

Gabriel Callimachi, Metropolitan of Moldavia (1760-1786)

- PhD thesis abstract -

INTRODUCTION*

The history of the Church, as a setting for the investigation of a certain epoch, has been *visited* and *storied* mainly in terms of the people that were part of it. It is well known that from its beginnings the Church had been conducted by the apostles through heritage, and pastored by the bishops. Episcopacy was *par excellence* the leading position in the Church, through its members by its mission in the ecclesiastical life through the plan of the well-known triad : pastoral, sanctifying and educative. In any place of the Christian world, the Church in its entirety and its integrity was represented by the eparchy, which is the icon of the Universal Church. Over time, the changes in the canonical and administrative ordinaries made that the role of the bishop, head of the local Church, to expand, making him a true community leader . Therefore, to investigate the life and work of a bishop involves analyzing all levels of activity, for its many responsibilities.

Concerns for the lives of the clergy have always existed, so we can't speak of a new direction in this area of research. The Holy Fathers of the Church were mostly bishops, some also having ranks of metropolitans and patriarchs, that is why the biographies of the ecclesiastical figures can be included in a huge *corpus*. From the East to the West, from patriarchs and popes to the simplest bishops, each community has expressed an interest for its shepherd, the bishop being the one around which others manifested themselves in a particular form of social solidarity. Thus, each eparchy has had a history and several shepherds, each with his "story". As a characteristic, the eighteenth century confronts us with the reality of a world which is on a road with many crossroads and back roads on which new and old people come and go, traditional and innovative ideas; a lapse in history of all socio-political contradictions that one can imagine. Therefore, especially the Romanian eighteenth century there is a line of research with many challenges and has to be supported primarily by an effort of identification and selection of the

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documents found in various archival funds, insufficiently known and exploited for this period.

Regarding the history of the Church of Moldavia in the eighteenth century, the great synthesis, pornographies, dictionaries and encyclopaedias of Romanian history include only information only as a rough guide and sometimes inaccurate, especially regarding knowledge of the life and ecclesiastic personalities of the time, especially since synchronization between literature and the realization of such projects was not always the most successful. Volumes regarding the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church, some of them having the characteristics of textbooks, is characterized by the same "quality", only having a scientific character, already established in the spirit of genuine historical research. It is hard to make a clear distinction between the different reports on the realities of the eighteenth century over time and, especially in the realm of ecclesiastical history. On the other hand, we can signal, in many cases, a clear distinction between secular historians and the ones of religious formation, the degree of subjectivity in their reporting economy to certain events or personalities being more pronounced for the latter. Various contributions published in different journals are unequal in value, and, over time, many of them proved to be outdated. The solutions and knowledge later developed in the direction of ecclesiastical history of the realities of the 18th century were supported by reputable historians, even if it was not their main concern. If we were to report strictly to the studies that relate the history of the Church in Moldova in the 18th century, we can notice that many contributions that have focused on topics such as the situation of the clergy, the phenomenon of the foundation act, the situation of Orthodox theology, monasticism and the role of the Church (in particular through the production of church books), the relations between the Church and the State, symbols of the power of the ecclesiastical speech or the ties with other Orthodox areas and examples may continue, especially since the history of the Church was thoroughly woven with that of the State.

If the period prior to the eighteenth century there were constant concerns (sometimes, interdisciplinary) and sustained for the life and, especially, for the work of the metropolitans and bishops of Moldavia, given that here were active hierarchs whose contributions stood out through their cultural contributions and their biographies enrolled, especially in the "string of great men of this nation "; not the same can be said about the bishops of the fanariot world. With time, however, the editing of documents and the constant concerns of some historians, there have been registered significant contributions in this regard, the example of N. Iorga had been followed by

teachers and clergy that published studies, documents and notes in various magazines, religious or not. One of those who have expressed a special interest in biographies of bishops of the eighteenth century was the priest Alexander I. Ciurea, author of several studies, including those relating to the metropolitans Iacov Stamati and Leon Gheucă, both located in the collection whose title was meant to be continued: *Figures Moldavian bishops*. Based on this model, other historians (some of them among the clergy) gave their contributions printing the lives and works of the Moldavian Church hierarchs of the eighteenth century, some of the magazines of the eparchy centre providing hosting for specific studies and articles and for the publication of documents relating to ecclesiastical history. Metropolitans such as Gheorghe the IVth, Nichifor Sidis, Iacov of Putna, Leon Gheucă and Iacov Stamati or other bishops, like Inochentie of Huși or Dositei Herescu have been in the spotlight because historians have noted their outstanding achievements. In the recent years, a significant contribution to the research on the history of Moldova church of the eighteenth century had Centre for Research and Documentation "Ștefan cel Mare" of Putna Monastery, under its auspices being given to the typography several studies of the life pattern of hierarchs of Moldavia as metropolitans Antonie, Nichifor and especially Iacov of Putna.

The latter's successor in his chair from Iași was another son of Putna, Gavriil, who shepherd to the *talking* flock in Moldavia for 26 years, the longest and continuous tenure in Moldavia, managing to keep the seat, despite the many situations that would have been unfavourable. It has been said that "the bishops and metropolitans, in the 18th century are the only ones who keep in touch with the people; only they form the element of continuity in the leadership of the country, because the lack of lords was so powerful and unpredictable that it "expected or unexpected the killings, they let no lord to end his days on the throne". And he added that "only" two metropolitans have distinguished themselves in the 18th century: Iacov of Putna and Iacov Stamati. Maybe it was a little exaggerated; each had their role, their position and their achievements. In a context of respect for a system of values "based on Orthodoxy, traditionalism, traditionalism, political assassinations and the respect for the Ottoman Empire", Metropolitan Gavriil Callimachi's personality emerges from the custom, at least at a first glance. A pure Moldavian, from the Upper Land, turned Greek in the academic atmosphere of Constantinople, then the shepherd of the souls from the Thessaloniki apostolic eparchy, he came back in his elder days in Moldavia, where he would lead an anti-Turkish politics (or better said a pro-Russian) externally and a pro-Romanian in his shepherding, and in the cultural-administrative domains,

Gavriil Callimachi has proved to be an outstanding figure of his time. Some place him in the group of the "impressively large prelates, scholars and politicians" who were active in all areas of the political and cultural life. I have divided this paper into six chapters, each of them representing parts with which one can build this biography of the Romanian Church hierarch of the 18th century.

CHAPTER I: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CALLIMACHI (CĂLMAȘUL) FAMILY HISTORY

The first chapter is dedicated to a few additions to the Callimachi's family genealogy with the thought to fill some gaps, with the help of some sources up to date or the reconsideration of older ones. I did a very thorough presentation of the representatives of this family for the period mentioned because I didn't want to go too far from the subject of my research, especially because there were in our historiography various theses and hypotheses that have proven to be inaccurate and respectively made, *ab initio*, as a sign of a needed reconsideration. The importance of the family coordinates is primarily that of emphasizing with the existing realities in the eighteenth century, during which family and kinship ties had arranged a different role than that facilitating the ascension in different functions and conservation of the status and wealth within a group as tightly as can be. The ascension of the members of the Callimachi family was due to the context of certain circumstances. The fact is that the Metropolitan Gavriil had a special support, a strong family background, which was also the base of his ascension and his permanency in Church during his days Moldavia.

CHAPTER II: ON GAVRIIL CALLIMACHI, METROPOLITAN OF MOLDAVIA. COORDINATES OF AN ASCENSION

The second chapter it was destined to emphasize the coordinates of the ecclesiastic ascension of the Metropolitan Gavriil, who, from the son of a *mazil* of Câmpulung became the archdeacon of the Great Church; later turning into the shepherd of the most important eparchy of the church of Constantinople. I looked at the context of the departure and return of the Metropolitan Gavriil from and to Moldavia, placing the events in a much larger context of some specific ecclesiastical realities of the period. In a religious world found in an obvious crisis caused by a quite antagonistic political and social system, hierarchies (and clergy in general) have very often

been put in compromising situations, especially because the seats were not safe, and between the glory of the hierarchy dignity and the humiliation of exile or death in an unexpected obscurity there were only a few bags of money that had to be given to the right man at the right time. However, there have been some remarkable men at their time who could maintain the desire to preserve unaltered the Orthodox dogmatic teachings, in a context in which the exterior factor tried to bring together Christian beliefs a new wind of change, a revolutionary and reformative one, under different aspects.

CHAPTER III: FOUNDATIONS AND CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF METROPOLITAN GAVRIIL CALLIMACHI

In the third chapter I dealt with the "foundations and cultural achievements of the Metropolitan Gavriil Callimachi. Brought to Iași in 1760, he was put in the position to continue the work begun by the prolific Iacov of Putna, one of the wisest men of his time and maybe one of the hierarchies of the 18th century with the most ardent spirit for foundations. The metropolitan typography continued his work on the foundations of its hierarch, who developed schools greatly, and the influence of Metropolitan Gavriil, who came from the Greek world was seen at this level also, especially through the crowd of Greek teachers which begun to penetrate into the space. The metropolitan was a permanent inspector of education, making solemnly researches twice a year. Also, there are other aspects of the church's cultural life- presented and analysed in chapter III.

CHAPTER IV : THE SHEPHERDING AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITY OF THE METROPOLITAN GAVRIIL CALLIMACHI

A rather consistent chapter is the fourth, where I entered the Metropolitan Administration issues, a topic which, I've considered very important for the analysis of hierarch's Gavriil Callimachi biography. Having three eparchies under his administration, in addition, he had to administer the church of a country that had been confronted in the last 26 years with multiple problems. Thus, we found it fit to go towards the analysis of hierarchical relationships that existed between the eparchy and other clerics. So I traced the hierarch's ties with the other shepherds- from Roman, Rădăuți and Huși; some of them left from the time of Iacov of Putna, others were settled there during the archbishop's service, most of them being elected among his closest associates. The second part of this chapter is devoted to the family clergy, one of the most important categories, because they were by the hierarch to

represent him in villages and towns, and their role in maintaining communion was a fundamental one. After the analysis of the family clergy I found it fit to take a glimpse on the monasticism in the second half of the 18th century, showing which were the directions, as well as who were founders of the monasteries during this period.

CHAPTER V : METROPOLITAN GAVRIIL AND “THE LIFE OF THE CITADEL”

The fifth chapter is dedicated to the involvement of Metropolitan Gavriil in the "life of the citadel". As bishop he was close to the Lord, the nobles, the boyars, the clergy and people of all kinds, with all kind of troubles. He was designated by the noblemen in different judgments, assisting to various transactions, giving cursing cards or solving everyday problems of all types of people. On the other hand, being part of the elite of the country, he had to maintain friendly relations, of solidarity and cooperation with the country's rulers and nobles, especially now that the period was one during which intrigues, plots and scenes negotiations were no stranger to the "enlightened" Moldavian elite. Gavriil Callimachi shepherd in a period in which ruled in Moldavia both his brother and his nephew, from another angle we can see that the relationship that was between him and other boyars (Grigorie III Ghica, Constantin Mavrocordat, Constantin Moruzi, Alexandru Mavrocordat Delibei and Alexandru Mavrocordat Firaris) is another interesting aspect of his biography.

One of the turning points in his life and pastoral work, was his involvement in the Russo-Turkish war of 1768-1774. One of the main consequences of this war was that the Church of Moldavia, lost the north, due to the demands of Austria. For a period of seven years, the Christians in the north of Moldavia were still shepherd by the administration of Iași. In April 1781 it was created the eparchy of Bucovina. Based on a decision of the Emperor Joseph II, of 12 December 1781 the Bishopric of Rădăuți is moved to Cernăuți. The bishop Dositei Herescu, who had the Rădăuți seat in 1750, is officially installed in Cernăuți on the 30th February 1782/ 10th of January by General Karl of Enzenberg as the "exempt bishop of Bucovina". Starting from now the jurisdiction over the former Moldavian Metropolitan bishop of Rădăuți ended, and it was created a new one under the orders of the Metropolitan of Carlovitz, in the summer of 1783.

CHAPTER VI : THE END AND POSTERITY OF METROPOLITAN GAVRIIL CALLIMACHI OF MOLDAVIA († 1786)

"The end is that of the end" of the life of Metropolitan Gavriil. Reached an age that passed the border of 90 years, the archbishop will no longer get to see the first flower buds of the spring of 1786, before taking the path of eternity, in a Friday, February 20th, as it is mentioned on the stone tomb, placed in the service of Metropolitan Veniamin. The funeral took place on February 22th. After the death of Metropolitan Gavriil, the Ecumenical Patriarchate has opposed to the election of Leon Gheucă in the bishop's chair of the Metropolitan Church of Moldavia. Normally, after the death of an archbishop one must wait 40 days to occupy the place, or a certain period, in the event of an emergency. Leon was seated at Roman (February 2nd 1769) at more than two weeks after the death of Ioanichie (15th of January). In the case of the appointment of Iacov Stamati at Huși all has been made properly, and the new Bishop was settled in on the ninth day of the month of December. So the rush was justified by what followed, for the day after the consecration of Leon (February 28th, the Saturday of Saint Toader), the eparchy of Roman greeted its new shepherd in the Greek, abbot of the Barnovschi monastery. People said at the time that this was done "without the consent of the Council and the Congregation". Patriarch Procopie I was the one who showed the claims for the appointment of the new Metropolitan of Moldavia, claims which, however, were not too good, behind these wishes were other interests as well ...

The son of Toader Călmașul was a clergyman of great value for his time, and a extraordinary type of man. A portrait of the man Gavriil is harder to achieve, but its features are presented in a few of his letters, sent to relatives, either to the ones submitted in the monasteries, to the bishops or to other persons with whom he had contact. His writing was a nice one, with a special handwriting. At least in letters sent to his younger sister Maria Canano jniciceasa we can see a sensitive side of the hierarch, the one who cared for her and assured her of his total support due to the loss of one of her sons. In various documents of the day he is commemorated as the spiritual father or as the "too gentle and loving father of all the poor, consolation for those in trouble". We also know that he loved the food from his own country,-the famous cheese from Câmpulung or the honey from Vaslui, which leaned him in his wonderings around the world of Turks and Greeks (where he was thought with "coffee, desert and others as so"). The chief priest Gavriil had an

important role in promoting the three hierarchs that he collaborated with: Leon Gheucă (Bishop of Roman and Metropolitan of Moldavia), Iacov Stamati (Bishop of Huși and Metropolitan of Moldavia), Bishop and Exarch- Gavriil Bănulescu Bodoni or the Metropolitan Archdeacon Chiril. Each of whom, with their good and bad, were shepherds in those days, only one of them multiplying, better than all the others, what he had learned from his spiritual father: Iacov Stamati, clothed under a monastic name took his antecessor's name- Iacov, "the great putnean"...

CONCLUSIONS

In inceptum finis est, one might say, now, at the end, when we have to draw a few conclusions on what we announced in the introduction. An unwritten rule (so far) show that most of the introductions and conclusions are a perfect blending in the research. That's why I wouldn't want to burden this works with details that could be observed during the reading. I don't know if I'm satisfied, but as far as it was possible- although more could have been done, because often it is relatively impossible – I'm tried to show a picture of the life of the church in the 18th century through the personal events of metropolitan Gavriil, son of Putna Monastery. Maybe there are things that have been said before, maybe some were overlooked. The Callimachi family was one of the most influential families of the 18th century, with a peculiar ascension, relieved by the ambition of the son of Toader Călmașul, which became the Grand dragoman of the Ottoman Port, that turning out to be a skill – perhaps surprising and apart – in resisting and could even influence the troubled and uncertain lives in the ancient city of Emperor Constantine. One can see a certain feeling of solidarity in the family, all family members helping each other, especially those who had power and money (even though in the so-called fanariot elements are often confused), therefore being able to make the living of others more than reasonable. Being related with large families this family had a background that could really build something that lasts.

We have shown, then, what were the *in Ecclesia* reports of the archbishop with the Ottoman Empire, so that one could see that the events that occurred in 1760 in the Metropolis of Moldavia were not so surprising as they were portrayed in history. As far as available resources allowed me, I showed the context of election and appointment in the Apostolic Church of Thessaloniki, and bits (or rather crumbs) of his activity there. Once back in Moldavia in 1760, I saw the whole course of events - also within sources - and

where I thought I had to say things differently than fixed, I did it, even though things can receive, now or later, other interpretations. At least this is my belief at the moment! The withdrawal of Bishop Iacov was one already discussed that is why I insisted on a relationship with former Metropolitan bishop in office, and the relation they maintained with the convent where the two had gotten their "angelic face".

When he was made metropolitan of the country, Gavriil Callimachi didn't look back and did his job in a proper way. If he did a good job, I can't say, because most of the times the work of a bishop is seen on all he sets his hands on. He continued the work started by his predecessor: he served the church, consecrated them, ordained bishops, priests and deacons, printed books, blessed monastic ordinances, made donations, and did all was included in the " job " of a bishop in the second half of the eighteenth century. Besides this proved to be a good administrator of the eparchy where he served. But he also did things that were judged by posterity, especially when he was engaged in a struggle whose consequences could not anticipate. But, whatever it is said about it, I think that in those times he felt that it was the only way he could bring deliverance from the Ottoman Empire. His intention was good, especially because the cause preached by the Russians was wrapped in the propaganda for a Balkan Orthodox rescue. But he is not the only one that should be found guilty of all those that happened with the Moldavian Country, because of the Russian politics in this part of the world; one must have a general view over all, the eyes of a historian must see first the events that generated the affiliations between lords, hierarchs and sages. Also, the history of the Church in the 18th century cannot be written with a very good knowledge of Ecumenical Patriarchs, biographies of the Russian Church episcopate and all the church relations in this period, one that said its word not only on the social, political or economic developments, but also upon the Church. Overall, however, the figure of the old metropolitan, who managed to wear the Omophorion, with dignity and incorruptibility, which was given "to shepherd the flock of Christ, that was entrusted to him" was, as we have seen, "for the obedient the support rod and for those disobedient the wake-up rod". He was cared for by the priests, monks, and its administrative apparatus and, in particular, was noted as a hierarch who was always close to the community, in spite of his old days. He had striven to be an Archbishop and a man devoted to the Church.

Reaching the end of this work which was not meant to be exhaustive and may be supplemented within time, I can conclude by underlining the importance of comprehending a subject such as the life and activity of

Metropolitan Gavriil Callimachi, at least while he was archbishop of Moldavia (1760-1786). As I have said from the very beginning- I am reluctant to just use the same documentary sources used by those who have never mentioned, even in passing, archbishop Gavriil. With respect to the interpretations made by some or others I avoided to resume without first-hand sources analysis newer papers published or the archives collections. What is certain is that where I thought I would be able to add or set clear certain remarks, hypotheses, theses or conclusions of some illustrious predecessors fully, I did it with one goal in mind: to show and shed light on things as they were and to serve the truth. *Favor opus adiuvat, laboremque minuit*, said the wise Latins, but there wasn't only inspiration throughout the composition of this doctoral theses; at times, the work was more difficult than I expected. I, however, always remained guided and aided by documents, unwilling to venture into sharing assumptions or suggestions that are impossible or nearly impossible to prove. Because, paraphrasing the words of the "wingless pilgrim"- to dismiss the testimony of the document is an attempt to desecrate history. Therefore, the call to the document brought me many times in the situation of being greeted by surprises, especially when I thought I got stranded. These also are some of those stories "which illuminate like lightning the way a scientist".