

SECULARIZATION IN THE SPEECH OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH. A CASE STUDY: “VESTITORUL ORTODOXIEI ROMÂNEȘTI” (1989-1998)

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ABSTRACT

IF IN WESTERN EUROPE, SECULARIZATION IS INCONTESTABLE, IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RETURN OF RELIGION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SPACE AND THE OUTBURST OF RELIGIOUSNESS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRANSITION, THE DEBATE IS STILL OPEN. OPINION POLLS MEASURING PEOPLE’S TRUST IN THE CHURCH, IN THE FIRST 20 YEARS OF THE POST-COMMUNIST PERIOD, PLACED THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AT THE TOP OF THE RANK, SHOWING THE CONTINUOUS ASCENDANCY OF ITS AUTHORITY IN RELATION TO SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL. HOWEVER, DESPITE THE OBVIOUS ACCENTUATION OF RELIGIOUSNESS IN ROMANIA AFTER 1989, THE TOPIC OF SECULARIZATION WAS NOT ABANDONED EITHER BY THE ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTION OR BY THE ANALYSTS OF THE AUTOCHTHON RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON. TO OUTLINE THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ADDRESSED THE SECULARIZATION PHENOMENON DURING THE PERIOD 1989-1998, WE PROPOSE THE ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS PUBLISHED IN THE VESTITORUL ORTODOXIEI, THE PERIODICAL OF THE ROMANIAN PATRIARCHATE. ALL 215 RELATED ISSUES WERE CONSULTED, SEARCHING FOR ARTICLES DEDICATED TO THIS TOPIC, BUT SIMPLE REFERENCES AND NOTES HIGHLIGHTING THE POSITIONING WITHIN THE ECCLESIAL INSTITUTION IN RELATION TO THE PROCESS OF SECULARIZATION. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE TEXTS SHOWED THAT, IN GENERAL, SECULARIZATION IS PERCEIVED AS A THREAT TO RELIGION, AN IMPRINT OF MODERNITY AND RIFT SEPARATING ROMANIA FROM WESTERN EUROPE.

Introduction

Secularization is one of the most dynamic processes of contemporary society, covering the entire Western space, having different forms and intensity degrees. Applying the verdict of secularization is sensibly difficult in the context of the remarkable abundance of definitions and interpretations of the concept. Thus, “the classical theses” of secularization suggested the disappearance of religion: Weber believed that by rationalization the modern world would be “disenchanted” (*Entzauberung*), the mythical aspects would devalue, and religion would face a constant decline, while Durkheim speaks of “functional differentiation”, in the sense that

organizations or individuals take over some of the roles previously held by the Church¹. Tchannen systematises the manners in which secularization is defined by Lukmann, Bryan Wilson, David Martin, Parsons, Richard Fenn, and adds to his scheme elements complementary to the rationalization and differentiation processes: autonomization, pluralisation, privatization². Classical theories of secularization are being challenged by several authors who bring up the differences between the European and the American cases. Jose Casanova considers that modernity is not implicitly connected to secularization, and the European experience is not the same as the one from the USA, the latter being a modern society, possibly more religious than the European one, but not less secularized than it³. Gracie Davie continues the analysis and challenges the universal model of secularization, the accentuated religiousness in the USA, Latin America, etc., making her wonder to what extent is the case of Western Europe an atypical, exceptional one⁴.

In Romania, the burst of religiousness in the first decade of transition⁵ keeps the debate on the secularization process open. The high levels of the ecclesial institution's public presence, as well as the high levels of individual religiousness (belief, practice, etc.), sets the Romanian case apart from the paradigm of Western Europe. Against this background, we propose the analysis of the Romanian Orthodox Church's speech on the phenomenon of secularization, reflected in the periodical *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, in the first 10 years of printing (1989-1998). All 215 related issues were consulted, searching for articles dedicated to this topic, but simple references and notes highlighting the positioning within the ecclesial institution in relation to the process of secularization.

The history and importance of the periodical *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*

Vestitorul Ortodoxiei, the periodical of the Romanian Patriarchate, is considered to be the first press body of the Orthodox church appeared in Romania after the Revolution of 1989. In his very first lines, Patriarch Teoctist emphasized the origin of the ecclesial institution's periodical as “the natural and necessary fruit of the freedom that our people have conquered with a huge blood sacrifice”⁶. The publication's editorial board proclaimed the status of a “free church newspaper” in which young theologians could write without fear of censorship and communist manipulation⁷.

The necessity of the continuous printing of the periodical is reaffirmed at the end of 1991 by the Romanian Patriarch, who invoked a series of main motivations. First of all, this is considered “the only means of press capable of ensuring communication, the timely circulation

¹ Radu CARP, *God in Brussels. Religion in the European public space*, Eikon Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p.50

² Oliver TSCHANNEN, “The Secularization Paradigm: A Systematization”, in: *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol.30, No. 4, Dec. 1991, pp. 395-415.

³ Jose CASANOVA, “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective”, *The Hedgehog Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1-2, 2006, p. 8.

⁴ Grace DAVIE, “Is Europe an Exceptional Case?”, *The Hedgehog Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1-2, 2006, p. 33.

⁵ Mălina VOICU, *Religious Romania. On the European wave or behind it?*, The European Institute, Iași, 2007.

⁶ The Message of the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, TEOCTIST, in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year I, No.1/1989, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁷ Teodor BACONSKY, „The Truth Shall Set You Free” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year I, No.1/1989, Bucharest, p. 1.

of information from the centre to the base units”¹, in the context of a constantly changing society and the rapid succession of events. The Hierarchy also mentions the competition in the field of information, noting that public opinion is guided by the mechanisms of the secular press and the lack of an internal tool to disseminate the information would generate significant risks in the relationship with the adherers. Moreover, part of the religious actors competing on the Romanian market (referring to the neo-Protestant cults) invest significant resources in publications and prints, and BOR (The Romanian Orthodox Church) is obliged to remain active in this field. A third argument in favour of printing *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei* is that of unity, threatened by the processes of decentralization and privatization in Romania, which can reconfigure the power centres. Finally, the Patriarch highlights the role in the equation of the mission and re-catechization of the population, after 45 years of atheism and the start of a transition, in which the ecclesial institution had little material resources².

Vestitorul Ortodoxiei was a reflection of the debates, decisions and actions from within the ecclesial body, pointing to the way the religion and the Romanian Orthodox Church returned to the public space in the first post-communist decade. The Pastoral Letter of the Holy Synod on New Year (December 1989) highlights the desires of the elites of the ecclesial institution: the reconstruction of churches, religious assistance in hospitals, orphanages, asylums, religious education in schools³. At the meeting of the Synod from January 1990, the mentioned proposals were preceded by “the sending of a Pastoral Word and reconciliation to the clergy and the faithful”⁴, a fundamental stage in the reconstruction of the authority of the Orthodox Church. BOR (Romanian Orthodox Church) quickly succeeds in returning to the public space, and a real outburst of religiousness can be observed. In 1995, Metropolitan Serafim drew up a retrospective of the first post-communist years, noting the rise of religion and reaching the points proposed by the Synod in 1990. Thus, the hierarchy observes: “11 new dioceses, more than 350 monasteries and convents (as compared to the 114 that existed before) nearly 7000 monks (as compared to 2500), the reintroduction of religion into the state education, the increase and diversification of theological education (the number of faculties of theology increased from two to seventeen and the number of seminars from 6 to 30), the increase of church publications. Today the church is present in hospitals, penitentiaries, army, asylums, mass-media and carries out sustained charity”⁵.

The concept of “secularization” reflected by *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei* 1989-1998

A first reference to the secularization thesis is found in the Protos text. Daniel Ciubotea writes in the 2nd issue of the periodical of the ecclesial institution about freedom and its costs, in a society that bears the deep stigma of censorship and communist barriers. The freedom offered by the act of the 1989 Revolution is linked by the author to the process of a spiritual “rebirth”,

¹ The Message of the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, TEOCTIST, with regard to the periodical of the Romanian Patriarchate in „*Vestitorul Ortodoxiei Românești*” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year III, No. 59-60/1991, Bucharest, p. 8.

² Idem.

³ MEMBERS OF THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, „Pastoral Letter of the Holy Synod on New Year” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year I, No.1/1989, Bucharest, p. 3.

⁴ “The extraordinary assembly of the synod” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year I, No.2/1990, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁵ SERAFIM, Metropolitan for Germany and Central Europe, „Orthodoxy, a factor of the spiritual unity of the Christian world” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VII, No. 143-144/1995, Bucharest, p. 2.

that gives meaning to personal and community life. The hierarch finds it difficult for the Romanian society to be reborn on the foundation of a “secularised humanism”, specific to Western European states, the local case requiring a profound reflection regarding the “Christian significance of freedom”¹.

The same theme of freedom is perceived as the key to religious individualization, one of the effects of secularization. The priest Constantine Coman condemned the manner in which the atheistic communist propaganda has influenced the attitude towards religion, moving it into the area of the individual’s intimacy, a personal matter, that in time has lost its significance².

A larger text dedicated to the phenomenon of secularization is signed in 1991 by Professor Dumitru Popescu, bearing the title “The man between secularization and transfiguration”. The author considers “secularization” as being the direct consequence of the Enlightenment phenomenon, which fundamentally repositioned “the centre of gravity of the European culture”³, from divinity to man. By rationalizing his whole existence and by using the tools of science, the man gives up his efforts to obtain the “heavenly paradise” and streamlines his experiences in the direction of building a terrestrial paradise. Professor Popescu's speech sets the reality of the modern man between two poles – secularization and transfiguration –, considering that the first framework “meant a tremendous scientific and technological progress for mankind, but also a huge spiritual and moral downfall”⁴. The idea of a space limited by secularization and transfiguration – in which modern man consumes his existence – is also resumed by Liviu Stoinea in the text “For a theology of communication”⁵, published 4 years later.

The next important reference to the topic of “secularization” is recorded in the BOR periodical in April 1992, being the translation of a fragment from the book “For the Life of the World” by the orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann. The author uses the terms “secularization” (process) and “secularism” in the text, the latter being defined as “a religion because it has a belief, because it has its own eschatology and its own ethics”⁶. Schmemmann proposes to analyse the theme of death, read through the key of religion, of Christian doctrinal positioning and of modern secularized culture. The fact that Christianity assumed the status of religion was manifested by the acceptance of a common function of all religions – to justify death, a decision which affected its theological dimension, because it has outlined a death-oriented religious world. The arguments of justification have been rejected by secularization, a stage in which man is stripped of “the clothing of the old death-oriented religion”, but “the world” has become secularized not because it has become an <<unrealistic>>, <<materialist>>, <<superficial >> world, not because it has lost the religion – as many Christians believe – but

¹ Protos. Dr. Daniel CIUBOTEA, „How do we use freedom” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year I, No.2/1990, Bucharest, p. 3.

² Constantin COMAN, “Freedom and Responsibility” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year II, No.9-10/1990, Bucharest, p. 4.

³ Pr. Prof. Dumitru POPESCU, „Man, between secularization and transfiguration” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year III, No.35-36/1991, Bucharest, p. 2.

⁴ Idem.

⁵ Liviu STOINEA, „For a theology of communication”, in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VII, No. 130/1995, Bucharest, p. 3.

⁶ Alexander SCHMEMMANN, *For the Life of the World*, translation Pr. C. Coman, Paris, 1969, pp. 116-131 quoting. “Walking with death on death”, in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year IV, No. 69-70/1992, Bucharest, p. 3.

because the old explanations can no longer explain anything”¹. Schmemmann's speech outlines the “secularization” within the boundaries of a process, offering an unexpected verdict: that it is domestic and specific to Christianity. In fact, “secularization rejects Christianity to the extent that this has identified itself with the old religion and forces itself to impose on the world its explanations and doctrines regarding life and death”². As mentioned, if the author refers to the concept of “secularization” understood in terms of a process, the notion of “secularism” is regarded as designating an authentic religion. Secularism is “an explanation of death and a reconciliation with it. It is the religion of those who were tired of explaining the world in the terms of *another world*, of which no one knows anything (...) were tired of *valuing* life in terms of death”³.

Two years after regaining freedom through the bloody sacrifice of the Revolution of 1989, the Metropolitan of Moldova, Daniel, observes the high readiness of children and young people to receive the religious message. This beginning of the return of religion into the public space is a beginning of the growth of personal religiousness, the hierarch referring to secularization in terms of a “tendency” that can only be opposed by the “holiness of life”⁴.

The dialogue between Bishop Serafim and Professor Olivier Clement of the St. Serghie Institute in Paris reveals the “French” imprint on the manner in which the notion of secularization is understood, by adding to the debate the concept of “laicization”. For Clement, laic democracy does not imply assuming the atheistic materialism, but it is an open democracy which respects religious pluralism. In such a democracy, religious education is guaranteed to all students, irrespective of their religion⁵.

As mentioned, one of the main aspects of secularization is religious individualization. The article “The Church and the Intellectuals” – signed in May 1993 by the clergyman Vasile Petrica – highlights the relationship that the autochthon intellectual elites assumed with religion and its institutional representation, at the beginning of the transition. The author notes in the form of a verdict: “it is known that most of our intellectuals are not exactly close to the church”⁶. Trying to discover the causes of the indifference of intellectuals towards religion, Vasile Petrica refers to the communist ideology, which imposed the levelling, monochrome Marxism. Thus, in order not to be exposed to the repression of the regime, part of the intellectuals rendered their religious practices private, while another part has reached forms of atheism (however, atheism as an expression of denial of the existence of divinity was rarely met). The author draws a number of solutions for the re-establishment of the relationship between religion/the church and the

¹ Idem.

² Idem.

³ Idem.

⁴ Pr. C. COMAN, “The spiritual crisis – a judgement and a call for renewal – Interview with His Holiness Metropolitan Daniel of Moldova and Bucovina”, in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year IV, No. 85-85/1992, Bucharest, pp. 3-6.

⁵ Bishop SERAFIM Făgărășanul, „ We need spiritual people. Dialogue between His Holiness Bishop Serafim Făgărășanul and Mr. Olivier Clementin, professor of Moral Theology at Sf. Serghie Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year V, No. 88/1993, Bucharest, p. 3.

⁶ Prot. Dr. Vasile PETRICA, „The Church and the Intellectuals” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year V, No. 95/1993, Bucharest, p. 1.

intellectual elite: religious education in school, the activity of Christian associations which counterbalances the imprint of the “secularizing spirit of the world”, the religious press¹.

Secularization not only touches the dimension of individual religiousness, but also receives relevant political valences in the discourse of ecclesial institution leaders. At the inter-parliamentary meeting held in Ormilina (Greece) from June 30 to July 4, 1993 and in the context of the accentuation of the religious revival in Romania, the theologians of the Bucharest faculty stated: “the greatest obstacle to European unity is the secularization of the current world”². Their statement reflects one of the positions that the ecclesial institution seeks to assume in the process of Romania's integration within the Western structures. The dissonance between highly religious societies and the secularized ones is condemned by BOR (Romanian Orthodox Church) representatives, who stated: “every nation has its problems and faces the disease of the 20th century, secularization. This obstacle can only be overcome by avoiding the politicization of spirituality, through the concern to rather achieve the spiritualization of the politics”³.

In the context of the Fourth Congress of the Faculties of Theology from August 1996, Patriarch Teoctist resumes the debate on the European integration of Romania and makes a list of the difficulties the ecclesial institution is faced with, mentioning among them the issue of secularization⁴. The final message of the Congress continues the direction assumed by the patriarch, considering that the Church must gather its resources to fight against the secularization of the contemporary world, which is undergoing a spiritual crisis⁵.

Falling within the same category of opinions are also the statements of the Bishop of Alba Iulia, Andrei, who emphasizes the importance of preserving the Orthodox identity after adhering to the European Community: “Let it be clear that we, people of the Church, also want with all our hearts to enter the European Community, but by keeping our spirituality and our cultural heritage and without perverting the truth”⁶.

The theme of European unity is viewed differently by Jean Fischer, the Secretary General of the Conference of European Churches, who, after a visit to Romania in November 1993, emphasized the need for dialogue between the East and the West of Europe. He expresses doubts with regard to the assertion of the idea of “Western civilization”, considering the experience of secularization as being common to the two spaces. Secularization in Western Europe took other forms and manifestations than in Eastern Europe⁷.

The topic of secularization and its relevance in the relationship between Eastern and Western Europe is also analysed by Professor Radu Preda, who notes the difficulty encountered by the Eastern theologian in his dialogue with the Western one. The new terminologies used by

¹ *Ibid*, pp. 1-4.

² P.S. CASIAN Gălățeanul, “Orthodoxy and the new European reality” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year V, No. 99-99/1993, Bucharest, p. 5.

³ *Idem*.

⁴ TEOCTIST, The Patriarch of Romania, „The mission of the church, today and tomorrow” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VIII, No. 161-162/1996, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁵ DANIEL VRACIU, „The Conference of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology, Bucharest, 12-17 August 1996” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VIII, No. 161-162/1996, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁶ ANDREI, Bishop of Alba Iulia, „The truth shall set you free” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year IX, No. 175/1997, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁷ Pr. Constantin COMAN, „Proselytism is poisonous” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year V, No. 106/1993, Bucharest, p. 4.

the Western theological discourse are the consequence of the desire to adapt to the “secularized culture”, but which lead to drifting apart from the evangelical message¹.

Another feature of the Western space (with direct reference to the North American one), debated in Romania during the first post-communist years is the plurality of the religious market. The reactions of the autochthon Orthodox elites were of implicit condemnation of “supply-side” theories². If, in Europe, the accentuation of secularization is generated by the decline of national churches, in the USA, the lack of monopoly of such institutions and the rich diversity of the religious market are mechanisms that have kept a high degree of religiousness.. A critique brought to the American model – suggested at an International Seminar in April 1994, held in Bucharest (“Religious Freedom under the Conditions of Democracy”) –addresses simultaneously the subject of religious proselytism. In fact, secularization and the development of neo-Protestant cults in the early years of the transition, were two topics which intensely preoccupied the ecclesial institution, as they were considered to be damaging to the Church and society. “Market religion” is the title of the text signed by Pr. Constantin Coman, which denies the applicability of these principles regarding the functioning of the market economy in the religious life, being considered as methods which do not diminish secularization, but rather accentuates it³.

The topics of secularization and “fanaticism of religious sects” are also vectorized at the end of the analysed period, when Metropolitan Daniel places them within the equation of rapprochement between the Churches. The hierarch condemns their use in practice and thinking, considering them as extreme and obstacles in the cooperation of the Churches⁴.

In an overview, most of the texts that refer to the concept of secularization, read in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei* for the period 1989-1999, consider it an attribute of the Western environment and a threat to the autochthon space. However, the theologian Radu Preda is among the first analysts of the autochthon religious phenomenon, who see the Romanian society not only as being threatened by secularization, but as a “secularized society”. The context in which the author proposes the verdict of secularization is the text “A brief overview of the church press from Romania in 1994”, which proposes a radiography of the church press from the first four years of the post-communist period. Preda believes that “by living in a secularized society, addressing a secularized audience (...), the Christian journalist is forced to take outer elements from the secularized press and shape according to their rhythm to ensure the pastoral and missionary efficiency of his message”⁵. This line of interpretation of the dynamic of religious life in Romania is also reproduced in the official conclusions of the first seminar dedicated to the church press, keeping the boundary between the two categories of press: “ecclesiastical” and “secularized”⁶.

¹ Radu PREDA, “The other brother” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VI, No. 111/1994, Bucharest, p. 3.

² Laurence R. IANNACCONE, Rodney STARK, , *A Supply-Side Reinterpretation of the “Secularization” of Europe*, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 33, N0.3, Septembrie 1994.

³ Pr. Constantin COMAN, „Market religion” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VI, No. 114/1994, Bucharest, p. 1.

⁴ DANIEL, Metropolitan of Moldova, „Perspectives of the Conference of European Churches” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year X, No. 196/1998, Bucharest, p. 2.

⁵ Radu PREDA, “A brief overview of the church press from Romania in 1994” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VI, No. 116/1994, Bucharest, p. 6.

⁶ “Church press. Conclusions of the first seminar dedicated to church press” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VI, No. 117/1994, Bucharest, p.1.

After the 1992 translation of a text from *For the Life of the World* by Alexander Schmemmann – where the author marks the differences between “secularization” and “secularism” – we no longer find in the pages of the periodical *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei* a detailed analysis of the concept, but only contextual references. However, in the issues 206-209/1998 it is integrated an article taken from *Contacts* – 144/1988 – signed by Olivier Clement and entitled “Confessing in a Secularized Society”. The material proposes an insight into the lines of understanding the concept, historical aspects, the relationship with Christianity. The author defines “secularization” in terms of “autonomization of different spheres of existence in relation to Christian religion”. Politics, science, economy, etc. are positioned outside the sphere of religious influence. Two factors are considered to be primordial in the emergence of secularization: “instrumental reason” (Weber suggests the thesis of “the world's disenchanting”) and “the Judeo-Christian tradition” (which facilitates the shift to experimental reason). The effects of secularization are profound, affecting how the person relates to everyday reality. Churches are affected by the diminution of plausibility, while religiousness of the “sect” type and religious “hyperindividualism” are accentuated¹.

At the end of this incursion into the pages of *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei Românești*, we propose the addition of the message of the Patriarchs of the Orthodox Churches after the meeting held on September 26, 1995, on the Island of Patmos. The text represents the official position of most Orthodox Churches with regard to the process of secularization, but also a synthesis of the direction that dominated the autochthon theological discourse between 1989 and 1998: “*in these times characterized by an unstoppable process of secularization, it is particularly necessary to affirm the significance of the holiness of life, given the spiritual crisis that dominates today's civilization*”².

Conclusions

Between 1989 and 1998, *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei* hosted within its pages several texts which proposed a complex analysis of the secularization process or made only references to it. In general, secularization is perceived as a threat to religion, an imprint of modernity and a rift separating Romania from Western Europe. Even in the earliest issues of the periodical we have discovered an obvious offensive against secularization, placed as an antagonist extreme of spiritual transfiguration. The translations of the texts written by A. Schmemmann and Olivier Clement are the only ones which propose a consistent analysis of the concept of secularization, the rest of the references being contextual. The meanings they offered were of: individualisation of religion, pluralization, autonomization/diminution of the ecclesial institution's authority. The debates on the European integration of Romania, but also the connections between the idea of freedom and the idea of secularization were very interesting. The dynamics of the development of the neo-Protestant cults, the patrimonial dispute with the Greek Catholic Church and the topic of secularization of society remain vectors in the discourse of the Romanian Orthodox Church throughout the entire research period.

¹ Olivier CLEMENT, “To confess in a secularized society” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year X, No. 260-261/1998, Bucharest, p. 3.

² „The Message of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches. Patmos, 26 September 1995” in *Vestitorul Ortodoxiei*, Year VII, No. 142/1995, Bucharest, p. 5.

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