The History of Romanian Evangelicals, 1918-1989: A Bibliographical Excursus

Paul E. MICHELSON[*]

Introduction

The history of evangelical Christians in Romania has been a neglected and little known chapter in the complex and checkered history of this unique South East European country, both by Romanians and non-Romanians alike. In recent years Romanian scholars have begun to remedy this situation. Initially, despite the opening up of Romanian historiography and archives that was brought about by the fall of Communism in Romania a quarter of a century ago, relatively little appeared dealing with Romanian evangelicals.

This was not surprising given the general lack of specialists on the study of Christianity under the Communists, higher priorities for other ignored or heavily falsified areas of the Romanian past, and disappointing access to archives[1]. In addition, evangelicals occupy a rather minor place in Romanian society[2] and the way in which such unauthorized religious minorities have been treated historiographically is symptomatic of an unfortunate tendency toward viewing the Romanian past in a monochromatic, triumphalist fashion; and the distinctly negative view of religious (and other) minorities in Romanian public discourse[3].

However, the situation has rapidly changed for the better, particularly as a younger generation of Romanian scholars − many of whom have studied and

[*] Dr., Professor, Huntington University; e-mail: pmichelson@huntington.edu.

[1] For a suggestive survey, see Dorin Dobrincu, *Istoria bisericii și pericolul confesionalizării cercetării*, in "Xenopoliana", vol. 7, nr. 3-4, 1999, p. 131.

[2] The complexities and difficulties of counting the number of members of religious denominations (some groups count children as members, others do not, and so forth) are well-known, so it is hard to determine the actual proportion of the Romanian population that is involved with evangelical denominations (i.e. adherents as opposed to actual members). A reasonable estimate would be 3-5% of the population or somewhat over 600,000. See Sorin Negruți, *The Evolution of the Religious Structure in Romania since 1859 to the Present Day*, in "Revista Română de Statistică", Supliment nr. 6, 2014, p. 39-47.

[3] See my *Orthodoxy and the Future of Post-communist Romania*, in "Xenopoliana", vol. 7, nr. 3-4, 1999, p. 59-67.

done work abroad − has begun to affirm itself[4]. This survey aims to provide an annotated bibliographical introduction to historical work dealing with Romanian evangelicals, focussing primarily on academic work done in Romania or by Romanians since 1989.

This is not to say that Western scholars and writers did not have anything useful to say about Romanian evangelicals, especially during the Communist era, 1944-1989. Indeed, because of the totalitarian political situation in Romania − where one goal of the regime was the elimination or marginalization of all forms of religion − what few serious studies of Christianity in Romania that appeared prior to 1990 *per force* had to appear in the West. Pride of place should be given to the work of Keston College in the United Kingdom, headed by Michael Bourdeaux, which was critical in gathering and publishing important studies, documents, and materials on religion in Romania under the Communist regime between 1969 and 1989 in its journal, "Religion in Communist Lands" (continued after 1991 as "Religion, State, and Society")[5]. The same may be said about the American journal "Religion in Communist Dominated Areas" (*RCDA*), and the work and publications of Radio Free Europe. Specific studies that deserve mention here include a number of excellent pieces by Stephen A. Fischer-Galați[6], E. C. Suttner[7], Alan Scarfe[8], Trevor Beeson[9], Janice Broun[10], Earl A. Pope[11], and Paul Mojzes[12]. However, this essay will concentrate on

[4] For a general bibliographical survey of church history and religion under Communism, see Gheorghe Hristodol, *Istoria Bisericii şi a religiilor în istorigrafia română, 1944-1989*, in "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Seria Historica", vol. 7, 2003, p. 75-78; and since 1989, Felicia Hristodol and Gheorghe Hristodol, *Istoria Bisericii şi a religiilor în istoriografia din România după 1989*, in "Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Seria Historica", vol. 7, 2003, p. 79-83.

[5] See Davorin Peterlin on the history of Keston College: *An Analysis of the Publishing Activity of Keston Institute in the Context of its Last Three Years of Operation in Oxford (2003-2006)*, in "Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe", vol. 30, nr. 1, 2010, p. 2-3. Keston also published Philip Walters (ed.), *World Christianity: Eastern Europe*, Eastbourne UK: MARC/ Monrovia CA: Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center, 1988, which included a chapter on Romania, p. 247-270.

[6] Stephen A. Fischer-Galați, *Religion*, in idem (ed.), *Romania*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger and the Mid-European Studies Center of the Free Europe Committee, 1956, p. 132-147.

[7] Ernst Christian Suttner, *Kirchen und Staat*, in Klaus-Detlev Grothusen (ed.), *Südost-europa-Handbuch*, vol. II, *Rumänien*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977, p. 458-483.

[8] Alan Scarfe, *A Call for Truth: An Appraisal of Rumanian Baptist Church-State Relationships*, in "Journal of Church and State", vol. 21, 1979, p. 431-449 (Scarfe was Keston's principal Romanian expert).

[9] Trevor Beeson, *Romania*, in his *Discretion and Valour. Religious Conditions in Russia and Eastern Europe*, revised edition, London, Collins Fount, 1982, p. 351-379. The first edition appeared in 1974.

[10] Janice Broun, *Romania*, in idem, *Conscience and Captivity. Religion in Eastern Europe*, Washington DC, Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1988, p. 199-244, and appendices, p. 339-354.

[11] Earl A. Pope, *Protestantism in Romania*, in Sabrina Petra Ramet (ed.), *Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia. The Communist and Post-Communist Eras*, Durham NC, Duke University Press, 1992, p. 157-208.

[12] Paul Mojzes, *Romania: State Controls, Robust Religions*, in idem, *Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Before and After the Great Transformation*, Boulder CO, East European Monographs, 1992, p. 311-338.

Romanian scholarship primarily because it is less accessible to Western scholarship and, therefore, less known.

What is an "Evangelical"?

A definition of "evangelical" is elusive, but essential[13]. George Marsden provides a helpful starting point: "Roughly speaking, evangelicalism today includes any Christians traditional enough to affirm the basic beliefs of the old nineteenth-century evangelical consensus." This consensus involved an emphasis on the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the necessity for a personal saving relationship with a living Christ, the need to live a transformed life in this world but not of this world, and the importance of evangelism and mission[14].

Another way of putting this is in the form of David Bebbington's well-known "quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism," namely the "four qualities that have been the special marks of Evangelical religion: *conversionism*, the belief that lives need to be changed; *activism*, the expression of the gospel in effort; *biblicism*, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called *crucicentrism*, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross"[15].

At the same time, such descriptive and theoretical statements need to be tempered and complemented, as Alistair McGrath has argued, by "a distinctive *ethos*, an approach to Christian thinking and living that centers on a number of guiding biblical principles rather than specific doctrinal formulations. It is no dead orthodoxy, but a living faith"[16]. Thus, according to Mark Noll, evangelicalism should be seen as a movement defined by its relationships, activities, and "networks of communication" as much as by theology[17].

[13] For a sampling of the complexities, historical and theological, see Richard V. Pierard, *The Quest for the Historical Evangelicalism: A Bibliographical Excursus*, in "Fides et Historia", vol. 11, nr. 2, 1979, p. 60-72; and Robert H. Krapohl and Charles H. Lippy, *The Evangelicals. A Historical, Thematic, and Bibliographical Guide*, Westport CT, Greenwood Press, 1999. Pierard's *Evangelicalism*, in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Grand Rapids MI and Cumbria UK, Baker Books and Paternoster Press, 1984, p. 379-382, is a concise and useful presentation of both the theological and the historical senses.

[14] George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1991, p. 4-5. For additional clarification, see Kenneth S. Kantzer, *Unity and Diversity in Evangelical Faith*, in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge (eds.), *The Evangelicals. What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing*, revised edition, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Book House, 1977, p. 58-87. Compare John T. McNeill, *Modern Christian Movements*, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1968, p. 81 ff.

[15] David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Book House, 1989, p. 2-3. For a critique, see Brian Harris, *Beyond Bebbington: The Quest for Evangelical Identity in a Postmodern Era*, in "The Churchman", vol. 122, nr. 3, 2008, p. 201-209.

[16] Alister McGrath, *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity*, Downers Grove IL, InterVarsity Press, 1995, p. 57 ff.

[17] Mark Noll, *American Evangelical Christianity. An Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2001, p. 12 ff. This is shared by Stephen R. Holmes, who "recalls Alasdair MacIntyre's famous description of traditions of thought as continuities of conversation". See Stephen R. Holmes,

Finally, there is Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel J. Treier's profoundly edifying *Theology and the Mirror of Scripture. A Mere Evangelical Account*[18], which calls attention to evangelicalism's failure to distinguish clearly between sociological and theological identity statements, where faith has been transformed by culture rather than *vice versa*[19]. Their book tries to get at a renewed evangelical theological perspective through retrieval of the evangelical tradition: "what ultimately defines evangelical is God's Word and God's act"[20]. Their primarily theological approach fleshes out the historical and stipulative definitions above, asking evangelicals to consider if their theologies are "too small", and calling on them to focus on the unifying aspects of "mere evangelicalism" rather than letting controversy and polemic blow things out of proportion[21].

Who are the Romanian Evangelicals?

All of this – personal faith in Christ, commitment to the Bible and its authority, living a transformed life in a hostile world, impelled to evangelism and mission, and utilizing community and networking – works pretty well in defining modern Romanian evangelicals, especially since almost all Romanian evangelical groups were founded or heavily influenced by Western evangelicals, thus making it easier to assimilate them into the Western definition of evangelical developed above.

Evangelicals in Romania were called "sectants" prior to 1944, with a pejorative sense intended. After 1944, they were usually called "Neo-Protestants", an umbrella label used to refer to non-conforming, non-magisterial, non-establish-

British (and European) evangelical theologies, in Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 241, 255-256. The importance of communities is reflected in Marsden's stress on the importance of *Building Academic Communities* for evangelical historians, in his *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 101 ff.; and Jay Green's discussion of *Historical Study as Christian Vocation*, in his *Christian Historiography. Five Rival Versions*, Waco TX, Baylor University Press, 2015, p. 149-163.

[18] Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel J. Treier, *Theology and the Mirror of Scripture. A Mere Evangelical Account*, Downers Grove IL, IVP Academic, 2015. The scope of this deeply nuanced work goes far beyond what is discussed here. It should be noted that this work is a deliberate attempt to further the work done by Bernard Ramm's unjustly neglected 1973 *The Evangelical Heritage. A Study in Historical Theology*, reprinted with a Foreword by Kevin Vanhoozer, Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2000.

[19] See H. Richard Niebuhr's classic *Christ and Culture*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1951; and D. A. Carson's thoughtful *Christ and Culture Revisited*, Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 2008.

[20] Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel J. Treier, *op. cit.*, p. 10-11.

[21] The reference here to C. S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity* is explicit. The authors are also adamant, as was Lewis, that this is not a "lowest common denominator" watered-down tradition. "In my Father's house are many mansions", Christ said. Lewis argued that the Christian faith has many rooms or communions. See the Preface to C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, London, Geoffrey Bles, 1952.

ment Christian groups who reject state patronage and entanglements as well as the ecclesiastical formalism of traditional churches[22]. They were dubbed "neo" because they came to the Romanian lands relatively late, usually in the 19th and 20th centuries, thus being distinct from established, "historic" Protestant reform groups dating back to the 16th century, such as Lutherans and Calvinists[23].

However, many Romanian scholars now question the "Neo-Protestant" terminology which seems to have appeared only after 1944, and elsewhere is a term used to refer to 19th century German theological liberalism (!). They also point out that the vagueness of the term leads to grouping together Protestant groups that have little or nothing in common, either theologically or in shared common mission. Since 1989, there are signs of movement among Romanian evangelicals themselves toward using "evangelical" or even simply "Protestant" instead of "Neo-Protestant"[24].

In what follows, "evangelicals" will be used to describe the three principal Romanian protestant groups under discussion here: the Baptists (*Uniunea*

[22] While one cannot ignore the presence in Romania of what might be called evangelical Christians within the framework of the Romanian Orthodox Church and other historic churches, e.g. the *Oastea Domnului* (Army of the Lord) and Ferenc Visky's Bethanist revival movement in the Romanian Reformed Church, such movements and individuals are not usually considered part of Romanian evangelicalism *per se* nor are they usually referred to as "Neo-Protestants". See Alan Scarfe, *The Evangelical Wing of the Orthodox Church in Romania*", in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 3, nr. 6, 1975, p. 15-19; a document circulated by the Comitetul Creştin Român pentru Apărarea Libertăţii Religioase şi de Conştiinţă (ALRC) in 1978, *A Limb of the Orthodox Church which Continues to Bleed: The Lord's Army*", published in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 8, nr. 4, 1980, p. 314-317 as *The "Lord's Army" Movement in the Romanian Orthodox Church*; Nicolae Marini, *Istoria documentară a Oastei Domnului. Conflictul dramatic pr. Iosif Trifa, Mitr. Nicolae Bălan, 1923-1947*, Bucureşti, Societatea Evanghelică Română, 1999; the memoirs of *Oastea Domnului* leader, Traian Dorz, *Hristos, mărturia mea*, Simeria RO, Editura Traian Dorz, 1993; Thomas J. Keppeler, *Oastea Domnului: The Army of the Lord in Romania*", in "Religion, State, and Society", vol. 21, nr. 2, 1993, p. 221-227; and Jánosi Csongor, *Procesul membrilor mişcării de reînnoire spirituală "Bethania"*, in Cosmin Budeancă and Florentin Olteanu (eds.), *Forme de represiune în regimurile comuniste*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2008, p. 318-339.

[23] "Historic" and "historical" in this context are code words for "historically privileged". "Neo-Protestant" also doesn't work as a synonym for "evangelical" because Romanians tend to sweep most non-evangelical Christian groups under the "Neo-Protestant" label.

[24] An additional complication is that in Romania the Lutheran Church is officially known as the "Evangelical Lutheran Church in Romania" (*Biserica Evanghelică-Luterană din România*), or "Evangelicals" for short. Such groups are not part of the "evangelicals" considered here, just as they were not considered part of the earlier "Neo-Protestant" taxonomy (nor were they considered a "sect"). There is also a tiny Biserica Evanghelică Română mentioned below. On terminology, see Dorin Dobrincu, *Religie şi putere în România. Politica statului faţă de confesiunile (neo)protestante, 1919-1944*, in "Studia Politica", vol. 7, nr. 3, 2007, p. 583-584; and Marius Silveşan, *Ce sunt baptiştii − protestanţi sau neoprotestanţi?*, in "Revista România Evanghelică", nr. 3, August 2015, https://roev.wordpress.com/2015/09/01/ce-sunt-baptistii-protestanti-sau-neoprotestanti-marius-silvesan/ last accessed 27.09.2017. A term widely used among Romanian evangelicals themselves is "pocăiţi," which translates as "repentant ones," but this term is used by non-evangelicals as well.

Bisericilor Creştine Baptiste din România), the Brethren (*Biserica Creştină după Evanghelie din România*), and the Pentecostals (*Biserica lui Dumnezeu Apostolică din România*). In addition, the term "Neo-Protestant" will be avoided as much as possible. The Romanian Baptists[25] and Brethren[26] are quite similar theologically, while the inclusion of Pentecostalism[27] among Romanian evangelicals is perhaps the product of a historical accident. Prior to 1944 – when Pentecostalism was prohibited in Romania – many of them simply joined the legally tolerated Baptist church[28]. Thus, while evangelicalism in the United States

[25] For the Romanian Baptist constitutive documents, see www.culte.gov. ro/uniunea-bisericilor-crestine-baptiste, last accessed 1.03.2016. Their home page is located at www.uniuneabaptista.ro. For the history of the Romanian Baptists, see Ioan Bunaciu, *Istoria Bisericilor Baptiste din Romania*, Oradea, Editura Făclia, 2006; Alexa Popovici, *Istoria Baptiştilor din România, 1856-1989*, 2nd revised edition, Oradea, Editura Făclia, 2007; the polemical work of Daniel Mitrofan, *Pigmei şi uriaşi. File din istoria persecutării baptiştilor*, Oradea, Editura Cristianus, 2007, and *Paşi. Cultul Creştin Baptist din România în perioada comunistă*, second edition, Bucureşti, Centrul de Istorie şi Apologetică [c. 2009], who accuses practically everybody of being a collaborationist and Securitate informer; and the more nuanced Marius Silveşan, *Bisericile creştine baptiste din România: între persecuţie, acomodare şi rezistenţă (1948-1965)*, Târgovişte, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2012. Also useful are Silveşan's *Identitatea baptistă şi comunismul în România*, in Cosmin Budeancă and Florentin Olteanu (eds.), *Identităţi sociale, culturale, etnice şi religioase în comunism*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2015, p. 386-402; and for the pre-1970 period, David Britton Funderburk, *Baptists in Rumania since World War I*, in "Baptist Quarterly", vol. 24, 1971-1972, p. 135-139; and Teodor-Ioan Colda, *Utopia libertăţii religioase în România postbelică. Baptiştii din România în perioadă de tranziţie de la Monarhie la Republică între 1944-1953 (I)*, in "Jurnal Teologic", vol. 12, nr. 2, 2013, p. 133-170.

[26] For the Romanian Brethren constitutive documents, see www.culte.gov.ro/biserica-crestina-dupa-evanghelie, last accessed 1.03.2016; and Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ (ed.), *Documente şi Acte Normative privind Biserica Creştină după Evanghelie din România*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Risoprint, 2014. Their home page is located at www.bcev.ro. Though the label "Brethren" is slightly misleading, they are part of the Plymouth Brethren heritage. For Romanian Brethren history, see Ieremia Rusu, *Cine sunt creştinii după Evanghelie? Curente teologice care au influenţat doctrinele specifice ale Bisericilor Creştine după Evanghelie din România în perioada interbelică şi comunistă*, Bucureşti, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică R.A., 2011; Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, *În căutarea identităţii. Eseuri despre Creştinii după Evanghelie*, Craiova, n.p., 2012; and idem (ed.), *Din istoria creştinilor după Evanghelie. Culegere de documente*, Târgovişte, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2013.

[27] For the Pentecostal constitutive documents, see www.culte.gov.ro/uniunea-penticostala-biserica-lui-dumn, last accessed 1.03.2016. Their home page is located at www.cultulpenticostal.ro. For the history of Romanian Pentecostals, which has exploded in this decade, see Vasilică Croitor's controversial *Răscumpărarea memoriei. Cultul Penticostal în perioada comunistă*, Medgidia, Succeed Publishing, 2010. Many Pentecostals were offended by his naming the names of collaborationist church leaders that others thought should be kept quiet; Valeriu Andreiescu, *Istoria penticostalismului românesc*, vol. 1, *Evanghelia deplină şi puterea lui Dumnezeu*, vol. 2, *Lucrările puterii lui Dumnezeu*, Oradea, Editura Casa Cărţii, 2012; and Ciprian Bălăban, *Istoria Bisericii Penticostale din România (1922-1989). Instituţie şi harisme*, Oradea/Cluj-Napoca, Editura Scriptum/Editura Risoprint, 2016.

[28] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, p. 586. See also Viorel Achim (ed.), *Politica regimului Antonescu faţă de cultele neoprotestante. Documente*, Preface by Alexandru Florian, Iaşi, Editura Institutului Naţional pentru Studierea Holocaustului din România Elie Wiesel/Editura Polirom, 2013, p. 14.

has often come to be seen as a divisive force[29], repression actually promoted cooperation among evangelicals in Romania. On the other hand, Romanian evangelicals share some sociological stereotypes with evangelical Christians in America: anti-intellectualism (a suspicion of scholarship or "Don't give me exegesis, just give me Jesus"), otherworldliness (avoidance of social issues), and a remnant mentality[30].

Some might be surprised that the Seventh Day Adventists (*Biserica Adventistă de Ziua a Şaptea din România*)[31] are not included among the Romanian evangelicals. Non-evangelicals consider them "Neo-Protestants," but, as we have seen, that isn't quite the same as "evangelical". Most Romanian Baptists, Brethren, and Pentecostals find their differences with the Adventists too great, and the Adventists did not choose to be part of the post-1989 Romanian Evangelical Alliance (*Alianța Evanghelică*)[32].

Chronological and Resource Limitations

A few words are needed to explain the focus of this paper on 1918-1989. Before World War I, Romanian evangelicals were more or less ignored because there were so few of them and the Romania in which they lived in was a pre-modern state that contained less than half of the Romanians in South Eastern Europe. Despite this, from time to time they suffered repression though not on a systematic basis. For example, in 1909, a founding leader of the

[29] Joel A. Carpenter, *The Fellowship of Kindred Minds: Evangelical Identity and the Quest for Christian Unity*, in Timothy George (ed.), *Pilgrims on the Sawdust Trail: Evangelical Ecumenism and the Quest for Christian Identity*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Academic, 2004, p. 32 ff.

[30] See Richard J. Mouw, *What Evangelicals Can Learn from Fundamentalism*, in Timothy George (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 46-47.

[31] For the Romanian Adventist constitutive documents, see www.culte.gov.ro/biserica-adventista-de-ziua-a-saptea, last accessed 1.03.2016. Their home page is located at www.adventist.ro.

[32] The Romanian Evangelical Alliance (*Alianța Evanghelică*), founded in 1990, was consciously modeled on the World Evangelical Alliance and the US National Association of Evangelicals. See Iosif Țon, *Ce este și cum a început Alianța Evanghelică din România*, on "Creştinul şi Biserica, Alpha Omega.tv", 2015, on-line at http://alfaomega.tv/sectiuni-tematice/romania-puls-spiritual/3813-ce-este-si-cum-a-inceput-alianta-evanghelica-din-romania-de-iosif-ton#axzz4lvpou8Bd. At an exploratory meeting in 1990, according to Țon, only three differences emerged – over gifts of the Spirit, ordination, and the second coming of Christ – which they agreed were far outweighed by what they had in common. See also Earl A. Pope, *The Significance of the Evangelical Alliance in Contemporary Romanian Society*, in "East European Quarterly", vol. 25, 1992, p. 493-418; and Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, *Alianţa Evanghelică din România. Istoric şi documente*, Craiova, Editura Sitech, 2015, p. 15-32. In addition to the three primary groups, there were three other founding participants: the Biserica Evanghelică Română, (developed out of the work of Dumitru Cornilescu and Tudor Popescu called "Christians according to Scripture" [*Creştinii după Scriptură*], forcibly merged with the Brethren in 1939, who chose to go independent in 1990); several *Oastea Domnului* adherents; and the pastor of the Biserica Luterană Evanghelică in Bucureşti. By 2008, only the Baptists, the Brethren, and the Pentecostals remained in the *Alianţa*.

Brethren was expelled from the pre-War Romanian Kingdom for no other reason than that his work had become overly successful[33].

This paper does not deal with the pre-World War I history of Romanian evangelicals because of the sparsity of material available (scholarly literature dealing with pre-1918 Romanian evangelicals is practically non-existent), but also because of the fact that prior to World War I, the Romanians were geographically dispersed across multiple empires and countries in South Eastern Europe, a situation that changed significantly with the emergence of the post-war unitary Romanian national state[34].

It also does not deal with post-Communist Romania, which has dramatically evolved since the demise of the Romanian Communist regime in 1989 – becoming, for example, part of the European Union by 2007 – though the legacies of Communism will continue to plague the Romanians for the foreseeable future[35]. As is usually the case with contemporary history, the study of post-1989 Romania is a little too close in time and is still very much a work in flux and progress[36].

Lastly, this survey is limited in terms of the scope of the materials reviewed. Publication on Romanian evangelicals between 1918 and 1989 falls into the following categories: published documents, scholarly works (mono-graphs and articles), memorialistic works[37], Communist apologetics[38], and Romanian Orthodox polemics[39]. The study will generally take into account only

[33] Constantin Cuciuc, *Religii care au fost interzise în România*, Bucureşti, Editura Gnosis, 2001, p. 44.

[34] For the pre-World War I and pre-Communist history of Romanian evangelicalism, see Adrian Stănculescu, *Romanian Evangelical Christianity: Historical Origins and Development prior to the Communist Period*, unpublished Master's thesis, Trinity International University, Deerfield IL, 2002. In addition, denominational histories, such as Alexa Popovici's *Istoria Baptiştilor din România*, which often include coverage of the pre-1918 era, especially in Transylvania, have been excluded from this survey. See below, p. 11.

[35] See my *Post-Communist Romania: A Dysfunctional Society in Transition*, in Adrian-Paul Iliescu (ed.), *Mentalităţi şi instituţii: caren'e de mentalitate şi]napoiere instituţională în România modernă*, Bucureşti, Ars Docendi, 2002, p. 61-97, in collaboration with Jean Michelson; and *Overcoming Communism's Dysfunctional Legacy: The Romanian Case*, in "Journal of Global Initiatives", vol. 6, nr. 2, 2011, p. 109-125.

[36] See my *Despre viitorul trecutului recent al României*, in *Politica externă comunistă şi exil anticomunist*, "Anuarul Institutului Român de Istorie Recentă", vol. 2, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2004, p. 13-39.

[37] For example, the numerous memoirs and first hand accounts relating to the Communist era – such as Richard Wurmbrand's widely circulated *Tortured for Christ* (1967) – which deserve careful study and would play a major role in telling the story of religious life in the period. Martyriology would need to be overcome, but these materials provide a rich vein for the historian.

[38] Marxist-atheist apologetics – that is various and sundry works published under the Romanian Communist government and mass media attacks dealing unfavorably with Christianity, particularly evangelicals – are revealing, though they were often painfully crude. Such lame critiques may even have encouraged the general population to give the evangelicals a second look, contributing to their exponential growth between 1948 and 1989.

[39] Romanian Orthodox critiques of Romanian evangelicals are usually sections in textbooks dealing with heresies, schismatics, "sects", and proselytism. A couple of recent examples of these

the first two of these sources – that is published documents and scholarly works (monographs and articles) – which provide the principal printed basis for scholarly consideration of Romanian evangelicalism. In addition, although reference occasionally will be made to denominational historical works, for reasons of space and their wildly uneven character, these are not included in the annotated bibliography. The other genres are excluded here, both for reasons of space and because they are not the product of historiographical effort as such. Of course, such materials have important and essential contributions to make to further study of the history of Romanian evangelicalism.

The most intense efforts dealing with the Romanian past since 1989 have focussed on Interwar Romania, World War II, and the Communist era. This is primarily because open investigation of and writing on these periods was virtually impossible for Romanian scholars functioning under one form of dictatorship or another between 1938 and 1989. The white pages in Romanian history are now being filled, including those concerning Romanian evangelicalism. The bibliographical portion of this paper, presented chronologically by publication date, is divided as follows: Romania between the World Wars, 1918-1938; Romania during the era of the Second World War beginning in 1938 and ending with its aftermath in 1947; and Romania during the Communist era, 1948-1989.

Romanian Evangelicals in Interwar Romania, 1918-1938

The post-World War I unification of the Romanian lands into a centralized national state, *România Mare* (Greater Romania) more than doubled the size and population of the pre-war Romanian Kingdom[40]. This transformation brought large minority populations into Romania and created considerable religious, cultural, and developmental diversity within a hyper-nationalistic state hostile to nonconforming religious groups[41].

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are P. I. David, *Sectology sau apărarea dreptei credințe. Manual experimental*, Constanța, Editura Sfintei Arhiepiscopii a Tomisului, 1998, XIX + 428 p., decrying the existence of non-Orthodox "sects"; and Gheorghe Petraru, *Ortodoxie și prozelitism*, Iași, Trinitas, Editura Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, 2000, 398 p., which is based on the premise that the proselytism of the "sects" is "Satanic". On the issue of proselytism, see the Special Issue on Pluralism, Proselytism, and Nationalism in Eastern Europe of "The Journal of Ecumenical Studies", vol. 36, nr. 1-2, 1999, especially the piece by Ion Bria, *Evangelism, Proselytism, and Religious Freedom in Romania: An Orthodox Point of View*, p. 163-183.

[40] The Romanian Kingdom went from 53,000 sq miles in 1912 to 114,00 sq miles in 1918 and from 7,200,000 people to 18,000,000. Ethnic Romanians went from over 93% of the population to less than 72%. See Lucian Boia, *Cum s-a românizat România*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2015, *passim*, on Romanian demographics and its implications in the Romanian development in the 20th century.

[41] For Romania cultural/nationality issues after World War I, see Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930*, Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2000; and Lucian Boia, *op. cit.*, p. 53 ff.

Romanian evangelicals also did not fit well into a society in which church and state were inextricably interwoven, ethnicity and religious grouping were assumed to be synonymous, and the idea of "independent" churches was completely oxymoronic[42]. In a highly nationalistic environment, Romanian evangelicals were readily stigmatized as "foreigners" and "outsiders." In Eastern Europe generally,

> A person's religion is a matter of 'natural identity.' That is, Romanians are said to be 'naturally' Orthodox... In other words, authentic Romanians... are Orthodox, and... Those who step outside their natural designations − for example, those who chose a new religion or minority religion − are deemed traitors to their group. Those who have long been outside the majority 'natural' designation are simply the 'other,' who may be tolerated but who need not be supported[43].

One other reason for the hostility directed against Romanian evangelicals by the established churches is to be found in its implicit critique of Romanian church and state. Andrew Walls writes that evangelicalism in some parts of the world "is a religion of protest against a Christian society that is not Christian enough"[44]. Who wouldn't be offended by the implication that he or she wasn't Christian enough or that Christian alternatives were needed to the historic denominations? Interestingly, though Romanian Orthodox writers today recognize that evangelicals were persecuted by the Communists, they continue to propagate the myth that Romanian Orthodoxy is uniquely tolerant of religious "Others," a mythology that was first enunciated in the middle of the 19th century[45].

The situation of Romanian evangelicals was graphically illustrated in the Interwar period by legislation which divided the religious landscape into "national" churches, the Romanian Orthodox Church (*Biserica Ortodoxă Română*) and the Uniate Romanian Greco-Catholic Church (*Biserica Română Greco-Catolică Unită*, today known as *Biserica Română Unită cu Roma, Greco-Catolică*); and recognized "minority" churches and groups (such as Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Unitarian, Jewish, and Muslim) which were historically associated with a single ethnic group.

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[42] Even though "ethnophyletism" (the conflation of nation, state, and religion) was declared a heresy by the Orthodox Church at the Synod of Constantinople in 1872. See "Territorial Jurisdiction According to Orthodox Canon Law. The Phenomenon of Ethnophyletism in Recent Years, on *Eastern Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Home Page*, www.ec-patr.org/docdisplay.php?lang=en&id=287&tla=en, last accessed 10.02.2016.

[43] Julie Mertus and Kathryn Minyard Frost, *Faith and (In)tolerance of Minority Religions: A Comparative Analysis of Romania, Ukraine, and Poland*, in "Journal of Ecumenical Studies", vol. 36, nr. 1-2, 1999, p. 65-66. Compare Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Budapest, Central European University, 2001, p. 9-11.

[44] Quoted in Joel A. Carpenter, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[45] George Enache, *Ortodoxie şi putere politică în România contemporană (studii şi eseuri)*, Bucureşti, Editura Nemira, 2005; and Ionuț-Gabriel Corduneanu, *Biserica și Statul: două studii*, Bucureşti, Editura Evloghia, 2006.

Revealingly, religious communities based on commitment rather than affiliation and ethnicity – and generally counter-culture to boot – were at first legally ignored. As an afterthought, some of these groups (such as the Baptists, Adventists, and a few others) were subsequently granted the status of "tolerated sects," in 1925 and 1928, while yet others (such as Pentecostals, Nazarenes, and Jehovah's Witnesses) were classified as "prohibited sects"[46]. "Sect" is a pejorative in Romanian religious parlance indicating groups beyond the pale or close to it. The state did not interfere with the beliefs of national and minority churches, but specifically reserved the right to do so in regard to the "sects".

Their statutory situation thus placed evangelicals at a legal disadvantage for most of the history of modern Romania after 1918[47]. They were subject to a variety of "hindrances" ranging from the petty (refusals or slow responses to requests for building permits) to more severe (imprisonment). The success and persistence of Romanian evangelicals under such circumstances was testimony to the spiritual fecklessness of the established denominations and to a somewhat impoverished and barren religious milieu[48].

At the same time, the Romanian Orthodox Church pursued a monistic view of church-state relations.[49] In return, ruling elites used "the Orthodox establishment [...] as an instrument for validating" their "legitimacy [...] through historic explanations related to the relationship between Orthodoxy and Nationality in Romanian history"[50].

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[46] Olimp Căciulă, *Cultele în România*, in Dimitrie Gusti (ed.), *Enciclopedia României*, vol. 1, Bucureşti, Imprimeria Naţională, 1938, p. 417-442. For the text of the 1923 constitution, see www.constitutia.ro/const1923.htm, last accessed 4.10.2016. Article 22 pertains to religion. See also Constantin Schifirneţ (ed.), *Biserica noastră şi cultele minoritare. Marea discuţie parlamentară în jurul Legii cultelor, 1928*, Bucureşti, Editura Albatros, 2000.

[47] On the legal framework, see also Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, p. 586 ff.; Constantin Cuciuc, *op. cit.*, p. 17 ff; and Virgil Pană, *Biserica Ortodoxă şi cultele minoritare între cele două războaie mondiale*, in "Angustia" (Sfântu Gheorghe), vol. 6, 2001, p. 179-184. Pană has another study, *Aspecte privind situaţia cultelor minoritare din Transilvania în perioda interbelică*, in "Revista Bistriţei", vol. 8, 1994, p. 205-222, which does not mention evangelicals, "cultele minoritare" meaning here Hungarians and Germans.

[48] On the political and social deficiencies of Romanian Orthodoxy, see my *Orthodoxy and the Future*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 59-67. For a more optimistic view, see Al. Duţu, *Traditional Toleration and Modern Pluralism: The Case of Orthodox Europe*, in "East European Quarterly", vol. 29, 1995, p. 142-155, republished as *The Challenge of Pluralism*, in his *Political Models and National Identities in "Orthodox Europe"*, Bucureşti, Babel Publishing House, 1999, p. 163-175.

[49] Irwin T. Sanders, *Church-State Relationships in Southeastern Europe (with special reference to the Orthodox Church*, in "East European Quarterly", vol. 16, nr. 1, 1982, p. 65. In other words, they rejected a "dualism of church and state" promoting "a harmonious ideal of unity and solidarity of all forces in a society [...]". This is the Orthodox Church concept of "symphonia". Sanders also usefully applies Max Weber's idea of "hierocracy" to the Orthodox Church (p. 60-61).

[50] Steven A. Fischer-Galaţi, *Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality in the Twentieth Century: The Case of Romania*, in "East European Quarterly", vol. 18, nr. 1, 1984, p. 27. He goes on to say: "It is indeed noteworthy that all national heroes of Greater Romania – all supporters of the Orthodox Church and all supported by the Church – were [...] valiant rulers of the component provinces of the Old Kingdom" (p. 27). Indeed, a number of them were sainted after 1989.

One symptom of this was the virulent integral nationalism which escalated throughout Europe as the 1920s and 1930s unfolded. Another was an obsessively centralized and bloated state apparatus, largely motivated by fear that the new state might easily be destabilized and that national unity would be threatened by the slightest local autonomy or initiative. This led to disproportionately large military and security expenditures for a country of modest size[51].

Romanian evangelicals were viewed with alarm. For them,

> [...] toleration was the exception, and persecution was the rule [...]. Generally speaking, in the interwar Romanian state, to belong to an evangelical church was risky, exposing one to repressions on the part of the state administration and the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as to social marginalization [...]. Persecution came to be part of everyday life for members of religious minorities[52].

At best Romanian evangelicals were heretics or a symptom of societal breakdown[53]; at worst they were religious "anarchists" who might undermine the state apparatus and who ought to be suppressed in the interests of societal hygiene.

There are a small number of excellent works dealing with the situation of Romanian evangelicals between 1918 and the spiral into World War II, but as yet there is no comprehensive monograph or document collection. Iosif Țon's 1995 sketch dealing with religious persecution between 1920 and 1944 was the first work to appear[54]. A brief introduction is provided in Constantin Cuciuc's 2001 study of "prohibited" religions in Romania, which covers the situation up to the Communist religious statute of 1950[55]. Documentation is mostly lacking (except for a twelve item bibliography at the end and virtually no references), but the survey is helpful. The preface provides a general overview of religious persecution or hindrance in Romania, followed by three chapters dealing with recognized groups (Baptists, Adventists, and Brethren), prohibited groups (Pentecostals, Nazarenes, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others), and parareligious groups (spiritism, Christian Science, theosophy, and Anthroposophy). The author gives some credence to the mythology that Romanians, at least before

[51] For an overview of the period, see my *Romania (History)*, in Richard Frucht (ed.), *Encyclopedia of East Europe: From the Congress of Vienna to the Fall of Communism*, New York, Garland Publishing, 2000, p. 680-686.

[52] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, p. 602. According to Baptist historian Alexa Popovici, between 1918 and 1938, Romanian Baptists went through no fewer that six waves of persecution (in *op. cit.*, p. 347 ff.).

[53] The noted sociologist Ernest Bernea claimed that the appearance of "sects" was both a cause and a symptom of a breakdown in Romanian "village civilization". Ernest Bernea, *Civilizația română sătească. Ipoteze și precizări*, București, Colecția Țară și Neam, 1944, p. 119 ff.

[54] Iosif Țon, *Persecuția religioasă între anii 1920-1944*, in idem (ed.), *Libertatea religioasă. Contribuția baptiștilor la dezvoltarea acestui concept*, Oradea, Editura Cartea Creștină, 1995, p. 101-119.

[55] Constantin Cuciuc, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

the 20th century brought modernization and nationalism, were intensely religiously tolerant[56]. He argues that the "over-reaction to the sects" after 1918 was primarily political not theological, based mostly on ignorance of the established churches and the authorities, and these groups shouldn't have been seen as a problem. The legal and political context from 1928 to 1948 is reasonably surveyed, while the history of the main evangelical groups – the Baptists (p. 23-30), the Brethren (p. 41-48), and the Pentecostals, were prohibited until 1944 (p. 76-86) – is informative, but summary.

Dorin Dobrincu's 2007 study[57] of state policy toward evangelicals between 1919 and 1944 is a superb, archival based overview that ranges from issues of historical nomenclature and conceptualization to Romanian legislative religious policies and realities between 1919 and 1944 to the impact of escalating religious nationalism on Romanian evangelicals[58]. Dobrincu is probably the leading Romanian scholar currently concerned with such issues, and his work here is a model of its kind[59]. His study begins with an untangling of the terminology related to "Neo-Protestants", "evangelicals", "sects", and "sectants", already referred to above, and estimates the approximate size of these groups, an issue complicated by the legal status of the Brethren and Pentecostals before World War II. This is followed by a comprehensive review of law and legislation impacting religion between the Constitution of 1923 and 1944.

The third section of his study is devoted to how Romanian religious nationalism and its influence on the state impacted evangelicals, with extensive notes. Romanian nationalists were not only concerned with the Jewish and Freemason threats, but also those of religious "sects". Though Romanian democracy was problematic prior to 1938-1944's dictatorial phase, Dobrincu argues for an undisputed continuity between the two periods in regard to policies *vis-à-vis* evangelical believers and the flagrant violation of religious

[56] Cuciuc's bibliography cites B. P. Hasdeu's *Istoria toleranței religioase în România* (1868) as evidence. Given Hasdeu's ferocious antisemitism, this tolerance seems unlikely, and all of his examples date before the 19th century. For a clear restatement of the toleration myth, see David Pestroiu, *Religia ortodoxă – o disciplină a toleranței*, in Lucrețiu Vasilescu (ed.), *Cultură și religie. Statutul religiei și instrucția școlară*, București, Editiura Universității din București, 2009, p. 82-94. Pestroiu defines toleration to include the "avoidance of proselytism", which by definition would disqualify from toleration evangelical groups that seek converts to their beliefs.

[57] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 583-602.

[58] An additional area worth investigating has to do with issues of everyday life. For example, evangelicals in some locations had problems with burial locations. See Lucian Leuștean, *Diversitate etnică și confesională la Iași în perioada interbelică*, in Laurențiu Rădvan (ed.), *Iași – oraș al diversității. Categorii etnice și minoriăți în secolele XV-XX: aspecte sociale, economice și culturale*, Iași, Editura Ars Longa, 2015, p. 224.

[59] Though an evangelical (a Brethren), Dobrincu was the director of the Romanian National Archives from 2007 to 2012. See my *1,800 Days: The Romanian National Archives, 2007-2012*, in Ovidiu Pecican (ed.), *România post-comunistă: istorie și istoriografie. Analize istorice*, Cluj, Editura Limes, 2014, p. 101-118.

rights, actions in which the Romanian Orthodox Church was deeply implicated ideologically, politically, and administratively[60].

Typical was a public declaration in 1942 by the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Nicodim: "The Romanian [Orthodox] and the Romanian state are one. Where the State commands, the Church also commands. And where the Church advises, the State listens"[61]. A substantial majority of the population in interwar and World War II Romania saw little reason to disagree with that. For Romanian evangelicals, "toleration was the exception, and persecution was the rule". The impact of this era on a Romanian evangelicalism still developing its theology and place in society, Dobrincu concludes, was incalculable and served to make martyrdom a key part of the consciousness of Romanian evangelicals (something that was further ingrained during the Communist era).

A third study, as yet unpublished other than in abstract and resumé form, is Bogdan Petre Hrestic's dissertation dealing with religious liberty in Romania between 1934 and 1938, including under Carol II's royal dictatorship[62]. The author, a Romanian Orthodox priest and seminary professor, stresses the relationship between religious freedom and freedom generally in a Romania "in transition" that then headed off the cliff at the end of the 1930s. He begins with the problems of nationalization, regionalism, religion, and *kulturkampf* in the new, religiously and ethnically diverse Romania, which, on the other hand, was bound by provisions of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. This led to the emergence of an aggressive integral nationalism, with ramifications in finance, education, and elsewhere. The Romanian Orthodox Church had the upper hand religiously and intended to maintain it. Evangelical groups "oscillated between recognition for the moment or prohibition" as "sects" and suffered from the "authoritarian tendencies" of both Church and State. In his view, "speculation" by the Orthodox Church among the simple folk with mystical ideas (such as the Maglavit episode) prepared fertile ground for Corneliu Codreanu and the Legionary Movement, and for King Carol II's machinations and escalating violence (such as the assassination of the Prime Minister in 1933) and racialism. In 1938, Carol was aided in this by the Patriarch himself, Miron Cristea, with worse to come after the king was forced to abdicate and flee in 1940[63].

[60] Fischer-Galați writes "the state had been traditionally dependent on the church hierarchy for the conduct of certain local affairs", in Fischer-Galați, *Religion*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 133. This not-so-benign relationship was considerably to the disadvantage of Romanian evangelicals. See the Church and interwar politics, see Hans-Christian Maner, *Confesiunile în viața parlamentară din România interbelică*, in AIIX, vol. 36, 1999, p. 113-124.

[61] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, p. 600-601.

[62] Bogdan Petru Hrestic, *Despre libertatea cultelor şi libertate în societatea românească între anii 1934-1938*, dissertation abstract, Universitatea Valahia din Târgoviște, 2014, www.scoaladoctorala. valahia.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Rezumat-Hrestic-Bogdan.pdf, and dissertation resumé, www.scoaladoctorala.valahia.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Rezumat-Hrestic-Bogdan-Petru.pdf, both accessed 11.10.2016.

[63] Though Hrestic does not give the Romanian Orthodox Church a pass on integral nationalism, racialism, and support for the Legionary Movement, he does insist that it never went

Biblical translation was another issue during the 1918-1938 era. The publication in 1921 of a Romanian translation of the Bible by Dumitru Cornilescu, the version now most-widely used by Romanian evangelicals, was a major event and has elicited considerable attention, much of it vaguely reminiscent of disputes between advocates of the King James version and newer translations in the English-speaking world[64]. In 1981, Alexandru Măianu wrote a popular/devotional life of Cornilescu that was reprinted in 1995[65].

This has recently been raised to a new scholarly level by the work of Emanuel Conțac, particularly in a 2014 book that demythologizes Cornilescu's work by publishing over 300 pages of documents, along with a biographical sketch and a discussion of the reception of the translation and its subsequent revisions[66].

Conțac, a Pentecostal scholar, had previously devoted considerable effort to the work of Cornilescu and translations, including a 2011 article on an influential precursor, the French Swiss Bible translator, Louis Segond, which argues that while Cornilescu was heavily influenced by Segond, the two differ considerably in a number of cases[67]; a 2011 study of the Romanian Bible translation tradition[68]; and a 2011 book (revised edition in 2015) on the problems of Biblical translation which analyses both linguistically and hermeneutically some thirty-five translations of the New Testament into

as far as some Germans (the German Christian Movement) in support of such ideas, which he considers aberrations fostered in large part by extraordinary external and internal developments that led to a "fracture" of Romanian society, and the adoption in 1938 of a constitution that abrogated political freedom and led to a decline in religious freedom.

[64] See D. A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate. A Plea for Realism*, Grand Rapids MI, Baker Books, 1978. For a trenchant analysis of a new (2010) translation (called FIDELA) of the King James text into Romanian, see Emanuel Conțac, *FIDELA, o traducere românească fidelă a Bibliei King James (1611)*, in Eugen Munteanu, Ana-Maria Gînsac, and Maria Moruz (eds.), *Receptarea Sfintei Scripturi între filologie, hermeneutică şi traductologie, Lucrările simpozionului naţional "Explorări în tradiţia biblică românească şi europeană", ed. a II-a, Iaşi, 4-5 noiembrie 2011*, Iaşi, Editura Universităţii "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2012, p. 101-119. The motive force behind FIDELA was an American fundamentalist Baptist missionary: perhaps not the most beneficial kind of cultural exchange for Romanians.

[65] Alexandru Măianu, *Viața și lucrarea lui Dumitru Cornilescu. Traducătorul Bibliei în limba română modernă*, București, Editura Biserica Evanghelică Română, 1995. An online version is available at https://gospelfororthodox.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/viata_lucrarea_dumitru_cornilescu.pdf, last accessed 25.07.2017.

[66] Emanuel Conțac (ed.), *Cornilescu. Din culisele publicării celei mai citite traduceri a Sfintei Scripturi*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Logos, 2014, 424 p. As recently as 2016, there were still legal disputes over the Cornilescu copyright.

[67] Emanuel Conțac, *Influența versiunii Segond asupra versiunii Cornilescu 1921*, in Eugen Munteanu, et al. (eds.), *Receptarea Sfintei Scripturi între filologie, hermeneutică și traductologie. Lucrările simpozionului național "Explorări în tradiția biblică românească și europeană", Iași, 28-29 octombrie 2010*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", Iași, 2011, p. 122-145.

[68] Idem, *Tradiția biblică românească. O prezentare succintă din perspectiva principalelor versiuni românești ale Sfintei Scripturi*, in "Studii Teologice", nr. 2, 2011, p. 159-245.

Romanian both linguistically and hermeneutically[69]. In addition, the Romanian Biblical tradition is the subject of two articles (2010, 2012) by Eugen Munteanu[70]. Cornilescu's translation work has also been usefully examined in an article by Paul Negruț[71].

Romanian Evangelicals under Dictatorship, World War II, and after, 1938-1947

In 1938, Romania abandoned its flagging pursuit of democratization with the installation of a royal dictatorship and the adoption of an authoritarian new constitution[72]. This was followed by the imposition of a joint fascist-military regime in 1940 and then a military dictatorship under General Ion Antonescu in 1941 that brought Romania into the Second World War alongside Nazi Germany[73]. Antonescu's ouster in 1944 was followed by the Soviet occupation of Romania and the gradual Stalinization of what became a full-fledged Communist state in December 1947[74].

One doesn't have to be very perceptive to recognize that all of this did not bode well for Romanian evangelicals. They found their status moving from bad to worse owing to the fatal conjunction of renewed efforts by the Romanian Orthodox Church to "re-convert" evangelicals, soaring national chauvinism and totalitarianism in the 1930s and 1940s, and the acceleration of events which drew Romania into the genocidal cauldron of the Second World War. Paradoxically, in the face of this savage persecution, the number of evangelicals in Romania grew remarkably between 1918 and 1944[75].

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[69] Idem, *Dilemele fidelității. Condiționări culturale și teologice în traducerea Bibliei*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Logos/Risoprint, 2011, 320 p.; revised, 2nd edition: *Determinări culturale și teologice în traducerea Noului Testament*, Iași, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2015, 328 p.

[70] Eugen Munteanu, *Sulla tradizione biblica romena. Dissociazioni di principio*, in "Quaderni della Casa Romena di Venezia", vol. 7, 2010, p. 15-26; and *A Brief History of the Romanian Biblical Tradition*, in "Biblicum Jassyense", vol. 3, 2012, p. 15-53.

[71] Paul Negruț, *Cornilescu și traducerea Bibliei*, in his *Revelație, Scriptură, Comuniune. O interogație asupra autorității în cunoașterea teologică*, Oradea, Editura Cartea Creștină, 1996, p. 121-150.

[72] For the text of the 1938 Constitution, see www.constitutia.ro/const1938.htm, last accessed 4.10.2016. The main general provisions of Article 19 dealing with religion were virtually unchanged from Article 22 of the 1923 Constitution. The rub lay in unspecified administrative regulations what that were to follow. The 1938 Constitution was suspended by General Antonescu in 1940. In August 1944, the 1923 Constitution was restored, more or less.

[73] See Dennis Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally. Ion Antonescu and His Regime, Romania 1940-1944*, Houndmills UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; and Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation. Population Exchange and Ethic Cleansing in Nazi-Allied Romania*, Washington DC, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010.

[74] See my *The East European Revolution Revisited (La révolution de l'Europe de l'Est revisitée)*, in "Revue Roumaine d'Études Internationales", vol. 27, nr. 1-2, 1993, p. 49-64, on the process.

[75] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*, p. 602.

The major new contribution to the 1938-1947 literature here was Viorel Achim's landmark 2013 collection related to the fate of the evangelicals under Antonescu[76]. The editor, a highly-respected historian who has specialized in the study of ethnic and religious minorities, carefully selected and published in full over 500 mostly unpublished documents relating to the policies of the Antonescu dictatorship between 1940 and 1944 *vis-à-vis* two leading Romanian evangelical groups (the Baptists and the Brethren) as well as the Seventh Day Adventists.

What does this collection show? In 1940, Romania became officially defined as "a nationalist, Christian, and totalitarian" state[77] and all evangelical groups were even temporarily banned. Between 1940 and 1942, they were subjected to the old strategy of attrition: their meeting places were requisitioned to provide barracks for German soldiers; Baptist leaders were arrested for conducting "unauthorized" baptisms; and the Minister of Culture and Religion took to describing evangelicals as having "always been a dissolving agent of our national solidarity," a constant threat to "our national imperatives", and "Enemy Nr. 1 of our national Romanian unity"[78]. By 1942, the regime was threatening the wholesale deportation of evangelicals to war-zone "bloodlands" – with the exception of able-bodied young men who were shipped off to the front lines of the war. In December 1942, the three groups were again banned, this time for good, their buildings seized, their members forced to convert to Orthodoxy or arrested, and their leaders tried in military courts and often executed[79].

The responsibility of the state-patronized Romanian Orthodox Church for this cannot be minimized since it both initiated and fully supported governmental policies toward Romanian evangelicals. Illustrative was a 1942 public lecture by a professor of "sectology" at the University of Bucureşti's Faculty of Theology who described evangelicals as promoters of "a social anarchy which threatens the existence of the State", and called for support of the campaign for religious homogenization under the slogan "One faith, one people, one king"[80]. Small wonder that the editor compares the "drastic measures" taken by the Romanian regime against these relatively harmless non-conforming Christians unfavorably with the conduct of even the Nazis[81].

Achim has made a further contribution to this subject in a 2014 article that publishes and analyzes a 1943 police inspectorate study of evangelicals in Bucovina, which is published in full. Officials summarized measures taken

[76] Viorel Achim (ed.), *op. cit.*

[77] Document nr. 4, 9.09.1940, in *ibidem*, p. 207.

[78] Document nr. 70, 5.07.1941, in *ibidem*, p. 288-289.

[79] On how this persecution was linked to horrific "special" government statutes for war-time Basarabia and Bucovina, see Viorel Achim's *Proiectul governului de la Bucureşti vizând schimbul de populaţie româno-ruso-ucrainean (1943)*, in RI, vol. 121, nr. 5-6, 2000, p. 395-421.

[80] Document nr. 141, 5.03.1942, in idem, *Politica regimului Antonescu…*, p. 405-406.

[81] *Ibidem*, p. 18. The Nazi legation in Bucureşti, in fact, actually complained of the mistreatment of the Baptists (document nr. 22, 5.10.1940, in *ibidem*, p. 234-235).

against "religious sects" in North-Central Romania between 1941 and 1943, provided short histories of each group in general and in Romania (sometimes amusingly erroneous, such as identifying George Fox as the founder of Pentecostalism), listed the names of leaders and members, and set forth an agenda for action to be taken against each group in the future[82].

Lastly, there is a 2015 piece by Dorin Dobrincu dealing with the decline of diversity from the point of view of ethnic and religious minorities in Iași between 1944 and 1989[83]. The study is organized into several parts, one of which includes a discussion of the fate of Romanian evangelicals in the context of Iași as a war zone hard hit by famine and refugee problems; subject to a brutal Soviet occupation and the Stalinization; and unparalleled social breakdown and change[84]. Pointing out that evangelicals carried an almost pre-modern stigmatization, the author notes the irony that their treatment pulled evangelicals together, "contributing to the consolidation of an evangelical ethos".

Romanian Evangelicals under Communism, 1948-1989[85]

Though the end of World War II brought some hope for a better future (what could be worse than fascism?), such optimism proved illusory as the transition from fascist/military nationalism to Communist nationalism – the movement from black to red – meant renewed oppression for evangelicals[86]. From December 1947 to December 1989, Romania was under direct Communist rule. Communist Romania had three constitutions: the 1948 constitution of the Romanian People's Republic; a new RPR constitution in 1952 on the Soviet model to mark the completion of the Stalinization of Romania; and the 1965 constitution of the Romanian Socialist Republic[87]. Each provided "guarantees" of religious freedom; each proved sterling instruments of repression.

[82] Idem, *Situația "sectelor religioase" în Provincia Bucovina. Un studiu al Inspectoratului Regional de Poliție Cernăuți din septembrie 1943*, in ArchM, vol. IV, 2014, p. 351-427.

[83] Dorin Dobrincu, *Declinul diversității. Minorități etnice și religioase în Iași, 1944-1989*, in Laurențiu Rădvan (ed.), *Iași – oraș al diversității. Categorii etnice și minorități în secolele XV-XX: aspecte sociale, economice și culturale*, Iași, Editura Ars Longa, 2015, p. 278-375; p. 350-374 deal with evangelicals in Iași and the surrounding region.

[84] See Alexandru D. Aioanei, *Între ruine, foamete și normalizarea vieții cotidiene. Iașul în anii 1944-1948*, in ArchM, vol. VI, 2014, p. 89-118.

[85] Since the country was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1944, some studies of Romanian history begin the Communist era in 1944. Some of the works cited in this study obviously will overlap the periodization used here; they will generally be discussed under their chronological point of entry.

[86] George Enache, *Strategii de infiltrare și atragere la colaborare a cultelor religioase elaborate de autoritățile procomuniste din România în perioadă 1945-1947, cu o privire specială asupra cazului Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 1, nr. 1, 2008, p. 53, who identifies this as part of the Communist dialectic approach.

[87] For texts, see *Constituția Republicii Populare Române 1948*, on www.constitutia.ro/const1948.htm; *Constituția Republicii Populare Române 1952*, on www.constitutia.ro/const1952.htm; and *Constituția Republicii Socialiste România 1965*, on www.constitutia.ro/const1952.htm, all last accessed 4.10.2016.

Article 27 of the 1948 Constitution provided that

> Freedom of conscience and religious liberty are guaranteed by the State. Religious groups are free to organize and function freely if their ritual and practices are not contrary to the Constitution, public security, or good morals. No religious confession, congregation, or community can open or maintain institutions of general education, only special schools for the preparation of the personnel of the religious group under the control of the State. The Romanian Orthodox Church is autocephalous and unitary in its organization. The mode of organization and functioning of religious groups will be regulated by law[88].

It does not take much imagination to see that seemingly minor and apparently reasonable exceptions ("freely if ...") were big enough to drive a truck through by a regime that harbored little good will toward religion. The abolition of religious schools was another important element, as was direct state control of the training of church personnel. The final clause of Article 27 further revealed where real authority lay: in the issuing of manifold regulations which would easily subvert constitutional guarantees.

Article 84 of the 1952 Constitution was both similar and subtly different:

> Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Romanian People's Republic. Religious groups are free to organize and function freely. Exercise of religious freedom is guaranteed to all citizens of the Romanian People's Republic. Schools are separate from the church. No religious confession, congregation, or community can open or maintain institutions of general education; only special schools for the preparation of the personnel of the religious group. The mode of organization and functioning of religious groups is regulated by law.

"Freedom of religion" was now subsumed under "freedom of conscience". The ominous "freely if ..." clause was omitted, but this merely meant that such matters would be dealt with outside of the constitution via tried and true methods of regulation. Exercise of religious freedom was now a specific right of citizens of the RPR, and the explicit control of the training of religious personnel was also moved from the constitution to the regulation book. References to the Romanian Orthodox Church were deleted. The rest of the article was the same as in 1948.

In 1965, as a self-recognition of Romania's "progress" in "building socialism", the name of the country was changed to the Romanian Socialist Republic and a new constitution implemented. The only changes in religious statutes under the new Article 30 came in the first part: "Freedom of conscience is guaranteed to all citizens of the Romanian Socialist Republic. Everyone is free to share or not share a religious belief. Exercise of religious freedom is guaranteed [...]". The right to no religious profession at all was now made

[88] The clause about the Romanian Orthodox Church being autocephalous was an affirmation of the independence of the Romanian church from any outside authority, while the "unitary in organization" phrase marked the end of the Greco-Catholic church dating back to the 17th century.

explicit. Religious freedom was guaranteed, not by the State or for citizens, but somehow guaranteed. The rest was unaltered.

In addition to whatever mischief could be wreaked via regulations, the simple disregard of constitutional provisions and generally lawless behavior by the Romanian Secret Police (the Securitate) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs meant that religious repression continued to ramp up in Communist Romania[89]. The further reality that the overwhelming majority of the Romanian population tended to see practice of religion as what one did inside the walls of a church on Sundays and holidays almost automatically brought Romanian evangelicals into conflict with the regime.

In 1947-1950, new statutes dealing with religious groups in Romania were adopted, the Orthodox Church was "purified" of uncooperative elements, the Greco-Catholic church was forcibly "re-united" with the Orthodox Church, and the three principal evangelical groups − the Baptists, the Brethren, the Pentecostals − and the Seventh Day Adventists were combined into "Federalized Cults," and forced to break any connections with evangelicals outside of Romania[90]. The federation seems to have been principally a device for forcing evangelical leaders to meet with authorities on a regular basis, but it did not involve any amalgamation of the groups and appears to have been more or less a dead letter very soon after[91]. A governmentally-manipulated "peace movement" was another primary instrument of control, presenting a Hobson's choice between being part of the peace-loving "progressive" camp or part of the imperialist, war-mongering cabal[92].

The Romanian communist regime pretty much toadied to the Soviet Union until the late 1950s, and then morphed into a national-Stalinist state which

[89] On the Securitate between 1948 and 1989, see Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948-1965*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1999; and *Ceaușescu and the Securitate. Coercion and Dissent in Romania, 1965-1989*, Armonk NY, M. E. Sharpe, 1995.

[90] For a survey, see Keith Hitchins, *The Romanian Orthodox Church and the State*, in B. Bociurkiw and J. W. Strong (eds.), *Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe*, London, Macmillan, 1975, p. 314-327; Marius Bucur, *State and Church in Post-War Romania, 1945-1948. A Few Considerations*, in "Transylvanian Review", vol. 4, nr. 4, 1995, p. 122-133, who argues that the Orthodox Church benefited from its role in providing legitimization for the Communist regime; and Olivier Gillet, *Religion et Nationalisme. L'idéologie de l'Église orthodoxe roumaine sus le régime communiste*, Brussells, Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1997. The official version of these events is put forth in Stanciu Stoian, et al., *Cultele religioase în Republica Populară Română*, București, Editura Ministerului Cultelor, 1949, which argues that "Neo-Protestant" cults were the product of the disintegration of capitalist society, a situation that obviously was shortly going to change dramatically (p. 46-47).

[91] The creation of this pseudo federation may have been when the term "Neo-Protestant" was officially adopted as an umbrella term to describe non-magisterial Protestant and evangelical groups regardless of their theological differences. The inadequacy of the term "Neo-Protestant" has been argued above, and the term "evangelical" is specifically taken in this paper to include the Baptists, the Brethren, and the Pentecostals, but not the Seventh Day Adventists. However, because of official terminology, the distinction cannot always be maintained.

[92] See Lucian N. Leuștean, *Orthodoxy and the Cold War. Religion and Political Power in Romania, 1947-1965*, Basingstoke UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 96 ff.

eventually combined the worst features of nationalism and Communism[93]. A key turning point for the regime was the withdrawal of Soviet military forces from Romania in 1958. For religious, political, and sociological reasons, the conflict between evangelicals (particularly the Baptists) and the Romanian state heated up in the 1970s. The key factor was a generational change in the church. These were the people who came to maturity after the 1950s who were tired of facile collaboration with the Communist regime, and were no longer content to remain passive in the face of a state that refused to observe its own constitution and laws. Of course, the logic of such dissent would have eventually undermined the foundations of the regime.

On this period, good historical studies dealing with Romanian evangelicals are the most plentiful, though there are no documentary works comparable to that of Achim on World War II, and a general history remains to be written. In 1955, Raoul Bossy, an émigré, former Romanian diplomat, published the first extended study of religious persecution in Communist Romania[94]. Unfortunately, his premise is that Romanians have been victimized for twenty centuries, with Communism as just the latest misfortune to afflict them. Prior to this,

> [...] the greatest freedom and autonomy was always enjoyed by all these different creeds [including evangelicals] in a country in which religious matters were never involved in political platforms nor caused controversies in a basically tolerant population [...]. It was left to the Communist régime in Romania to sow the germs of this new and hitherto unknown plague, religious persecution[95].

This mythology of the religiously tolerant Romania persists to the present. The bulk of the article is devoted to the fate of the Romanian Orthodox, the Uniate, and the Roman Catholic churches. Less than a third of a page deals with the evangelicals; this is devoted to their involuntary 1950 "federalization". Bossy's conclusion, that "it may be seen that no one particular religion is the target of Communism (sic!) attention in Romania, but that the régime treats them all alike and seeks to destroy them all, one after the other," is considerably off the mark, though his conviction that "millions of men and women still cherish the eternal principles of religion and anxiously await the day when they will be free to proclaim them openly again" has proven accurate[96].

Emil Ciurea provided one of the earliest surveys of religious life in Romania in 1956, useful for spelling out the ideological stance of Marxism-Leninism on religion and for reviewing the changes in religious regulations in

[93] This sorry tale is well-told by Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceauşescu's Romania*, Berkeley CA, University of California Press, 1991.

[94] Raoul Bossy, *Religious Persecutions in Captive Romania*, in "Journal of Central European Affairs", vol. 15, 1955, p. 161-181.

[95] *Ibidem*, p. 161.

[96] *Ibidem*, p. 180-181.

1947 and after, which affected all religious groups. However, typically and symptomatically, evangelicals get scant direct mention[97].

In 1983, a volume on *Dissent in Eastern Europe*[98] included two chapters on Romania. Emil Freund's *Nascent Dissent in Romania*[99], briefly covers Romanian religious protest in the 1970s and early 1980s through the lens of dissent. He recognizes that such dissent "received little attention in the West since it has lacked the drama of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980," but its significance was quickly and brutally appreciated by the regime and Party. Freund discusses evangelical dissent, growing religious revival in Romania, and makes the point that "Due to the official atheism of the regime, religion has been a favorite mechanism for showing popular disapproval of the government... [and] is defined by the authorities as an act of defiance."

A second contribution, Vlad Georgescu's *Romanian Dissent: Its Ideas*[100], deals with those manifestations of Romanian dissent which take a philosophical approach, the question of why Romanian dissent was relatively later in coming than elsewhere in Eastern Europe (the false Romanian Spring of the late 1960s − early 1970s), and the Ceaușescu personality cult. He explains why attempts in Romania to exercise human rights were ipso facto suspect political acts, and how the "very real threat came from a variety of religious groups that appeared as the result of an unexpected religious revival". The Baptist demands for religious rights supposedly guaranteed in the Romanian constitution "were revolutionary enough", but "Evangelical Christians were clearly and boldly moving out into the field of politics, promoting reforms that would not only have changed Church-State relations, but the nature of the totalitarian state as well". However, Georgescu was not optimistic about the future of such protests "because of the lack of real popular support", noting that "Many dissident texts are in fact extremely bitter about the timidity of the population and its reluctance to join the movement". On the other hand, he concluded "Sooner or later, an explosion appears inevitable".

Iosif Țon's 1985 pamphlet *Religious Persecution in Romania*[101] is an indictment of the Romanian Communist regime by one of its principal

[97] Emil Ciurea, *Religious Life*, in Alexandre Cretzianu (ed.), *Captive Rumania. A Decade of Soviet Rule*, New York, Praeger, 1956, p. 165-203. There is considerable detail on the horrific measures taken against the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the brutal re-union of the Uniate Church with the Orthodox Church. (The contributors to this volume were all Romanian émigrés.)

[98] Jane Leftwich Curry (ed.), *Dissent in Eastern Europe*, New York, Praeger, 1983, p. 61-68. This book treats rising dissent in Eastern Europe in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s in terms of a breakdown of a kind of "social contract" between the communist regimes and their populations. (See especially p. 173 ff.)

[99] Emil Freund, *Nascent Dissent in Romania*, in Jane Leftwich Curry (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 61-68.

[100] Vlad Georgescu, *Romanian Dissent: Its Ideas*, in Jane Leftwich Curry (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 182-194.

[101] Joseph Ton [Iosif Țon], *Religious Persecution in Romania*, Wheaton IL, Romanian Missionary Society, 1985, 39 p.

opponents in the 1970s and 1980s. The booklet helpfully lays out a number of key topics in regime repression of evangelicals: from outright persecution and imprisonment to more subtle items in the totalitarian playbook: refusal to allow building permits or renovations coupled with church demolitions and displacements, job discrimination against laymen and clergy, control of access to literature, and educational discrimination. The use of forced emigration is also considered. Ţon names names, and actual cases are discussed[102].

Sergiu Grossu, Romanian Orthodox religious prisoner (imprisoned in 1959 as a member of the *Oastea Domnului* and forced to emigrate to France in 1969), was the editor (along with his wife Nicoleta Valeria Bruteanu) of a monthly magazine on Christianity behind the Iron Curtain: *Catacombes*, published from 1971 to 1992[103]. In 1987, he published an account of the persecution of Romanian Christians of all confessions who functioned virtually "underground" as a "silent church"[104]. Grossu stresses the culpability of the hierarchy of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the persecution carried out by the Communist regime and finds the justifications advanced by regime collaborators contemptible (such as claims that they were preventing worse people from becoming official church leaders, and thus deserved credit for "saving" at least some religious practice).

Grossu devotes an ample chapter (p. 103-207) to the fate of evangelicals and other non-magisterial, non-established Protestants, primarily from 1970 to 1985, based primarily on materials acquired by and published in *Catacombes*. His book is useful for an accounting of what might be called "penalties for being an evangelical believer in Communist Romania" and for details connected with major and minor episodes in the contest between evangelicals and the authorities. Among the former, the baring of evangelicals from any positions of authority across the board including upper level teaching, harassment of children in school or removing them from their families[105], the use of

[102] Several non-evangelical cases are included, such as that of Father Gheorghe Calciu-Dumitreasa.

[103] On Grossu and his wife, see Sergiu Grossu, *L'Église persécutée entre goulag & société opulente: chronique de deux Roumains à Paris, "Catacombes", septembre 1971 − décembre 1992*, edited by Jean-Marc Berthoud, Lausanne, L'Age d'homme, 2002.

[104] Idem, *Le calvaire de Roumanie Chrétienne*, Paris, Editions France-Empire, 1987, 328 p., with Romanian editions in 1992 and 2006. Citations are to idem, *Calvarul României creştine*, s.l., Chişinău, Editura Convorbiri Literare/ABC Dava, 1992. On the earlier period, see idem, *Rezistenţa spirituală în România comunistă (1954-1960)*, in Romulus Rusan (ed.), *Anii 1954-1960. Fluxurile şi refluxurile stalinismului, Analele Sighet*, vol. 8, 2000, p. 158-169. Grossu is also the author of *The Church in Today's Catacombs*, translated by Janet L. Johnson, New Rochelle NY, Arlington House, 1976, a collection of news items from *Catacombes* with some references to Romania, but mainly important for consciousness raising in the West at the same time that Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* (1973) was opening people's eyes to the nature of Soviet systems.

[105] Including the use of school "questionnaires" with questions such as these: "How do you spend your free time on Sunday? Do you listen to [foreign] religious broadcasts? Do you go to church? Why do you go to church? What is a Christian? Are you a Christian? Do you belong to a

psychiatric hospitals to deal with dissidents, trumped up charges of homosexual activities and of financial fraud, confiscation of homes, newspaper campaigns designed to belittle or "expose" evangelicals, work place discrimination and loss of jobs, and a steady bombardment of fines equal to several months salary can be added to the usual staged "accidents", arrests, beatings, imprisonments, and faked suicides[106]. The director of a pedagogical high school in Arad put it well, addressing five evangelicals who were expelled in 1975 on the grounds that they were Baptists: "We don't even consider you Romanians. You are traitors, elements to blame for the fact that our society has not advanced to the heights of progress"[107].

Grossu is especially good in showing how Decree 153 of 1970, supposedly directed against "hooligans" and "asocial youth" was used to target evangelicals for participating in Bible studies, prayer meetings, and fellowship, all of which amounted in official eyes to "disturbing the peace" and "social parasitism". In one case, even a birthday party was judged to be a sanctionable illegal religious gathering. The other important legal innovation was the 1974 Press Law, which was used to crack down on "illegal printed matter", materials published outside of Romania without permission, particularly Bibles. This was the basis for numerous cases, most importantly that of Vasile Rascol in 1974. A third legal problem for evangelicals was the 1975 loyalty oath to the Romanian state which included a pledge to support "socialist ethics," a commitment that evangelicals would have difficulty acquiescing to. Finally, the use of emigration issues in regime strategy is explained and documented.

The other contribution of Grossu's book is to provide details related to notorious 1970s and 1980s episodes of religious persecution including 1) the 1977 Iosif Țon-led protest, the "Letter of the Six", which included Pavel Nicolescu, Aurel Popescu, Silviu Cioată, Constantin Caraman, and Radu Dumitrescu. Its Helsinki Human Rights-based approach was summarized in its motto, Proverbs 31:8-9: "You must defend those who are helpless and have no hope. Be fair and give justice to the poor and homeless" CEV); 2) the 1978 ALRC protests led by Pavel Nicolescu, Dimitrie Ianculovici, Petre Cocârțeu, and others; 3) the 1979 Prisoners of Conscience protest led by Nicolescu (mostly Decree 153/1970 cases); and 4) the 1982 letter of seventy Baptist pastors, among others[108].

sect? Where do you meet and for how long? Who are other students that you know belong to a sect? Do you believe in God? When were you last at church? (Recently− a long time ago − I don't remember − I have never been − I no longer go) How do you see the future of religion in our country? (It will disappear − It is on the road to disappearing − Categorically it will disappear − It certainly will survive) How do you see the role of religion today? (Positively – Negatively − It doesn't have any role)". Sergiu Grossu, *Calvarul României creștine*, p. 192-196.

[106] Compare Dorin Dobrincu, *Declinul diversității…*, below for other examples.

[107] Sergiu Grossu, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

[108] A useful survey is provided by Dennis Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate…*, p. 224 ff. Țon's account of the events of the 1970s and 1980s is found in Iosif Țon, *Confruntări*, Oradea,

In the end, the regime's hand was shown to an engineer and Baptist lay preacher, Aurel Popescu. Popescu told his Securitate interrogator that evangelicals were Christians and were not involved in politics. Colonel Constantin replied: "Mr. Popescu, don't give me any more crap. When we want to build an atheist society while you want a Christian one, you are engaged in politics, in fact the worst kind of politics because it is opposed to ours..." Popescu came to agree: "We all are engaged in politics, we carry on the politics of God in a world now ruled by Satan"[109]. (Popescu was later forced to immigrate to the United States.)

The 1998 book edited by Paul Caravia, Virgiliu Constantinescu, and Flori Stănescu on the Romanian Gulag and the churches between 1944 and 1989[110] is a dictionary of some 2,544 religious clergy (or leaders), including Jews and Muslims, imprisoned under Communism. It looks promising at first glance, but is disappointing because its title, *The Imprisoned Church*, is misleading and selectively leans toward the Romanian Orthodox Church[111]. Why influential laymen are omitted isn't clear, and by concentrating on leaders, the work by definition ignores evangelical groups, who in general place less emphasis on hierarchical structures[112].

The 1978 Romanian Christian Committee for the Defense of Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience (ALRC) was the subject of a penetrating 2003 discussion by Dorin Dobrincu[113]. The work notes that studies of religion

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Editura Cartea Creştină, 1999, 3rd edition, 2009, along with most of his writings from the era. Curiously, it did not include the 1977 *Cultele neoprotestante şi drepturile omului în România*. To this list should be added the Memoir of the fifty Baptist pastors to Ceauşescu in 1973. See Iosif Sărac, *Istoria "Memoriului celor 50" – Documente, relatări, amintiri, date biografice ale pastorilor semnatari ai "Memoriului" din 1973, adunate şi păstrate de Iosif Sărac*, Arad, Editura Ramira, 2010. Also helpful is Alan Scarfe, *Romanian Baptists and the State*, in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 4, nr. 2, 1976, p. 14-20.

[109] Sergiu Grossu, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[110] Paul Caravia, Virgiliu Constantinescu, and Flori Stănescu (eds.), *Biserica întemnițată. România, 1944-1989*, București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 1998, 464 p. An English translation appeared as *The Imprisoned Church. Romania, 1944-1989*, București, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarianismului, 1999, 416 p.

[111] Possibly because its core is a similar work edited by Paul Caravia, Ştefan Iloaie, and Virgiliu Constantinescu on Orthodox clerics in Communist prisons, *Mărturisitori după gratii. Slujitori ai Bisericii în temnițele comuniste*, Cluj-Napoca, Arhiepiscopia Vadului, Feleacului, şi Clujului, 1995, 85 p. The title is misleading because the work includes Jews and Muslims as well.

[112] Compare Dorin Dobrincu's withering commentary on this work: *Istoria bisericii şi pericolul confesionalizării cercetării*, in "Xenopoliana", vol. 7, nr. 3-4, 1999, p. 130-136, which criticizes the tendentious foreword by Radu Ciuceanu and a methodologically weak introductory study by Caravia for perpetuating cliches about the Romanian Orthodox Church, disenfranchising millions of Romanian citizens who belonged to other denominations, and misrepresenting the anti-Communist resistance.

[113] Dorin Dobrincu, *Libertate religioasă şi contestare în România lui Nicolae Ceauşescu: Comitetul Creştin Român pentru Apărarea Libertății Religioase şi de Conştiință (ALRC)*, in Romulus Rusan (ed.), *Anii 1973-1989: Cronica unui sfârşit de sistem, Analele Sighet*, vol. 10, 2003, p. 203-227. See also Alan Scarfe, *Dismantling a Human Rights Movement: a Romanian Solution*, in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 7, nr. 3, 1979, p. 166-170.

under the Communists in Romania have been rather modest during the first post-Communist decade. What attempts there have been often lack broader context and have been particularly focused on memorialistic work rather than anything else. His paper provides an antidote to this with an overview of religion and politics in the first part of the Communist regime, including the legal context, followed by an excellent précis of the history of evangelical Christians in Romania, including the problems caused by nationalism and attitudes toward minorities in general.

More detail is given by Dobrincu to the situation of evangelicals during the 1950s and 1960s. As the new generation of evangelical Christians came of age in the 1970s and 1980s, the Communist regime's problems seemed to increase, especially as Ceaușescu's cult of personality escalated. Iosif Țon, Vasile Taloș, and others became perpetual thorns in side of the regime as the international success of the human rights movement – promoted by US President Jimmy Carter, a devout and practicing Baptist – blindsided Ceaușescu and his henchmen, who by the early 1970s had bizarrely become enamored with North Korea's style of dynastic communism[114]. As the regime ratcheted up religious repression, this led to the Iosif Țon − Pavel Nicolescu − Aurel Popescu Radio Free Europe protest of 1977. All three were Baptists: they were subsequently joined by Radu Dumitrescu (Baptist), Constantin Caraman (Pentecostal) and Silviu Ciotă (Brethren).

The result was more repression, which was followed by further protests leading to the formation in 1978 by Pavel Nicolescu of the Romanian Christian Committee for the Defense of Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience (*Comitetul Creştin Român pentru Apărarea Libertăţii Religioase şi de Conştiinţă* or ALRC). The ALRC was a further radicalization: it was the first religious movement in Romania that went beyond religious concerns, and the first that actually dared to flatly question the right of the Romanian regime to control people's consciences. It launched a full scale public relations offensive both within Romania and internationally; its twenty-four point program dealt with nearly every aspect of Romanian life. This campaign led to division with some evangelical activists (such as Țon) who wanted to concentrate on religious issues. Others (such as the extremely cautious leadership of the Baptist Union) took the occasion to back off, declaring that the ALRC had transgressed the line between faith and politics. Dobrincu tells the story of the rigorous and brutal repression of the ALRC forcefully and clearly. Pavel Nicolescu, Petru Cocârțeu, and others were physically mistreated and hounded, banned from their

[114] See Joseph Harrington and Bruce Courtney, *Tweaking the Nose of the Russians: Fifty Years of American-Romanian Relations, 1940-1990*, Boulder CO, East European Monographs, 1991, p. 415 ff.; the memoirs of Romanian Ambassador to the US, Nicolae M. Nicolae, *O lume aşa cum am cunoscut-o. Amintirile unui fost ambasador al României*, Bucureşti, Editura Pro Domo, 2000; and Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief*, Washington DC, Regnery Gateway, 1987.

churches, and eventually expelled from the country (Nicolescu went to the US in 1979).

Adrian Nicolae Petcu is the editor of a helpful 2005 volume on the Romanian Communist Party, the Romanian secret police (the Securitate), and religious groups between 1945 and 1949.[115] Three of its articles – by Alexandru-Alin Spânu, the editor, and Elis Neagoe-Pleșa and Liviu Pleșa – deal with Romanian evangelicals. Spânu deals with reports found in the Army's secret service from 1947[116]. He gets off on the wrong foot by asserting that Romania was noted for religious tolerance (which makes it hard to understand why smallish, "schismatic" groups came to be so feared as "perilous" and deserved repression) and attributes their success to economic hard times. It would be more accurate to say that such harmless groups furnished a pretext for diverting attention away from the real problems of Romania at the time and from the actual aims of Romanian elites. He does not distinguish between evangelicals and such groups as the Jehovah's Witnesses and various extremist and aberrant Russian groups. Deviant behaviors included promotion of ideas that "defamed" the Romanian Orthodox Church, welfare work (merely an attempt to buy adherents), and proselytism (obviously dangerous). Army intelligence was also concerned with those groups that counseled pacifism.

The editor's piece covers the dealings of the Securitate with all religious groups in Romania, including evangelicals, in the crucial year 1949, when the major outlines of Communist regime policies and legislation were set forth[117]. (Unfortunately, he also lumps evangelicals indiscriminately with others, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses.) This article is important for setting forth the context of religious life in Romania between 1948 and 1989.

The Pleșas' study of Romanian evangelicals and Adventists between 1975-1989 is easily the best and most useful of the three pieces in this book, and is thoroughly documented from the Securitate archives[118]. 1975 is their

[115] Adrian Nicolae Petcu (ed.), *Partidul, Securitatea și cultele 1945-1989*, București, Editura Nemira, 2005, 428 p., under the auspices of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (*Consiliul Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității*, CNSAS). The CNSAS archives and those affiliated with CNSAS have been responsible for a good deal of the documentation available since 1989. The archives at Popești-Leordeni outside of București, which house only a fraction of the dossiers created under the Romanian Communist regime, now have over 82,000 feet (15,5 miles) of files. The volume includes an extensive bibliography (p. 395-427) by the editor. On the document base, see Sorin D. Ivănescu, *The Documents of the Securitate (The Romanian Communist Secret Service) and the Historical Research*, in RRH, vol. 43, nr. 1-4, 2004, p. 303-313.

[116] Alexandru-Alin Spânu, *Sectele religioase în rapoartele Serviciului de Informații al Armatei (1947)*, in Adrian Nicolae Petcu (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 117-123.

[117] Adrian Nicolae Petcu, *Securitatea și cultele în 1949*, in idem (ed.), *Partidul, Securitatea…*, p. 124-222. See Stanciu Stoian, et al., *Cultele religioase în Republica Populară Română…*

[118] Elis Neagoe-Pleșa and Liviu Pleșa, *Cultele neoprotestante din România în perioada 1975-1989*, in Adrian Nicolae Petcu (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 350-394.

starting point since this was when the Helsinki Accords went into effect with Romanian governmental support. This, of course, energized Romanian evangelicals' use of human rights appeals, which is usefully elaborated. The history of each of the three evangelical denominations (as well as of the Adventists) is reviewed as is the political and legal context of the Communist regime. The Department of Religious Affairs had already noted in 1958 that what was "particularly dangerous" about these groups is that "they do not have a static character, indeed it is one of their distinctives that compels each believer to gain new converts". The report called for hindering applications for new church meeting place constructions, cracking down on unauthorized meetings, unregistered groups, and activities outside of authorized meeting places, bringing to justice evangelists "illegally" roaming villages and towns, and reducing the number of meeting places and publications in the hope of reducing "proselytism."

These policies stumbled spectacularly. The late 1970s and early 1980s was a period of alarming (from the point of view of the Communist regime) growth among evangelicals: the Securitate was dismayed to find that the Baptists had grown by 500% in twenty-five years and the Pentecostals by 900% in the same period[119]. They were also convinced that contacts with foreign evangelicals were funded by the CIA. The Pleşas' discuss a number of Law 30/1978 cases futilely designed to cut off contact with the West as well as "impediments" to evangelicals (dubious military oaths, harassment in schools, building delays, and restricting access to religious literature, especially Bibles) and outright persecution (frame-ups, blackmail, arrests, trumped up prosecutions, punitive fines, and imprisonment)[120]. Though the number of evangelicals was escalating, the number of building permits declined from 196 in 1968 to 55 in 1977-1984 and only 2 in 1984-1988. In 1979-1980, 175 evangelicals had emigrated and 500 families were waiting to emigrate. The authors conclude that "all the efforts of the Communist state to obstruct the activities of the neoprotestant groups failed lamentably [...] the atheist regime, with all the means at its disposal, could not prevent this phenomenon [...]". In the deteriorating conditions of Ceauşescu's Romania in the 1980s, many "sought refuge in religion," but because the Romanian Orthodox Church was compromised in the eyes of many, that religion was evangelical protestantism.

Dorin Dobrincu also published three archival-based works in 2004-2005 dealing the Securitate and communities of faith: a listing of religious people in the Romanian Gulag in the early 1960s, Securitate informers in Central Moldova, and a look at the Securitate's game plan *vis-à-vis* evangelicals in

[119] In terms of baptized members, the Baptists went from 17,457 in 1940 to 189,850 in 1982; the Pentecostals from 4,564 in 1940 (when they were illegal) to 120,720 in 1982; and the Brethren from 6,414 in 1940 to 32,890 in 1982. The number of adherents (as opposed to members) was significantly higher. Elis Neagoe-Pleşa and Liviu Pleşa, *op. cit.*, p. 354-363.

[120] An illustrative case was from Arad in 1983, where an entire Brethren church congregation was arbitrarily arrested and given fines ranging up to several months income.

1949-1950. The first of these, which appeared in 2004[121], provides two documents from the Ministry of Interior archives dating from 1960 and 1962 intended as a kind of census (including personal data) of imprisoned religious leaders. The catalogues are preceded by an excellent and suggestive description and analysis of regime religious policy between 1945 and 1960 (p. VII-XXXII), particularly on the work of the Third Service of the First directorate of the Ministry of Interior that dealt with religion. The most of this dealt with Orthodox, Uniate, and Roman Catholic churches and the overwhelming number of those who fell into the hands of the authorities for undermining the regime "under the mask of religion" were from those denominations, but much the same treatment applied to evangelicals as well. The second piece, also from 2004[122], provides a case study of the work of Securitate informers in central Moldova in 1950 based on a Securitate "work plan" document (which is published in full). The third contribution along these lines was from 2005[123] and deals with the tasks of the Securitate in regard to religious groups in 1949-1950 based on five illustrative documents which comprise the bulk of the presentation. The documents lay out the agenda and strategies for dealing with various tasks, ranging from monastic unrest in the Orthodox Church to the Greco-Catholic resistance to problems with "historical cults, new cults, legal and illegal, as well as clandestine cults".

Lastly, in 2005 Dobrincu published a study entitled "Richard Wurmbrand's tours in Great Britain and their international echoes (1968-1972)"[124]. This work is important as a brief but serious historical treatment of one of Romania's most prominent and controversial evangelical figures of the Communist era utilizing memoirs, eyewitness accounts, and documents from the CNSAS Securitate archives. Though it focusses on two visits that Wurmbrand paid to Britain in 1968 and 1972 (p. 150-156), the story of his life is well told for the first time. This fascinating tale runs from his Jewish birth in 1909 to his Communist activism and imprisonment in the 1930s, and to his conversion, Christian activism, and imprisonment in the 1930s-1960s by both the fascists and Communists (p. 140-146). In 1965 he was ransomed out of Romania, eventually settling down in the United States, where he burst spectacularly on American and Western public consciousness with a vivid and unforgettable appearance before the US Senate in May 1966. Despite warnings that the Securitate would

[121] Dorin Dobrincu (ed.), *Proba infernului. Personalul de cult în sistemul carceral din România potrivit documentelor Securității, 1959-1962*, București, Editura Scriptorium, 2004, XXVI + 155 p.

[122] Idem, *Informatorii Securității în comunitățiile religioase din centrul Moldovei (1950)*, in *AIR*, serie nouă, vol. I, nr. 1, 2004, p. 223-232.

[123] Idem, *Sarcini ale Securității pe linia cultelor (1949-1950)*, in *AIR*, serie nouă, vol. II, nr. 1, 2005, p. 228-237.

[124] Idem, *Richard Wurmbrand's tours in Great Britain and their international echoes (1968-1972)*, in Dennis Deletant (ed.), *In and Out of Focus: Romania and Britain. Relations and Perspectives from 1930 to the Present*, București, Editura Cavallioti, 2005, p. 139-162.

permanently "silence" him, he consistently spoke out against Communism and led the very effective and successful Christian Mission to the Communist world (p. 146-150; 156-161)[125], before passing away in 2001. Remarkably, Wurmbrand was selected as one of the top ten "Greatest Romanians" of all time in a 2006 Romanian television poll[126].

In 2006, the issuance online of the Final Report of the Presidential Commission to Analyze the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, edited by Vladimir Tismăneanu, Dorin Dobrincu, and Cristian Vasile (widely known as the Tismăneanu report)[127], not only created a sensation, but included respectable sections dealing with "religious dissidence" (p. 376-381) and the contest between Romanian "Neo-Protestants" and the Communist Party (p. 467-472). In addition to precisely and forcefully summarizing much of the work already cited above, the Tismăneanu report brings the appropriate archival resources into view at every step. In addition, this major work gave the history of Romanian evangelicals under Communism visibility and put it on the map of public consciousness in ways not previously achieved. It would provide a basis for many subsequent investigations.

The choice between persecution and collaboration was the subject of a collection of documents published in 2007 by Carmen Chivu-Duță[128]. Her introduction, p. 11-27, drawing heavily on the Tismăneanu report, reviews the development between 1945 and 1989 of the relationship between the Romanian state, the Securitate (created in August 1948), and Romanian religious groups. It is organized by denomination (p. 29-208) and includes sections on Romanian evangelicals – the Baptists (p. 113-123), the Pentecostals (p. 143-152), and the

[125] We were made personally aware of the astonishing outreach of this ministry in the 1970s and 1980s, which was also known in the US as Jesus to the Communist World. For a striking memoir ofand, see the account by his Romanian Gulag friend Ion Ioanid in his now classic *Închisoarea noastră cea de toate zile*, Bucureşti, Editura Albatros, 1991, vol. II (1953-1955), p. 200 ff., as well as Richard Wurmbrand's own *Tortured for Christ*, 1967.

[126] See below, p. 57.

[127] Vladimir Tismăneanu, Dorin Dobrincu, and Cristian Vasile (eds.), *Raport final. Comisia Prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste în România*, Bucureşti, 2006, 664 p., online at https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/RAPORT%20FINAL_%20CADCR.pdf, last accessed 8 ix 2016. The 2nd edition was the print version: Vladimir Tismăneanu, Dorin Dobrincu, and Cristian Vasile (eds.), *Raport final. Comisia Prezidențială pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste în România*, 2nd revised and expanded edition, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2007, 878 p. For a rebuttal by Romanian Orthodox scholars, see George-Eugen Enache, Adrian-Nicolae Petcu, Ionuț-Alexandru Tudorie, and Paul Brusanowski, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română în anii regimului comunist. Observații pe marginea capitolului dedicat cultelor din Raportul final al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România*, in ST, vol. 5, nr. 2, 2009, p. 7-103.

[128] Carmen Chivu-Duță, *Cultele din România între prigonire şi colaborare*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2007. For a study of the "informer" through the eyes of Securitate documents, see Mihai Albu, *Informatorul. Studiu asupra colaborării cu Securitatea*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2008. For a case study on informers, see Denisa Bodeanu, *Informatorii din cultul baptist între 1979-1989*, in Cosmin Budeancă and Florentin Olteanu (eds.), *Sfârşitul regimurilor comuniste: cauze, desfăşurare şi consecinţe*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Argonaut, 2011.

Brethren (p. 183-190). Each section is illustrated by copies of Securitate documents held by CNSAS, informer reports, analytic notes, and such like.

The collection closes with a discussion of efforts by the Orthodox Church and others to restrict access to church-related materials at CNSAS. Patriarch Teoctist went so far as to argue that the law of access "seriously undermines the sacramental and holy character of the priesthood....even the Church itself"[129]. Though the Church tacitly, but grudgingly conceded that some priests had been informers (other estimates had the number as high as 80-90%), it wanted to exempt them from public scrutiny, including on the grounds that priests had suffered enough before 1989, or at best, to let them be judged by church courts[130].

Gheorghe Modoran, an Adventist historian, published in 2007 a excellent study of non-magisterial Romanian protestants between 1945 and 1965, when the Romanian Communist Party was headed by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, based on primary sources[131]. The early days were less oppressive since the Communist Groza government thought church support could help relieve its lack of legitimacy[132], but after the Communist takeover was complete in December 1947 things changed dramatically. The churches could no longer choose neutrality in politics and society. The evangelical churches benefitted from the relative loosening between 1944 and 1950 to extensively proselytize[133]. This eventually alarmed both the government, since according to Marxist theory, religion is supposed to decline as a country builds socialism; and the Romanian Orthodox Church, since 95% of the evangelical converts were former Orthodox (though, of course, this was by being born Orthodox and not necessarily from any personal commitment). It also meant there were twice as many evangelicals in Romania than in the other East European Soviet satellite states of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria combined. And the

[129] Carmen Chivu-Duță, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

[130] *Ibidem*, p. 211-213. That the Orthodox Church distinguished itself in this fashion should have been no surprise. In January 1989, Patriarch Teoctist sent a congratulatory telegram to President Ceauşescu on his birthday, in appreciation for "the climate of complete religious liberty for all confessions in our country". This was followed on 20 December 1989, shortly after the killings in Timişoara that were the beginning of the end for the Communist regime by another telegram congratulating Ceauşescu for his "outstanding activity" and "wise and far-seeing guidance" in creating a "golden age which justifiably bears your name and its achievements which will endure for thousands of years", both quoted by Dennis Deletant, *Ceauşescu and the Securitate…*, p. 232-234. For an Orthodox defense of the Church and politics, see Ionuț-Gabriel Corduneanu, *op. cit.*

[131] Gheorghe Modoron, *Confesiunile neoprotestante din România în perioada regimului comunist: 1945-1965*, in "Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review", vol. VII, nr. 3, 2007, p. 655-674. It includes material from the Ministry of Religious Affairs archives, though, unlike at CNSAS, there was no reading room for their consultation. Materials for evangelical groups are even harder to obtain.

[132] See also Cristian Vasile, *The Romanian Communists and the Churches, 1945-1948*, in AT, nr. 34-35, 2002, p. 131-135.

[133] The Baptists grew from 44,380 in 1948 to 52,942 in 1950; the Brethren from 6,113 to 13,805; and the Pentecostals from 3,061 to 33,274. Gheorghe Modoron, *op. cit.*, chart on p. 658.

unexpected growth of the Pentecostals (1654% between 1948 and 1958) was particularly troubling to the authorities since they were considered by far the most "mystical," the most obscurantist, and the most bizarre of the Romanian evangelicals. An attempt to ban speaking in tongues, miraculous healings, and other exotic manifestations of Romanian Pentecostals failed[134].

Numerous measures were undertaken between 1950 and 1965 to restrict or suppress evangelical growth, most of which have already been detailed above. Some additional ones discussed by Modoran include creating alternative organizations and obligations for the youth (Young Pioneers, Communist Youth); scheduling cultural and athletic events to conflict with approved church meeting times; prohibiting the religious education of children and youth even in church; prohibiting the baptism of minors; the restricting of meetings on Sunday afternoon[135]; reducing or prohibiting church choirs and orchestras[136]; frequent changes in the personnel of the approved leadership of evangelical groups; arbitrary withdrawal of pastoral credentials[137]; increasing the record keeping burden and the gathering and reporting of statistical and personal information (to fill the increasing number of dossiers so prevalent in Soviet-type socialist regimes); and restricting access to Bibles. Though these measures applied to evangelicals and Orthodox alike, many of them (such as Sunday Schools, Bible lessons, and Sunday restrictions) were of little or no concern for Orthodox practice. The idea of "equal treatment" also was used to reduce the number of ministers and meeting places of evangelicals, who had proportionately more of both than the Orthodox did (this occurred in 1951 and again in 1959, leading to the disbanding of over 40% of existing evangelical communities. Such measures also reduced governmental costs). There was also an increasing insistence that pastors support from the pulpit governmental initiatives, be they the collectivization of agriculture, peace campaigns, or other campaigns. Modoran also notes that because of their looser organizational traditions, evangelicals often found it easier to ignore injunctions from their officially-designated leaders, mitigating in practice escalating governmental ukases. On the persecution side, during the early 1950s, particularly brutal punishments

[134] Two contributing factors to Romanian Pentecostal growth were 1) the fact that when they had been outlawed, most of them became Baptists, who could now openly belong to the Pentecostals; and 2) Pentecostals had very large families (8-10 children). It must again be noted that statistics usually only included actual baptized members, not adherents, though occasionally the authorities tried to estimate the latter as well.

[135] Allowed to have a single meeting on Sunday mornings, the Baptists held a continuous four-hour long service that combined elements of Biblical study, hymn singing, choral and orchestral music, and preaching. They also used the rehearsal times for choirs and orchestras as covert religious gatherings.

[136] In 1961, the Baptists has 265 choirs and 132 church orchestras. One method of repression was to confiscate the instruments of church orchestras. Gheorghe Modoron, *op. cit.*, p. 667-668.

[137] In one case, a Pentecostal minister lost his credentials for weeping in the pulpit. Gheorghe Modoron, *op. cit.*, p. 667.

consisted of being sent to dig on the Danube-Black Sea canal project or being "re-educated" under extreme conditions, physically and psychologically at Pitești, both of which became synonyms for the most gruesome treatment[138]. In contrast to the 1970s and 1980s, when human rights, protests, and emigration were the typical resistance to the regime, in the 1950s and early 1960s, evangelicals didn't so much attack the regime as they evaded what they could and simply strengthened and lived out their faith, even into the valley of the shadow of death.

Denisa Bodeanu's 2007 book on Romanian evangelicals in Communist Transylvania is narrower than the title promises – it is a case study of Baptists in *județul* Cluj, based on oral histories and documents – but is illustrative enough to merit inclusion here[139]. An introductive study (p. 13-77) covers familiar ground from 1948 to 1989, but is usefully illuminated by oral history interviews with fourteen diverse individuals, though only one is a female. The interviews are published along with fifteen documents from CNSAS. An interesting feature is that many of the interviewees were converts to their evangelical faith.

In the 1980s, Romania came under considerable pressure from the US connected to economic (most favored nation relations and human rights issues including the Jackson-Vanik linking of religious freedom to trade)[140]. More often than not, this turned the spotlight on Romanian persecution of evangelicals and kept the Romanian authorities discomfited a good deal of the time as American congressmen, evangelical clergy and laymen, and others brought such cases to the front pages of Western newspapers[141]. A 2008 article by Valentin Vasile dealing with the visit to Romania in December 1984 of a Anglo-American delegation led by Congressman Mark Siljander is an interesting case study of how the Securitate in the period tried to deal with religious issues with an international dimension[142]. The mission was code named "Denigrators-84" by the Securitate and produced five volumes of materials in the Securitate archives (including surveillance and informer reports,

[138] See Dobricu Dobrincu's illuminating *Studiu introductiv*, in idem (ed.), *Listele morții: deținuți politici decedați în sistemul carceral din România potrivit documentelor Securității, 1945-1958*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2008, p. 7-62.

[139] Denisa Bodeanu (ed.), *Neoprotestanții din Transilvania în timpul regimului comunist. Studiu de caz: Baptiștii din județul Cluj. Mărturii și documente*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Argonaut, 2007. A similar study focussing on Romanian pentecostals in Cluj-Napoca was published by Monica Vlase, *Viața și practica religioasă a comunității creștin penticostale din Cluj-Napoca în perioda dictaturii comuniste*, in "Anuarul de Istorie Orală" (Cluj-Napoca), vol. III, 2002, p. 133-156.

[140] See Joseph Harrington and Bruce Courtney, *op. cit.*

[141] The fact that the then-American ambassador (1981-1985), David B. Funderburk, was an evangelical Baptist and persistent critic of the regime was an additional factor. See David B. Funderburk, *Pinstripes and Reds: An American Ambassador Caught Between the State Department and the Romanian Communists, 1981-1985*, Washington DC, Selous Foundation, 1987.

[142] Valentin Vasile, *Acțiunea "Denigratorii-84"*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 1, nr. 1, 2008, p. 23-36.

wire-taps, room searches, fake protest letters by alleged Romanian evangelicals against foreign meddling, and the usual panoply of secret police activities). This operation accomplished little.

A counter effort was the sending of a delegation of Romanian religious leaders to the US in April-May 1987, analyzed by Denisa Bodeanu in 2008[143]. With the coming to power of Gorbachev in the Soviet Union in 1985, Romania's human rights record, including mistreatment of evangelicals, was increasingly aberrant even for Communist regimes, and in 1986, President Reagan informed Ceaușescu that time was running out on most-favored nation status for Romania in light of its religious freedom violations[144]. "Operation Representatives" was launched specifically to "use religious leaders, including neoprotestants, to counteract certain members of the US Congress preoccupied with this area (Christopher Smith, Frank Wolf, Tony Hall, and others) and the leaders of hostile religious groups...engaged in a campaign of denigrating realities in our country". The delegation was comprised of leaders of most of the major religious groups in Romania, and included two Baptists and an Adventist. The mission failed because of poor timing (it arrived amidst a new flurry of anti-Romanian activity in Congress)[145], Romanian misunderstanding of how to carry out a propaganda offensive in the West, and the Romanians' failure to recognize that they lacked any kind of constituency in the US[146]. Typically, an interview on Voice of America with one of the Baptists, who alleged that there were no religious freedom problems in Romania, was followed a week later by an interview with Iosif Țon (now in exile in the US), who contradicted everything the mission had been tasked with presenting. It was not difficult to see which side had the greater credibility. In the end, Ceaușescu unilaterally renounced the US most-favored nation clause in February 1988 to avoid the humiliation of having it revoked from the American side.

George Enache's 2008 study of religious policy between 1945 and 1948 as a preparation for the offensive against Christian groups in 1948[147] is focussed on the Orthodox Church, on the removal or "retirement" of recalcitrant

[143] Denisa Bodeanu, *Din culisele unei misiuni eșuate. Vizita întreprinsă în primăvara anului 1987 în SUA de reprezentanții cultelor din România*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 1, nr. 1, 2008, p. 37-52.

[144] See Roger Kirk and Mircea Răceanu, *Romania versus the United States: The Diplomacy of the Absurd, 1985-1989*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1994. Kirk was US Ambassador during this period.

[145] For the involvement of Smith, Wolf, and Hall in Romania, see Frank Wolfe with Anne Morse, *Prisoner of Conscience*, Grand Rapids MI, Zondervan, 2011, p. 29-51.

[146] The Ceaușescu regime's rapidly dwindling credibility in the West was finally put paid by the publication in 1987 of Ion Mihai Pacepa's sensational *Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief*, Washington DC, Regnery Gateway, 1987. Pacepa was a Lt. General in the Romanian Securitate, advisor to Ceaușescu, and acting head of Romania's foreign intelligence service at the time.

[147] George Enache, *Strategii de infiltrare și atragere la colaborare a cultelor religioase…*, p. 53-92.

Orthodox leaders, and on the maneuverings that led to the election of a new, pro-Communist Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Justinian Marina. However, it contains some information on the treatment of evangelicals in this period in addition to providing an overview of the mechanisms of Stalinization in the field of religion, what the author calls a strategy of infiltration and inducements to collaboration. Mentioned among other things were that the Orthodox priest who was Minister of Religion in 1945-1946 continued to persecute evangelicals even though the Communist fellow-traveler Prime Minister, Petru Groza opposed it; that Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the defacto leader of the Romanian Communist Party, sought to instrumentalize the Orthodox Church in the traditional fashion; that religious legislation harked back to measures adopted under pre-1944 dictatorships and not more democratic regimes; and that church actions were taken which were later seen to be setting the stage for the forcible disbanding of the Uniate Church[148].

Also useful on the general level are three pieces by Adrian Nicolae Petcu on the the activity of the Securitate and the Department/Ministry of Religious Affairs (1970-1989), published between 2009 and 2013 by CNSAS[149]. The Department of Religion had the mission of "oversight and control" which went back before 1944, though now on a considerably expanded level. Allegedly this was to ensure religious liberty; in practice it worked to the opposite end. The Department's work was intertwined with the Securitate and often its agents were Securitate officers or informants. Petcu traces its functioning from 1948 on, including a new statute in 1970, modified in 1977 to coordinate its activities more closely with the Securitate. The story was one of increasing micro-management of even the most clearly religious activities in Romania. The Securitate was also interested in promoting international ecumenical activities of Romanian churches, including evangelicals, especially where these could be used to advance the foreign policies of the Romanian Socialist Republic or to favorably present the internal policies of the regime. The role of the Department of Religion was to prepare delegations going abroad or meeting internally with international delegations to give the correct responses to questions dealing with Romanian religious policies, and to energetically rebut foreign attacks on these policies. The Securitate, in turn, was responsible for monitoring these activities. In 1977, a Securitate informer's report analyzing the work of the Department of

[148] On the fate of the Uniate Church, see Cristian Vasile's collection of source materials *Istoria Bisericii Greco-Catolice sub regimul communist, 1945-1989. Documente şi mărturii*, Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2003, and his *Între Vatican şi Kremlin: Biserica Greco-Catolică în timpul regimului communist*, Bucureşti, Editura Curtea Veche, 2003.

[149] Adrian Nicolae Petcu, *Activitatea Departamentului Cultelor în atenţia Securităţii (1970-1989)*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 2, nr. 2, 2009, p. 69-120; *Organizarea şi funcţionarea Departamentului Cultelor între anii 1977-1984*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 4, nr. 1-2, 2011, p. 85-108; and *Împuternicitul de culte între conformism şi asigurarea libertăţii religioase*, in "Caietele CNSAS", vol. 6, nr. 1-2, 2013, p. 7-82 (p. 7-37 is the study, p. 37-82 is a series of biographical sketches).

Religion in the 1970s conceded that the idea "that the problem of the church will resolve itself, that 'it will die on its own' had proven mistaken. Religious life is intense in our times. The isolation of the church has raised its authority". In addition, the strategy of "encouraging the sects [...] to dissolve the traditional churches" had backfired, "creating new islands in the population religiously subordinate to Western agents (Baptists, Adventists, Pentecostals). Further, ecumenization abroad has strengthened them internally [...]. [T]here have appeared forms with great organizational ability, with a conspiratory functionalism and with ideological forms of the most subtle anti-communism". In short, the traditional churches have been undermined while the evangelical "pastor, messenger, and so forth find open doors which allows them to enter conspiratorially in the factories, plants, and so forth to attract the people to his sect. They are not only not treated with the full rigor of the law, let alone the provisions of the constitution, rather frequently they are actually supported [...]". The bottom line was that the Department of Religion was failing because of "superficiality with which it treats the religious phenomenon in principle"[150]. This would probably have come as a considerable surprise to evangelicals who had lost their jobs, were arrested, beaten, incarcerated, or murdered, or were forced to emigrate in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.

The controversial 1985 visit to Romania by Billy Graham is the subject of a 2010 study and collection of documents by Denisa Bodeanu and Valentin Vasile[151]. This event generated a considerable amount of debate in Romania and attracted international attention. The volume consists of a lengthy introductory study by Bodeanu, including a fairly balanced biography of Graham (p. 11-21) followed by a study of the event itself (p. 22-78), based largely on materials in the Securitate archives (much of which is published on p. 79-321). Included are extensive biographical notes on the main players. Though there are some dangers in viewing events from these kind of materials, the editors are aware of this and the "inside" view is revealing. Bodeanu considers the event to be a triumph for Graham's principal negotiator, Alexander Haraszti, who was able to arrange the visit by playing on the illusions of Romanian officialdom. Graham, who, incidentally, had abandoned his fire-breathing anti-Communism in the early 1970s for the sake of trying to reach Iron Curtain audiences, was able to go beyond the boundaries that the authorities in Bucureşti had carefully established, meeting with dissidents and modifying the program of his 11 day

[150] Idem, *Activitatea Departamentului Cultelor…*, p. 88-90. How ineffective these policies were is shown by statistics in Marius Silveşan and Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, *Cultele neoprotestante şi drepturile omului. Un strigăt la Radio Europa Liberă (aprilie 1977)*, Prefaţă de Iosif Ţon (Cluj-Napoca, Editura Risoprint, 2014), p. 21, which showed that the Baptists went from 55,800 in 1967 to 75,000 in 1987, the Brethren from 20,400 to 28,500 and the Pentecostals from 38,800 to 87,000.

[151] Denisa Bodeanu and Valentin Vasile (eds.), *Afacerea "Evanghelistul". Vizita lui Billy Graham în România (1985)*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Argonaut, 2010; see *Billy Graham in Romania*, Minneapolis MN, World Wide Publications, 1989.

visit in various ways. The Romanians, in return, she writes gained remarkably little, Graham's visit doing them little or no good on the international front and perhaps emboldening Romanian evangelicals. On the other hand, many Romanian evangelicals were disappointed that Graham seemed so irenic[152], but even his presence in Romania brought many of the 1970s dissidents (most now in exile) back onto the pages and television screens of international media. In the end, the question remains "Who used Who?" Perhaps both sides.

In 2010 and 2012, a Brethren historian, Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, published two brief books that should at least be mentioned here: one covering church and state between 1948 and 1965, and another on evangelicals in Romania between 1965 and 1990[153]. The works are a little too summary, and memorialistically based, but they do represent a useful perspective and introduction to the problematic. The former discusses the installation of the Communist regime in Romania and its effects on the churches, does a brief comparative study of religious legislation under the pre-Communist and Communist regimes, and then reviews church-state relations after 1948. The second volume covers the story from 1965 to 1989.

Another approach to the history of evangelicals in Romania is taken by Ligia Dobrincu's biographical study of Dănuț Mănăstireanu[154]. The author uses the career of Mănăstireanu, born in 1954, to cast light on Romanian evangelicalism during the latter part of the Communist era, fruitfully so, since Mănăstireanu was connected to most of the 1970s and 1980s evangelical activists. Based on an extended interview with the subject, Dobrincu follows the typical peregrinations of working class youth and adolescence in Communist Romania. Things changed dramatically when Mănăstireanu was converted at the age of 18. The authorities looked askance at his questionable adherence to a "sect" (the Baptists), so his compulsory military service was doubly unpleasant for him as a higher education student and as an evangelical. He was subject to most of the petty and otherwise forms of persecution, under surveillance by the Securitate between 1973 and 1989, which produced some 2,000 pages of reports[155]. Mănăstireanu's files show that the Securitate was not as all-knowing as it liked to convey: for example, they were apparently clueless about the formation of the 1978 ALRC even though Mănăstireanu was in close contact with Pavel Nicolescu (p. 257). Mănăstireanu worked with the Navigators in Romania from 1977; nothing about this appears in his files either, despite the

[152] For a negative view, see *Reflections on Billy Graham's Trip to Romania*, in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 14, nr. 2, 1986, p. 224-227, by an anonymous Romanian Baptist.

[153] Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, *Statul şi Biserica în România Comunistă (1948-1965). Între demnitate şi compromise*, Craiova, Editura Sitech, 2010; and *Cultele neoprotestante în statul socialist (1965-1990)*, Craiova, Editura Sitech, 2012.

[154] Ligia Dobrincu, *Evanghelicii din Romania în anii comunismul târziu. Breviar biografic: Dănuț Mănăstireanu*, in ArchM, vol. III, 2011, p. 245-265.

[155] For details, see Dănuț Mănăstireanu's online blog, *Argument*, https://danutm.wordpress.com/argument/, last accessed 25.07.2017.

fact that the Navigators were (and are) a deeply committed American-based evangelical enterprise[156]. This was a somewhat surprising *lapsus* on the part of the authorities, though in the 1970s they were primarily concerned with the actions of Romanian evangelicals. The Securitate was mainly after him because of his close contacts with Iosif Țon and Ferenc Visky as well as foreign religious luminaries. Interestingly, these contacts actually provided some protection for Mănăstireanu during the later years of Communism.

The widely publicized 1977 evangelical human rights protest memorandum (sometimes called the Letter of the Six) was published in 2012 with a detailed introduction and extensive commentary by Dorin Dobrincu[157]. This protest came on the heels of a discussion by the Baptist Union of the relationship between the denomination, younger activists, and the Department of Religions. Dobrincu reviews the various evangelical protests in the 1970s and then succinctly presents the origins and development of the 1977 document, providing useful brief biographies of the six signers, and a review of its contents and distribution, and consequences. The document, published in May 1977, extensively documented governmental pressure on Romanian evangelicals between 1970 and 1977, particularly since 1975, and was broadcast in April 1977 by Radio Free Europe. The result was that all six signers (Iosif Țon, Silviu Cioată, Pavel Nicolescu, Aurel Popescu, Constantin Caraman, and Radu Dumitrescu) were immediately arrested and underwent months of grueling interrogation; subsequently four of them were forced to emigrate from Romania.

A regional trial of Brethren in Craiova in 1970 was the subject of an article by Bogdan Emanuel Răduț in 2013[158]. Interesting as a case study based on interviews with participants, the trial showed the authorities responded to the unseemly growth of evangelicals by taking more or less illegal action against them. This was an early example of the Decree 153/1970 laws on parasitism and anarchy described above by Sergiu Grossu. Seventeen Brethren adherents were hauled before the authorities, mistreated, fined incredibly large sums, and fired from their jobs. Incidentally, Decree 153 was not abrogated until 1991.

In 2014, Marius Silveșan, a Baptist historian, and Bogdan Emanuel Răduț, a Brethren historian, published a new study, along with three relevant texts, synthesizing the 1977 "Letter of the Six" episode. They emphasized how this

[156] The Navigators is an international, interdenominational evangelical parachurch ministry established in 1933 whose motto is "To Know Christ and Make Him Known". This is done "through building life-on-life mentoring – or discipling – relationships among Christ followers, equipping them to make an impact on the people around them for God's glory". Source: www.navigators.org, last accessed 24.09.2017.

[157] Dorin Dobrincu, *"Cultele neoprotestante şi drepturile omului în România". Un memoriu din 1977*, in ArchM, vol. IV, 2012, p. 351-402. Cf. Alan Scarfe, *Dismantling a Human Rights Movement: A Romanian Solution*, in "Religion in Communist Lands", vol. 7, nr. 3, 1979, p. 166-170.

[158] Bogdan Emanuel Răduț, *Creștinii după Evanghelie și Departamentul Cultelor. Din culisele unui proces public la Craiova*, in "Oltenia", Series IV, nr. 1, 2013, p. 124-131.

action used Radio Free Europe to internationally expose the Romanian regime's continued descent into oppression of evangelicals through masked but very real persecution[159]. Meanwhile, Ceauşescu blandly lied about religious conditions in Romania. The introductory study (p. 15-50) reviews the history and situation of evangelicals in Romania, the socio-politic and religious context in 1977, the unfolding of events, and the outcomes. This is followed by biographical sketches of the six signers (p. 51-67), the original "Letter of the Six", along with some supplementary pieces (p. 69-128), a bibliography (p. 128-132), and an index (p. 133-136). This book combined with Dobrincu's 2012 work[160] make the 1977 episode one of the best covered in 1970s Romanian evangelical history.

In addition to the list of "pressures" applied to religious troublemakers recounted by above by Sergiu Grossu, Dorin Dobrincu's 2015 survey of religious life in Iaşi from 1944 to 1989[161] provides additional illustration, including repeated, usually forcible, changes in meeting places, impediments to construction, repairs or alterations (the Brethren in Iaşi did not get permission to build their own buildings until 1974); programmatic use of Securitate informers (most spectacularly when the Pentecostal Church in Iaşi was shut down from 1959-1968 because an informer had actually become secretary of the church board); involvement in risky literature distribution[162], (one aspect of which was the use of Iaşi as a trans-shipment point for sending Bibles and other contraband evangelical literature into the Soviet Union a scant ten miles away); politically accused of being Communist agents (prior to 1944) and tools of Western Imperialism (after 1944); being labelled as "religious fanatics" (that is, people who did not restrict their religious activities to church buildings and fixed services) and "mystics" (that is, people with personal devotional lives and spiritual practices typical of evangelicals worldwide); being sent to psychiatric institutions because of their obvious mental problems; having their children harassed educationally, physically, and emotionally in school; losing their jobs and being expelled from universities; and suffering inexplicable fatal accidents, among other things.

Particularly edifying is Dobrincu's brief biography of the nearly legendary Baptist pastor Nichifor Marcu, who despite an excellent seminary education, spent a good deal of time as a chimney sweep during the Communist era, and his wife Ariadna, a conservatory graduate who was forced to support their family by mending socks and bee-keeping. Ironically, these accidental professions put them in contact with a far-wider circle of people (including

[159] Marius Silveşan and Bogdan Emanuel Răduţ, *Cultele neoprotestante şi drepturile omului. Un strigăt la Radio Europa Liberă (aprilie 1977)*, Prefaţă de Iosif Ţon, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Risoprint, 2014.

[160] Dorin Dobrincu, *op. cit.*

[161] Idem, *Declinul diversităţii…*, p. 350-351.

[162] And even production of same. Some Iaşi Adventists worked in an enterprise that serviced photocopiers, which they were able to use to reproduce religious materials on the side. *Ibidem*, p. 373.

students and peasants) than otherwise would have been the case, and multiplied their ministry outreach.[163]

Finally, in 2015, Dorin Dobrincu completed his 2003 study of ALRC[164] with the publication of an extensive collection of documents, accompanied by his usual excellent commentary and notes[165]. With these materials, the 1978 ALRC episode joins the 1977 Letter of the Six as ground fruitfully plowed by modern Romanian evangelical historiography.

Conclusions

The picture of the history of Romanian evangelicals between 1918 and 1989 that emerges from our bibliographical excursus is on the whole very positive. Given that the history of a relatively minor segment of Romanian religious life would not be of primary interest to the majority of Romanian historians, what has been achieved in the last two decades is remarkable. Especially in the historiography of the Communist era, the history of Romanian evangelicalism has emerged from marginalization to occasional passing reference to consistent participation in various conferences and collective volumes dealing with 1948-1989. A new generation of scholars is affirming itself, their work is noticeably more professional, and they are no longer generally perceived by their peers as "outsiders". At the most recent (2015) Society for Romanian Studies International Congress in Bucureşti, there were several superb panels dealing with religious groups and minorities in Romania, including evangelicals. There is no reason to suppose that these trends will not continue, especially since many of the leaders in this area of research and study are relatively young and should have many fruitful years of scholarship ahead of them.

One problem that emerges from the above is a continued "confessionalization" of religious historiography in Romania, i.e. many or most of the studies of Romanian evangelicals are by Romanian evangelicals. And much of the work is still denominationally-linked, i.e. Baptist historians writing about the Baptists and so forth. This is neither shocking nor necessarily detrimental, and in some cases produces awareness of nuance that outsiders would miss or misunderstand as well as leading to the tackling of subjects that might very well have been ignored, but Romanian evangelical historiography will have truly matured when this is no longer as noticeable as it is today.

Overall, some confessionalism is not all bad, as Dorin Dobrincu has pointed out, since often scholars studying a Christian faith differing from their

[163] *Ibidem*, p. 356 ff.

[164] Idem, *Libertatea religioasă şi contestare în România lui Nicolae Ceauşescu…*, discussed above.

[165] Idem, *"Noi nu suntem marxişti, ci creştini". Actele constitutive ale Comitetului Creştin Român pentru Apărarea Libertăţii Religioase şi de Conştiinţă (1978)*, in ArchM, vol. 7, 2015, p. 275-294.

own vitiate their work through egregious errors or blatant but perhaps unintentional prejudice[166]. On the other hand, people also are often blind to the prejudices of their own "side" or are overly sensitive to perceived slights.

Two other desiderata that emerge from the preceding catalogue. The first is the continued lack of international access to the history of Romanian evangelicals because most work is in Romanian. One solution would be to anthologize some of the more analytical articles mentioned above in Western languages, with the aim of providing an introduction to the history of Romanian evangelicalism from their 19th century origins to the present. In addition, there is a need for the continued production of source collections, along the lines of Viorel Achim's volume described above[167].

Recently, a prominent, maverick Romanian historian, Lucian Boia, published a book on how Romania was "Romanianized"[168] in which he called for Romania to move from a tribalist/nationalist conception of its nationhood to a civic, political conception in which minorities are valued for their actual and potential contributions to Romanian life and culture rather than derided or discriminated against[169]. This timely study came on the heels of the surprising election of an ethnic German as President of Romania in November 2014 over a heavily-favored demagogic candidate. Ironically, Boia argued that the ethnic theory of nationality which has dominated Romania since the 19th century has been the Germanic view of the nation. He called for a real integration of minorities into Romanian society... and into the historical study of Romania. One can hope that such minorities (including religious minorities) would come to be accepted, and even welcomed for their contributions to modern Romanian society.

In 1999, the political scientist Daniel Barbu lamented the sad reality that Romanian dissidence under the Communists was for all practical purposes non-existent and isolated... with a "single exception – which has remained both anonymous and unexplored politically in the 1990s". This was the opposition by Romanian evangelicals, who went from moral recriminations of the Communist regime "to political denunciation of the totalitarian regime. Only for

[166] See Dorin Dobrincu, *Istoria bisericii şi pericolul confesionalizării cercetării*, in "Xenopoliana", vol. 7, nr. 3-4, 1999, p. 130-136. This theme number of "Xenopoliana" on *Confesiune, societate, naţiune* contains a number of useful articles on religion and Romanian society, though relatively little on evangelicals.

[167] See Viorel Achim, *Politica regimului Antonescu…*

[168] Lucian Boia, *Cum s-a romanizat România…*

[169] For the relationship between Orthodoxy, the dominant Christian faith in Romania, and the state, see Steven K. Runciman, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State*, Auckland NZ, Auckland University Press, 1971; Olivier Gillet, *Religion et Nationalisme…*; Nikolas K. Gvosdev, *Emperors and Elections: Reconciling the Orthodox Tradition with Modern Politics*, Huntington NY, Troitsa Books/Nova Science Publishers, 2000; Paul Negruţ, *Biserica şi Statul. O interogaţie asupra modelui 'simfoniei' byzantine*, Oradea, Editura Institutului Biblic Emanuel, 2000; and Lucian N. Leuştean, *Orthodoxy and political Myths in Balkan National Identities*, in "National Identities", vol. 10, 2008, p. 421-432.

members of these groups the affirmation of identity was invested in a systematic refusal to collaborate, under any form with the regime and with its flunkies"[170]. While this may be slightly hyperbolic, it is true that by preserving in some small way intellectual integrity in Communist Romania, Romanian evangelicals could provide a moral beacon and inspiration for a Romanian society after 1989 sorely in need of ethical guidance.

Secondly, as research on Romanian evangelicals during these unexplored or anonymous pages of Romanian history has expanded, it has also emerged that Romanian evangelical protests contributed in no insignificant measure to the international downfall of Nicolae Ceaușescu in the 1970s and 1980s. Looking back on this era in context and perspective, one can see that Romanian evangelicals played a much more important role in the undermining of Ceaușescu's position and imperial presumption than one would have guessed from their numbers and place in Romanian culture and society. It was another confirmation (of which we are constantly in need of reiterating) of Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize insistence on the importance of individual action and on speaking the truth to power, whatever the circumstances:

> [L]et us not forget that violence does not live alone and is not capable of living alone: it is necessarily interwoven with falsehood [...] the simple step of a simple courageous man is not to partake in falsehood, not to support false actions! Let THAT enter the world, let it even reign in the world – but not with my help [...].That is why, my friends, I believe that we are able to help the world [...]. Not by making the excuse of possessing no weapons, and not by giving ourselves over to a frivolous life − but by going to war! [...] ONE WORD OF TRUTH SHALL OUTWEIGH THE WHOLE WORLD[171].

The truth of Solzhenitsyn's maxim seems to have been born out in 2006 in a small way, when Romanian Television (*Televiziunea Română*, TVR) conducted a vote to determine whom the general public considered the *100 Greatest Romanians* of all time, in a version of the British TV show *100 Greatest Britons*. Amazingly, the anti-Communist evangelical leader Richard Wurmbrand came in at number five. He was the only religious figure in the top ten[172].

[170] Daniel Barbu, *Republica absentă. Politică şi societate în România postcomunistă,* Bucureşti, Editura Nemira, 1999, p. 53-54.

[171] See Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's Noble Address, reprinted in Leopold Labedz (ed.), *Solzhenitsyn: A Documentary Record*, enlarged edition, Bloomington IN, Indiana University Press, 1973, p. 302-320.

[172] See *Mari români*, https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mari_români, last accessed 25.07.2017.

The History of Romanian Evangelicals, 1918-1989:
A Bibliographical Excursus
(Abstract)

Keywords: Interwar Romanian history, Romania during World War II, Communist Romania, post-Communist historiography, Romanian historical bibliography, history of evangelicalism, Romanian Baptists, Romanian Brethren, Romanian Pentecostals.

The history of evangelical Christians in Romania has been a little explored area of Romanian history, though this situation has changed since 1989 as a younger generation of Romanian scholars has come unto the scene. This article provides an annotated bibliographical introduction to historical work dealing with Romanian evangelicals. It begins by reviewing work done prior to 1989. This is followed by an attempt to define what an evangelical is and who the Romanian evangelicals are, recommending that the label "Neo-Protestant" often used to describe them since 1945 be abandoned. Then their history is surveyed bibliographically in three segments: Romania between the World Wars, 1918-1938; Romania during the era of the Second World War beginning in 1938 and ending with its aftermath in 1947; and Romania during the Communist era, 1948-1989. The review will consider only published documents and scholarly works (monographs and articles), leaving memorialistic, and other works aside, as well as denominational histories as such. These materials will be discussed chronologically by publication date to show the progression of study, rather than being organized thematically.