

PhD. Rev. Florin Dobrei *The Theological Journal “Altarul (Mitropolia) Banatului” (1944-1947, 1951-2011) - Monographic Highlights*, Romanian Academy, Centre for Transylvanian Studies, Învieerea Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca - Timișoara, 2013, 719 p.

University teacher of a high academic posture and cultural counsellor to the newly created Diocese of Deva and Hunedoara, Rev. PhD. Florin Dobrei promoted the doctoral exam in 2009, obtaining the degree “magna cum laude” at the Faculty of Theology “Andrei Șaguna” in Sibiu, under the coordination of the most competent scientific researcher in the area of Romanian Orthodox Church History, Academician Prof. PhD. Rev. Mircea Păcurariu. After the publication of the thesis entitled “The History of the Church Life of the Romanians from Hunedoara County” published in Reșița, in 2010, 724 pages, followed the book “Orthodox Churches from Hunedoara County”, published in Reșița, in 2010, 734 pages. The signature of Prof. PhD. Rev. Florin Dobrei is on three other volumes, as co-author and coordinator “Register of Wooden Churches in Hunedoara County” (co-author), published in Reșița, 2011, 457 pages; “Hunedoara County, Monography” (co-author), vol. III, published in Deva, in 2012, 471 pages, “Silviu Dragomir (1888-1962) - 50 years from his passing into eternity” (coordinator), published in Cluj-Napoca, in 2012, 326 pages. In the same time Rev. Dobrei is co-author of the *Encyclopedia of Romanian Orthodoxy*, published in Bucharest, in 2010, 767 pages. After publishing several studies and articles in the country and abroad, proving his accomplished competence in scientific research, under the auspices of two prestigious Romanian publishing houses, the Romanian Academy – Centre for Transylvanian Studies and Învieerea Publishing House, Rev. Dobrei recently published a laborious monography of a remarkable theological journal form the District of Banat “Altarul (Mitropolia) Banatului (1944-1947, 1951-2011)” published with the blessing of Nicholas Corneanu, Metropolitan of the See of Banat.

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The volume turns out to be a systematic and comprehensive presentation of a church publication worthily named "a stand intended for discussing the most important and the most pressing issues of Theology, the Church, of the Romanian culture and history". Never the less, the present monography is not only a peek into the past of a journal, which had an undeniable role in the development of the Orthodox theology, of the Romanian culture and history, but above all, a welcome "instrumentum theologicum bibliographicum" available to students, doctoral students, priests, teachers and researchers of any kind, designed to support the elaboration of parishes monographs or thematic index.

Regarding the structure of the volume, in the first part was detailed the evolution of the journal over its three editions – the old edition, Caransebeş, 1944-1947; Timișoara metropolitan edition, 1951-1989, and the current edition, from 1990 to present still as the metropolitan edition.

A separate space has been reserved for typographical execution of the journal (beginning with the receiving, sorting and correcting the materials received by the editorial office and to the act of printing itself, i.e. the sending of the journal to its subscribers) and its various graphics over time - made over the nearly seven decades of issue. Then it has been highlighted the work of those who laboured in its editing, editorial presidents, editors (both editors responsible for the guidance and supervision of the issue and actual editors during the years 1944 to 1947 and after 1969), members of editorial committees, researchers, typists and translators. Regarding the editorial presidents, editors and proof readers it has been done in short bio-bibliographical portraits.

Separately, were presented the collaborators of the journal, bishops, teachers, priests, theology students and even seminarians and numerous lay researchers. The journal showed itself to be a space available for publication and dialogue to all those who had the desire to provide relevant communications in theology, spirituality, history and authentic Romanian culture and Church, respecting the orthodox doctrinal line and minimum typing requirements indicated in editorial frames. This "opened door" rule suffered only during communist period when, because of the rejection of the regime, some authors were forced to publish under a pseudonym, and sometimes, the texts sent for publishing were put to "index", and were published only after 1989.

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A special place was reserved for the presentation of the area of distribution of the journal. If initially, in the period 1944-1947, the priority referred to the area of the Diocese, after relocation the journal in Timișoara (1951-2011) – it received a wide and deserved popularity, being a living presence both in the area of the Metropolitan See of Banat and beyond.

Finally, the subject of other chapters lies in the relationship between the journal and its readers and its importance in Romanian publishing landscape.

The central part of the volume shows to the readers the thematically dimensions of the publication, presenting a detailed analysis of the structure and content of its rubrics. In this sense were listed and grouped in alphabetical or chronological order the titles of all the studies, articles, sermons, catechesis, theological meditations, notes and various commentaries, reviews and bibliographic presentations from the contents of the 26 categories of rubrics of the journal, some permanent, others having a transient existence.

In view of the above, we recommend this book with the mention that it turns out to be of an exceptional importance in the knowledge of the history of the representative journal of the Metropolitan See of Banat and in providing a complete index of all the materials published in its pages over the seven decades of occurrence. At the same time, unlike other similar bibliographic indexes drawn previously for journals and diocesan papers, this volume brings a detailed presentation, judiciously interpreting the wording of the journal.

Thus, the present volume, following the previous others, former young graduate of Caransebeș Theological Seminary (1998), Florin Dobrei now demonstrates full maturity in his study and ecclesiastical and secular history research, a true specialist and a name in the Diocese of Deva and Hunedoara, proving himself to be a worthy successor of his distinguished teacher and tutor Academician Prof. PhD. Rev Mircea Păcurariu.

Rev. PhD. Sorin Cosma