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Conference Paper

Studies on the current situation of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest agricultural partimony

Provided in Cooperation with:

The Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development (ICEADR), Bucharest

Suggested Citation: Ungureanu, Florin; Alecu, Ioan Nicolae (2014) : Studies on the current situation of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest agricultural partimony, In: Agrarian Economy and Rural Development - Realities and Perspectives for Romania. 5th Edition of the International Symposium, November 2014, Bucharest, The Research Institute for Agricultural Economy and Rural Development (ICEADR), Bucharest, pp. 283-290

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/111648>

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STUDIES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE ARCHIEPISCOPATE OF BUCHAREST AGRICULTURAL PATRIMONY

UNGUREANU FLORIN¹, ALECU IOAN NICULAE²

Abstract: *The Romanian Orthodox Church, founded as Patriarchy in 1925, performs alongside the pastoral and missionary works specific to the orthodox cult and administrative works. The cult units of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest, as part of the Metropolitanate of Muntenia and Dobrogea, own agricultural, horticulture and forestry land. The agricultural and horticultural lands are cultivated under own regime or under a lease. For the areas with forest vegetation the cult units have forest service contracts with private or state Forest Districts, specialized inspectors of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest participating in the sustainable forest management. Vineyards are subject to the reconversion program (by APIA programs) with noble varieties of vineyards and for producing wine it was built a section of vinification, by accessing European funds, with modern technology. The cult units participate in improving the quality of life in rural areas by implementing programs for accessing European funds (job creation, efficient exploitation of land, economic development, strong correlation between the creditworthiness of agricultural land and infrastructure).*

Keywords: *Archdiocese of Bucharest, agricultural patrimony, horticulture, forestry*

INTRODUCTION

The Romanian Orthodox Church is the community of the orthodox Christians, clergy, monks and laity, canonically constituted in parishes and monasteries in the Romanian Patriarchate episcopates located inside and outside Romania, who confess God the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, under Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition and participating in the church life through the same Sacraments, liturgy and canonical order [3]. On 4 February 1925, the *Holy Synod* decided to establish Romanian Orthodox Patriarchy, and on 1 November 1925 took place the investiture and inauguration of the first Patriarch Miron Cristea (1925-1939). His descendants were the patriarchs Nicodim Munteanu (1939-1948), Justinian Marina (1948-1977), Iustin Moisesescu (1977-1986) and Teoctist Arăpașu (1986-2007), and currently, the Romanian Orthodox Church is headed by Patriarch Daniel Ciobotea.

The Patriarch of Romanian Orthodox Church is Archbishop of Bucharest and the Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrogea. His title is: "His Holiness, His Beatitude (N), Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrogea, Deputy to the throne of Caesarea of Cappadocia³ and Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church". Romanian Patriarchy includes dioceses⁴ (archbishops and bishops) grouped into metropolises. All of assets belonging to parishes,

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³ In the Byzantine city of Caesarea in Cappadocia (now the city of Kayseri in Turkey) existed at the beginning of the first millennium a Christian bishopric, which was led by St. Vasile cel Mare (370-379). Named at 14 June 370 the bishop of Caesarea throne, St. Vasile held in this position the rank of Metropolitan of Cappadocia and Exarch of Pontus, his authority extending between the Balkan Mountains, Mediterranean Sea, Aegean Sea and to Euphrates. St. Vasile is considered one of the most important fathers of the Orthodox Church and one of the greatest Christian theologians, being glorified and celebrated every year on January 1 and also on January 30 with St. Ioan Gura de Aur and St. Grigore of Nazianz (Feast of the Holy three Hierarchs, established in 1081 by Patriarch Ioan of Constantinople in the memory of these three great saints and Orthodox theologians. Following the conquest of this region by the Ottoman Empire, the bishops of Caesarea in Cappadocia had to stop activity for the lack of believers (who run from Turks, they were killed in battles or changed to Islam), but in the Byzantine church hierarchy preserved the honorary title of bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. To perpetuate the memory of this ancient episcopal seat, the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, during the Patriarchy of Sophronius, decided on 10 October 1776, the Metropolitan of Ungrovlahia (with residence in Bucharest) to bear the honorary title of "Deputy of Episcopal Throne of Caesarea (Caesarea) Cappadocia". Since 1925, this title is held by the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

⁴ Diocese (ἐπαρχία) from the administrative point of view, is the church administrative unit that is under the authority of a bishop, which is composed of parishes and monasteries that are found in that territory. The term "diocese" was borrowed from Roman legal language. The Emperor Constantin cel Mare (306-337) - following the example of his predecessor, Diocletian (285-305) – has divided the Empire into 4 prefectures, which were divided into dioceses.

monasteries, deaneries, bishops, archbishops, metropolitans and Patriarchy, associations and foundations established by the Church, the funds for a religious purpose, and foundational churches wealth, form the religious heritage which belongs to Romanian Orthodox Church. In terms of its destination, the church patrimony contains sacred and common goods. Holy assets are those that by consecration of blessing are intended solely and directly to cult: places of worship (cathedrals, churches, chapels etc.), treasures and church vestments, books of ritual, cemeteries etc. The common goods of the Church are: church school buildings, church administration buildings, religious museums, establishments and cultural, philanthropic and economic institutions, agricultural and horticultural land, forests, pastures and patrimonial rights [3].

MATERIALS AND WORKING METHODS

It was studied the organizational structure of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the Archdiocese of Bucharest. Currently, the subunits of Archdiocese of Bucharest own agricultural, horticultural and forestry land with documents of ownership (property title, act of donation, documents of sale-buy) and land returned under the laws governing restitution of property that belonged to religious cults in Romania. Thus, the parishes and monasteries from the Archdiocese of Bucharest participate in the ongoing development of the national agricultural, horticultural and forest patrimony, by implementing national programs for rural development and sustainable management of forests [4]. Visits were conducted on the land of parishes and monasteries where it was found the situation of the ownership documents and the land status.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Organizing of Romanian Patriarchy. The Romanian Orthodox Church includes inside and outside Romania the following Metropolitanates, Archiepiscopates and Episcopates:

1. Metropolitanate of Muntenia and Dobrogea (figure 1), that includes:
 - Archiepiscopate of Bucharest, with headquarter in Bucharest.
 - Archiepiscopate of Tomis, with headquarter in Constanța.
 - Archiepiscopate of Târgoviște, with headquarter in Târgoviște.
 - Archiepiscopate of Argeș and Muscel, with headquarter in Curtea de Argeș.
 - Archiepiscopate of Buzău and Vrancea, with headquarter in Buzău.
 - Archiepiscopate of Dunărea de Jos, with headquarter in Galați.
 - Episcopate of Slobozia and Călărași, with headquarter in Slobozia.
 - Episcopate of Alexandria and Teleorman, with headquarter in Alexandria.
 - Episcopate of Giurgiu, with headquarter in Giurgiu.
 - Episcopate of Tulcea, with headquarter in Tulcea.
2. Metropolitanate of Moldova and Bucovina (figure 2), that includes:
 - Archiepiscopate of Iași, with headquarter in Iași.
 - Archiepiscopate of Suceava and Radauți, with headquarter in Suceava.
 - Archiepiscopate of Roman and Bacău, with headquarter in Roman.
 - Episcopate of Huși, with headquarter in Huși.

Dioceses were composed of several provinces, which, in Greek, were identified by the term dioceses (ἐπαρχίαι). From here, the term "diocese" passed later in the language of the Church, at first with the meaning of "province" (metropolitanate), and then with the current "bishop".



Fig. 1 – Metropolitanate of Muntenia and Dobrogea



Fig. 2 – Metropolitanate of Moldova and Bucovina

3. Metropolitanate of Ardeal (figure 3), including:

- Archiepiscopate of Sibiu, with headquarter in Sibiu.
- Archiepiscopate of Alba Iulia, with headquarter in Alba Iulia.
- Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Oradea, with headquarter in Oradea.
- Episcopate of Covasna and Harghita, with headquarter in Miercurea Ciuc.
- Episcopate of Deva and Hunedoara, with headquarter in Deva.

4. Metropolitanate of Cluj, Maramureş and Sălaj (figure 4), including:

- Archiepiscopate of Vadu, Feleacul and Cluj, with headquarter in Cluj-Napoca.
- Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Maramureş and Sătmar, with headquarter in Baia Mare.
- Episcopate of Sălaj, with headquarter in Zalău.



Fig. 3 – Metropolitanate of Ardeal



Fig. 4 – Metropolitanate of Cluj, Maramureş and Sălaj

5. Metropolitanate of Oltenia (figure 5), including:

- Archiepiscopate of Craiova, with headquarter in Craiova.
- Archiepiscopate of Râmnic, with headquarter in Râmnicu Vâlcea.
- Episcopate of Severin and Strehaia, with headquarter in Drobeta-Turnu Severin.
- Episcopate of Slatina and Romanati, with headquarter in Slatina.

6. Metropolitanate of Banat (figure 6), including:

- Archiepiscopate of Timișoara, with headquarter in Timișoara.
- Archiepiscopate of Arad, with headquarter in Arad.
- Episcopate of Caransebeș, with headquarter in Caransebeș.



Fig. 5 – Metropolitanate of Oltenia



Fig. 6 – Metropolitanate of Banat

7. Metropolitanates, Archiepiscopates and Episcopates of outside Romania:

- Metropolitanate of Basarabia
- Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Western and Meridional Europe
- Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Germany, Central and Northern Europe
- Romanian Orthodox Archiepiscopate of the two Americas
- Episcopate of Dacia Felix
- Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Ungaria
- Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Australia and New Zealand

B. Organization of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest

The units of the Romanian Orthodox Church, organized as Patriarchy, are: parish, monastery, deanery⁵, **eparchy (archiepiscopate and episcopate)** and the Metropolitanate.

The eparchies are church units consisting of a number of parishes, grouped as deaneries and the monasteries located on a certain territory. The eparchies are archiepiscopates or episcopates, led by archbishop or bishop. None of the eparchies can have, or establish and manage religious units on the territory of other eparchy [3]. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest comprised 9 deaneries (one in Ilfov, one in Ialomita, one in Dâmbovița, one in Prahova, one in Muscel, one in Teleorman, one in Vlașca and two in Bucharest), with 1,029 parishes (urban and rural), 1,680 churches (parish and subsidiaries) and 1547 priests and 17 monasteries and hermitages (with monks and nuns), with 920 people.

Since 1929, the deaneries were set in plasi, in a county being between 2 and 6 deaneries corresponding to the number of plasi. Archiepiscopate of Bucharest had 21 deaneries (3 in the every city of Bucharest, Ilfov county, Dâmbovița, Teleorman and Vlașca, 2 in Muscel and 4 in Prahova

⁵ *protopopiatele* sunt structuri organizatorice teritoriale care au în subordine parohii, mănăstiri, schituri, centre social-filantropice și au rolul de a-l ajuta pe chiriarh în a-și desfășura activitatea pastoral-misionară și administrativ-bisericească în teritoriu (pentru Arhiepiscopia Bucureștilor - București și județele Ilfov și Prahova)

county), with 1,109 parishes and 405 branches. In these parishes and branches were 1,514 churches, with 1,260 priests serving [4].

Since 1990, in conditions of freedom, under the leadership of Teoctist Patriarch, new churches were built in parishes, schools, military units, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, social assistance centers. However, the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest ceded 5 counties (Dâmbovița, Ialomița, Calarasi, Teleorman and Giurgiu) of its coverage for the establishment of new dioceses: Archiepiscopate of Targoviste (1990), Episcopate of Slobozia and Calarasi (1993), Episcopate of Alexandria and Teleorman (1996) and Episcopate of Giurgiu (2000), restricting jurisdiction over Ilfov and Prahova counties plus Bucharest.

It should be noted that on 17 May 1990, the National Church Assembly, based on "historical, administrative – religious and missionary - pastoral" and to respond to the "current requirements of the clergy and believers", approved the decision of the Holy Synod of change Metropolitan of Ungrovlahia name in "Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrogea".

Today, under the leadership of His Beatitude Daniel, Archiepiscopate of Bucharest has in jurisdiction 12 deaneries with 712 church units (634 parishes and 78 affiliates), and 977 priests and 33 monastic establishments (26 monasteries and 7 hermitages) with 784 people.

Currently, under the *Statute for the organization and functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church*, the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest Diocesan Center operates under the careful coordination of the Hierarchy, aided by Assistant Bishop, the diocesan administrative vicar and diocesan advisers through the **Diocesan Chancery** and **Diocesan administration** [2].

In the **Diocesan Chancery** operates:

- Diocesan Secretariat;
- Canonical and legal office;
- Church Inspection body.

In the **Diocesan Administration** operates 12 sectors:

1. **Church Administrative Sector:** Service of Personnel - Human Resources
2. **Cultural and media Communications Sector:** Publishing Word of Life
3. **Education and Youth Activities Sector:** Theological education, Catechetical office
4. **Social Philanthropic and Missional Sector:** Religious assistance, Social assistance, Social Cantina "Barnabas House", Retirement Home "Pasarea", Palliative Care Center "Saint Nectarie", "Joy Aid" Foundation, Information and Advice Centre.
5. **Economic-Financial Sector:** Accounting Service, Factory of candles "Faclia of Romanian Saints" Service of canvassing, Icons workshop "Eternal Faces", laundry "Bob de roua", Workshop "Reverend", Funeral Services, Center "Justin Patriarch" Center "St. Calinic" at Cernica, the monastic House, monastic Cantina
6. **Church Real Estate Sector**
7. **Monuments and church buildings sector:** Technical service, Transport
8. **Patrimony and church painting sector:** Painting, restoration and conservation, Museums and church collections
9. **Sector of Exarchate:** Patriarchal Cathedral, Monastery St. Cuv. Parascheva, Cathedral of St. Spiridon
10. **Agricultural, Forestry and Viticulture sector:** wine warehouse, annex households
11. **Sector Cemeteries, Memorials and Funeral Services**
12. **Financial Control and Internal Audit Sector**

For a better organization and management of the agricultural, horticultural and forestry patrimony of the Diocesan Center and subunits (parishes, monasteries), it was established in 2008 the Agricultural, Vineyard and Forestry Sector of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest, operating in Bucharest, Ilfov and Prahova.

The Agricultural, Vineyard and Forestry Sector coordinates and manages several areas:

1. **The agricultural domain:**

- takes care of the proper administration of the agricultural land belonging to the Diocesan Center and its subordinate cult units;
- review, control, and makes proposals on improving the operation and management of land belonging to monasteries, parishes, deaneries and other church institutions with legal personality from Archiepiscopate;
- the cult units work both in own regime cultivating their agricultural land with grain and in land leasing regime.

2. Horticultural domain:

- a) **manages the vineyards** of the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest in jud. Prahova (Figures 7 and 8): wine farm Urlati, with an area of 10.0 ha; Ceptura wine farm, with an area of 23.0 ha; Chițorani wine farm, with an area of 12.0 ha.

The whole area planted with vineyard has undergone the conversion process through APIA, using noble varieties of vineyard (Merlot, black Fetească, Cabernet Sauvignon, Fetească Royal Sauvignon blanc).

- b) **Department of wine Urlați - Prahova** (Figure 9):

- In 2009 was founded agricultural *Cooperative second degree "Vineyard of the Lord"* (with five cooperative members - religious units in the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest) in which are processed the grapes obtained from vineyards, to produce liturgical wine;
- European funds were accessed (Measure 123) for building a *wine Section* in accordance with European and national rules;
- liturgical wine produced is distributed in both dioceses in the country and the Diaspora, as well as in specific stores.



Fig. 7 – Vineyard in reconversion program (first year from planting)



Fig. 8 – Vineyard in reconversion program (year III from planting)



Fig. 8 – Vinification section (equipments for wine storing)



Fig. 9 – Vinification section (equipments for wine bottling)

- c) **The annex household of the Diocesan Center** administers an area of 3.5 ha planted with: fruit trees (apple, pear, quince, plum, cherry, sour cherry, apricot, peach, nectarine, walnut - Figure 10; vineyard (table grape varieties - *Sultanina*, *Hamburg*, *Victoria*, *Italia* - Figure 11) shrubs (raspberry, blackberry, strawberry - Figure 12); vegetables in the open and protected areas (Figure 13).
3. **The forestry domain** sustainable manages the forest belonging to religious units (Figure 14) totaling 1,600 ha:
- Antim Monastery - 600 ha;
 - Zamfira Monastery - 224 ha;
 - Pasarea Monastery - 30.0 ha;
 - Cheia Monastery - 100 ha;
 - Ghighiu Monastery - 150 ha;
 - Snagov Monastery - 300 ha;
 - Căldărușani Monastery - 134 ha;
 - Cornu Monastery - 4.5 ha;
 - Church of Icoanei - 30.0 ha.



Fig. 10 – Plantation of fruit trees



Fig.11 – Plantation of vineyard (table grapes)



Fig. 12 – Strawberries



Fig.13 – Tomatoes under protected space



Fig. 14 – Deciduous forest (Cernica Monastery)

Romanian Patriarchy participated since 2012 as member of the National Coordination Committee of RNDR⁶ by representatives of the Romanian Patriarchy and the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest and at the Working Groups of the Managing Authority of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Agriculture and Food Industry, Economic Development in Rural Area, Environment).

CONCLUSIONS

The Archiepiscopate of Bucharest conducted alongside pastoral and missionary work specific to the orthodox cult, the administrative. In this respect, the Archiepiscopate of Bucharest:

- participates in knowledge and good relationship with other dioceses;
- carry out exchanges with dioceses running European projects or from own funds in agriculture, horticulture and forestry;
- advise subunits to capitalize the agricultural, horticultural and forestry patrimony;
- good management of the areas planted with vineyards to produce wine needed to cult (Holy Sacraments and religious service);
- transmit to the cult units useful information on how to access EU funds through the National Program of Rural Development and through APIA.

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⁶ National Network of Rural Development