Notes on a 17th Century Calvinist Catechism

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La présente étude fait partie de la direction d'actualiser, dans la philologie et la linguistique roumain, la recherche sur les catéchismes Calvino-roumains du XVIIe siècle. Le texte que nous proposons aux yeux du public est le Catéchisme de Fogarasi István, imprimé à Alba Iulia en 1648. Ce texte présente de l'intérêt culturel parce qu'il apparaît dans une époque caractérisée par des troubles et conflits religieux intense. Ce catéchisme est remarquable aussi parce qu'il fournit un matériau linguistique riche, à la fois en termes d'évolution de la langue roumaine (littéraire) et de les influences hongroises, puisque la source de la traduction faite par Fogarasi est une version (latine) hongroise du Catéchisme de Heidelberg. La littérature consacrée à ce catéchisme est cependant assez pauvre.

Mots-clés: traduction, textes religieux, catéchisme.

The issue of the 17th century Calvinist Romanian catechisms is widely debated and intensively researched in the literature. Nevertheless, several aspects regarding this topic are still unknown or poorly known. Furthermore, some of the important texts do not have up to date editions, in the sense that their existent critical and / or modern editions no longer meet the current standards. This is the case of the text we have chosen for our discussion and which has a cultural, literary and, especially, a linguistic significance for which it is worth to be studied and perhaps to be re-evaluated. We refer to the *Catehism [Catechism]* of Fogarasi István, printed in Alba Iulia in 1648, which seems to be forgotten by researchers, though it is closely related to all the other old Romanian literary monuments, especially to those produced by the "missionary activities" of the (Calvinist) Hungarians conducted among Transylvanian Romanians, just like any other larger work.

In our discussion on the *Catechism* of Fogarasi István (1648) we shall focus on the following three aspects: the influences exerted by the Reformation on the translation, printing, diffusion and use of the Calvinist catechisms in the 17th century; the position occupied by the *Catechism* of Fogarasi in the context of the religious clashes ongoing in the mid 17th century; and, finally, we shall make some observations on the current state of research on the *Catechism* of Fogarasi.

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1. The Reformation and the 17th century Calvinist catechisms

The 17th century may be regarded as the very epoch of Reformation and Counter-Reformation. During this period, Transylvania provides a fertile ground for the expansion of Calvinism[1]. In Banat and south-western Transylvania, "there has long existed a trained community, formed under the aegis of Catholicism, which Reformation only reoriented in religious terms and stimulated, putting it at the service of the people's enlightenment" (Moldovanu 2007-2008, p. 49-50 – our translation). Thus, it is no wonder that Reformation, in general, and Calvinism, in particular, could run deeper among Romanians of Banat-Hunedoara whose relations with the Eastern Church tradition have been previously broken off by their conversion to Catholicism (see also Tamás 1942, p. 20; Gafton 2012a, p. 47-48; Pál 2014, p. 59).

This shift from the old ways has also been encouraged by the fact that political and religious efforts often converged regarding the introduction of the Reformed Church's doctrine into Romanian environment. Beginning with the 16th century and especially in the following century, religious unity – i.e. a united and uniform religion for all - was regarded as a prerequisite for the unity and integrity of the state (Bariţiu 1879, p. 90)[2]. Transylvanian monarchs (and aristocrats) who embraced the new religion often struggled to convert their subjects to the Confession they professed. Their endeavours, however, were not oriented towards national assimilation, in the current national-political sense of the word, but rather towards religious unity (Tamás 1942, p. 4, 127).

In the 17th century, the actions taken in order to convert Romanians to Calvinism continued, in fact, the attempts existent in the previous century, but the tension and unsettlement caused by the confrontation between the new religion and the old ones (Catholicism and Orthodoxy) are, perhaps, more acute in this period. This state of affairs determines certain scholars to talk about a violent Calvinist proselytism which made the Romanians of Greek-Eastern religion to be "tolerated only for one day to another (*pro tem*) until the monarchs and the Diet [assembly] would say otherwise" and which "imposed [the Calvinist catechisms] on Romanians by brutal force" (Bariţiu 1879, p. 110 – our translation). Under the circumstances, "the autonomy of the Eastern Romanian Church of Transylvania, Banat and Hungary has been completely paralyzed" (*ibidem*, p. 111 – our translation). Perhaps the influence of Calvinism on Transylvanian Romanians of Eastern Greek religion was actually not as deep and comprehensive as the above mentioned author considered it to be (see also Hunfalvy 1886, p. 487-489; Veress 1910, p. 142), since it did not manage to convert the Orthodox priests and their

[1] For the expansion of the Calvinist movement see Marienescu 1902, especially, p. 169-170; Juhász 1940; IST. ROM., III, p. 162; Makkai 1989.

[2] In this regard, it is noteworthy, for instance, that Lutheran doctrines have acquired "the status of *national* confession and Church of the Saxons" (emphasis added), while Hungarians "adopted the doctrines of Calvin and established their Church on the basis of these [doctrines], likewise bearing *national* character" (emphasis added) (Bariţiu 1879, p. 109 – our translation).

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Romanian believers to the new religion, as it happened to Hungarians, for instance.

It is a fact, however, that many decrees, diplomas, laws (see in Bariţiu 1879, p. 111-112; Tamás 1936 p. 427; Tamás 1942, p. 19-20; Makkai 1989, p. 44) stipulated, in a way or another, the submission of the Romanian Church to the jurisdiction of a Calvinist Superintendent and to the decisions of the Calvinist synods. This also involved, among other things, the ordination of priests (and only of those) recommended by the Calvinist bishops and, what is more important, the introduction and (quasi-) compulsory teaching/learning of the Calvinist catechism in schools. Some of these demands were included in the very laws of the country, while others appear as conditions put on Romanian hierarchs by the Calvinist monarchs, whom the Diet granted free reign over their subjects. In this way, a wide path opens for Calvinist doctrines to penetrate into Transylvanian Romanian churches and schools and, consequently, for the translation, printing and diffusion of Calvinist catechisms.

Therefore, Calvinism has left its mark not only on the political organization and religious life of Transylvania, but also on its typographic activities[3]. Under the reign of Gabriel Bethlen and his Calvinist followers, there comes a new era in the history of Transylvanian Romanian printing. Unlike the previous epochs, in which Romanian printings appeared alongside the Slavonic ones, during the reign of the Calvinist monarchs, the holy books of Transylvanian Romanians are almost exclusively printed in Romanian language. Influenced by the Protestant thinking which encourages the use of national languages in churches, Rákóczi Ist and IInd, as well as, later on, Mihály Apafi fought, sometimes quite bitterly, for the establishment of Romanian language use in schools and churches, going against Romanian hierarchs who held on tightly to their Eastern rite regarding both confession and language use (see also Veress 1910, p. 174-175). Given these circumstances, Calvinist catechisms soon became not only a way and means to convert Romanians but, inevitably, the source of certain confrontations and controversies.

2. The position occupied by the *Catechism* of Fogarasi in the context of the religious clashes ongoing in the mid 17th century

17th century Calvinist Romanian catechisms are almost exclusively printed in the royal typography of Alba Iulia during the reign of the Transylvanian monarchs

[3] It should be pointed out that, ever since the 16th century, several Romanian holy books have been translated and printed under the initiative and patronage of Calvinism. Among these we could mention: *Cazania I [Ist Homiliary]*, *Molitvenic [Prayer Book]* (ca 1567), *Psaltire [Psalter]* and *Liturghier [Liturgy Book]* (1570) of Coresi, *Cartea de cîntece [The Book of Songs]* (1570-1573) and *Palia de la Orăştie [The Old Testament from Orăştie]* (1582) (see also Pál 2014, p. 59, 119). In the 17th century, this list is completed, among others, with a few catechisms (1642, 1648, 1656), *Psaltire [*the *Psalter]* of Agyagfalvi (1642), the psalter copied by Viski (1697), *Sicriul de aur [Golden coffin]*, *Dictionarium valachico-latinum* etc.

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Rákóczy and, unlike the catechisms of the previous century; these ones are based on the catechism of Heidelberg.

The series of Romanian Calvinist catechisms of this epoch starts off with the one entitled *Catihizmus creștinesc [Christian Catechism]*, printed in 1642, which has no copies preserved. The mentioned title is reproduced from the preface of Varlaam's *Răspunsul... [Response...]* (see Teodorescu 1984, p. 186). Vasile Pop mentions it as the "Catechism made after a Calvinist catechism (the Palatinate Catechism) about the Sacrament of Baptism and the Holy Communion 1642" (our translation) (BRV, I, under 38, p. 107; BRV, IV, under 38, p. 188), whereas, in a copy of Varlaam's *Răspunsul... [Response...]*, it is mentioned with the following data: "Response, [or] the book entitled Catechism, written by the will and command of the Christian monarch George Rákóczi, king of Transylvania, lord of the Hungarian Principality and court baron of the Szeklers, [book] which has been translated from Latin and Slavonic into Romanian under the counsel and encouragement and expenses of George Csulai, court shepherd of His Royal Highness. It was translated by parson George from Secul and laboured in the city of Bălgrad and printed in the village of Prisaca. The craftsman of the printing was parson Dobre from Muntenia and it was started on the 5th of July and it was finished on the 25th of July, in the year [...] 1640"[4] (Drăganu 1926, p. 249-250; see also *idem* 1922, p. 163[5]; see also Teodorescu 1984, p. 190). Specialists dispute, however, the information given regarding the publication date of this catechism as well as its acknowledged sources. Thus, this catechism was printed most probably in 1642, not in 1640 (see Sztripszky 1912, under 2536; BRU, under 159; Veress 1910, p. 157; Mareș 1974, p. 541-542, see also Hunfalvy 1886)[6] and, as for its sources, it is most probable that it has been translated from a Latin-

[4] Our translation, cf. "Otveatŭnicŭ, cartea ce să chĭamă Catehizmusu, carea cu voĭa și cu porunca Domnului creștinescu Racolți Gheorghi, Craĭul Ardealului, Domnul părților Țărăei Ungurești și Săcuilor Șpan, carea s'au întorsu din limbă diečască și slovenească pre limba rumănească, cu svatul și cu îndemnătura și cu cheltuĭala Domniei lui Cĭulai Gheorghi, păstorul sufletescu a curței Mării Sale. Cu scrisoarea s'au ostenitu popa Gheorghi de Secul, și s'au izvodit în cetate Belgradu și s'au tipărit în sat în Prisacă. Meșterul tiparĭului au fost popa Dobre din Țara Muntenească și s'au început în luna lui ĭul[ie] 5 dzile și s'au săvărșit în luna lui ĭul[ie] 25 dzile, vă leat [...] 1640".

[5] First it has been reproduced by A. Bunea, in *Ierarhia Românilor din Ardeal și Ungaria,* Blaș, 1904, p. 307, from where N. Drăganu copies it.

[6] The publication date has been deduced from the following circumstances: the printing of the *Cazanie [Homiliary]* of Alba Iulia is finished in 1641, the catechism is mentioned in a diploma of Rákóczy Ist in 1643 as being given to Romanians in those times (Vasile Pop, in BRV, I, under 38), Varlaam gathered the synod against this catechism in 1642 and it is precisely in this period when the printing of the third edition of the Latin-Hungarian catechism is finished in the royal typography (Sztripszky 1912, under 2536; Veress 1910, p. 157). Nevertheless, the manuscript of the catechism's translation must have been ready in autumn 1640.

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Hungarian version of the catechism, the one which is also the source-text of the catechism translated by Fogarasi (see Tamás 1942, p. 10-15, 129, 131)[7].

The catechism of Csulai (1642) triggers a real controversy due to the confrontation between Calvinism in expansion and Orthodoxy with strong traditions. Being fully aware of the unrest within the Orthodox Patriarchate as well as of the concessions made, in those times, to Calvinism, bishop Varlaam gives a vigorous riposte in his work entitled *Cartea carea să cheamă Răspunsul împotriva catihismusului calvinesc [The book called Response to the Calvinist catechism]*, printed in 1645 (BRV, I, under 48, p. 150-151; BRV IV, under 48, p. 190-194; BRU, under 164, p. 79). This work constitutes a vehement reaction, both in substance and in form, to the Calvinist doctrine and catechism, which the bishop rightfully considered to be a real danger (cf. Teodorescu 1984, p. 8-12).

The offensive against Calvinism launched by Varlaam soon finds its response from the Calvinists who, in 1656, in Alba Iulia, reprint their catechism accompanied by *Scutulŭ Catichizmușuluĭ cu răspunsu den scrăptura svăntă. Înpotriva răspunsului a doao țări, fără scriptură svăntă [The Shield of Catechism with response from the Holy Scripture. Against the response of the two countries, without the Holy Scripture]* (BRV, I, under 64, p. 207; BRV IV, under 64, p. 201-202; BRU, under 182, p. 92; Veress 1910, p. 162; for this see also Barițiu 1879, p. 83-115; Hunfalvy 1886).

It is in the midst of this exchange of attacks that the catechism of Fogarasi (1648) appears. In its Romanian title, it is presented with the following specifications: "Catechism / That is that; Summa or marrow of the Christian confession and belief, comprised of short questions and answers; and with evidence from the Holy Scripture. Latin, Hungarian, Romanian Catechism, translated by Stefan Fogarasi, parson of the city of Lugoj, in the year 1647, on the

[7] According to the author, both the catechism printed in 1642 and the one printed in 1648 are translations of the Latin-Hungarian *Catechismus Religionis Christianae* which had several editions (1636, 1639, 1643, 1647). The author mentions two arguments to support his theory regarding the source-text: a formal argument, the texts in question being made up of 77 questions and answers, and a stylistic argument, since these texts contain many Hungarian loanwords and calques (p. 129). The first Romanian catechism (1642) is most probably based on the 1639 edition of the Latin-Hungarian catechism (see also Drăganu 1922, p. 164), whereas the catechism of Fogarasi is more likely based on the 1643 and 1647 editions, less possibly on the 1639 edition (Tamás 1942, p. 11, 129). As a matter of fact, the 1939, 1943 and 1947 editions are so much alike that it is quite difficult to determine the precise source-edition of Fogarasi's translation (Tamás 1942, p. 11). The fact that the two Romanian catechisms have been translated, independently, from the same abbreviated version of the Heidelberg Catechism was pointed out also by Juhász I. (1940, p. 192), though the author does not mention the source-edition. Therefore, we can not lend credence to the statement made in the preface according to which the catechism printed in 1642 "has been translated from Latin and Slavonic". As a matter of fact, this is not the only case in which the real sources are concealed. We encounter this phenomenon in *Palia de la Orăștie* [*The Old Testament from Orăștie*] too, in which the authors' concealing of the sources could have pursued the text's legitimacy (see Gafton 2009, p. 4; *idem* 2012a, p. 47-68; *idem* 2012b; Pál 2014, p. 116-117).

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18th of December [...]”[8] (Tamás 1942, p. 45). This book of religious instruction remained, however, almost unnoticed in those times, which may be due to several facts. Although this Calvinist guidebook appears in-between the most crucial moments which mark the main controversy of the epoch (1642, the first Calvinist *Catechism* – 1645, Varlaam's *Responses* – 1656, the *Shield* of the Calvinist catechism), it seems as if Fogarasi was reluctant to this whirlwind which comprised the Calvinist movement, on the one hand, and the Orthodox tendencies, on the other hand, otherwise he could have given the first response to the Moldavian bishop. Moreover, it is possible that he did not know about the catechism of his predecessor, just like as it seems that he did not have knowledge of the prior translations of David's psalms, since, in the Preface of his catechism (p. 6), he seeks the support of the monarch “to translate into Romanian the Psalms of David, whose translation I have already begun but because of my other occupations I have halted [...] in order to bring them to light in Romanian language, *which until now has not been done*”[9] (emphasis added) (Tamás 1942, p. 44)[10]. Thus, Fogarasi seems not to take sides in the controversies of the epoch, but he rather conforms to the “Calvinist mission” in which he immersed himself.

[8] Our translation, cf. “Catechismus / Aceea e aceea; Summa sau Măduva a uluitei şi a credinţei creştineşti, cuprinsă în întrebări, şi răspunsuri scurte; şi cu adevărături din scriptura svântă. Catechiſmus Latino, Ungarico, Walchicus Translatus opera ac Studio Stephani Fogaraſi Symmiſtae Oppidi Lugas, Anno 1647 die 18, Decembri [...]”. This title appears on page 7 which is preceded by the Hungarian title and a Preface (*Előljáro Beszéd*) in Hungarian. The Hungarian title offers other details too, mentioning the date of publication, the place in which the catechism was printed and the name of the typographer: “CATECHISMUS / Az az; A' kereſztyéni Valláſnak és Hûtnek Rövid kérdésekben és feleletekben foglaltatot ſzentirásbeli bizonyſágokval meg erósittetet ſummája avagy veleje. Mellyet Deák és magyar nyelvbóI Oláh-nyelvre forditot. Fogarasi Istvan. Lugoſi már az igaſságot rész szerint meg-iſmet Olah Magyar Eccleſiának lelki Páſztora. […] *Feiervarat Nyomtattatott. Braſsai Major Márton általi 1648. esztendőben*” (Tamás 1942, p. 43; also see its Romanian translation: “Catechismus / Adecă; a creştinesciĭ religiĭ şi credinţe în scurte întrebărĭ şi răspunsurĭ cuprinse cu fapte din sfînta scriptură întărită coprindere saŭ măduvă. Care din latinésca şi unguréscă limbă în valahica limbă a tradus Ştefan Fogarasi. A Lugoşuluĭ, acum după dreptate parte recunoscut al valaho-maghiareĭ ecclesiĭ sufletesc păstor. […] *În Alba-Julia s'aŭ tipărit. De către Martin Maior de la Braşov în anul 1648*”, in BRV, I, under 53, p. 161).

[9] We must point out, however, that, dealing with old Romanian texts' prefaces, we must proceed with great caution. The accounts given by the authors of these texts are not always reliable, since they often dissimulate, whether they conceal the sources employed (see *Palia*), or they distort some circumstances in which the text in question appeared. By that means, they could have aimed at different purposes. In case of Fogarasi, for instance, pretending ignorance might have served as a rhetorical technique, namely as *captatio benevolentiae*. He could have known the prior translations of the catechism and of the psalms, not acknowledging it may be equally due to his effort to win the goodwill and / or financial support of the hierarch and / or of the monarch.

[10] Our translation, cf. “inditson fel engemet is én általam Oláh nyelven már elkezdet s' mostan pedig egyéb foglalatosságim miat tsak üszegében marat Dávid Soltárinak meg-forditására, s' annak utánna Isten s' a Kegyelmed segitsége által azoknak Jövendőben Oláh nyelven nap fényre valo ki-botsátására, *mely ez ideig nem volt*” (emphasis added) (see also the Romanian translation: “ca să traduc în limba valachă Psalmiĭ luĭ David, a cărora traducere am început'o deja dar din causa altor

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In his *Preface* (*Előljáró Beszéd*) addressed to Acațiu Bartsai (Barcsai Ákos), governor of Lugoj and Caransebeș, supreme committee of Severin county, Fogarasi pleads for the importance of catechisms in strengthening the believers' faith, since "the Holy Scripture is given by God and it is useful for learning, for correction, for admonishment, in a word, for redemption"[11]. Invoking the words of Paul the Apostle, Fogarasi considers that studying the catechism is necessary even more so since "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"[12]. Furthermore, the translator confesses that "the blind Jewish exceed us because they first teach their learners the Holy Scripture, so that a 5 or 6 years old child already reads quite well the Holy Scripture. But see the ignorance of our Hungarians, some of them at the age of 20 or 25 years, men with beard and they barely had in their hands the Bible. But since the Bible is not found in every bush, and it is expensive (especially in our country), and because it is not briefly summarized in questions and answers. This is how there were found the questions and answers to the mysteries of faith that is the Catechism"[13]. The few remarks which are of polemic nature are addressed to those who "consider the human teachings, made up in their mind, to be above the Holy Scripture"[14] and who "instead of the true Christian religious teachings, which would have strengthened them through the parables of the Holy Scripture, live [their lives] only according to the Rosaries or spinetum, which

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ocupațiunĭ ale mele am întrerupt'o […] să-ĭ pot da în viitor la lumina dzileĭ în limba valachă, *ceea ce până astădzĭ nu s'a făcut*" (emphasis added), in BRV, I, p. 163).

[11] Our translation, cf. "a' Sz: irás Istentől illetetet, és hasznos a tanitásra a' meg-jobbitásra, dorgálásra, egyszoval az üdvössegre" (see also the Romanian translation: "sf. Scriptură e de la Dumnedeŭ, și e folositoare pentru învățare, pentru îndreptare, pentru mustrare, cu un cuvînt pentru mîntuire", in BRV, I, p. 163).

[12] Our translation, cf. "Az utolso üdöben némellyek el szakadnak az igaz hüttöl, kik hitetö lelkekhez, és ördögi-tudománykhoz figyelmeznek", (see also the Romanian translation: "în vremea de apoi unii se vor lepăda de la adevărata credință, îndreptînd luarea aminte la spirite amăgitoare și învățături de demoni", in BRV, I, p. 162).

[13] Our translation, cf. "a vak Sidok meg-haladnak minket, mert ök elsöben is a' tanulo gyermeket, a' Sz: irásra fogják, ugy hogy: 5. s', 6. esztendös gyermek, már szépen olvassa a' szent-irást; de láss nagy gorombaságot a' mi Magyarink közöt, 20. a vagy 25 némely esztendös szakállos légyen-is alig forgatot kezében életében Bibliát. Mivel azért a Biblia, nem minden bokorba hever és nagyob kö1tségve1 is jár, (kivált-képpen a' mi Országunkban) s' annak felötte az hütnek ágazati is nintsenek rövideden öszve foglalva kérdésekben és feleletekben; Igy találták fel osztán az hütnek ágazatira valo kérdéseket, és feleleteket tudni-illik a' Catéchismust" (see also the Romanian translation: "Judeii orbi ne întrec, pentru că ei pe elevii lor mai întîiu îi învață sfînta Scriptură, așa că copilul de 5 și 6 ani deja citește frumos sfînta Scriptură. Dar vezi cîtă bădăranie e între Ungurii noștri, unii în vîrstă de 20 sau 25 de ani, oameni cu barbă, și abia dacă în viața lor au avut în mînă Biblia. Dar fiindcă Biblia nu se găsește în orice tufă, și e scumpă (mai ales în țara noastră), și fiindcă nu se află resumată pe scurt în întrebări și răspunsuri. Așa au găsit apoi întrebările și răspunsurile cu privire la tainele credinții adecă Catechismul", in BRV, I, p. 163).

[14] Our translation, cf. "s' leéndö agyokbol ki-koholtattatot emberi találmányokat sokval fellyeb a' Szent irásnal böt ülleni" (see also the Romanian translation: "învățăturile omenesci, născocite din capul lor, le țin mai pre sus decît sfînta Scriptură", in BRV, I, p. 162).

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spoil the human soul rather than inspire it”[15]. Hence, Fogarasi disapproves, in fact, the tradition and use of breviaries containing prayers of the saints: “with numerous Breviaries, so that it is already *brevis via,* i.e.: There is a short way, but you ask for what! not to Heaven but Hell with those many legends or rather ablegends”[16] (Tamás 1942, p. 43-44). The expression of Fogarasi does not compare, however, neither to the vehemence with which Varlaam opposes the catechism which he depicts as being “filled with deadly poison to our souls”[17] (Teodorescu 1984, p. 186), nor to the harsh tone of the *Scutul catehismului [Shield of Catechism]* in which there are accused the “blindness and lack of wisdom of those who judged our catechism” and in which “we shall shut their mouths with the Holy Scripture, knowing that the mouth of the ignorant shall graze on their madness”[18] (Bariţiu 1879, p. 1).

The fact that Fogarasi’s catechism (1648) has been somewhat forgotten is due to yet another circumstance, namely that it appears in the same year as *Noul Testament de la Bălgrad [The New Testament from Bălgrad]*. This latter voluminous work seized much of the contemporaries’ attention, the more so since it was addressed to *all* Romanians[19], which explains the extraordinary popularity it enjoyed both in the epoch and in the following centuries. Unlike this work, Fogarasi’s catechism had a more restricted destination: “in these two places, mainly in Lugoj and Caransebeş, for the schools of Christian religion, [meant] for strengthening the faith of the young students from there”[20], as stated by the author

[15] Our translation, cf. “Igaz keresztyéni hütnek ágazatt hellyett, mely meg-erösitettet volna szentirásbéli bizonyságokval, élnek tsak a' sok Rosariumval avagy inkáb spinetumval mely embernek lelket inkáb sértegeti hogy sem gerjeszti” (see also the Romanian translation: “în locul adevăratei învăţături creştinesci a credinţei, care i-ar fi întărit prin pildele din sfînta scriptură, trăesc numai cu cele multe Rosarium-uri sau mai bine zis spinetum-uri, care mai mult strică, decît să însufleţească sufletul omului”, in BRV, I, p. 162-163).

[16] Our translation, cf. “a sok Breviariumval hogy már *brevis via* az az: Rövid ut, de mire kérded! nem az égre, hanem a' kénra, a' sok legendákval avagy inkáb ablegandákval” (see also the Romanian translation: “cu multe Breviarium-uri, că deja e *brevis via* adecă: Drumul e scurt, dar întrebi, la ce! nu spre ceriŭ, ci spre iad cu multele legende sau mai bine zis cu ablegende”, in BRV, I, p. 163).

[17] Our translation, cf. “plin de otravă de moarte sufletească”.

[18] Our translation, cf. “orbiciunea şi neînţelepciunea celora ce au giudecatu catichizmusĭulu nostru” [...] “vom să le astupăm gura cu svta scriptură, sciindu că gura nesciutorilorŭ sĕ pasce cu nebuniĭa lorŭ”.

[19] See, in this sense, the specifications given in the foreword addressed to the readers: “We yet ask you to take heed of [the fact] that Romanians do not speak in every country alike, nor does everybody of the same country [speak] alike [...] We, thereby, tried, as much as we could, to write *in a manner in which everyone should understand*” (emphasis added) (our translation, cf. “Acĭasta încă vă rugămŭ să luaţi aminte că Rumănii nu grăescu în toate ţărăle într’un chip, încă neci într’o ţară toţi într’un chipŭ […] Noi dereptŭ aceĭa ne-amŭ silit, de în căt am putut, să izvodim *aşĭa cum să înţeleagă toţi*”, in BRV, I, p. 170).

[20] Our translation, cf. “e' két helyekben, ki-vált-képpen ugymint Lugos és Káránsebesben, lévö keresztyén vallásu Scholáinknak s'azokban tanulo iffiainknak hütökben valo meg-erösittetésekre” (see also the Romanian translation: “în aceste două locurĭ cu deosebire, în Lugoş şi în Caransebeş

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himself on page 5 of the Preface of his book (Tamás 1942, p. 44). In this regard, Fogarasi's catechism remained not only in the shadow of *Noul Testament [the New Testament]*, but also in that of the previous catechism (1642) on which the religious education of entire Transylvania had been based (Iorga 1928, p. 302; Tamás 1942, p. 128) and which had put on guard the Eastern Orthodox Church, giving rise to the synod and reaction of Varlaam.

Given these circumstances, Fogarasi's catechism could not compete with the other Romanian religious books of the epoch, which had a much larger diffusion (see Dudaș 1987) and compared to which the first one is nothing but a *rare* book[21]. Nevertheless, it must have been known, even if in smaller areas. Comparing the text of the *Decalogue* to the one in the version of Viski (1697), Tamás L. (1942, p. 41) concludes that the text of Viski is a direct or indirect copy of the translation made by Fogarasi, which indicates the fact that the Protestant Romanians of Banat must have employed the catechism at least till the end of the 17th century. Being overshadowed by the other works of the century, Fogarasi's catechism remains echoless in the epoch and, perhaps due to this fact, it goes almost unnoticed in Romanian philological and linguistic researches.

3. The current state of research on the *Catechism* of Fogarasi

The name of István Fogarasi[22] is not entirely unheard of in scientific discourse on the evolution of Romanian culture. It may be found in books and studies concerned with the history of Romanian Church, literature, language and printing, but, in most of the cases, there is very little information given regarding his works. Numerous references are made to his work as translator of the Psalms of David; the question whether Fogarasi was or he was not the translator of the *Psalter* seems to occupy a much larger space in research than his catechism, despite the fact that it offers less certainty[23]. Compared to this preoccupation, the

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pentru șcólele de religia creștinéscă și pentru întărirea în credință a tinerilor elevĭ de acolo", in BRV, I, p. 163).

[21] One of the reasons for which the catechism of Fogarasi did not have a greater impact could be the fact that it had a single edition, whereas the previous catechism (1642), for instance, was reprinted in 1656.

[22] Very little is known about his life. The data at hand only indicate that he was a Protestant parson in Lugoș, translator of the *Catechism* printed in 1648 and of the psalms, which were not publicated, though (Kenyeres 2001, s.v.; see also Zoványi 1977, s.v.). The name of Fogarasi is listed, alongside Sándor Gergely Agyagfalvi, Halici and Istvánházi, in the students' register of the Protestant College of Aiud (Pantaleoni 2007, p. 44). He must have had nobiliary title (*nemeș*), since Gabriel Bethlen granted noble status to all Protestant parsons (Meteș 1935, p. 264; Tamás 1942, p. 17). Many researchers have tried to identify who Fogarasi was, among them being N. Iorga too (1904, p. 144; *idem*, 1928, p. 301, 302, 334). References to this aspect may also be found in Moldovanu 2007-2008, p. 34.

[23] References to Fogarasi's *Psaltire* [*Psalter*] are to be found in: Iorga 1904, p. 144; *idem* 1928, p. 302; Pușcariu 1921, p. 198; Drăganu 1927, p. 89; IST. LIT. ROM., I, p. 472. A thorough study of this issue is to be found in Moldovanu 2007-2008. Among other things, the author claims the authorship of Fogarasi based on certain orthographical, phonetic and lexical similarities between the two texts,

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literature dedicated to the Palatinate (heidelbergens) catechism (1648) is less substantial. If we were to sum up the references made exclusively on this text, they would barely fill a page and many of them just record its existence, without any further clarification.

Although it is mentioned relatively early, researchers did not pay special attention to it which may be due to several factors. On the one hand, as already pointed out, in the 17th century, the popularity of this catechism has been competed by other contemporary texts, which could have been due to its restricted use. Then, after being mentioned in a few documents and history books (see Tamás 1942, p. 7), its remembrance seems to erase until the second half of the 19th century, when the (Romanian) scientific world gets acquainted with it through fragments excerpted from the Creed, published by B. P. Hasdeu (1879, p. 725-727) and M. Gaster (1891, p. 124)[24]. Later on, the text is catalogued in old Romanian bibliographies (BRV, I, under 53, p. 160-164), in old Romanian-Hungarian bibliographies (BRU, I, under 167, p. 81) and in old Hungarian bibliographies (RMK, I, under 803; RMK, II, under 683; Veress 1910, p. 159; see also RMNY, III, under 2212). Naturally, the account given in these catalogues is quite brief: they usually reproduce, in facsimile or in transcription, the Hungarian and/or the Romanian title page, some of them contain the Hungarian Preface as well or a summary thereof; they specify the text's size (format 4^0, 48 pages); they indicate the (Latin) alphabet and the (Hungarian) orthography employed; they mention the place(s) where its copies may be found (in the Library of the Protestant High schools of Tîrgu Mureș and Sfîntu Gheorghe); regarding its content, they mention that it is structured in questions and answers, in three parts: 1. *About the needs and troubles of men*, 2. *About the redemption of men* and 3. *About the expression of gratitude to God of the men freed from his troubles*, the text ending with the utterance *Soli Gratias Tibi o Gratiose Deus*[25]. Besides these inventories, Fogarasi's catechism is mentioned in passing in books dedicated to the history of Romanian language and literature / culture (see Nădejde 1886, p. 161, 379, 380; Philippide 1888, p. 51, 75; Sbiera 1897, p. 106; Marienescu 1902, p. 115; Iorga 1904, p. 144-145, *idem* 1928, p. 302 etc.).

The first study which seems to be entirely dedicated to this catechism – as indicated in the title (*Catechisul lui Stefan Fogarasy, preot în Lugoj, 1648*) – was

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namely the *Psaltire [Psalter]* (ca 1660) and the *Catechism* (1648) (p. 36 et seq.) and on the resemblance between a psalm fragment quoted in the *Catechism* and its correspondent version from the *Psaltire [Psalter]* (p. 39).

[24] Fragments of the catechism may also be found in Nădejde 1886, p. 161, 379, 380.

[25] A more detailed account is given in RMNY, III, in which there are made some considerations regarding its source-text as well. The Romanian translation of the Hungarian title page and of the Preface given in BRV, I is also very useful. In addition, the latter book also provides information about the text's printing style, mentioning that it uses two types of characters, each page having 23-24 lines, information which, except for Veress 1910, no other works mention, not even the edition of Tamás L. (1942).

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published in 1907 in *Revista teologică [Theological Review]*, written by Gruia. However, this paper includes little reference to the text itself, sometimes even those very notes are incorrect[26], the largest part of the study containing, in fact, a discussion on the identity of the people mentioned in the Preface of the catechism. But even in this case, the author often engages in speculation, asserting groundless facts or, in any event, facts which cannot be proved[27].

A real breakthrough in researches on Fogarasi's catechism is made only in 1942, when the first and, to our knowledge, the only edition of this text appears, published by Lajos Tamás. This edition has the undeniable merit of having facilitated the access to the text of Fogarasi and of having done the first more detailed linguistic study of the catechism. After this, we would have expected the studies on this text to increase in number. This does not happen, though. This edition seems to be unknown or poorly known in (Romanian) scientific circles, which could also be due to the fact that it is a Hungarian edition[28].

Despite its extraordinary and indisputable value[29], this edition has, nonetheless, certain shortcomings, especially if it is viewed in the light of the

[26] For instance, the author states that this text is "the first Romanian book printed with Latin letters" (p. 257 – our translation). It is well known, however, that this was preceded by *Cartea de cîntece [The Book of Songs]* (1570-1573), which likewise was written employing the Latin alphabet and Hungarian orthography. Naturally, the author could not have known about the edition of this text, made by M. Sztripszky and Gy. Alexics, published later, in 1911 (entitled *Szegedi Gergely énekeskönyve XVI. Századbeli román fordításban*, Budapest). Hence, some of the author's inadequacies may be due to the early stage of research.

[27] For instance, the author claims that Fogarasi is the author/translator of *Psaltire [the Psalter]* dated 1651 (p. 262) and that he had also collaborated with the authors of *Noul Testament de la Bălgrad [The New Testament from Bălgrad]* (p. 263).

[28] Therefore, we propose, in what follows, to briefly present it. Thus, in the first four sections, the author describes the circumstances in which the text appeared: I. *The Reformation among Romanians. Romanian translations of the Catechism of Heidelberg* (p. 3-8), II. *The source of Fogarasi's catechism and the description of the translation* (p. 9-16), III. *István Fogarasi's identity* (p. 17-18) and IV. *Who might have read Fogarasi's catechism?* (p. 19-21). These preliminary considerations are followed by a philological – linguistic study of the text which starts with chapter V. *The language of Fogarasi's catechism*, in which the author analyses 1) the phonetic properties (p. 22-24) and 2) the morpho-syntactic features of the text (p. 24-35). These analysis are followed by chapter VI. *About the script of the catechism* (p. 36-38), VII. *Text of the Decalogue* (p. 39-41), in which the author also gives the correspondent fragments of Agyagfalvi (1642) and Viski (1697), and VIII. *Prayers annexed to the catechism* (p. 42). The next chapter is IX. *The text of the catechism in facsimile and in transcription* (p. 43-65). The largest part of the work is chapter X. *Glossary of words and material* (p. 66-122). The edition ends with chapter XI. *Abstracts in foreign languages*, i.e. in German and Romanian (p. 123-130), followed by an *Afterword* (p. 131), *Index of names and words* (p. 133-136), *Contents* (p. 137) and *Corrections and additions* (the translation of the chapters' titles from this Hungarian edition belongs to us).

[29] Overall, the transcription is correct and the author's comments are relevant and valuable. It should also be pointed out that the *Glossary of words and materials*, placed at the end of the study, is extremely fruitful and instructive. It lists, in alphabetical order, the words which are relevant in terms of Romanian language history. Thus, besides specifying the meaning of the words and the contexts in which they appear, there are also made references to their uses in other texts, especially

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current state of research. For instance, the philological study is quite brief, it only indicates the number of pages, the size of the facsimile (123 X 73 mm) and a few aspects regarding the methodology of transcription, mentioning certain difficulties raised by the script/orthography. It does not offer any information about the state of the copy transcribed, nor about the used paper, ink, ornamentation etc., which a critical edition usually specifies. In addition, the transcription of the text begins only with page 7, i.e. with the Romanian title, the Hungarian title page and Preface being reproduced only in facsimile. The linguistic study, in its turn, seems to us incomplete, leaving unexploited several linguistic peculiarities of the text. For instance, although the author announces, in chapter V. 2), that he will discuss the morpho-syntactic particularities of the text, almost all his considerations refer to the morphological features of the translation only, its syntax being almost unconsidered. In this respect, it would have been very useful, for example, if he had made a syntactic analysis regarding the influence of the source-text which, as a matter of fact, is to be found quite frequently in the catechism[30]. Furthermore, the study does not extend to word formation, although Fogarasi's translation reveals an extraordinary preference for derivatives. This latter aspect is all the more important since, in the old period, one of the most frequently used means to convey less common ideas in a more accessible way to the reader was precisely the creation of new words from already known roots. Another problem with this edition resides in the way in which the author reproduces the quotations when

in Calvinist-Romanian texts of the 16th – 17th centuries. The author also provides bibliographical references to these words and their usage. Due to the fact that the linguistic material of the *Catechism* is discussed related to the vocabulary of the previous epochs and to the contemporary usage, this *Glossary* offers an approximate image of old Romanian (literary) language. In addition, this part of the work also offers certain details about the Hungarian influence on Romanian language in general, and about the influence of the Hungarian source-text on the translation, in particular, which is reflected, mainly, in the domain of vocabulary, the text including many Hungarian loanwords and calques (for examples, see p. 80, 81, 82, 87, 93, 107).

[30] The fact that the source-text has not been made use of may be explained, among other things, by the circumstance that the author became aware of the existence of its editions (in Mózes András: *Az erdélyi román reformáció kátéirodalma*, Kolozsvár, 1942) only after he finished a great part of his work, as he claims in his *Afterword* (p. 131). Nevertheless, Tamás L. offers a few examples of the manifestation of the Hungarian source-text's influence which may be found "particularly, quite clearly and frequently, in the domains of syntax and word formation" (p. 129). Hence, the author gives examples of "literal translations" (calques) and of Hungarian loanwords characteristic not only for Fogarasi's translation but also for other Romanian Protestant religious texts of the 16th – 17th centuries translated from Hungarian. Besides the words of Hungarian origin employed in the northern Romanian regions, there are mentioned some Hungarian loanwords of bookish origin too, which occur only in this particular translation (p. 15, 129). Furthermore, the author observes that, although the Romanian text is unquestionably based on the Latin version too, the influence of the Hungarian source is much more remarkable (see p. 12-15). This state of affairs may also be sustained by the fact that Fogarasi claims, in the Hungarian title, that the translation has been made "from Latin and Hungarian" (cf. "deákból és magyarból"), on page 5 of his Preface, however, only the Hungarian source is mentioned: "I have translated [it] from Hungarian into Romanian with not little effort" (cf. "Magyar nyelvről Olára nem kitsiny munkával meg-forditottam").

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analysing the linguistic material offered by the text. Thus, if we take into account that the (Romanian) researchers' access to this text could have been restricted because of "the barbarism of the orthography" (Iorga 1928, p. 334), since it has been printed with Latin characters and "with a curious Hungarian spelling" (BRV, I, p. 164)[31], this obstacle still hinders in the linguistic study of the edition because, except for the transcription itself, the Hungarian spelling is kept in the morphological and lexical analysis made by the author.

4. Conclusions

Taking into account those stated above, we believe that a critical edition made entirely in Romanian language in which the text of Fogarasi would be accompanied by its source-texts and which would gather all the results offered sporadically in various papers could have favoured and maintained the interest of researchers. However, in the absence of such preoccupation, except for certain references made in different books concerned with the history of Romanian language[32] and/or literature, after the edition of Tamás L., the catechism printed in 1648 seems to be abandoned. If catechisms, in general, are of particular importance for the study of foreign influences on Romanian writing (Panaitescu 1965, p. 158), this statement is obviously true for the text we have made our notes on. "Although the publication of Ștefan Fogarasi's catechism in 1648 is merely a modest epilogue to the history of Hungarian-Romanian relations, the significance of this event consists of the fact that it gives us a vivid mirror representing the endeavours undertaken in this particular epoch" (Tamás 1942, p. 127 – our translation). Therefore, the *Catechism* of Fogarasi is worth paying attention to and further studying due to its cultural, religious and linguistic importance since it is

[31] Running from the end of the 16th century, "the Calvinist schools of Caransebeș, Hațeg and Lugoj have created among Romanian people a cultural discontinuity, establishing Latin language instead of Slavonic and Hungarian alphabet instead of the Cyrillic one on the basis of education. This explains the emergence of the manuscripts and printings which employ the new printing letters" (Moldovanu 2007-2008, p. 51 – our translation). Thus, most of the Romanian texts written with Latin characters and Hungarian spelling do not represent, in fact, "a curiosity", but "a unitary expression of a religious and literary movement" (Pantaleoni 2007, p. 55 – our translation), namely Calvinism which flourished in the regions of Banat-Hunedoara between the 16th - 17th centuries. Nevertheless, the reproduction of Romanian sounds in writing must have been a real challenge even for Fogarasi because, in those times, he did not have at hand a more or less definitive graphical tradition for employing Latin letters, as there existed for the use of Cyrillic letters, for instance. Hence, in that epoch, this kind of endeavour was actually an act of creation (Tamás, p. 36). Although such attempts have already been made, sporadically, before him, he may have not been acquainted with them, therefore, he had to solve the problem raised by the notation of the specific Romanian sounds by using the available range of Latin and Hungarian letters (*ibidem*, p. 36). Then, beginning with the 17th century, there also increases the number of those Romanian texts which employ Latin letters but which are not related to Calvinism (for examples, see Pantaleoni 2007, p. 46 et seq.).

[32] Among these, it is worth mentioning, for instance, the notes on certain linguistic features of the text found in Gheție 1975 (p. 305-309).

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the product of an epoch characterized by intense confessional unrest and conflicts. In addition, it also offers a substantial linguistic material regarding both the evolution of Romanian (literary) language and the Hungarian influences which, we believe, have not been sufficiently exploited yet.

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