

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA IN THE TIME OF THE ORGANIC REGULATIONS (1831-1832), BETWEEN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONALISM AND POLITICAL MODERNIZATION

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Rezumat: *Biserica Ortodoxă Română din Moldova și Valahia în vremea Regulamentelor Organice (1831-1832), între tradiționalismul religios și modernizarea politică*

În cadrul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române se produsese la sfârșitul secolului XVIII și începutul secolului XIX o separație între adepții „tradiției” ortodoxe și cei atrași de modernizarea social-politică de tip vest-european. Clericii din prima categorie rămăneau atașați ideii de „națiune ortodoxă” (de națio, categorie social-națională privilegiată, în sens medieval), dorind restaurarea Imperiului Bizantin.

Cea de-a doua categorie de clerici era constituită din adepții – la nivel politico-social, nu religios – modelului vest-european, militând pentru constituirea mai multor state balcanice, fondate pe idealuri democratice și pe respectul drepturilor cetățeanului, încă inexistente în acea parte a Europei. Acești clerici conștientizau faptul că dobândirea libertății naționale pentru Moldova și Valahia nu era posibilă decât prin adoptarea treptată a culturii politice și sociale occidentale, dublată de lupta armată a popoarelor aservite puterii otomane.

Adepții modelului politico-social vest-european au avut câștig de cauză odată cu introducerea în Valahia (iulie 1831) și Moldova (ianuarie 1832), sub influența Rusiei, a primelor Constituții de tip modern – Regulamentele Organice.

Articolul analizează modernizarea instituțională a Bisericii Ortodoxe din Moldova și Valahia sub influența Regulamentelor Organice: controlul autorității statale asupra Bisericii, stipularea prin lege a atribuțiilor clericilor, măsuri de protecție a edificiilor religioase, salarizarea unor categorii de clerici, crearea instituției preoților militari.

Din punct de vedere religios, Regulamentele Organice au păstrat neschimbate dogmele și tradițiile religioase ale Bisericii Ortodoxe Române.

Abstract: *In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in the Romanian Orthodox Church had occurred a separation between the followers of the "tradition" orthodox and those attracted to the Western European type of the socio-political modernization. The clerics of the first category remained attached to the idea of "Orthodox Nation" (natio as a privileged socio-national group, in the medieval sense), seeking restoration of the Byzantine Empire. The second category consisted of clergy attached to*

the Western European model (at the political-social level, not at the religious one), advocating for the establishment of several Balkan states, based on the democratic ideals and on the respect for citizens' rights, yet absents in that part of Europe. These clerics realized that acquiring of the national freedom of Moldavia and Wallachia is possible only through the gradual adoption of the Western political and social culture, accompanied by an armed struggle of the peoples enslaved to the Ottoman power. The followers of the Western European socio-political model had prevailed, along with the introduction, under the Russian influence, of the first modern Constitutions – the Organic Regulations – in Wallachia (July 1831) and Moldavia (January 1832).

The article analyzes the institutional modernization of the Orthodox Church in Moldavia and Wallachia, under the influence of the Organic Regulations: the control of the state authority over the Church, the stipulation, by law, of the clergy's civil and religious duties, the measures for protection of the religious buildings, the remuneration of certain categories of clergy, the establishment of the military chaplain institution. From a religious perspective, the Organic Regulations preserved the dogmas and the religious traditions of the Romanian Orthodox Church, emphasizing the subordination of the Church to the State, according to the existing model in Russia.

Résumé: L'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine de la Moldavie et de la Valachie pendant les Règlements Organiques (1831-1832), entre le traditionalisme religieux et la modernisation politique

Une séparation eut lieu dans le cadre de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine à la fin du XVIII-ème siècle et le début du XIX-ème entre les adeptes de la tradition orthodoxe et ceux attirés par la modernisation sociale-politique de type ouest européen. Les clercs de la première catégorie restèrent attachés à l'idée de nation orthodoxe (natio, catégorie sociale-nationale privilégiée, dans le sens médiéval), voulant la restauration de l'Empire Byzantin.

Les adeptes – au niveau politico-social, pas religieux – du modèle ouest-européen, militant pour la constitution des Etats balkaniques, fondés sur des idéaux démocratiques et sur le respect des droits du citoyen, encore inexistant dans cette partie-là de l'Europe, constituèrent la seconde catégorie de clercs. Ces clercs étaient conscients qu'on ne pouvait obtenir la liberté nationale de la Moldavie et de la Valachie que par l'adoption graduelle de la culture politique et sociale occidentale, doublée par la lutte armée des peuples assujetties au pouvoir ottoman.

Les adeptes du modèle politique-social ouest-européen gagnèrent avec l'introduction en Valachie (juillet 1831) et en Moldavie (janvier 1832), sous l'influence de la Russie, des premières Constitutions de type moderne – les Règlements Organiques.

L'article ci-joint analyse la modernisation institutionnelle de l'Eglise Orthodoxe de la Moldavie et de la Valachie sous l'influence des Règlements Organiques: le contrôle de l'autorité d'Etat sur l'Eglise, la stipulation par loi des attributions religieuses et civiles des clercs, des mesures de protection des édifices religieux, la rétribution des catégories de clercs, la création de l'institution des prêtres militaires.

Du point de vue religieux, les Règlements Organiques gardèrent inchangées les dogmes et les traditions religieuses de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine, accentuant pourtant la

subordination de l'Eglise envers l'Etat, conformément au modèle existant a cette époque-là en Russie.

Keywords: *Organic Regulations, Moldavia, Wallachia, Russia, modernization, the Orthodox Church, 19th Century*

Introduction

In the 14th-18th centuries, the Orthodox Church from Moldavia and Wallachia was placed from the administrative point of view under Hospodar's (Rom: "domn" or "voievod") authority and from the spiritual point of view under the authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The head of the Church, i.e. Metropolitan, had to be confirmed by the Hospodar and occupy the first place in the State's Council (Divan).

At the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, inside the Romanian Orthodox Church had been a gap between supporters of the medieval Orthodox tradition and those attracted to the Western tradition¹. Clerics in the first category remain attached to the idea of „Orthodox nation” inherited from the organizational structure of Ottoman Empire, dreaming of restoring a medieval Byzantine Empire. This latter utopian project was perceived as a divine intervention of God in history, as a combination of the old Greek and Byzantine virtues supported by the messianism of the Russian Empire.

The second category was made up of Western model followers, who wanted more than one establishment of Balkan states, based on democratic ideals and respect for the rights of the citizen, still non-existent in that part of Europe. At the same time, they realize that gaining freedom is only possible by gradual adoption of Western political and social culture, doubled with the armed struggle of the people enslaved at that time by the Ottoman power².

The core of the Romanian “conspirators” [i.e. revolutionists] who had begun to be manifested at the beginning of the 19th century was attracted to Russia and its pan-Orthodox propaganda, generally by the secret Russian agents. It was widespread among priests in the villages the idea that the Greeks are the main responsible for their difficult financial situation – a direct reference to the huge number of land properties owned by the Greeks. Thus, a time of rise of

¹ Asterios Argyriou, *Eglise orthodoxe et insurrections nationales dans les Balkans*, in Jean-Marie Mayeur (coord.), *Histoire du Christianisme*, vol. X, Paris, Editions Desclée de Brouwer/Fayard, 1997, p. 759.

² Mirel Bănică, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română, stat și societate în anii '30* [Romanian Orthodox Church, State and Society in the 30s], Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2007, p. 35.

national consciousness is recorded in April 1821. Then the country's noblemen (Boyars) negotiate with the Ottoman Empire, and managed to obtain the right to be led again by the local princes (Hospodars) as well as limiting the access of a large number of Greek officials to main civil and religious functions. The relations between the Orthodox Church and the political power shall enter into a new phase, and is marked by the maturation and the expression of national consciousness, what gets a dynamic character, even explosive in some areas of the Balkans³.

By the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 Moldavia and Wallachia get greater autonomy. Also, the official Russian „protectorate” over them was introduced. Moreover, this treaty stipulated internal administrative reorganization on the basis of new rules, contained into the future so called Organic Regulations (Rom. Regulamente Organice)⁴. In order to oversee a proper implementation of the Organic Regulations, Russia sends count Pavel Kiselev as administrator in Moldavia and Wallachia.

This article will seek to demonstrate that the Organic Regulations really contributed to the modernization of the Moldavia and Wallachia. Also, we will try to show that these constitutional documents supported institutional modernization of the Romanian Orthodox Church and its full integration into the structures of a modern state. Paradoxically, this was done by keeping the Orthodox Christian dogmas and religious traditions of the medieval Romanian Orthodox Church.

Our research is based not only on the texts of the Organic Regulations but also on the most representative Romanian bibliography on this topic.

The provisions of the Organic Regulations concerning the Orthodox Church in Moldavia and Wallachia

Complex measures taken by the Organic Regulations had generally positive consequences on the future political, economic and social development of Moldavia and Wallachia. Among other things, it mobilized the priests to help fight blind fatalism of average people, illiterates and also helped doctors to introduce vaccine to fight the scourge of plague⁵. Mentioned Regulations have entered into force in July 1831 in Wallachia and in Moldavia in January 1832.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 36-37.

⁴ A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria Românilor din Dacia Traiană* [Romanians history from Trajan (i.e. Roman) Dacia, vol. XI / XII, 1896, p 74.

⁵ Dumitru Vitcu, *Pavel D. Kiseleff în Principatele Române (1829-1834). Virtuțile și frustrările unui ocupant atipic* [Paul D. Kiseleff in the Romanian Principalities (1829-

Organic Regulation contained rules for the state organization, rules of administrative or financial law and even provisions of civil law. This enactment has been entered in the first place in order to bring to an end abuse in all areas, but accelerate Church subordination to the State, by extending and formalizing control of rulers and governors in ecclesiastical problems, in the same way as in Russia.

Also in this case, precedents were not missing: this matter had become current starting with 1832⁶. Subsequently, beginning with the spectacular reforms of the Manolache Costache Epureanu government would have to take into account the question of bringing under state control the *unconsecrated* monasteries (Rom. „neînchinat”)7.

Mihail Sturdza (1834-1849) claimed since 1835 the adoption of a bill in this respect, prepared by Metropolitan Veniamin Kostaki.

Veniamin Kostaki's proposals were related to the division of unconsecrated monasteries into categories, after wealth. Their entire income must be gathered in a “central house” at the Mitropoly. For each place of worship was established an amount necessary for maintenance. Half of the “surplus” money had to be used for the benefit of religious education (priority have the Socola Seminar, near Iași) and charity institutions⁸.

This measure was in accordance with the Organic Regulation of Moldavia which, by the article 416, stipulated that a part from the monastic income must be taken into account for maintenance of some institutions as seminars and public schools⁹.

Other half of income remained for repairs of monasteries and unplanned expenses. Monastic estates of the unconsecrated monasteries had to be leased to

1834). *Virtues and frustrations of an atypically occupant*, in „Anuarul Institutului de Istorie A.D. Xenopol Iași” [Yearbook of the Institute AD Xenopol of Iași], tome XLII, 2005, pp. 115-122.

⁶ Alexandru Gavriș, *Manolache Costache Epureanu și începuturile reformismului autoritar* [Manolache Costache Epureanu and the beginnings of the authoritarian reformism] in Ivănescu Dumitru, Dumitru Vitcu (coordinators), *Toți în Unu: Unirea Orincipatelor la 150 de ani* [All in One: 150 years since Principalities Unification], Junimea Publishing House, Iași, 2009, pp. 85-86.

⁷ Monasteries consecrated by boyars or Hospodars to the monasteries from Athos mount in Greece. There were consecrated income, land, animals and buildings of a monastery.

⁸ Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* [Documents concerning the history of Romanians], vol. V, Supplement I, doc. CVIII, 1893, pp. 224-227.

⁹ D. Vitcu, G. Bădărău, C. Istrati (Editors), *Regulamentul Organic al Moldovei* [Organic Regulation of Moldavia], Iași, Junimea Publishing House, 2004, p. 563. Further quotation: ROM

the Metropolitan for three years, in the presence of a representative of the Hospodar; all documents related to incomes and expenditure had to be sent to the metropolitan, who had to submit them to the Hospodar.

The project was converted into law in the same year (1835)¹⁰.

The provisions related to Church organization have been inserted in Chapter III, Annex A (Article 1-9) and in Chapter IX, Section III (Articles 411-417) in the Organic Regulation of Moldavia and, in Chapter VIII of the Organic Regulation of Wallachia¹¹.

In the Church, only Ecumenical Council (Synod) had unlimited jurisdiction. Councils (Synods) of local churches, regardless of their importance, do not hold a sovereign jurisdiction, except in matters in which it is not reserved for the higher authority of the Ecumenical Synod. Organic Regulations do not change clergymen's relations with state, in matter of their old advantages and privileges. Clerics of high rank had to be selected among deserving men, born in Moldavia and Wallachia. On the other hand, the Organic Regulations have restricted the right of clergy to dispose freely of its properties and income of dioceses. Also, their powers and participation in civil affairs have been reduced¹².

The tradition of laity's participation from State Council at the election of hierarchs has been kept during Organic Regulations; the Council was now replaced by "Adunările Obștești Obișnuite (Ordinary Public Assemblies). The great boyars of 1st class might participate to the election of the high hierarchs, even they were not members of this Assemblies.

The criteria provided by the Organic Regulations, which had to be respected by the eligible candidates were as follows: to be of Wallachian or Moldavian descent, to be pious and to have good knowledge in matter of religion. They were confirmed by rulers and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and their enthronement was done according to church canons¹³. Metropolitans were

¹⁰ I. C. Filitti, *Domniile române sub Regulamentul Organic 1834-1848* [Romanian principalities under Organic Regulation 1834-1848], Bucharest, 1915, pp. 531-533.

¹¹ Negulescu Paul, George Alexianu, *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei* [Organic Regulations of Wallachia and Moldavia], vol. 1, Bucharest, 1944, p. 305; See also ROM, p. 95.

¹² V. V. Munteanu, *Statul și biserica la români (sec. XV-XX)* [The State and Church at Romanians (15th -20th C)], in „Revista Istorică [Historical Review], new series, t. VII, nr.5-6/1996, p. 445.

¹³ *Regulamentul organic al Valahiei* [Organic Regulation of Wallachia], chapter VIII art. 359. Further ROV; ROM, chapter IX, art. 411. See full text in *Colecțiunea vechilor legiuri administrative. Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei. Texte puse în aplicare la 1 iulie 1931 în Valahia și la 1 ianuarie 1832 în Moldova* [The Collection of old administrative laws. Organic Regulations of Wallachia and Moldavia. Texts

chosen among the clerics who had been bishops before the time of Regulations. Ordinary priests were ordained only with the written approval of the Hospodar, after the scribes (chancellors) of the church made reports in this respect. They had to refer in their reports to candidate's merits and to specify if they graduated the seminary. The Hospodar have final decision in the case of appointment of priors and abbots¹⁴.

By Organic Regulations were preserved medieval privileges of the clerics of high rank concerning their right to be elected in the State Assembly and to legitimate the Hospodar by their spiritual authority¹⁵. After the Hospodar was elected in the Assembly, he traveled to the Metropolitan Cathedral to be anointed with Holy chrism by the Metropolitan and to utter the oath of allegiance to the country and its laws¹⁶.

Clerics of high rank have continued to fulfill their political and social duties. Metropolitans and bishops continued to be part of the legislative body of the country, The Ordinary Public Assembly (Rom. Adunarea Obștească Obișnuită), the Metropolitan holding the role of chairman of the Assembly¹⁷.

Hierarchs held from the Middle Ages judicial powers. Both the Mitropoly and the Bishoprics held from those times consistories and dicasteries, recognized by Organic Regulations. Members of these bodies were priests, archimandrites, archpriests and other clergymen, appointed by the bishops. Consistory judge church matters of confessional nature; dicasteries were led by the vicars (vice-bishops) and judged disciplinary and matrimonial (divorce) matters. Their vote was consultative; the decision was valid only after approval by the bishop¹⁸.

At the Dicasterial meetings were also participating boyars (who were at the Mitropoly concerned about other problems, or for helping one of theirs

implemented on 1 July 1931 in Wallachia and from 1 January 1832 in Moldova], vol. 1, edition coordinated by Paul Negulescu and George Alexianu, Bucharest, 1944.

¹⁴ ROM, chapter III, Appendix A, art. 1 and chapter IX, art. 415, p. 388; *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, chapter VIII, art. 363, p. 161. Further ROVM

¹⁵ Ioan C. Filitti, *Principatele Române de la 1828 la 1834. Ocupația rusească și Regulamentul Organic* [Romanian Principalities from 1828-1834. The Russian Occupation and the Organic Regulation], Bucharest, Institute of Graphic Arts „Bucovina”, 1934, pp. 9-21.

¹⁶ ROM, chapter I, art. 29-47; ROVM, chapter I, art. 29-43, p. 57.

¹⁷ ROV, chapter I, art. 45-48; ROM, chapter I, art. 48-49; See also Sever Buzan, *Regulamentele Organice și însemnătatea lor pentru dezvoltarea organizației Bisericii Ortodoxe Române* [Organic Regulations and their meanings for organizational development of Romanian Orthodox Church], in „Studii Teologice” [Theological Studies], year VIII, 1956, no. 5-6, pp. 369.

¹⁸ Nicolae Dobrescu, *Studii de istoria Bisericii Române contemporane* [Studies of history of the contemporary Romanian Church], vol. I (1850-1895), Bucharest, 1905, p. 43.

protégé), diocesan bishops, bishops and hierarchs of Eastern patriarchates, visiting the Romanian Countries. Consistories and Dicasteries were law courts with an religious character, where disputes between clergy, regarding the properties of the Church, concerning families and individuals, were solved.¹⁹

With the new Organic Regulations, priests performed also the local administrative tasks, but they were put under the control of secular power. Priests were integrated as representatives in the system of civil courts, in each village or outskirts of the cities. They were also entitled to keep documents and records of civil status (birth, baptism, wedding, marriage, death). Control on these activities was exercised by the metropolitans, bishops, representatives of the Department of Domestic Affairs²⁰.

Compilation and maintenance of civil acts was done according to the Organic Regulations. At the end of the year all registers – received from the archpriests, were taken by the control commissions. Afterwards, they were closed and received an alphabetical nameplate. On the base of these registers three new regional registers, containing the names of the born children, the married and those who died were formed. Based on these registers, the steward (Rom. “ispravnic”) sent a copy to the Department of Domestic Affairs. Careless priests commissioned with the documents keeping were punished by the church authorities. Metropolitans and bishops were responsible for the situation of civil documents. If one of them died, then the successors would take over, with official reports, those registers²¹.

The Organic Regulations stipulated also when a hierarch could lose his seat. In Wallachia, the Metropolitan and the bishops could be removed for spiritual misconduct, but also for some political reasons: „Metropolitan and the bishops are immovable in their own nominations, except when they deviate from their spiritual duties, and when they have a political behavior that could harm the state, proven by the Ordinary Public Assembly, and acknowledged by Prince (Hospodar)”²².

In Moldavia, the nature of their offenses and the trial procedure was specified more clearly. For spiritual deviations, hierarchs were to be judged by 12 titular bishops from Moldavia and Wallachia, and for political violations by a

¹⁹ Ioan C. Filiti, *Domniile române sub Regulamentul Organic*, p. 526.

²⁰ ROV, chapter I, art. 115; ROM, chapter I, art. 139. Gabriel-Viorel Gârdan, *Instituția Episcopatului în lumina legislației cu caracter bisericesc din secolul al XIX-lea* [Episcopate Institution in the light of religious legislation from 19th century], in „Theologica Ortodoxa”, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai*, year LV, 2/2010, Cluj-Napoca, p. 90.

²¹ ROM, chapter IV, art. 139, section III, letter B, Annex, p. 257.

²² ROV, chapter VIII, art. 361.

committee composed of 12 bishops and 12 great boyars (which were not priest's relatives or enemies), chosen by the Ordinary Public Assembly, but in the absence of Metropolitan and bishops.

Committee members had to vote a verdict. The majority vote report had to be presented to the prince. If the accusation was proved to be well founded, it was sent to the Patriarch of Constantinople, for defrocking of the hierarch. If accusation was proved false, the plaintiff would lose his boyar rank (if it was a nobleman) and was punished according to Pravila (a collection of Byzantine laws) if it was not a nobleman).

According to the Organic Regulation, the political facts that make the bishop punishable were incitement to disobedience and disrespect of the princely provisions: „when they will provoke rebellion by disturbing the people and when they will resist the lawful commands of the Prince (Hospodar) and those known under the Public Assembly”²³.

Metropolitan also had important political tasks, one of the most important being to preside over the Assembly for the Prince's election. Also, the metropolitan was the one who had the obligation to ensure lieutenancy during the *interregnum*, and to welcome in that situation members of diplomatic missions. Metropolitan was the legitimate president (chairman) of the Assembly and, in his absence, the function was performed by the Bishop of the highest rank.

The Assembly was convoked in the Church, the election of the Prince being made after the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Metropolitan, after his speech, was reading the oath. After that, each of the electors, with his hand on the Bible, uttered “I swear”. Next, voting with ballots would take place. Two secretaries and three assessors gathered ballots and hand them over to the Metropolitan. After examining them, he would announce the election results²⁴.

The new Prince (Hospodar), with his hand on the Holy Bible had to say the oath: “I swear in the name of St. Trinity, to guard the codices and Wallachian laws after the established rules, and to make the others to keep them”. That was the case in Moldavia too.

Another positive step taken towards the institution of the Church consisted in exemptions from taxes to the state and landlords. However, in Moldavia, the clergy had to perform corvée, tithe and a payment for the house lot obtained from the landowner. Priests (or monks) with wine yards, apiaries or sheep gave tithe for these, as the other inhabitants or by agreement with the owner. The priests also paid a fee of 20 lei to the state in two installments/tranches. They

²³ ROM, chapter IX, art. 413; Gabriel-Viorel Gâdan, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

²⁴ ROV, chapter I, art. 2, 29-42; ROM, chapter I, art. 2, 27-45.

were only exempted from the tax of 1 “galben” (i.e. coin of gold) annually – for the maintenance of “National Schools House”. These measures reflect the influence and the power of the great boyars, who did not give up their medieval privileges²⁵.

The main obligation of priests was to perform religious services free of charge, being thankful for whatever they would get. The archpriests and the treasurer (Rom. “economul”) of a monastery had to receive salary, according to a special regulation. Priest’s widows received financial aid from the church for a year, and manorial tax exemption for life. Only for the “food place” (Rom. “locul de hrană”) they had to agree with the landowners²⁶. For nuns from two monasteries (Văratec and Agapia) were settled pensions and financial aid. Because some monasteries contributed with products to the maintenance of hospitals, they were exempted from taxes²⁷.

The state has intervened in order to secure the welfare of the priests, giving laws by which landowners were forced to give to priests portions of land which peasants had to work, leaving thus them to fulfill the mission for which they were trained at the seminar. Thus, because of land works, some clerics left their careers²⁸.

In other news, the Regulation of Moldavia provided the first measures regarding the protection of church (religious) buildings and in favor of religious sites and buildings. It was also provided that churches and monasteries must not be surrounded by tall buildings and the surrounding buildings should be placed far away, in order to protect churches from fire. Cemeteries were moved out of towns and surrounded by trees, to refresh the air²⁹.

Metropolitans were elected by hierarchs who were elected bishops, prior to the Regulation: in Moldavia from the titular bishops of Roman and Huși and in Wallachia from the ones of Buzău, Râmnic and Argeș³⁰.

²⁵ ROVM, Anex A, art. 1, 9, 14, 67, p. 559.

²⁶ Ion Stoian, *Statutul „Preoților de oștire” din epoca Regulamentară până în timpul domniei lui Alexandru I. Cuza* [The status of „military priests” from Regulation era until the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza], in Iosif Iulian Oncescu, Radu Florian Bruja (coordinators), *Istoria între mituri și realități ale României moderne. Profesorului universitar doctor Dumitru Vitcu la împlinirea vârstei de 70 de ani* [History between the myths and realities of modern Romania. For Ph.D. Professor Dumitru Vitcu, at the age of 70 years], Târgoviște, „Cetatea de scaun” Publishing House, 2010, pp. 77-78.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, passim.

²⁸ ROM, chapter III, art. 7 and 8; chapter IX, art. 414; ROVM, chapter VIII, art. 362.

²⁹ ROM, chapter III, section II, art. 74; chapter III, section III, art. 79, chapter X, art. 416; ROVM, chapter III, section V, art. 123.

³⁰ ROM, chapter IX, art. 411 and 412.

Also, from the Organic Regulations period came the first evidence of the military priest's existence. In 1834 there was, for instance, a confessor of the chapel (Rom. "confesor al capelei") in the headquarters of the "dorobanți" (i.e. infantrymen), and three years later was recorded the activity of an army priest (Rom. "preot al oștirei", the monk Visarion³¹).

In 1835, in Moldavia, was established a rule for the administration of indigenous unconsecrated monasteries. Hospodar's trend for clergy reorganization, for putting under the state's control Metropolitan incomes, for submission this regime to all monasteries, including those dedicated to the Holy Places, have attracted the disapproval of Russia. The result was the conflict with the Metropolitan Veniamin Kostaki and his complete withdrawal, in January 18th/30th 1842³².

The epoch of the Organic Regulations which introduced a new regime for the Church ended in 1848, when the Revolution have broken out in Iași and Bucharest. Generally, from 1848 to 1866, the Romanian Orthodox Church from Moldavia and Wallachia entered in a time of accelerated secularization, according to the Western pattern.

Conclusions

Undoubtedly, the Organic Regulations contributed to the general progress of society in Moldavia and Wallachia. Among the reforms of Organic Regulations are included the ones from the religious domain. As in Russia and in all contemporary Western countries, these reforms have severely restricted the clergy's right to freely dispose of the dioceses properties and incomes. Also, they restricted the participation of Church in the public affairs³³, in comparison with the Middle Ages times. However, the Organic Regulations have contributed to

³¹ Ilie Manole, *Preoții și oștirea la români (1830-1948)* [Priests and the army at Romanians (1830-1948)], Răzvad-Târgoviște, Daniel T. Publishing House, 1998, p 39.

³² Gheorghe Platon, *Domniile regulamentare [Regulation Reigns]*, in *Istoria românilor* [History of the Romanians], vol. 7, tome I, Buharest, Enciclopedic Publishing House, 2003, p. 123.

³³ Mirela Beguni, *Patrimoniul bisericesc și situația clerului ortodox din Moldova în perioada preregulamentară* [Clerical patrimony and the situation of the orthodox clerics from Moldavia before the Organic Regulation period] in Dumitru Vitcu (coordinator), *Prin labirintul istoriei – stat, societate și individ în perioada construcției naționale* [Through the labyrinth of history – state, society and individual in the period of national construction] Iași, Junimea Publishing House, 2009, pp. 99-100.

raising the culture of priests, many of them having, initially, poor general knowledge³⁴.

These reforms have made the Church a liable part of modernization of the society. Paradoxically (or not), the Romanian Orthodox Church was not secularized by these reforms, as already happened in the West of Europe. This Church managed to safeguard its Christian Orthodox dogmas and authority, almost as in the medieval times.

³⁴ Ion Stoian, *op. cit.*, p. 77.