turning point, providing an opportunity for opening new schools, in Romanian.

In 1760, the *Aulic Commission* for education was created in Vienna with the goal of supervising the reorganization of the educational system in the whole empire.

This was followed by two important laws, *Ratio Educationis* (1777) and *Norma Regia* (1781) that defined the framework for the educational reform, with an increasing central control as opposed to that of the church. In this context, schools for the Romanian population were also opened. Most of the primary schools were opened after the mutiny in 1784, the *Patent* in August 1785 explicitly stipulating the right to education for the Romanian peasants. The tens of communal schools founded in Arad County, in Bihor, in Banat border area, in the area of the 1<sup>st</sup> Border Regiment, in Zlatna mining area, in Bârsa

<sup>13</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria învăţământului românesc*, Bucureşti 1971, 60-61.

<sup>14</sup> Iacob Mârza, *Şcoală şi naţiune. Şcolile din Blaj în epoca renaşterii naţionale*, Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1987, p 64; N. Albu, *Istoria scolilor romanesti din Transilvania între 1800-1867*, 71.

<sup>15</sup> the first mention to Blaj locality was done in 1252, when Count Herbord bought the property located "at the junction of the Târnavă Rivers"; in 1313, Blasius the son of Herbord was the owner of this property. The name Blaj comes from him: Villa Blasii, Balázsfalva (Blasiu's village), Blasendorf

<sup>16</sup> Rotariu Traian, *op cit*, pp 7-37.

area, are all proofs of the Imperial Court's intention to gain the Romanian population from Banat and Transylvania on its side<sup>17</sup>.

Another important step in promoting education in Romanian language was represented by the assertion of the *confessional education* following the *Tolerance Edict* (1781). This was achieved by the opening of new schools for the Orthodox from Transylvania adding to the older confessional schools from Blaj. Every national community exceeding 100 members was entitled to found its own church and school<sup>18</sup>.

Following the degradation of the relationship between Joseph II and the pope Pius VI, the imperial authorities stopped the financing for study fellowships to Rome and in exchange supported the access of young Romanians to study in Vienna, especially at the *St. Barbara College*<sup>19</sup>. In 1783, the emperor gave a positive resolution to the Bishop Ioan Bob's complaint related to the endowment of the *Romanian Church United with Rome* clergy and schools, in the view of improved education of the Romanian population<sup>20</sup>.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the organisation of the educational system in Transylvania was based on the *Nova Ratio Educationis Publicae* law issued in 1806<sup>21</sup>.

After 1830, the educational system in Transylvania registered several progressive trends, related to its secularization on one hand, and to the generalization of the village schools on the other. Leaders of the Romanian intellectual elite of Transylvania such as Gh. Barițiu and Simion Bărnuțiu, as well as the German erudite Stefan Ludvig Roth were actively promoting scientific education adapted to the current needs of the society. The framework for these developments were the secondary schools and the universities in the old educational centres of Transylvania in Cluj, Sibiu, Brasov, Blaj, Aiud, Beius, or Sighisoara. The new educational structures were supporting the interests of the bourgeoisie, but also the emancipation of other social categories. The oldest higher education centre in Romanian language from Blaj was reorganized based on modern principles, with an emphasis on the study of mathematics and physics, besides geography, history and philosophy. Here, Simion Barnutiu was teaching *Philosophy*, while I. Rusu was teaching *Universal history*, including the new topic *History of Romanians*.

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<sup>17</sup> Jacob Mârza, *Fapte și momente din istoria învățământului în Transilvania. Secolele XVIII-XIX*, Editura Imago, Sibiu, 2002

<sup>18</sup> N. Cordoș, Un plan de școală românească din anul 1828, in "Acta MN", VI, 1969, pp 585-591.

<sup>19</sup> David Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, chapter "Ideile noi social-politice", Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, București 1984, p 243.

<sup>20</sup> Ioan Chindriș, Un *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* inedit, in "Manuscriptum", 1980, nr. 1, pp 89-104.

<sup>21</sup> N. Albu, *Istoria școlilor românești din Transilvania între 1800-1867*, București, 1971, p 72.

In 1833, the government of Transylvania issued a decree stating the *history* was considered a tolerated subject in the Romanian schools' curriculum, while in 1842 the *Diet* in Cluj ruled that Hungarian was going to be introduced as teaching language in all the schools in Transylvania. Accordingly, this resulted in strong protests among the leaders of the national Romanian movement.

The evolution of the Romanian education during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be subdivided into two periods: a) between 1848 and 1868, when the education law was elaborated and the Romanian school system registered a significant progress especially due to the activity of the metropolitan bishop Andrei Şaguna, and b) after 1868 when, following the installation of the dualist system the precepts of the law of education were not any more applied and the national pedagogical system recorded a forced Hungarian influence (the “*maghiarization*” process).

Starting with 1850, when the administration of the schools was taken over by the Consistories and the leaders of the two *confessions*<sup>22</sup>, *Orthodox* and *Greek-Catholic*, we can objectively define a *confessional educational system*.

In 1868 the primary education system is reorganized in Hungary following the *Law of the Cult Ministry*, of Baron Josef Eötvös. This law states that primary education is obligatory for all the citizens in ages between 6 and 15, and that parents are free to decide the school where to send their children. Concerning *Romanian confessional schools*, the authority of the church is granted by article IX of the Constitution, except for the right of “supreme inspection” that is granted to the state<sup>23</sup>.

The “*maghiarization*” of the Romanian schools is first perceived following the *Law XVIII* (1879) that imposed Hungarian language as obligatory subject starting with the second year of popular education. Confessional teachers were forced to learn Hungarian too, in order to be able to educate their pupils.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some changes could be noticed as a result of the national politics of the church in order to support the education in Romanian, but also following the “*maghiarization*” process resulting in an increased economic pressure on the Romanian communities. In order to get a clear image on the situation of the teaching staff, the district protopopes were required via the Address no. 2255/1895 to ask for error-less

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<sup>22</sup>N. Albu, op cit, p73 .

<sup>23</sup>Onisifor Ghibu, *Şcoala românească din Transilvania şi Ungaria. Dezvoltarea ei istorică şi situaţia ei actuală* , Bucureşti, 1915, p 18.

statistics on the number of occupied and free positions, equipment, frequency in the classroom – all signed by the priests and the church curators.

The involvement of the priests representing both Romanian confessions in Transylvania in the management of the educational act played a decisive role in including the Transylvanian Romanian population into the “cultural class”<sup>24</sup>.

### 3. CONFSSIONAL ROMANIAN SCHOOLS

At the transition from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of a Romanian school associated to the Metropolitan church funded by Mihai-Viteazul was outlined<sup>25</sup>, but only for short while. Documents of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, during the leadership of Price Gabriel Bethlen, mention the idea of a Romanian school<sup>26</sup> associated to the well-known *Academia Collegium*, as a way to attract the Romanian population to *Calvinism*<sup>27</sup>.

By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, once that Transylvania is integrated as province of the Habsburg Empire, the life of the Romanian population is doubtlessly recording big changes: not only from religious point of view – through the foundation of the Greek-catholic church, but also administratively, with the loss of Province capital status for Alba-Iulia. Here, also at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Reformed Gymnasium is reorganized in 1698.

The first Greek-catholic hierarch, Atanasie-Anghel, intended to create in Alba-Iulia a Latin-Romanian school<sup>28</sup>. This trend was underpinned by the Imperial policies related to the opening of schools for Romanians<sup>29</sup> resulting in the formation of educated and devoted citizens, and in the increase influence of the clergy in convincing the population towards the *religious union*<sup>30</sup>. All these projected outcomes were desirable for the imperials in order to reinforce the Catholic establishment vs. the Protestants, taking into account that the Romanian population represented the majority in Transylvania.

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<sup>24</sup> Remus Campeanu, *Intellectualitatea romanilor din Transilvania in veacul al XVIII-lea*

<sup>25</sup> Iacob Mârza, *Alba Iulia 2000*, Alba-Iulia 1975, 35.

<sup>26</sup> George Barițiu, *Părți alese din istoria Transilvaniei pe două sute de ani in urmă*, 1, Sibiu 1889, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Iacob Mârza, *Aspecte din istoria învățământului la Alba Iulia sec. XVI-XVIII*, 73.

<sup>28</sup> Ileana Bozac & Pompiliu Teodor, *Învățământul românesc din Transilvania în sec. al XVIII-lea și începutul sec. al XIX-lea*, in "Din istoria pedagogiei românești", 2, (Bucuresti 1966), 14.

<sup>29</sup> David Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, (Bucuresti 1967), 128-154.

<sup>30</sup> Mathias Bernath, *Habsburgii și începuturile formării națiunii române*, (Cluj 1994), 71-158.

### 3.1. *The Greek-catholic (United) schools.*

Bishop Ioan Inochentie Micu Klein was the first promoter of Greek-catholic schools in Transylvania. In the short interval from his nomination in 1728, till 1736, he managed to establish in Blaj the United Bishop's seat. It was also in Blaj where Ioan Inochentie Micu Klein intended to open the first schools with Romanian as language of teaching. For this, he addressed a series of reports to King Carol VI requiring the end of the discrimination and injustice affecting the Romanians. For example, in one report written in 1732, the bishop argued for the absolute need to open schools for "the offspring of our nation". As a result, he obtained a larger domain as property that could better support the episcopate's financial needs. At the same time, the approval was granted for building a monastery for 11 basilitanian monks, a theological seminar, and several schools. Thus, the small village of Blaj, inhabited by only 23 families in 1733, will shortly grow into the cultural centre of the Romanians in Transylvania.

The activity of Bishop I. Micu-Klein represented not only the basement for modern Romanian education in Transylvania, but also a successful outcome of his program of political and national emancipation. His legacy was continued by Bishop Petru Pavel Aaron, who after two years since his nomination, in the document issued on 11 October 1754, was announcing the opening of the following schools:

-*The communal, or elementary school* – "addressing all the population of any age, citizenship, religion and language, without any fee required from the apprentices".

-*The Latin, or secondary school* – intended for an advanced training, including Latin and science classes. This school represented the precursor of the further Highschool for boys *Sfântul Vasile cel Mare*.

- *The seminar* - opened in the *Sfânta Treime* monastery; the topics thought here were *religion, Christian dogma and moral*. From this school, the *Theological Academy* will be further developed.

- *The seminar for monks* – opened in 1760 in the new monastery with the Feast of the Annunciation as parish fair; this institution did not last too long.

These schools founded in Blaj represented the first secondary-level Romanian educational institutions in Transylvania. They were also stimulating the development of



rural schools in this province<sup>31</sup>. The same Greek-catholic bishop Petru Pavel Aaron and still in 1754 founds a monastery in Maieri parish, belonging to Alba-Iulia town, where documents mention about the existence of a school for *United, Greek-catholic Romanian children*<sup>32</sup>. The large number of well-educated priests in specialized institutions in Western Europe located in Blaj represented a valuable human potential that could support the education in the newly opened schools.

During the office of the first metropolitan Greek-catholic bishop, Alexandru Șterca Șuluțiu, the first *school for girls* was opened in 1855, while at October 15, 1865 classes started in the *Archdiocesan Pedagogical Institute*, training teachers for primary schools. The *Consistory* in Blaj issued a number of norms and orders aimed at improving the rural education in the whole eparchy; nevertheless, significant improvement was not recorded even after 10 years<sup>33</sup>.

*The Greek-catholic metropolitan bishop* Ioan Vancea is considered the second founder for the schools in Blaj, following Bishop Petru Pavel Aron. His main tools for an efficient supervision of spiritual life and progress of church were the canonic visitations and the archdiocesan and provincial synods. Thus, during the provincial synods in 1872 and 1882 from Blaj dogmas were issued concerning the church organisation, the life of clergy, education of the youth, the basilitan monks order (of St. Vasile the Great). The common beliefs with the Roman Catholic Church (of Latine rite) were emphasized. At the same time, it was stated that the Greek-catholic rules such as rite, cleric discipline or calendar, have to be strictly preserved. All these statements were approved by Pope Leon XIII. During the archdiocesan synods in 1869, 1882 and 1889 it was decided to support the development of foundations, and to get financial support for priests, widows, confessional schools and orphans.

The scholastic archdiocesan congress from Blaj (June 1-5, 1987) has released important decisions concerning the advancement of the *Romanian Greek-catholic education*, complying with the Eötvös Education law (1868). The priests, protopopes and cantor-teachers were asked to work hard “day and night” in order to provide the best performance in the confessional schools, including the ones that were transferred under the

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<sup>31</sup> Iacob Mârza, Școală și națiune. Școlile din Blaj în epoca renașterii naționale, Ed. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1987, p 22.

<sup>32</sup> N. Albu, Istoria scolilor romanesti din Transilvania intre 1800-1867, 74.

<sup>33</sup> MMIRS, D. 356 - Ordinariul Metropolitanu nr. 978, Blaj, 25/13 noiembrie 1862, MMIRS, Biblioteca documentară, inv. 4925/D. 356.

state's administration thus endangered to lose their connection with the community. The protopopes were appointed as school inspectors for their area of religious supervision. Parents were required to send their children to school on a regular basis, by this fulfilling a duty to both God and the Romanian nation. „Knowledge is enlightening, it makes people cleverer, and it strengthens and enriches the nations”

Metropolitan bishop Ioan Vancea has significantly contributed to the curricula improvement in theological, secondary and elementary schools. In 1879, he added to the curriculum of the Theological seminar several practical topics: oriental rite, singing, churchly rite, civil rights, rural economy, and pastoral medicine; in 1888 he added philosophy, liturgics, and homiletics. Only faculty with a PhD title was eligible for teaching in the Theological seminar. The metropolitan bishop was presiding the examination committees for the young priests-to-be. From his own funds, bishop Ioan Vancea has sponsored the construction work for the *boys' dormitory in Blaj*, which starting with the academic year 1892-1893 was transformed into the *Civil Higher School for Girls* (lyceum level). For the boys, he ordered the construction of a larger dormitory, the *Vancean College* as well as of a gymnastic hall, all in Blaj.

Bishop Vancea has also encouraged the further instruction of the young theologians with special intellectual and religious skills, by providing fellowships for studies in *Vienna* or *Rome*. For example, he send Augustin Bunea<sup>34</sup> to study philosophy and theology at the famous institute *De Propaganda Fide* in Rome. Also, he has supported the construction of more than 300 schools in Transylvanian villages.

3.2. *Orthodox (Eastern-Greek) schools* For the 18<sup>th</sup> century, one can hardly discuss about confessional schools for the Romanian Orthodox (Greek - not-united, or Eastern-Greek) community, as a consequence of the fact that the cleric hierarchy was dissolved following the issuing of the *Leopoldine Diploma*<sup>35</sup>. Nevertheless, documents mention a printer, Popa Dobre, who was travelling from Wallachia to Transylvania with the mission to instruct and mentor the teachers-to-be from Alba-Iulia. This mission was continued around the year 1763 by Ioan of Balgrad<sup>36</sup>; unfortunately, he was accused of collaboration

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<sup>34</sup>“the remarkable scholar of Blaj”, dr. Augustin Bunea, stated the following about the schools in Blaj: "It is possible that no other Romanian cultural institution was so timely founded", in a time when "almost nobody was still aware of our remarkable origins; or able to tell about the glory and sufference of our parents, grand- and grand-grand parents; or able to preach and nourish the future aspirations " .

<sup>35</sup> until 1759, when the Tolerance Edict was promulgated by the Emperor Maria Theresia

<sup>36</sup> Nicolae Albu, *Istoria învățământului românesc din Transilvania până la 1800*, 145.

to the religious movement led by the monk Sofronie from Cioara monastery, due to his frequent travels to Wallachia related to obtaining educational materials for his pupils.

Another Orthodox priest that was active in educational activities in Alba-Iulia was Ioan Fulea. In 1786, the school director Dimitrie Eustatievici from Sibiu was mentioning that Ioan Fulea "was not fully trained concerning the pedagogical method, thus he would need to complete his training in Sibiu, starting with that autumn"<sup>37</sup>.

In 1811 the Orthodox Seminar was opened in Sibiu; in 1812 the first pedagogical school was opened in Arad, under the name of "The Preparatory or Pedagogical School for the Romanian Nation" (Romanian: *Școala preparandă or pedagoghicească a nației românești*) with Dimitrie Țichindeal and C. Diaconovici-Loga as professors.

An increasing interest in Romanian school system was developed following the revolution in 1848, when the metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna took the leadership of Romanian education in Transylvania. His first concern was to remove education from the jurisdiction of the Roman-catholic Episcopate, situation existing since 1837<sup>38</sup>. The next step was represented by the proper evolution of schools and the implementation of a legal framework under the supervision of the church. In 1850, Andrei Șaguna issued a Circular requiring that, "each of the protopopes has to act also as school inspector"<sup>39</sup>. The Circular in 1852 regulates the *confessional principle* as basis for the school system organization<sup>40</sup>. However, *the nationalists* interpreted *confessionalization* as a mean to separate Romanians; accordingly, they were supporting a *national education* system, independent from confession and administrated by the state. Education in Romanian recorded significant progress in the following years, for example between 1850 and 1856, when 339 Orthodox confessional schools were built in Transylvania<sup>41</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

It was the intellectuals formed in the schools in Blaj, together with those graduating the Orthodox confessional schools who became the ideologists and organisers of the 1848 Revolution in Transylvania, who contributed to the elaboration and publication of the Memorandum in 1894, and especially who made the union of Transylvania with Romania,

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<sup>37</sup> Lucia Protopopescu, *Contributii la istoria invatamantului din Transilvania 1774-1805*, București 1966, 66.

<sup>38</sup> Lazăr Triteanu, *Școala noastră 1850-1916*, (Sibiu, Tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1919), 5.

<sup>39</sup> Ioan Lupaș, Andrei Baron de Șaguna, Sibiu, Tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1909, 1.

<sup>40</sup> Triteanu, *Școala noastră 1850-1916*, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Triteanu, *Școala noastră 1850-1916*, p 10.

at December 1, 1918, possible. These facts should make us reflect more on the role of education even in the present-day society, when the educational system seems to be inefficient and the society seems to lack a reward to its educational efforts towards the young generation.

The brave deeds of the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century's intellectuals also provide an insight into the role of clerical institutions, representing both Romanian confessional churches. This role is still of importance today, when the young generations need more than ever examples of strong characters that they can follow.

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