

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION
“1 DECEMBRIE 1918” UNIVERSITY OF ALBA IULIA
FACULTY OF HISTORY AND PHILOLOGY

Ștefan Meteș (1887-1977) - elements of historical discourse

[Abstract of doctoral thesis]

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR:
PROF PHD IACOB MÂRZA

PHD STUDENT:
OVIDIU-VALENTIN BOC

ALBA IULIA
2013

Table of contents

Prolegomena

Argument

I. Directions in Romanian historiography from the end of XIXth century and first half of XXth century

II. Stages and moments from the life and activity of historian Ștefan Meteș

II.1. Origins and family

II.2. Period of studies

II.3. Managing director of Cluj State Archives (1922-1947)

II.4. Political activity

II.5. Library of historian Ștefan Meteș

II.6. The last years of life

III. Chronology and stages of creation of Ștefan Meteș

III.1. Professional training and influence of historiographical environment, especially that of his mentor Nicolae Iorga

III.2. Positivist features and outlook in his works. The place occupied by historian Ștefan Meteș in Romanian historiography

III.3. References of Ștefan Meteș to historiography of time. I Lupaș, S. Dragomir

III.4. Archival fund *Ștefan Meteș*, unpublished source of knowledge

III.5. Correspondence – source of research and reflection of the activity of historian Ștefan Meteș

IV. Historical discourse and the main themes or directions

IV.1. Method and historical outlook

IV.2. Ștefan Meteș, historian of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians: Elements of discourse

IV.2.1. Influence of the critical school on the discourse of historian Ștefan Meteș, in reference to works on ecclesiastical history. Particularities of writing and historical outlook

IV.2.2. General considerations on discourse of ecclesiastical history to Ștefan Meteș. Classification, themes and importance of works and studies on history of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians

IV.3. Historical background of Romanian Middle Ages

IV.3.1. Contemporary preoccupations of historian Ștefan Meteș with the Middle Ages. (An attempt of making the historiography of the issue)

IV.3.2. Older and newer perspectives on periodization of Romanian Middle Ages. View of historian Ștefan Meteș

IV.3.3. Romanian Middle Ages in the work of historian Ștefan Meteș

IV.3.3.1. Preoccupations with history of the Church

IV.3.3.2. Middle Ages reflected in the historical syntheses of Ștefan Meteș

IV.3.3.3. Institutional history and preoccupations with history of nobiliary and boyar families (social history)

IV.3.3.4. Relations between Romanian Countries in the Middle Ages (Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia)

IV.3.3.5. Economic history

IV.3.3.6. History of medieval religious art. Painting, Architecture

IV.4. Sources of historian Ștefan Meteș

Final considerations

Bibliography

Annexes

Ștefan Meteș (1887-1977) - elements of historical discourse

Throughout the last two decades, the Romanian scientific environment was preoccupied with recuperation and restitution of historical discourse of some personalities from the end of the XIXth century and beginning of the XXth century (Augustin Bunea, Alexandru Lapedatu, Ioan Rațiu, Iacob Radu, Ioachim Crăciun, Ioan Bianu), as well as their falling into Romanian historiography. The same interest underlain also the recommendation of professor PhD Iacob Mârza concerning the theme of the present doctoral thesis: **Ștefan Meteș (1887-1977) - elements of historical discourse.**

The work proposes an approach in the above mentioned terms. A first sequence is represented by the **Argument** – necessary for pointing out motivation, objectives and methodology. Object of investigation is represented by analysis of historical discourse treated by Ștefan Meteș within the expression of three terms *critical school-critical spirit-positivism*, without neglecting either the biography, which inevitably influenced his writing. When saying the name of Ștefan Meteș, more questions arise: Who was he? What is his educational background? Where did he perform his job as priest? How did he write and which are the main directions of his discourse?

The answer necessitates sketching the profile of the character and of his preoccupations. That is why, a whole chapter remarks chronologically the origin, family, studies and occupied positions – variables having a direct impact on his manner of writing. The core of the research is developed in the final sections of the work, where we attempted to analyse the cultural context, influences from the historiographic environment (especially of Nicolae Iorga), valences and positivist conceptions from his creation, as well as of the main themes and directions of his discourse.

Lack of compact information concerning life and creation of the historian, except for the volume dedicated to the celebration of 85 years of activity, made that the beginning of research be notably difficult.

In Cluj County Department of National Archives was discovered the personal fund *Ștefan Meteș and Filiala Arhivelor Statului Cluj (1922-1989) (Cluj Branch of State Archives (1922-1989))* fund. Whole records with personal documents, manuscripts, copies made after different works, correspondence exchanged with different personalities of the time or from the position of under-secretary of State in Iorga Government (1931-1932), all outlined the portrait of the historian from Cluj – starting from family, childhood, education, till characteristics

of his writing and development in Romanian historiography. In *Romanian Academy Library – Cluj-Napoca Branch* we discovered more works of historian Ștefan Meteș, but also sources on which he underlain his works. Research work continued in Cluj (“*Lucian Blaga*” *Central University Library*) then, in Sibiu (*Astra Library* and Library of “*Lucian Blaga*” *University*) by consulting some general and special works about Romanian historiography, positivism and Romanian critical schools, epistemology, historical discourse and its analysis, about important figures such as Nicolae Iorga, Ioan Lupaș, Silviu Dragomir, Alexandru Lapedatu or about interwar Romanian politics. An important work tool was *Bibliografia istorică a României (Romania’s Historical Biography)* – evidence of the fact that modern means of research can and must be completed by traditional methods of investigation and analysis. Study, comparison and synthetisation of the gathered material allowed more clear affiliation of historian Ștefan Meteș to Romanian, Transylvanian and especially ecclesiastical historiography.

Changes occurred in Romanian historiography are outlined in the **first chapter (Directions in Romanian historiography from the end of XIXth century and first part of XXth century)**, which establishes some features of the discourse of the time in which Ștefan Meteș lived and activated. Romanian historiography experienced important developments, triggered by social and political changes that Romanians passed through. The last decade of XIXth century evidenced the image of Romanian society undergoing profound changes. The young generation from 1900 aspired to its own discourse, engrafted on the failure of predecessors. It was the time when arose the conflict between historical consciousness and subjectivity, between two generations and two historical schools: “the old” representing the Romantic school and “the young” who started to stand out, headed by founders of the critical school: Nicolae Iorga, Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan.

Romanian modern historiography, as opposed to the old one, was rather pragmatical than imaginative. Fundamental contribution of the critical school was the positivist idea proposed by Dimitrie Onciul, meaning reconstruction of past based on documentary information. During the same period started institutionalization of history in higher education, but also printing of an important number of specialized publications from the field of history and auxiliary sciences. The chapter continues with presentation of the activity and outlook of two of the representatives of the critical school: Dimitrie Onciul and Ioan Bogdan, through whom Romanian historiography developed towards argumentation based on documents.

Following the “Union from Alba Iulia” circumstances of Romanian Transylvanian historiography have changed, research becoming more organised and new directions of study appearing: social, economic, political history, art history, monographs, history of law etc. Effusion characterised also auxiliary subjects, and history started to cooperate with other sciences and subjects (literature, art, sociology, geography etc.). New universities, institutes and specialised magazines were set up. Several of the important historians of the interwar period were: Vasile Pârvan, Ioan Lupaș, Silviu Dragomir, Constantin Giurescu, Zenovie Pâclișanu, Ștefan Meteș etc. Activity of Ștefan Meteș may fall under both interwar historiography and postwar, he dying in 1977. Besides him, renowned historians of postwar decades are: David Prodan, Francisc Pall, Ștefan Pascu, Gh. Platon, Alexandru Duțu, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, Alexandru Zub, Lucian Boia.

The second chapter of the thesis, **Stages and moments from the life and activity of historian Ștefan Meteș**, records important moments from biography of Ștefan Meteș. Based on new information and some articles published by himself were presented several aspects concerning his **native village** (Geomal), **period of studies, activity carried out in Cluj State Archives** or as **under-secretary of State in Iorga Government**, information about **componence of the personal library** of the historian and the **last years of his life**.

The first section of the chapter includes a geographical presentation of Geomal village, information about etymology or historical and statistical development of the locality, as well as observations about family and ancestors of historian Ștefan Meteș. Many references have been taken over exactly from his manuscript or from the study of Ștefan Meteș about his native locality.

The first time when Geomal was mentioned happened in 1282 and then in 1299. In 1349, Geomal reached by donation under the rule of the Chapter from Bălgrad, so that after, “in 1442, John Hunyadi to reconfirm” the right of the Roman-Catholic Church over it. Throughout the XVIIth century it had an important place amongst the neighbouring localities, and in 1664 the inhabitants have built a church under the shepherding of their priest Miclăuș, whose descendant – priest Iancu – became archpriest (protopope), setting up the headquarters exactly in his locality. Ștefan Meteș remarks that this priest participated to the act of religious union with Rome from 7 October 1698 and from 5 September 1700. Barely from 1848, when it was the scene of some terrible fights between Romanians and Hungarians, Geomal got out from the influence of Transylvania’s princes or the Chapter of Bălgrad.

In these places steeped in history Ștefan Meteș was born in 1887 and started studies. The first contact with school, such as it is revealed from the **section dedicated to the period of education**, occurred exactly in Geomal, in the confessional school whose elementary teacher was Luca Șandru during those years, who organized the whole didactic activity from here. The following attended schools were the State Gymnasium from Sibiu, the Commercial School from Brașov (1907 – 1908), the Romanian Theological Orthodox Seminary from Arad, so after that to follow courses of the Greek-Catholic High Gymnasium from Blaj to graduate the maturity exam.

After studies from Blaj and general certificate of secondary education, starting with 1912 he attended courses of University from Bucharest for two years, where he had as professors amongst others: Nicolae Iorga, Dimitrie Onciul, Ion Bogdan, Vasile Pârvan. It is the period when he was marked by historical studies and created an indestructible bondage with the one that was going to be his mentor but also friend, historian Nicolae Iorga. After graduation of faculty, Ștefan Meteș activated for two years (1914-1916) as elementary teacher to the School from Geomal, then between 1916-1921 as priest and elementary teacher in Boholt, near Deva. Yet, the path of his studies does not stop here, but continues also abroad. Between 1921-1922 he attended the courses of Letter Faculty from the University from Paris, fact evidenced both in the matriculation register for the school year 1921-1922, issued on his name, but also by the two letters addressed to the Dean of Faculty of Letters, that Ștefan Meteș asked to accept his enrollment to this faculty in view of defending the doctorate and by which he presented the whole activity until then.

A **third wider section** and which includes greatly new, unpublished information is dedicated to **activity of managing director of Ștefan Meteș to the State Archives from Cluj**, institution whose bases he set, heading it for more than two decades. He dedicated to it with all his powers and served it even in its toughest periods, such were the beginning years or refuge from Sibiu during the Second World War. Call for study of history, as well as urges of N. Iorga and D. Onciul, determined Ștefan Meteș to accept in 1922 the management of Cluj State Archives; for the beginning he was in charge of forwarding a memoir concerning the condition of archives from Transylvania and had the difficult mission of gathering the archival funds in one warehouse, to the headquarters of the institution from Cluj.

Starting with 1923, Ștefan Meteș was a pioneer, wandering throughout localities of Transylvania to track down and save archives, bearing unsparingly discomfort caused by his job and indifference of local authorities, wasting great

amounts of money from his own income, such it is revealed by records issued by different town halls whose funds have been researched, inventoried, catalogued and gathered. An edifying example is also the letter addressed to the Minister of Public Instruction Constantin Angelescu, by which Ștefan Meteș informed him about the hardships which he confronted with in his new position and the work he carried out during his first year of activity, when he was obliged to research archives from Transylvania or Bucharest at his own expense.

Other unpublished sources from Ștefan Meteș archival fund, out of which we only remember his correspondence with Ministry of Instruction, reveal constant hardships which was about to face the historian throughout his activity in the Archives from Cluj: precarious conditions, absence of furniture, poor electricity, damp, reduced number of employees, lack of areas for storage and research, lack of money and bad pay.

Ștefan Meteș participated also to retrieving archives from the Hungarians, being in charge also of correcting the text of the project that implemented these dispositions. Hardships endured while being a director were enumerated also in the memoir addressed to Iuliu Maniu on 20 October 1929, where managing director of the Archives from Cluj presents the state of archival funds from throughout Transylvania, measures taken for obtaining an appropriate building, as well as his view on importance of documents for the history of our nation; an extremely illustrative fragment on this line is available in the text of the thesis.

Between 1931 and 1932 Ștefan Meteș will work in the government of technicians presided by Nicolae Iorga, firstly as under-secretary of Home Affairs Ministry, then to Ministry of Public Instruction and Cults. Meanwhile he is obliged to renounce to heading the Archives from Cluj on behalf of David Prodan, such it is revealed by the unpublished documents mentioned in the work's table of contents. Confronted in his turn with difficulties, this forwarded a memoir to his superior on 5 July 1931, where he outlined the precarious condition, asked for a raise and a grant in Vienna. His memoir had no consequences, reason for which David Prodan asked for move to the archive of Central University Library from Cluj, after several years.

After numerous delays, the year 1936 brought to the Archives from Cluj headquarters bought by Ministry of Public Instruction, Cults and Arts, which corresponded better to the necessities of the institution and made possible increase of warehouses through new acquisitions. Before establishing the final location, managing director Ștefan Meteș experienced numerous hardships, risking outdoor storage of the Archives or their destruction during the war. Whole pages from the

thesis notice the action taken by Ștefan Meteș to transport archives from Cluj to Turda and to Sibiu, for the period of refuge between 1940 and 1945.

As managing director, Ștefan Meteș was a good administrator of Cluj State Archives both at times of peace or war. Impresses capacity of being very calculated with money he received from authorities for the institution he headed, his efficiency and keeping good relations with employees he headed. Several receipts and estimates, presented within the thesis are evidence of this fact. Despite difficult times, there existed also accomplishments, archives of some courts and prefectures being organised and was realised an index of documents until after 1500. As managing director, Ștefan Meteș was also preoccupied with evaluating the richness of funds by an intense activity of publication. He initiated and published between 1935-1943 six volumes from the documentary collection *Din publicațiile Arhivelor Statului din Cluj (Publications of Cluj State Archives)*. He published a report on funds and collections kept in Cluj Archives and collaborated to *Revista Arhivelor*, being always preoccupied with formation of a new generation of archivists.

Besides activity to Cluj State Archives, Ștefan Meteș was also part from Romanian interwar politics, **another section of the second chapter recording the political activity**. Also in this field, his relationship with historian Nicolae Iorga, future president of National-Democratic Party, had its say. Social-political transformations from Romanian society after 1918 occasioned entering the political scene of historian Ștefan Meteș, firstly as deputy of Romania's Parliament between 1919-1921, and then as under-secretary of Home Affairs Ministry and that of Public Instruction, in Iorga Government (18 April 1931-5 June 1932). The whole political activity of historian Ștefan Meteș did not measure up to accomplishments from the period when he headed the Regional Department of Cluj State Archives from Cluj. Subjected to different political pressures, especially those exerted by the Government or party he represented, Ștefan Meteș did not succeed to fulfil the tasks of his position according to his intellect and personality.

The fifth section from the second chapter deals with **library of historian Ștefan Meteș**. The document entitled "Catalogue of books and periodicals from Ștefan Meteș library", kept within the archival fund *Ștefan Meteș*, includes books and periodicals from the personal library of the historian. In the two notebooks, with 597 pages and which record over 3100 positions, books are arranged alphabetically according to the author's name, and the periodicals after the title. Noteworthy is calligraphy but also accuracy of depicting each book and periodical, evidence of training and tenacity of historian Ștefan Meteș.

Handwritten catalogue mainly includes books on history, philology, theology, yet there are not missing works treating law or geography. The predominant number of books are in Romanian language, but there are not missing books printed in Hungarian, German, English, French – a further more proof that historian and archpriest Ștefan Meteș knew more foreign languages. The majority of volumes was published between 1870-1950, yet the library also includes books older than 1870 or newer than 1950. Research of the library of our historian continues in our thesis with presentation of the titles, being also showed the percentage of domains. Synthesised, this “handwritten catalogue” reveals the highest degree of culture, interest for different domains, maturity of choices and preoccupation for building an as complete and maintained library as possible. The greatest part of the library was donated by the historian or his wife to Sibiu Metropolis, being kept as a special collection within the Library.

The last years of life is the final part of the second chapter and follows three directions: a) repeated approaches and memoirs forwarded by the historian to the communist authorities to recalculate his pension, as he was living beside his wife as renter in a common house, not having children or other incomes, b) surveillance by the Securitate and „internment” in Sighet and c) scientific rehabilitation in the last years of his life being awarded in 1971 with the order “Scientific Merit” by Nicolae Ceaușescu and acknowledged his whole activity and creation, six years before his death from 30 June 1977.

The third chapter of the doctoral thesis records chronology and stages of creation of Ștefan Meteș; it is revealed here maturation of his historical writing and it is attempted falling into Romanian and Transylvanian historiography by reference to other Transylvanian historians (Silviu Dragomir or Ioan Lupăș). Ștefan Meteș occupied a special place in the Romanian interwar society, involving in the cultural, scientific and political life of interwar Romania. He proved to be a valuable intellectual, a historian by vocation, an authentic specialist in the archival activity, an honest political man and especially a tireless researcher, who marked the Transylvanian historical discourse and not only (evidence for that are the awards given by Romanian Academy in 1919 and 1931). Ștefan Meteș subscribed successfully to historical discourse and research directions from the beginning of the XXth century. Romanian historiography from the third decade brought forth extensive theoretical debates through Alexandru Lapedatu, this noticing innovations brought by the positivism specific to the new critical school: research and publication of documents, supporting information by sources, if it is possible written and of first ranking, unpublished sources.

Setting up information on documents and as a general rule on more sources, complementary or comparable, represents the constant of historiographical ductus of the critical school and of discourse of Ștefan Meteș. Following tradition already rooted in the working methods of the new wave of historians, Ștefan Meteș publishes also selections of documents useful to subsequent researches. Aware of the usefulness of sources to reconstruct positivistically economic and agricultural life of Transylvanian Romanians, Ștefan Meteș uses unpublished sources concerning terrains, serfs, agricultural labours or animal breeding to throw a new light over the life of Transylvanian peasants, many of whom were serfs. He studies, translates or transcribes the documents accurately, revealing chronologically and methodically their content in the records, facilitating studies undertaken by other historians. For example, this way was born the volume of published documents *Vieața agrară, economică a românilor din Ardeal și Ungaria. Documente contemporane (1508-1820) (Agrarian, economic life of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary. Contemporary documents (1508-1820))*.

The first section of the third chapter from the doctoral thesis deals with **professional training and influence of historiographical environment, especially that of Nicolae Iorga**, over Ștefan Meteș. Acknowledged as specialist of history of the Church of the Transylvanian Romanians, completing the triad of Transylvanian historians out of which are also part Silviu Dragomir and Ioan Lupaș, Ștefan Meteș contributed to formation of Transylvanian school and enrichment of historiography through syntheses about history of the Church and monasteries from Transylvania, different monographs, economic writings or about Transylvanian ecclesiastical art, researching and valorising numerous unpublished sources that risked to be lost or to be forgotten.

Work in Cluj State Archives influenced decisively formation of historical vision and his writing, based on different materials: unpublished or published sources, specialised works, documentary or narrative, external or internal. Motivated by the love for archives and historical past, he remained his whole life a tireless researcher but also a critic, exceeding positivist training to fall also into constructivism.

While still a student at the University from Bucharest, having amongst professors the medievalist and Byzantinist Nicolae Iorga and other renowned names of historiography, he familiarised with disproving the wrong theories formulated by Franz Joseph Sulzer, Johann Christian Engel or Robert Rosler. Ștefan Meteș will reject with great delicacy such ideas by a well defined answer which will help to confirm continuity and millenary origin of Romanians in the same area of formation

that they are nowadays within. The modern working bent for more sources, their analysis and comparison may be found, both in the work *Istoria neamului românesc (History of the Romanian nation)*, as well as in other of his works.

The historian from Cluj underlines necessity of interdisciplinarity: similarly as in a laboratory, Ștefan Meteș takes over philological and linguistic knowledge to realise a solid discourse, well delineated, in accordance with trends of European positivism. For example, to explain the manner by which the forerunners' language maintained mainly Latin, he appeals to creation of philologist Sextil Pușcariu or other linguists. Activity of Ștefan Meteș continued also after 1948; acquired expertise in the several decades of work, the enormous researched and accumulated documentary material guarded him from the trap that many names of our history fell into, and his writing did not become an *instrumentum regni* for the communist dictatorship.

Second section of the third chapter entitled Positivist features and outlook in the historical writing. The place occupied by historian Ștefan Meteș in Romanian historiography records the place occupied by the historian from Cluj in our historiography and the main positivist influences of his writing. Ștefan Meteș had the chance of being educated in a period of deep political, social and cultural transformations and among a golden generation of historiography.

Nicolae Iorga was and remained the mentor of Ștefan Meteș. In his view, everything had to be printed, spread with no delay to the audience and researchers, line of thinking that was also followed by Ștefan Meteș: it is proven by the printing of volumes of documents referring to economic and agrarian life of Transylvanian Romanians. Detachment from the critical school is evident to Nicolae Iorga, who is not satisfied with a critical, objective, cold research, but attempts to relive the past, fill the gaps by an effort of imagination and to connect history from present. Following historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș there may be noticed a similar tendency. It is not a distant discourse, with gathered information ordered in a certain logical and temporal continuity. On the contrary, his historical writing is full of life, the protagonists from the past are almost brought in front of the readers, and events come to life, seem to develop again even if they ended centuries ago. Work *Relațiile bisericii românești ortodoxe din Ardeal cu Principatele Române în veacul al XVIII-lea (Relations of Romanian Orthodox Church from Transylvania with Romanian Principalities in the XVIIIth century)* presents in a lively manner the situation of Romanians who attempted to bring to Transylvania ecclesiastical books printed south or east of the Carpathians, historian as if living the life of characters, undergoing himself punishments imposed by Transylvanian authorities.

Historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș acquires colour and substance by style, interpretations, by expressing of views and assumptions. People from the past, no matter what century, come to life within his pages. Noteworthy remain also pages from the Monograph about Sibiu Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna, entitled *Relațiile Mitropolitului Andrei Șaguna cu românii din Principatele române (Relations of Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna with Romanians from Romanian principalities)*, where masses are depicted as being active in the development of events. Another characteristic of his discourse, adopted from Nicolae Iorga, is the effort of synthesis and continuity of ideas in short sentences, which to express more concepts in a logical succession. Although follows the same line promoted by German positivism and Nicolae Iorga, Ștefan Meteș remains a particular historian by technique, ideas, language, style, methodology.

Thenceforth, the doctoral thesis deals with positivist similarities between Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan and Ștefan Meteș. On the background of common features, but also based on temporal limits proposed by Pompiliu Teodor, Lucian Nastasă and Corina Teodor, the historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș could be projected along three directions, if we take into consideration also the age until he had written: a) historiography under the sign of critical spirit; b) historiography of interwar period and c) communist historiography (years 1948-1976). These references must not be regarded as close segments, because his historical writing will undergo a complex and continuous evolution, becoming mature during the Romanian interwar period. Finally, the historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș is under the sign of positivism delineated by the critical schools and Nicolae Iorga, yet keeping originality and somehow prefiguring constructivism.

If we restrain to the area of Transylvania, we can distinguish more historiographies: Romanian, Hungarian, German etc., amongst which sometimes debates were volcanic, both ethnically and politically or confessionally. On the Transylvanian multiconfessional scene may be remarked five great historiographical sections, without taking into consideration the ethnical spectrum: orthodox historiography, the Greek-Catholic, Catholic, Evangelical or Lutheran, Calvinist or Reformed. From this angle, Ștefan Meteș may come under, if we take into consideration the theological training and theme of many of his works, confessional historiography, still with a more moderate tone than that of Ioan Lupaș and Silviu Dragomir.

A new subchapter follows Ștefan Meteș's references to the historiography of time: Ioan Lupaș, Silviu Dragomir. Orthodox priest, Ștefan Meteș proved to the full within his works theological knowledge, yet his discourse

is more moderate than that of the other two contemporaries more renowned: Ioan Lupaș and Silviu Dragomir. Before 1918, the three historians indirectly supported the ideal of national unity of Romanians by evidencing blood connections (kin), language, culture, habits, beliefs.

Ioan Lupaș published selections of fragments from different sources, such as *Lecturi din izvoarele istoriei române (Readings of Romanian history's sources)*, published in 1928. Ștefan Meteș published in his turn such selections, such as those concerning agrarian and economic life. To the two historians are encountered similar preoccupations with some personalities of the Church, for example Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna. If Ioan Lupaș deals in most of his works with his life and activity, noticing from different angles the period in which the renowned hierarch lived, Ștefan Meteș places the image of Andrei Șaguna amongst the mass of Romanians and around the moment of Revolution from 1848, outlining both the actions of the metropolitan bishop and his relations with his homologues from the Romanian principalities or with other Romanians from beyond the Carpathians. Researching the work of Ștefan Meteș *Relațiile mitropolitului Andrei Șaguna cu românii din Principatele române (Relations of Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna with Romanians from Romanian principalities)*, published in 1925, thus later than many of the works of Ioan Lupaș about Andrei Șaguna, the reader may notice that no work of the latter is quoted by the managing director of Cluj State Archives. Situation is similar in syntheses or other works on the history of the Church written by Meteș, where the name of Ioan Lupaș almost does not appear.

Researching the archival fund *Ștefan Meteș* we also did not find any information about any contact or paper between the two historians from Cluj. Till present, absence of their collaboration and lack of quotations of Ioan Lupaș in the works of Ștefan Meteș remain uncleared, all the more so as both historians had common research themes: study of political-diplomatic, military, social-economic and cultural-artistic connections between Romanians located on one side and the other of the Carpathians, culminating with Union of the Romanians, research of institutional history of Transylvania, social movements, past of the Church and confessional realities from Transylvania are subjects that occupied hundreds of pages in the works of both historians. Situation changes as concerns relation with Silviu Dragomir, whose works are very often quoted. In the two syntheses *Relațiile bisericii românești din Ardeal cu Principatele Române în veacul al XVIII-lea (Relations of Romanian church from Transylvania with Romanian Principalities in the XVIIIth century)* and *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria (Romanian monasteries from Transylvania and Hungary)*, Silviu Dragomir is

quoted for 60 times, with *Istoria desrobirii religioase a românilor din Ardeal în sec. XVIII (History of religious manumission of Romanians from Transylvania in the XVIIIth century)*, out of which Ștefan Meteș takes over exactly quotations, sources or interprets excerpts. Also, common preoccupations of the two historians such would be situation of Romanians in the Balkans, institution of the Transylvanian church, religious Union, relationships between the three Romanian countries etc are noticed.

The fourth sub-chapter, entitled *Ștefan Meteș archival fund, unpublished source of knowledge*, presents structure, compenence and importance of *Ștefan Meteș* archival fund, kept in the institution to which the historian dedicated a great deal of his life. It includes more sections: **I. Personal documents of fund creator; II. Documents concerning occupied positions and the institutions he served; III. Manuscripts and copies of scientific works; IV. Personal correspondence; V. References about the creator; VI. Correspondence and works of other persons; VII. Photographs.**

The first section of the remembered fund includes documents of marital status, personal and scholastic documents, distinctions and awarded decorations, acts and autobiographical memoirs as regards retirement. The second section gathers documents reflecting activity of Șt. Meteș while occupying different public positions, culminating with his activity at Cluj State Archives, Romanian Academy or as Deputy and State-secretary. Sources vary: identification cards or decisions which attested his qualification of journalist to different publications, (“Patria” newspaper headed by Ion Agârbiceanu, N. Iorga’s magazine, “Drum Drept”); decisions by which the historian was informed about an appointment; invitations to participate to different manifestations; last but not least, the group of documents about activity performed at Cluj State Archives. The second section contains acts referring to his activity as correspondent member of Romanian Academy and documents about political activity (memoirs, petitions, telegrams, official correspondence with prefectures, town halls, Home Affairs Minister); correspondence with personalities which reveals scientific activity of Ștefan Meteș. The third section gathers manuscripts and copies of scientific works (55 titles), allowing an indexing of research directions followed by Ștefan Meteș.

The fourth section includes correspondence with cultural and political personalities such as Nicolae Iorga, Alexandru Matei, Teodor Naum, David Prodan, members of the family or different hierarchs of Romanian Orthodox Church. We could remark here *official correspondence*, including letters and telegrams received as Secretary of State and *private correspondence*, in softer tones, when it is about the man Ștefan Meteș who receives letters from the family.

Another section of the Meteş fund is that of “References about him”, with all opinions and contemporaries’ views, with gazette articles and interviews, with notes, speeches and messages from anniversaries or funerals. Noteworthy are references about Ştefan Meteş, from the press of 1919-1944. Impressive by quantity but also by recording important moments from life of Meteş is the section with photographs. Even if we are not dealing with written documents, photos mark out and delineate personality of Ştefan Meteş, keeping sequences from the life of the intellectual.

The last part of the third chapter is reserved for **correspondence as source of research and reflection of the activity of historian Ştefan Meteş**, as a new source of knowledge of his relations with contemporaries. The 18 files include letters received by him while he was under-secretary of State, while the rest record his relations with different cultural, political personalities or archivists hired in Cluj State Archives. Correspondence remains an essential source which besides the fact of revealing personality, activity and issues that historian Ştefan Meteş confronted with, is a mirror towards his contemporary society, noticing correspondents of Ştefan Meteş and the contexts they were in.

The central part of the research from now is the fourth chapter, Historical discourse and its main directions, by which are approached *method and outlook, elements of discourse, Ştefan Meteş historian of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians, historian of the Romanian Middle Ages, historical sources to Ştefan Meteş*. **The first sub-chapter is dedicated to methods and historical outlook** of Ştefan Meteş. Analysis of the historical discourse assumes research of the methods and outlook of the author in studying the past, categorised according domains: Church history, social, economic history or art history. Especially preoccupied with Church of Transylvanian Romanians and political, religious, cultural, economic relations between Transylvania and Romanian countries, his works are under the sign of his multidisciplinary training: within the historian with theological training were encountered the objective and critical outlook of the generation from the beginning of the past century, the vivid view on history of Nicolae Iorga and elements of theology acquired in Blaj and Arad.

Combining methods, Ştefan Meteş succeeds to built the base by which he will prove those affirmed. A first stage is selection and analysis of sources, so that to be passed to comparison of types of sources, to their interpretation and extraction of information. Then, by method of deduction and syllogism, after study and comparison of sources, the first conclusions or hypotheses may be drawn. For example, in the work *Şerban Cantacuzino și Biserica românească din Ardeal* –

studiu istoric (Șerban Cantacuzino and Romanian Church from Transylvania – historical study), the alliance against Transylvania between brother of the metropolitan bishop Sava Brancovici and Grigore-Vodă, depicted by a Serbian source and interpreted by deduction and chronological continuity of series of facts, was regarded as „[...] one of the causes that contributed to persecution and dethroning of the metropolitan bishop Sava [...]”.

Ștefan Meteș remains faithful to critical methodology of the positivist school, using also analogies to prove events occurred in the whole Romanian area. Analogy may also be combined with deduction: “To fully comprehend works of the Romanian Church from Transylvania one must necessarily know happenings occurred in the Church from Romanian countries [...]”. There must no be omitted either capacity of synthesis and ingenious display of the material both in the final work, and during writing. There are several hundreds of cards as evidence that show the work manner: consultation and critique of sources, analysis, their interpretation and extraction of unprocessed information. Then, followed the “game” with cards, establishing some connections and ordering of information according to fulfilling everything proposed in the established plan.

In *Viața bisericească a românilor din Țara Oltului (Ecclesiastical life of Romanians from Țara Oltului)*, the modern method of the critical school and reconstruction of the past learnt from Nicolae Iorga will have their say. The study begins in a positivist manner with presentation of the past and natural environment from Țara Oltului; then Ștefan Meteș insists upon relations between serflike Romanians and nobility. There are not missing quotations from documents, investigations, complaints, decrees and laws, there being subtlety emphasised sufferings of the peasants and measures of the authorities – the two discursive cores of the work. A similar work as manner of organisation of information is *Domni și boieri din Țările Române în orașul Cluj și românii din Cluj (Princes and boyars from Romanian countries in Cluj and Romanians from Cluj)*, by which Ștefan Meteș makes again antithetical presentations. This time, discursive cores which articulate the informational base are: Romanians-Hungarians, Cluj-princes from Romanian countries, Romanians from Cluj-Romanians from the armies of Walachian princes, Michael the Brave-Cluj. Operating with these discursive cores, Ștefan Meteș presents on the one hand history and social life from the past of his town, and on the other hand records relations of Transylvania with Romanian countries. Another positivist work is *Drăguș, un sat din Țara Oltului (Făgăraș) (Drăguș, a village from Țara Oltului (Făgăraș))*. With subtlety of a positivist acquainted with many other sciences, Ștefan Meteș appeals to interdisciplinarity, using information from diverse domains.

A new sub-chapter is dedicated to **Ștefan Meteș, historian of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians: discourse elements**. A first section of it follows **influence of the critical school on the discourse of historian Ștefan Meteș as for ecclesiastical works (particularities of writing and historical outlook)**. This influence is strongly felt in approaching history and construction of discourse to Ștefan Meteș. Savant researcher, he also cultivated more domains of Transylvania's history. As positivist, the historian from Cluj wished to understand past through sources (archival, documentary, archaeological) and not only to reproduce it, the manner done by Romantics. Our research starts from identification of works on ecclesiastical history, their temporal and thematical delimitation, identification of the view, features of discourse on ecclesiastical history and method based on informational and bibliographical cumulations.

The fourth chapter continues with several general considerations on discourse of ecclesiastical history to Ștefan Meteș. Classification, themes and importance of works and studies on history of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians. The historian made personal and original assumptions, using a multitude of unpublished or published sources, bringing valuable documentary contributions and new interpretations in historiography. He praises the nation, insisting upon relations between the three Romanian countries from ecclesiastical, economic-commercial and political point of view. Idea of unity, omnipresent in his discourse connected to the contemporary discourse from the beginning of the XXth century, is the subject of some new books or studies of his: *Șerban Cantacuzino și biserica românească din Ardeal* (*Șerban Cantacuzino and Romanian Church from Transylvania*); *Contribuțiile românilor ardeleni la unitatea națională și politică* (*Contributions of Transylvanian Romanians to national and political unity*); *Relațiile bisericii românești ortodoxe din Ardeal cu Principatele Române în veacul al XVIII-lea* (*Relations of Romanian orthodox church from Transylvania with Romanian Principalities in the XVIIIth century*); *Relațiile mitropolitului Andrei Șaguna cu românii din Principatele-române* (*Relations of the metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna with Romanians from Romanian principalities*).

A strict classification of works of Ștefan Meteș is not possible. Yet, for this research we select those of ecclesiastical character, which on an overview may be categorised according to two criteria: date of writing (printing) and themes. Chronological classification assumes the following scheme: 1. Works from his youth period, before 1918; 2. Works from the interwar period; 3. Works following 1945, till close to death of Ștefan Meteș.

Through discussed themes, his works can be divided into:

- Writings about relations between Transylvanian Romanians and those across the Carpathians, the Church having an important role in maintaining and improving these relations. Thus, the implicit theme is unity of Romanians.
- Historical syntheses on the Church of Transylvanian Romanians.
- Works on the religious Union with Rome.
- Ecclesiastical art, painting, schools of ecclesiastical music.
- Works that treat moments or characters from the life of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians;
- Writings of local ecclesiastical history, which present ecclesiastical life from perspective of Ștefan Meteș as historian and archpriest (protopope) of Cluj.

The attribute of historian, theological training and position of orthodox archpriest of Cluj have influenced the historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș. In depth, knowledge of ecclesiastical, biblical history, ecclesiastical art but also interdisciplinarity have decisively inclined the balance towards a coherent discourse, well constructed and argumented, logical and sufficiently clear.

One of the first works of historian Ștefan Meteș, *Șerban Vodă Cantacuzino și Biserica românească din Ardeal – Studiu istoric (Șerban Cantacuzino and Romanian Church from Transylvania – Historical study)*, may be framed as theme in relations of Transylvanian Romanians with those from across the Carpathians and importance of Church within these relations. The work was printed before the Union, in 1915. The study begins with recalling the ideal of union and ends with appeal addressed to the reader of reflecting on benefits of fulfilling this ideal. The historian arguments with documents, the idea that after the death of Michael the Brave, Romanian princes wished more and more to possess Transylvania. Being familiar with literary techniques, Ștefan Meteș introduces the antithesis of metropolitan bishop Sava with his brother, Gheorghe Brancovici: similar to a modern historian, objective and equidistant, he takes over exaggerated affirmations of the two confessions (Orthodox and Greek-Catholic) criticizing them by observation, comparison and analogy. The first presented bishop Sava as a saint and martyr, while the latter considered him as an immoral person, agent of the Calvinists. Ștefan Meteș follows the middle course, concluding: “[...] Definitely this reasoning is fundamentally wrong. Sava Brancovici was neither a saint, yet nor an immoral person, but [...] a diplomat with special attributes [...]”. The central part of the study debates politics of the Wallachian ruler, Șerban Cantacuzino and

his connections with Transylvania. Ștefan Meteș valorises here an impressive number of unpublished documents, out of which some referred directly to Transylvania, succeeding to decipher the hidden game of Șerban Cantacuzino, identifying useful sources and using first ranking sources such as *Condica Sfântă a Mitropoliei Ungro-Vlahiei* (*The saint chronicle of Wallachia's metropolis*), selection of documents *Török-Magyar Okmánytár* or collection *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*.

Another work on connections between Transylvanian Romanians and those from across the Carpathians, yet which also can be a panegyric is suggestively entitled *Relațiile mitropolitului Andrei Șaguna cu românii din Principatele-române* (*Relations of Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna with Romanians from Romanian principalities*). The work has a laudative character and nowadays must be interpreted in a critical manner, because in his discourse Ștefan Meteș presents the figure of the Metropolitan bishop only in positive tones, forgetting to remember also the shadows that mark the life of each mortal. Praising personality of Andrei Șaguna is a constant found in the whole work of Ștefan Meteș. Presentation of the metropolitan bishop's life starts directly after the moment of his consecration as bishop, "around the memorable Assembly from Blaj, on 3/15 May 1848". A minus of the work is represented by the fact that it is written as a journal of those days, sources on which information is based being fewer.

Another category of representative works for the discourse of historian Ștefan Meteș are the syntheses on institutional history of Church. In 1918 appeared to the Diocesan printing house from Arad volume I of the synthesis of Ștefan Meteș: *Istoria bisericii și a vieții religioase a românilor din Transilvania și Ungaria (până la 1698)* (*History of the church and religious life of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary (till 1698)*). Methodically written as a textbook, with detailed and structured table of contents, the synthesis combines within its pages from the perspective of the discourse all the methods used in a serious research: classification, analysis, comparison, analogy, induction, deduction, intuition, generalization. The tone is lively, coloured by ecclesiastical terminology and key words from the ecclesiastic circle: *bishop, bishopric, metropolitan bishop, clergy, Romanian, Union, schismatics, orthodoxes, Uniates/non-Uniates*. The volume represented for Ștefan Meteș the first work of big dimensions and is opened with a preface which presents concisely the work method, the used tool kit and followed purpose. The work method assumes use of archival documents, first ranking and secondary sources, their criticism, classification, analysis, comparison, basing each piece of information on sources studied discerningly. The work begins with

approaching religious life in Dacia, in the first Christian centuries and ends around the moment of religious Union. Using the methods of comparison, analogy and synthesis but also interdisciplinarity, Ștefan Meteș writes in a convincing manner, by concise presentation of information supported by a multitude of sources – furthermore evidence of the fact that historian consulted beyond the new, unpublished sources also a multitude of published sources, remembered at large throughout the thesis.

A second great synthesis on ecclesiastical history of Ștefan Meteș is entitled *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria (Romanian monasteries from Transylvania and Hungary)*. In introduction are presented data referring to number, spread and founders of Romanian monasteries from Transylvania, their role, connections of Transylvanian monks with Romanians from across the Carpathians and actions of promoting the Romanian culture by books, manuscripts, schools, art. The second part of the work presents 168 hermitages and monasteries "categorized according to regions and counties", Meteș remarking by precise, rich and even new information, reported to the historiographic horizon of the period. The work is valuable and important by richness of used sources: from documents from Hungarian and Viennese archives till those parochial or county, from works already well-known of Nicolae Iorga, Silviu Dragomir, Timotei Cipariu, Augustin Bunea, Samuil Micu, Grigorie and Petru Maior till less known authors at that time (Nicolae Dobrescu, Vasile Bologa, Tit Bud, Octavian Bârlea, Theodor Bodogaie) or other works appeared occasionally, the book is rich in information.

We cannot omit either investigations of Ștefan Meteș as concerns history of ecclesiastical art: *Din istoria artei religioase române. I Zugravii bisericilor române (History of Romanian religious art. I Painters of Romanian churches)*. Well organized, rich in historical information and sources, the work begins with a whole bibliographical list rendered by the author for consultation, which includes the majority of used sources. There are presented works of historians and Romanian specialists in the field of art and painting, such as Nicolae Iorga (with writings about construction of churches, art of painting or popular sculpture) contributions of Țigara - Samurçaș, Coriolan Petran, Ioan Bianu (with works on documents of Romanian art from old manuscripts, religious architecture, churches from XVIth century Moldavia, monasteries and churches of Stephen the Great). It is not missing either foreign bibliography: Karl Romstorfer, Louis Bréhier, Charles Diehl etc appearing quoted as sources. Knowledge of ecclesiastical art and iconography influenced writing from this book. Ștefan Meteș understood the manner of displaying painting in a church. He easily compared different areas, following the

talent of painters from one icon to another, from one church to another, although he hadn't visited all those places. The study continues with research of painters from Wallachia in the XIVth-XVIIth centuries and the main churches painted during this time interval. The informational volume and footnotes considerably increased in the following chapters of the book, referring to painters from Wallachia and Moldavia in XVIIIth-XIXth centuries. The chapter dedicated to painters of Romanian churches from Transylvania, Banat and Maramureş is interesting as appearance and number of pages. Neither schools of painters of icons from Mărginimea Sibiului are omitted.

Ştefan Meteş published also other studies about painters of icons and Romanian icons, out of which worth remembering is the article about *Zugravii și icoanele pe hârtie (xilografuri-stampe) și sticlă din Transilvania (Icon painters and paper (xylographs-stamps) and glass icons from Transylvania)*. Research begins with deciphering origins and appearance of the first xylographs (stamps) in Transylvania, the phenomenon being reported to relations between Transylvanian Romanians and those from across the Carpathians. Using sources previously mentioned, the historian identifies names of many engravers from Transylvania. There are enumerated more icons, xylograph type, not being omitted either icons on glass, more and more present in Transylvania. Then, he realized genealogies of some families of icon painters from the Valley of Sebeş river, presenting similarities and stylistic particularities amongst icons from different centres. The last part of the study is even more interesting, being presented methods of making stamps and icons on glass, used materials, combination of colours, Ştefan Meteş exceeding here the attribute of historian, appearing as initiated in techniques of painting.

Another category of works is represented by writings on local ecclesiastical history, which debate religious life of Transylvanian Romanians from a certain territory, locality or eparchy. One of the first such texts is *Viața bisericească a românilor din Țara Oltului (Ecclesiastical life of Romanians from Țara Oltului)*. The historian establishes the temporal and spatial dimension of the study, referring only to Transylvanian villages from Făgăraş district, from the oldest times until the mid of XIXth century. Besides researching the archives, Ştefan Meteş arranges gathered information, classifies it, interprets it and draws conclusions, surprising through the novelty he brings. *Viața bisericească a românilor din Țara Oltului* is based on previous researches of Ilarion Pușcariu, Augustin Bunea, statistics of XVIIIth century, new sources from Cluj State Archives or from Archives from Budapest. Structurally, the work includes two great parts, being completed by some final additions and a statistic section, presenting the material situation of priests from 35 villages from Țara Oltului (Făgăraş). For each village, Ştefan Meteş

offers the name of the priests, material situation, oldness of the church and its possessions, donations, purchasing of goods for the church, events that marked the community.

Finally, we consider that almost each page from the creation of Ștefan Meteș is well-argued with sources and unpublished documents, and made assumptions are considered by the historian personal opinions, subjected to criticism of historians or readers. The working tool kit is represented by new, unpublished and published sources, special and general, archaeological, epigraphic, numismatic sources, other unwritten sources etc.

Sentences of mature historical discourse are well organized, logical, affirmations are proven, details more accentuated, conclusions and syntheses from the end of chapters richer and more extensive. Ștefan Meteș used the following working methods: observation, induction, deduction, generalization, comparison, analogy and similitude, intuition, classification, ordering, so frequently evident in the pages of his works, methods by which, beside those related to field of philology, the Transylvanian historian builds his discourse and reconstitutes the past of Romanian nation. Language is very clear, not technical, combination of sentences is appropriate, so that the language flows similarly to action and development of events.

We can identify in the creation of Ștefan Meteș more levels of sources. A first level is that of new, unpublished documents, mainly gathered from Romanian Academy Library or researched archives. Often, the historian is quoting manuscripts and renders whole passages, which are interpreted and then put in connection with other sources. The power of clarifying information, classification and logical ordering of sentences in his discourse highlight valid attributes of historian. Rarely will we find to Ștefan Meteș divagations from the subject, everything is well organized as for arrangement of information, well argued, sentences are appropriate, interpretations are as precise as possible. Each page benefits of more footnotes and references to sources, which are noted correctly, completely and exactly, with sobriety of the one who headed for two decades the Cluj State Archives. The second level of sources is that of published sources – collections of documents and published acts. The most quoted are *Hurmuzaki collection*, *Scrisori și inscripții ardelene și maramureșene* (Nicolae Iorga), *Acte și fragmente* (Timotei Cipariu), collections of documents of Ilarion Pușcariu, Sterie Stinghe, Nilles, *Monumenta Comititalia Transilvanicae* etc. The third level of sources is that of dictionaries and encyclopedias, and the fourth level includes general or special works signed by Nicolae Iorga, Augustin Bunea, Octavian Bârlea,

George Bariț, Gheorghe Sion, Silviu Dragomir, Ioan Lupaș, Vasile Mangra, Nicolae Bălan, Petru Maior, Ion Mușlea, Ioan Bogdan, Coriolan Petran, etc. Magazines, newspapers, annuals etc. represented the last level.

Another section of the fourth chapter is dedicated to **Contemporary preoccupations of historian Ștefan Meteș with the Middle Ages (An attempt of making the historiography of the issue)**. The new historiographic perspective allowed a new look on certain stages of national history, mainly on medieval period, which unfortunately did not benefit at the beginning of a research based on thorough study of archival documents. Romantics' attitude of mythicising and issuing some theories without documentary support, started to be replaced with the critical outlook, based on research of archival documents for thorough and objective analysis of the Middle Ages.

In presentation of several views on the Romanian Middle Ages, we attempted to determine the coordinates that marked the outlook of the historian as for the whole epoch, regarded on the whole and in its characteristic manifestations. Defining essence of the medieval world allows establishing historical processes which delimitate this period: at the beginning disappearance of late Roman Empire and triumph of Christianity, and at the other end appearance and development of modern state that reintroduced, on other bases, control of society. Silviu Dragomir fixed the beginning of the medieval epoch in the IXth century, following ethnogenesis, during the period of recording Romanians and their political formations in external sources. Delimitation between medieval and modern is less precise, being established by him in the XVIIth century due to political, military, cultural and religious events from south-eastern European area. Comparing this date with year 1593 forwarded by Ioan Lupaș or the beginning of XVIIIth century proposed by Dimitrie Onciul, there may be noticed that the date established by the first is an exception within our historiography, explained by the fact that he always took into consideration the context of central and south-eastern Europe.

The following section of the final chapter debates **Older and newer perspectives on periodisation of Romanian Middle Ages. View of historian Ștefan Meteș**. Xth-XIth centuries were for a long time considered as the beginning of Romanian medieval period, an end of ethnogenesis and beginning of setting up – till the XIIIth century – of the first principalities and voivodeships, statal embryos or micro-states. Yet, there are newer opinions as for the lower limit of the Romanian Middle Ages. Investigation and interpretation of written documents and archaeological material represented important steps, the new school from Cluj (Ioan Aurel Pop, Thomas Năgler, Ovidiu Pecican, Ioan Drăgan, Gheorghe Gorun)

lowering this date towards the centuries of ethnogenesis of our nation, the latest being accepted VIIth century.

Old historiography fixed the end of the Middle Ages to 1821, the latest, yet vision evolved. If Nicolae Iorga and Silviu Dragomir fixed this date in the XVIth century, authors of the treaty *Istoria românilor (Romanians' history)* coordinated by Virgil Câdea propose XVIIth century. In syntheses and studies previous to 1989 the modern epoch started with Tudor Vladimirescu's uprising, Romanians being part of the European nations that remained in the Middle Ages for almost a millennium. Yet, researches on history of mentalities demonstrated that creation of intellectuals as agents of modernisation was in full swing in the XVIIth century, by innovations in thinking, attitudes and ideals that marked separation from medieval tradition. What particularizes XVIIth century in the history of Romanians are durable political and cultural developments. Things are different for the new historical school from Cluj, Ioan-Aurel Pop affirming that the respective period lasts for almost a millennium in the history of Romania, from the VIth-VIIth centuries until around 1600.

Position of Ștefan Meteș is not very clear. Trained in Bucharest, when scientific activity of Nicolae Iorga was at its peak, Ștefan Meteș does not express a concise opinion on this issue. We can deduce by his preoccupations concerning the Middle Ages that he follows the view of Nicolae Iorga and that establishes the beginning of the medieval period in the period of ethnogenesis of the Romanian nation. Out of his writing, it seems that Middle Ages end around XVIth-XVIIth centuries, all the more so as great part of his references are made to the Transylvanian area.

Another section of the chapter is **Romanian Middle Ages in the work of historian Ștefan Meteș**, with many sub-chapters:

- **Preoccupations with history of the Church;**
- **Middle Ages reflected in the historical syntheses of Ștefan Meteș;**
- **Institutional history and preoccupations with history of nobiliary and boyar families (social history);**
- **Relations between Romanian Countries in the Middle Ages (Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia);**
- **Economic history;**
- **History of medieval religious art. Painting, Architecture. Music and schools of music.**

A first contribution reflecting Middle Ages in works of history of the Church is the article about history of Geoagiu de Sus Bishopric, Ștefan Meteș showing who established it, the bishops that headed it, relations with Wallachia and

development of the two neighbouring monasteries (Geoagiu and Râmeț). Another work of local medieval history is that dedicated to the ecclesiastical past from Țara Oltului, from oldest times until 1850. For the medieval period, the research is not exhaustive, because information appears in a predominant proportion from the XVIIth century. Before this period are occasionally remembered certain events from the Romanian Middle Ages, such as presenting some names of boyars or data about church construction.

The medieval period is reflected also in several manuscripts (*Importanța bisericii ortodoxe la dezvoltarea istorică a neamului nostru* – 1928 (*Importance of the Orthodox Church in historical development of our nation* -1928) and *Rolul românilor în susținerea ortodoxiei din Răsărit în trecut și în prezent* – 1940 (*Role of Romanians in supporting eastern Orthodoxy in the past and at present* - 1940)). The first manuscript presents, focusing on the medieval period, contribution of the Church to development of Romanian nation, at religious-moral, cultural level (establishment of schools, printing presses, asylums, hospitals, promoting of culture and printings in Romanian, development and specific Romanian particularisation of Byzantine painting, architecture and music) and political, many representatives of the clergy being part of Ruling Councils and Princely Divans, or being sent in deputations. In the second text, Ștefan Meteș enumerates contributions of Romanian princes to support orthodoxy in the east, by protecting patriarchs and bishops that fled from the Turks or by establishment of Greek printing presses or which printed religious books with oriental letters. Unfortunately, these two texts are very schematic; they do not remember sources, being more some drafts for works that Ștefan Meteș did not succeed to write anymore.

Another section of the sub-chapter presents the Middle Ages reflected in the syntheses of ecclesiastical history signed by Ștefan Meteș. The first work *Istoria bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor* (*History of Romanian church and religious life of Romanians*), indicates IIIrd-IVth centuries as period of Romanian ethnogenesis, so that from VIIth-VIIIth centuries to appear the first signs of early Middle Ages. Follows information about social organisation of Romanians during these centuries, at large being followed the line of Nicolae Iorga. Ștefan Meteș connects medieval history of Hungarians from the history of Romanian nation, to contradict theories of some Hungarian historians that asserted that Hungarians would have found Transylvania uninhabited. Ștefan Meteș clears also establishment of Walachia and Moldavia by settling down of some Transylvanian voivods, who would have crossed the mountains to regain lost rights under the Hungarian domination. And many serfs have crossed the Carpathians to

Romanian Countries. As for ecclesiastical organisation of Romanians, the Transylvanian historian has lowered until XIth-XIIth centuries organisation of a bishopric of Romanians (even if based on existent sources, its headquarters cannot be localised). By a well articulated syllogism which uses theological knowledge, Ștefan Meteș reaches the conclusion that if there existed archpriests, then also existed bishops for them to belong to. The historian depicts the situation of Transylvanian Romanian bishoprics from the XVth-XVIth centuries and impact of Reformation here, reflected mainly in ecclesiastical printings. Whole pages are dedicated to relations between the three Romanian countries, Church promoting culture and Romanian language, providing training for typographers, copyists and educating children of Romanian princes. A second great synthesis of Ștefan Meteș, *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria (Romanian monasteries from Transylvania and Hungary)*, includes of introductory part with data referring to number, spread and founders of Romanian monasteries from Transylvania, connections of Transylvanian monks with Romanians from across the Carpathians and actions of promoting Romanian culture by books, manuscripts, school, art; the second part presents 168 hermitages and monasteries "categorized according to regions and counties". For the medieval period information starts from XVIIIth century, focusing on historical background of monasteries and is relatively little, except for old centres, such as Prislop or Peri.

A third section of the sub-chapter dealing with the Romanian medieval period from creation of Ștefan Meteș is entitled **Institutional history and preoccupations with history of nobiliary and boyar families (social history)**. Certain aspects were already recorded in the above mentioned texts, from the simple rural organisation, then "counties", until organisation on principalities, voievodships culminating with setting up outside the Carpathian arch of medieval states Walachia and Moldavia. Transylvanians' contribution to establishment of the two Romanian states is important for Ștefan Meteș, who supports theory of foundation of the state. Parallel with laic institutional evolution developed ecclesiastical institution, more rapidly in Transylvania at the beginning, then more difficult due to political and confessional situation from within the Carpathian arch. Also the metropolitan bishop, who stood beside them and was part of Ruling Council, had expanded powers over those Transylvanian territories. Relations between Transylvania and Romanian Countries are outlined also in the work *Moșiile domnilor și boierilor din Țerile Române în Ardeal și Ungaria (Domains of Wallachian princes and boyars in Transylvania and Hungary)*. Even if information is rich on Romanian medieval history from this perspective, notes are quite few.

Ever since introduction, Ștefan Meteș underlines that the first Romanian voivods, such as Basarab (1350-1352), entitled themselves as “princes of whole Romanian Country”, name which included all Romanian territories, thus also Transylvania. Furthermore, kings of Hungary started to give extensive estates in Transylvania and Hungary to voivods from Romanian Countries, in exchange of support against the Ottomans. When these received such territories, they immediately built churches there. Sometimes it happened that princes of the two Romanian countries to offer in their turn gifts for loyal servants, Ștefan Meteș thus explaining appearance of a new class: nobility.

The fourth section of the sub-chapter about Romanian Middle Ages to Ștefan Meteș refers to **relations between Romanian Countries in the Middle Ages**. The ideal of unity appears in creation of almost each Romanian historian, all the more in works of medieval history. *Șerban Vodă Cantacuzino și Biserica românească din Ardeal – Studiu istoric (Șerban Cantacuzino and Romanian Church from Transylvania – Historical study)* may be subsumed under this theme, revealing interest of princes from the Romanian Countries for the ecclesiastical situation of Transylvanian Romanians in the XVIIth century and showing that after death of Michael the Brave Romanian princes wished more and more to possess Transylvania.

The fifth section is dedicated to works of economic history. One of these works is *Relațiile comerciale ale Țerii Românești cu Ardealul până în veacul al XVIII-lea (Commercial relations of Walachia with Transylvania until the XVIIIth century)*. The book of Ștefan Meteș is a valid guide, as it depicts active commercial life of Walachia in connection with Transylvania and Hungary from the oldest times until death of Constantin Brâncoveanu (1714), so approximately three centuries. The work is interesting and is based on published Romanian, Saxon, Hungarian historical sources but also on new, unpublished acts. Noteworthy is that there are whole pages that depict goods and prices for each item, as well as duties imposed by the customs. Equally important are end pages, that include tables with the sold objects.

Similarly important for understanding medieval economy, this time from a relatively small territory, Țara Făgărașului, is also *Situația economică a românilor din Țara Făgărașului*, vol. I. (*Economic situation of Romanians from Țara Făgărașului*, vol. I.) The purpose of the work is that of offering an as authentic as possible picture of the economic life from the remembered territory, based on new documents, fiscal censuses, land registers, lists etc. discovered both in Archives from Cluj, and in Budapest. Interesting is that the historian realises a report of

localities by which he shows the number of noblemen or boyars, citizens, serfs, day labourers and free peasants, but also a categorisation on ethnicities: Saxons, Hungarians, Romanians, and at the end of the table presents the agrarian situation and number of fugitive serfs. Again impresses historian's capacity of depicting economic life from the end of the Middle Ages, identifying based on censuses and land registers even the number of haycocks, cultivated cereal crops, obtained quantities, quality of the terrain in different places, caprices of the weather and number of animals.

A last contribution of historian Ștefan Meteș as for medieval economic history is the volume of documents *Vieața agrară, economică a românilor din Ardeal și Ungaria. Documente contemporane, vol. I, 1508-1820* (*Agrarian, economic life of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary. Contemporary documents, vol. I, 1508-1820*). The historian reveals wholly the text of these documents, both in the language in which they were written, and in their transcription in Romanian, the volume being even nowadays a useful tool for researchers.

There cannot be omitted either preoccupations of Ștefan Meteș as for **history of ecclesiastical art** - recorded by **the sixth section** of the sub-chapter – because he was the first who completed a work about the old and ecclesiastical painters from the XIVth-XIXth centuries, entitled *Din istoria artei religioase române. I. Zugravii bisericilor române* (*History of Romanian religious art. I. Painters of Romanian churches*). The value of his work is revealed by the fact that he was the first historian who gathered, in a quite unitary work, more information on the subject, even if one can notice the modest level of commentaries on traditional art. Ștefan Meteș presents information about the schools of painters, established especially nearby monasteries. He records in detail more names and affirms that one painter had around him more apprentices. The study continues with presentation of painters from Walachia in XIVth-XVIIth centuries and main churches painted during this time interval, out of which we remember the Monastery from Curtea de Argeș, Cozia, church of Târgoviște Metropolis. Information that marks the historical writing of the author is varied, rendered quite exactly, as much as possible technically. For each church is remarked who is/are the painter(s), where do they come from, which is the painting school they come from, what techniques and paints one uses. The same situation is encountered also in the following chapter, where church painters from Moldavia are presented.

The end of the fourth chapter debates **historical sources**. There were analysed three of the important works of the historian. The work done was not easy,

yet outcome was surprising. The three works are *Istoria Bisericii și a vieții religioase a românilor din Transilvania și Ungaria, vol. I (Până la 1698)* (*History of the Church and religious life of Romanians from Transylvania and Hungary, vol I, (Until 1698)*), second edition from 1935, *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria* (*Romanian monasteries from Transylvania and Hungary*) (1936), *Relațiile bisericii românești ortodoxe din Ardeal cu Principatele Române în veacul al XVIII-lea* (*Relations of Romanian orthodox church from Transylvania with Romanian Principalities in the XVIIIth century*) (1928).

Results were surprising because counting and cataloging sources, but more especially identifying the manner by which Ștefan Meteș reported to them, we realised that this historian was not, such as maybe other historians are inclined to say, a compiler. More than that, he was and remained a man who had worked honestly with sources, decanted historical information, displaying it by neither simple nor too academic language, to may be easily covered by differently educated readers. We appreciate the work of historian Ștefan Meteș and his working method with sources, as we passed through the method of identifying and noting each position; we made a classification, we established proportions and percentages reflecting frequency of quoting a source or author and usage of each category of sources.

Getting over the three works, we noticed certain aspects for each of them. For *Istoria Bisericii* (*The History of Church*) one may easily notice variety of sources and quotation in a sole note of more complementary sources. Each piece of information is relatively well documented, that is why we can refer to more categories of sources – from those new, unpublished till periodicals. Nicolae Iorga, Augustin Bunea, Silviu Dragomir, Al. Cziple, Timotei Cipariu, Ioan Bianu, Andrei Veress, Ialariu Pușcariu, Vasile Pârvan etc. form the gallery of used sources, all the more so as a synthesis includes sources of different categories. Ștefan Meteș not only takes over information but also interprets it, making connections between sources. According to model of Nicolae Iorga, Ștefan Meteș quotes in a note, more sources. His notes are filled in certain places with convincing and necessary explanations, which by their presence on the bottom of the page ease the text itself. In the work *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria*, one may easily notice variety of sources and quotation to one note of more sources or categories of complementary sources. Here things change by comparison with *Istoria Bisericii*: more new sources appear which were obtained from Cluj Archives, Romanian Academy Library or Sibiu Archives. Increase of number of published sources, which the historian also interprets, ensures a solid base to the work beside the

general and special works. By calculating proportion of each category of sources results the work of researching documents, even published, as well as the varied range of sources both internal and external. This time published sources represent more than the half of the sources of the whole work, evidencing the passion of archivist for working on the documents, even if this is one published. The extended historiographical horizon and that of sources passes the borders by quotation of Hungarian, Slovakian, German authors, their titles being left in the language in which they were published. Extending quotation to different sources, internal or external, new or published, general or special represents the prerequisite of serious research, furthermore proof of intellectual profile and solid background of Transylvanian historian Ștefan Meteș.

Conclusions

Throughout this doctoral thesis it was proposed to establish some elements and directions that are at the base of historical discourse of Ștefan Meteș. Studying role of personalities within development of human society represented a constant preoccupation of researchers, mainly historians. Reconstitution of their past, making of biographies based on archive documents and already existent historiography, there where it is the case, to which is added the task of researching the work, ordering of works, interpreting, transform the researcher from a simple searcher of the past into an authentic detective, a spirit within which interdisciplinary knowledge combines. The new historian born at the turn of the XXth century will often be by nature of his mission and training, with strong interdisciplinary characteristics, a *spiritus rector*, a man that was going to sacrifice most of times years of his life and family moments for his activity, to the use of researching and resizing the historical past. Nowadays, rediscovering of some personalities, such was also historian Ștefan Meteș, who influenced the historical research, but also some domains of history, from history of the church and until economic or social history, constitutes a more than necessary approach. Furthermore, it is a moral obligation, especially as this research focuses on bringing to light and reposition, historian Ștefan Meteș and his creation on the deserved place in our historiography from the first half of XXth century.

Historiographical activity of Transylvanian historian Ștefan Meteș was carried out throughout more decades, beginning with the first two decades of XXth century, while he was still a student of Faculty of History from Bucharest and ending with his death from 1977. Mainly historian of Transylvanian Romanians, for two decades managing director of the prestigious institution of Cluj State Archives, Ștefan Meteș, always carried out fervent research in the field of history.

Certainly, that a research of such dimension and conducted throughout decades of activity led to extensive creation and unequal as documentary value. Historian with solid background, Ștefan Meteș cultivated more domains of Transylvania's history, manifesting interest for history of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians, political history, history of culture and Romanian art, social, economic history, national movements from Transylvania, historical demography, local history, historical geography and law history. He also made studies and medallions about personalities of our history, such as Michael the Brave, Horea, Cloșca and Crișan, Nicolae Iorga and George Bariț, Gh. Sion, I. Bianu,

origin of our nation, Thracians, Transylvania and boyar families and voivods from Transylvania.

With a background in positivism, with a critical sense, responsible for everything he had written, Ștefan Meteș brought in our historiography contributions such as valuable documentary articles, enriching information, working tool kit and method, raising to a higher level Romanian research on the field of history. Member of the generation of young historians, influenced by the new positivist and critical school, and new trends from our Romanian historiography, which came down to earth from orbit of Romanticism, Ștefan Meteș was a priest first of all, not only historian, archivist and researcher. This dimension of his personality had a visible impact on his historical writing. Ștefan Meteș represented a brilliant generation of Romanian historians which stood out from the beginning of the last century, which dedicated life and whole power and capacity for historical science: Vasile Pârvan, Dimitrie Onciul, Zenovie Pâclișanu, Ioan Ursu, Alexandru Lapedatu, Ioan Lupaș, Silviu Dragomir etc.

Dedicating over two decades of work for the institution that he so much cherished, Cluj State Archives, Ștefan Meteș involved deeply in researching our past by gathering documents, their selection and registering, interpretation and establishing connections amongst them. Through him, Cluj State Archives were fully appreciated by richness of archival funds. He was and will remain an authentic pioneer of Transylvanian record keeping, who fervently worked for keeping documents, ultimately to preservation and study of our past.

As for tool kit and work method, Ștefan Meteș affiliates to outlook on history of the critical-positivist school and discourses and knowledge taken over from his professor and mentor, Nicola Iorga. The working tool kit is represented exactly by sources, beginning with those new and continuing with those published, special and general, but also archaeological, epigraphic, numismatic sources and other unwritten sources. As working methodology, Ștefan Meteș took over from practical knowledge of N. Iorga, according whom history is cyclical, and events repeat, yet with other actors.

Also from N. Iorga and positivists' manner of working, Ștefan Meteș takes over the method of similitude and comparison of sources. So as it is revealed by pages of his works, the Transylvanian historian brings to prove some information or theories more sources, preferably internal or external, or which differ from the authors' point of view. By application of methods of classification, analysis, comparison and finding of similitudes, clarifying authentic information from the false one, Ștefan Meteș succeeds to capture and synthesise discovered information,

to systematise it logically. The method by which he makes his well thought discourse, sometimes even in a scholastic manner, carefully noting of sources and their arrangement, his pages remark through rich footnotes, with many explanations and parentheses, by variety of enumerated sources, are a further evidence of the contribution brought by Ștefan Meteș to historical research from our country. His discourse evolves, from his youth, when it had a vivid, more colourful tone, where emphasis is laid on depictions, figures of some personalities, until discourse from pages of syntheses on ecclesiastical art or other special works, where emphasis is laid on information, logical and methodic arrangement, argumentation, as many as possible sources, despite the vivid language, similar to his period of youth. Sentences of his discourse from matureness are well structured, logical, details are more accentuated, conclusions and syntheses from the end of chapters more rich and extended.

Figures of speech are not missing either from syntheses, even if they are not so numerous as in the beginning of his historical writing, as there are also present fine touches of irony, where it is the case, or those of polemic. As working methods used by Ștefan Meteș may be remembered: observation, induction, deduction, generalisation, comparison, analogy and similitude, intuition, classification, ordering, so frequently evident in the pages of his works, methods by which, beside those related to field of philology, the Transylvanian historian builds his discourse and reconstitutes the past of Romanian nation.

A first feature of his discourse on the theme of Church and religious life of Transylvanian Romanians is the attempt of restoring past based on documents and other types of sources. Always appealing to sources, especially from the primary fountain, always everlasting and everflowing of national, county, parochial or from Budapest and Vienna archives, Ștefan Meteș left nothing governed by the rule of chance. His pages are full of notes, references to special or general bibliography, collections of published or new documents.

In displaying the historical material, Ștefan Meteș used the criterion of theme and chronology, and as working methods he used comparison, deduction, inductive method, synthesis, developing clear ideas, that form themes and sub-themes. The main themes presented in ecclesiastical works are those referring to unity of all Romanians, religious Union, making some studies on local ecclesiastical history or ecclesiastical art, about certain ecclesiastical characters. Important and valuable are also till today his syntheses on ecclesiastical history, already remembered, rich informationally and frequently with a new content.

The modern base, in the spirit of the critical school, which results from many of his works is a further sign of importance and contributions brought by the historian from Cluj. Either it is a monograph, a social-economic work or ecclesiastical, on medieval history or demography, those introductory parts are not missing, they having the role of introducing the reader to the framework where the action takes place: establishing the geographic limits, remembering history of the place, offering some more economic explanations, concerning habits, all these regarding interdisciplinarity and knowledge that the author demonstrated. As for sources, broadly may be noticed more levels of them. A first level is that of new sources, gathered from the archives where he carried out his research, from the inland or abroad, followed by the second level made of published sources, following which the third level encompasses general and special works. Finally also articles and periodicals are used.

Ștefan Meteș was mainly interested in the medieval period from Romanians' history. The main themes of medieval history, dealt with by generation of Ștefan Meteș, other historians such as Silviu Dragomir, Nicolae Iorga, Ioan Lupaș, Dimitrie Onciul, were thoroughly researched also by the historian from Cluj, especially in his historical syntheses: origin and continuity in the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic area, ethogenesis of the Romanian nation reported to Dacian-Roman inheritance; organisation (institutions of local population), law, appearance of first Romanian medieval states; contribution of Transylvanian Romanians to appearance of first political medieval structures, dealing with South-Danubian Romanians and those from Balkan Peninsula, having here the same preoccupations as historian Silviu Dragomir; theory of settling down or territorial aggregations around a centre; Romanians' relations with the other nations from Transylvania: Hungarians and Saxons; criticism and negation of some wrong theories concerning relations between Romanians and Hungarians and permanence of the first on the territory of old Dacia; economic, cultural and political-institutional relations between the three Romanian countries in the Middle Ages; development of ecclesiastical art (architecture, sculpture and painting) in these centuries.

Another direction from Romanian medieval history, aimed at by the writing of historian Ștefan Meteș is that institutional, more evident when is presented the development of the Church of Transylvanian Romanians, when he attempts to restore the line of Bălgrad hierarchs, or when brings forward the role of institution in keeping national consciousness in the soul of Transylvanian Romanians. Yet, Romanian Middle Ages are reflected mainly firstly in works and articles on history of the Church-Transylvanian Romanians' Church almost

unlimitedly arouses interest and attention of the historian -, fact which betrays his theological training, but also study of a numerous volume of documents. Well structured and substantiated from the point of view of sources are also his contributions on Romanian medieval ecclesiastical art, many of them being used even nowadays. Although brought information is not new, and even if he did not see personally all frescoes and icons about which he wrote and referred to in his writings, still, he has the merit of ordering the extended material taken over from works of Romanian and foreign historians of art, and to interpret them in a theological manner, to notice their symboligy and differentiate the style of varied painting schools.

In the end, must be pointed out that through our study, by which we followed some elements of historical discourse to Ștefan Meteș, was wished to offer an actual perspective on personality and writing of historian Ștefan Meteș. He honourably represented the generation he was part of, following the line of Nicolae Iorga. We established the directions of his historical writing and subsumed him under historiography of the first half of XXth century, which was under the signs of critical - positivist school.

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