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V. VARIA

THE GATHERING OF MANY TEACHINGS. RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN ROMANIA (16TH–18TH CENTURIES)

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ABSTRACT. Although the history of the 16th-18th centuries fails to offer comprehensive information about the contemporary interest in adult education, there is evidence of initiatives to provide adult instruction, undifferentiated, yet concurrent with the education provided to children and young people. This paper gives insight into the old Romanian literature on the territory of Moldavia and Wallachia, in order to identify and analyze ideas, reflections and pedagogical solutions relevant for the continuing and adult education. While the religious educational aims and contents prevailed during the 16th century, being in close connection with the cultural activity of the time, mainly carried out within the churches and monastic schools, and intended to educate the upper class, the period between the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century showed the tendency to diversify the content, for reasons related to the need of population, regardless their social class, to access the scientific and practical knowledge of that time. The historical research will consider both texts that capture the general movement of ideas of the time, and the criticism accumulated in the Romanian cultural space, structured in a distinct direction of historical research on education, the history of education. We will resort to historical arguments in order to establish the main directions relevant to the specificity of continuing and adult education that stand out within this period: a. elements of religious education for adults in the Slavonic literature (16th-17th centuries) ; b. diversifying the ideas of adult education in the content of religious texts in order to disseminate moral and social cohabitation norms with educational value, through multiplication of translations into Romanian of biblical writings (end of 17th century—first half of the 18th century); c. the appearance of the first instructional and practical textbooks for adults (second half of the 18th century).

Keywords: religious education for adults, moral education for adults, practical textbooks.

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1. Historical context

The Christian education of adults in the monasteries is part of the first educational manifestations of humanity whose stated purpose is to prepare the individuals for life. The first monastic schools were founded in the 4th century, at the initiative of Saint Basil the Great, the main beneficiaries of the instruction being the monastic staff who had responsibilities in copying books with religious content. The new institutions start to develop in all regions where Christianity was spreading, thus occupying a distinct place in the development of Middle Ages education. The monastic school of Fulda, Germany, or that in the Eastern Europe, set up on Mount Athos, became landmarks in the medieval Christian education. Later, the first elements of a secular culture appeared during the 16th–17th centuries, and circulated concurrently with the spread of heresies. The new realities lead to the emergence of the cultural movement called *scholasticism*, based on the principle according to which Christian dogmas must be rationally grounded. Gradually, the spirit of scholasticism contributes to the emergence of an education system centered on both theological and abstract, empirical contents derived from the experiences of the contemporaries.

In Romania, the monastic schools from Moldavia and Wallachia remained in the historiography as the first institutions that materialized the forms of Slavonic education, strongly influenced by the evolution of the church[1]. In the national tradition, the founding of Wallachia and Moldavia is called "descălecare" (*dismounting*), a term that denotes *colonization, settlement, foundation*, and which shows that the establishment of the two principalities was achieved due to people coming from afar, riding on their horses[2]. As for Transylvania, the fate of the Romanians was under the domination of the Hungarian kings, and it would fundamentally change in 1699, when Hungary would pass under the authority of Austria. In the 18th century, the influence of the Lutheran and Calvinist church will be replaced with the Catholic one[3]. As a matter of fact, Transylvania, Banat, the Hungarian areas had only occasional contact with the political organization of the free Romanians, and their political and religious life was found in a different context with different influences, stated the historian Nicolae Iorga[4].

[1] Ş. Bârsănescu, *Istoria pedagogiei românești* (București: Societatea Română de Filozofie, 1941), 23.
[2] A.D. Xenopol, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană. Ediția a III-a. Primii domni și vechile așezăminte (1290-1457)* (București: Editura Cartea Românească, 1925), III: 12.
[3] I. Găvănescul, *Istoria pedagogiei*, Ediția a II-a (București: Editura Librăriei & Tipografiei H. Steinberg, 1922), 241.
[4] N. Iorga, *Istoria bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor* (Vălenii de Munte: Editura Neamul Românesc, 1908), I: 19.

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The political process of founding and strengthening the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia was naturally followed by the development and strengthening of the church, which was mainly due to the recognition of the two Metropolitan Churches, between 1352-1364, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople[5], the highest church authority in the Eastern Orthodox Church. These political and cultural realities explain the predominance of the Slavic language in the two Romanian territories, as it was the official language of both the church and the state, similar to the Latin used for sermons in Transylvania and the West[6]. The social and educational impact of the new political and cultural realities will be strongly felt, especially by the inhabitants, the "lower" social classes, separated from the administrative leadership of the state. A.D. Xenopol characterizes the linguistic and social cleavage of the two categories, the leading class, Slavic speakers, and the rest of the people, speaking Daco-Romanian, maintained until the 19th century, as follows:

> "The Slavonic language was too little spoken by this people who expressed their needs and thoughts in their ancestral language. Thus, related to culture, this dualism has always accompanied us during all periods of our history: the upper class, usually estranged from the thinking of the people, breaking its moral unity: during the Slavonic period, with the Slavonic language; during the Greek period, with Greek, in recent times, with the French, always receiving and feeding another foreigner with its powerful body. This is, in brief, the main feature of the whole cultural development of the Romanian people."[7]

The Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga marks the first stage of the founding of monastic life in Moldavia and Wallachia in the "Slavonic Stage" (14th-16th centuries). This is followed by the "Slavic-Romanian Stage," associated with the multiplication and diversification of religious prints translated into Romanian (16th–17th centuries), and the "Romanian Stage," by the end of the 18th century and the early 19th century[8]. We will preserve these delimitations, stating that our research will mainly capture and analyze the contributions of the texts that have benefited from Romanian translations, for reasons related to the increased influence they had on the majority population of the two Romanian territories. We will further analyze the ideas, reflections and pedagogical solutions relevant to the adult and continuing education, written on the territories of Moldavia and Wallachia in the centuries that followed the founding the two principalities.

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[5] M. Păcurariu, *Istoria bisericii ortodoxe române* (București: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al B.O.R., 2006).
[6] N. Djuvara, *A brief illustrated history of Romanians* (București: Humanitas, 2014), 34.
[7] Xenopol, *Istoria românilor*, 205.
[8] Iorga, *Istoria bisericii*, 39.

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2. Methodology

The paper is based on a qualitative historical research that enables us to explore and explain the meanings, stages and characteristics of the processes of adult education and learning in Romania, between 16th and 18th century. The evolution of concepts and practices regarding the field of adult education is divided into periods, in relation to the historical stages of the Romanian state evolution and the socio-cultural dominants. The historical research will analyze both the texts that capture the general movement of ideas of the period, as well as the criticism in the Romanian cultural space, structured in a distinct research direction of the educational historiographical field: the history of education. Regarding primary sources, it is necessary to clarify the following: for reasons related to the lack of access to the texts printed in the analyzed period (because many of them were lost, damaged or destroyed, without being re-published), we consulted the translation of their copies included by Ion Bianu and Nerva Hodoș in *Bibliografie românească veche [Early Romanian Bibliography]* (BRV), Volume I (published in 1903), and Volume II (published in 1910). Romanian exegesis and historiography consent that the authors of these primary sources of historical information were prominent figures of the communities they represented or originated from: rulers of the pre-modern Romanian states, or of the relevant communities. In addition, the corpus analized includes secondary sources: monographs, lexicographic, historiographic and history works of Romanian pedagogy.

3. Adult education in the first religious texts. The Slavonic Stage (16th–17th centuries)

Throughout most of its history, Romania has a state of Orthodox and Catholic denomination, in which the Church has enjoyed important privileges in education matters. The clearest example for the Church's influence can be found in the permanent presence of the Christian doctrine and the Biblical history in the texts published in this period. We may state this is a reference period for understanding the historical and cultural determinants of adult education, both in terms of the specifics of the prints and the activities of the institutions that support and generalize the ideas. The old Romanian translations of Biblical and patristic texts represent, at least in the 16th and 17th centuries, the result of initially occasional activities, too little included, later on, in the framework of a unitary activity. The translators, trained within the church, often act under the impetus of concrete and relatively stringent needs, as well as cultural-religious

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initiatives[9]. With reference to the written text, elements of continuing and adult education can be identified since the 16th century, in the first prints containing religious norms and teachings, intended for all, both children and adults. Monk Macarie printed the first texts in Slavonic, which provide moral and religious advice to guide an undifferentiated education for all stages of life, like the *Liturghierul din* 1508 *(Liturgy of 1508),* the first paper printed in Wallachia, the Octoich of 1510, the *Evangheliarul (Gospel)* of 1512, used in both the chancelleries and the religious services[10]. Such a message appears in the *Evangheliarul slavonesc* (*Slavonic Gospel*), printed by Deacon Coresi, in 1562: "I pray the youth and the elderly, and the young and the old, that thou shalt come around!"[11]. *Coming around* send to the stages of an extended lifelong education, gained exclusively through the knowledge and observance of religious parables.

The *Învățăturile lui Neagoe Basarab către fiul său Teodosie* (*Teachings of Neagoe Basarab to his son Teodosie*), a text allegedly written by Neagoe Basarab, the ruler of Wallachia between 1518-1521, provide an overview of the cultural and religious ambiance of that age. Although, in modern times, Neagoe Basarab's teachings have gained the fame of being one of the greatest European books of the 16th century, their value was only recognized in the last decades of the last century, due to the theory of the text's inaccuracy, and use of the Slavonic language, as the main limits that contributed to the difficult interpretation and generalization. Ștefan Bârsănescu states that the *Teachings* is "the first Romanian pedagogical writing"[12], and Nicolae Cartojan considers it "the most important masterpiece of Romanian thinking and feeling in the Slavic language"[13], while for the influential contemporary thinker, Adrian Neculau the *Teachings* predict many of the themes of modern psycho-sociology, such as leadership relationships with close collaborators, psychological elements of negotiation, social merit evaluation, advice on ways to gain social and moral accomplishment etc. [14]. Structured in eleven parts, the text proposes and develops sets of religious and political teachings in the scholastic culture, which in fact represented a "true treatise of guiding the *people* towards the Christian life[15]." According to Neagoe

[9] A. Gafton, „Relația dintre sursele traducerilor biblice și concepția de la baza acestora", in *Text și discurs religios* (Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" din Iași, 2009), 125-134.

[10] I. Bianu and N. Hodoș, *Bibliografie românească veche 1508-1830*, Tom I, 1508-1716 (București: Ediția Academiei Române, Atelierele Socec, 1903), 47.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Bârsănescu, *Istoria pedagogiei,* 23.

[13] N. Cartojan, *Istoria literaturii române vechi*, Vol. I, *Dela origini până la epoca lui Matei Basarab și Vasile Lupu,* (București: Fundația pentru Literatura și Artă „Regele Carol II", 1940), 42.

[14] A. Neculau, "Începuturile unei viziuni psihosociale asupra manifestărilor umane la cărturarii români", in *Psihologie socială în România*, red. Ana Tucicov Bogdan (București: Editura Academiei, 1984).

[15] Bârsănescu, *Istoria pedagogiei*, 16.

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Basarab, the education made in the spirit of continuing the royal traditions, and observing, throughout the life, the forefathers' parables and practices, is the guarantee of a valuable continuing education.

Continuing education ideas also appear in *Evanghelia învățătoare* (*The Gospel of the Teacher*), printed at Govora, in 1642. The text records the exclusive interest in learning and understanding the religious content by all *those* in the "darkness of misunderstanding," young or old, scholars or illiterates:

> "I pray you to read this book for your soul because it is full of meaning, and reveals the mysteries of God. The light and glow of the Holy Spirit illuminates all who are in the darkness of misunderstanding, makes the young wiser, and strengthens the elderly."[16]

We find the similar ideas in another writing printed in the same year, 1642, in Wallachia, also. *Învățătura pentru toate zilele (Everyday Teachings)*, a work printed by Melchisedec, the abbot of Câmpulung-Muscel Monastery, is intended for all "little and grown up" readers. The preface justifies the purpose of its translation and printing: "to be handy and useful because the Greek language cannot be understood by all the people of our country, that is why I brought them out to light, to help the little and the grownups understand them"[17].

> "For we see in the teachings how to achieve good things earlier, and how people have established their homes. I have had to bring these teachings into Romanian, to make them handy and useful not only to those who know, but to those who do not know the Greek language."[18]

The text has two educational objectives: learning the Romanian language, necessary to the people for accessing new information in a formal context (e.g. schools, monasteries), and learning the practical advice, useful in the daily life of the contemporary adults.

A particular interest of the feudal society seems to have been the instruction of the girls. The *Îndreptarea legii* (*Rectifying the Law*), a text published at Târgoviște, in 1652, includes the punishments for the person (the "teaching woman") who did not provide religious education, generally suitable for the female learners, and brief references to the nature of the studied contents, and some elements supporting the existence of an educational system paid by parents:

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[16] Bianu and Hodoș, BRV, I: 123.

[17] M. Gaster, *Chrestomație română*. *Texte tipărite și manuscrise, Secolele XVI-XIX,* Vol. I (București: Socec, 1891).

[18] Bianu and Hodoș, BRV, I: 123.

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> "The one who will give his daughter to be instructed by a teaching woman, or to learn another craft, will also have to pay for the studies and food, and if she, through teaching, misdirects her without the knowledge of the parents, the judge will punish her."[19]

The text also records the first teachings for parents derived from the need to provide children with moral education in accordance with the community values. The concerns related to cultivating the virtues of sons and daughters, their duty to respect and help their family, some provisions related to the methods of discipline, as well as how to make children accountable for their actions, are some of the pedagogical ideas emerging from the text that mainly envisage the noble families who ignore the education of the children, relying on "the good ancestral heritage."

> "Those who believe that goodness comes from their ancestors are completely mistaken. Similarly, the evil and bad life habits are not passed on by great men, but each, according to his actions, either feels ashamed of or glorifies them. A man, regardless of his famous and good parents or relatives, should be punished and despised if his deeds are evil and unnecessary. Moreover, if an offspring of good people is being raised alike, and makes wonderful things and improvements, with great effort and carefulness, then he deserves to be illuminated and praised."[20]

By the end of the 17th century, many translations into Romanian of the collections of religious texts that had the stated purpose of explaining, for everyone's sake, the passages of the Holy Scriptures, mainly through the ecclesiastical services, appeared on the territory of Moldavia and Wallachia. The priests or clergy of inferior rank, especially from the rural area, were almost always recruited from the peasantry, and the religious culture of church servants was often poor due to the lacking knowledge of the Slavic language[21].

4. Diversifying religious contents. The Slavonic-Romanian Stage (17th- 18th centuries)

Therefore, the religious literature has been gradually diversified and made accessible through a large number of translated *Psalteries and Homilies*, used both for disseminating the Christian morality, and the social cohabitation

[19] Colectivul de Drept Vechi condus de Andrei Rădulescu, *Îndreptarea legii*. 1652 (București: Editura Academiei R. P. R., 1962)
[20] Ibid.
[21] Djuvara, *A brief Illustrated History*, 65.

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rules. To the believers, these sermon collections represented a real moral and spiritual support in the struggle with the increasing heresies. As for the cultural activity of that time, some of the great monasteries in Wallachia and Moldavia focused on it by copying and decorating manuscripts, by translating the Holy Scriptures and other religious books into Romanian and participating in the activities carried out by religious and royal embroidery workshops and mural painting schools[22]. According to Nicolae Iorga, the activity conducted by the Church in this period was remarkable, and the heritage left by it is responsible for the existence of some peculiarities that will feed the struggle for strengthening the national identity[23].

The Metropolitan Varlaam of Moldavia is the one who, in the spirit of Deacon Coresi, draws up the first series of the most widely spread sermons of the old Romanian literature. The value of the *Cărţii româneşti de învăţătură (Romanian Teaching Book)* or Cazania (*Homily*) (1643) made the text enjoy a great appreciation in the year of its appearance and long after, the work being a reference to the preaching activity for about three hundred years, with a determining contribution to the Romanians' awareness of their spiritual identity[24]. Moreover, the historians consider Varlaam's *Homily* to be the book that successfully fulfilled the mission of defending the Orthodoxy from the attacks by the Protestants who had begun to exert influence even on the representatives of the church. Given that the sermons had been exclusively held in the Slavonic language until the 17th century, Varlaam's preaches from the pulpit, followed by the priests' reading of the preaches in the *Cartea românească de învăţătură (The Romanian Teaching Book)* had an important role in the consolidation of the Romanians' the idea of spiritual unity. It seems that the dialogue encouraged by Varlaam in *Cazania* (*Homily*), made the audience share the biblical events presented, thus making it more receptive after each sermon. Due to its purely Orthodox content understandable by everyone, *Cazania* (*Homily*) taught Christians the norms of the Orthodox faith by insisting on the evil done by heretics and offering teachings that urged them to a moral life consistent with the social norms ("pravilele") of the time[25].

At the beginning of the 18th century, Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul from Wallachia enjoyed the same success in making accessible and disseminating religious teachings, as Metropolitan Varlaam, in Moldavia. *Didahiile* (*Didaches)* are the reference writings to reflect on the realities of the time, being drafted in

[22] Xenopol, *Istoria românilor*, 241.
[23] Iorga, *Istoria bisericii*, 17.
[24] Djuvara, *A brief Illustrated History.*
[25] C. Giurescu (ed.), *Istoria învăţământului din România* (Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, 1971), 58.

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the most updated Romanian by that time[26]. Written between 1709 and 1716, *Didahiile* (*Didaches*) encompass ecclesiastical writings, materialized in discourses of educational value, delivered during sermons held in Bucharest and Târgovişte. Nicolae Iorga argue that the sermons in *Didaches* provided both a genuine collection of moral and pedagogical lectures, as well as moral lessons. While the printed books addressed the young and old readers, either the clergy or the laic people, the *Didaches* of Antim Ivireanul mainly addressed the ignorant social classes, to educate them, beyond the religious purposes, and against social inequalities and injustices[27]:

> "If you did not know until now and there was no one to teach you, now you know that I address all the people from Wallachia, young and old, except for the pagans and those who do not share our Law with us and are oppressive."[28]

The Biblical text also appears as the only means and purpose for instruction in the *Evanghelia învăţătoare (Teaching Gospel),* printed at Dealu Monastery in 1644. Having the "scripture craft," "light in hands," led to "changing the mind and loving the doctrine," as the ultimate goal of religious education being the knowledge of biblical passages. In fact, the first religious books translated into Romanian had exclusively educational purpose[29]. The Gospel text captures different levels of knowledge of the text:

> "Some do not have the craft of the Scriptures at all, and they are like a ship without a helm in the midst of the sea, so that it may sink; others have the craft, but they do not do what the Scripture says and so they sink, having the light in their hand; others read the Scripture but do not understand, as the ones who keep the light on, but has no eyes to see, and this is how most of our people is now."[30]

In a *Cazanie (Homily)*, which appeared in Râmnic, in 1748, religious messages appear supplemented by advises that support the need for lifelong learning. The skills acquired throughout the life provide the measure of knowledge and wisdom at the old age, and the gatherings of youth determine the evolution to maturity:

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[26] N. Iorga, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea (1688-1821)*, Vol. 1, *Epoca lui Dimitrie Cantemir* (Bucureşti: Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, 1964), 331.
[27] Ibid., 332.
[28] A. Ivireanul, *Din Didahiile ţinute în Mitropolia din Bucureşti*. Notiţe biografice de Dr. I. Cernoi (Bucureşti: Editura Librăriei Socec, 1895), 29.
[29] Giurescu, *Istoria învăţământului*, 44.
[30] Bianu and Hodoş, BRV, I: 105.

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> "We can know that the skills a man learns when he is young rest with him until he is old and not only valid for the human nature, as also the trees, whatever fruits they make when they are young, they will be the same up to the end."[31]

In *Adunare de multe învățături (The Gathering of Many Teachings)*, a collection of religious texts, which was published in Iaşi, under the direction of Moldavian Metropolitan Iacov, in 1757, the book became a "hermitage," and the knowledge of the forefathers' experiences would "bring them to light at all times of life"[32]. This text appears at a time when, in Moldavia, the Moldavian historians Grigore Ureche, Ion Neculce and Miron Costin printed the *Letopisețe,* as an early stage of the Romanian historiography.

Some adult education ideas also appear in *Ducere de mână către cinste (Guidance to Honor)*, a text published in 1777, in Romanian and German, in Vienna, that was widely spread dissemination in the two Romanian provinces. The work structures in chapters several sets of moral and religious teachings offered to the future families:

> "For good habits or for justice or for a man's honour, regarding his thoughts and deeds/For whoever marries and how man should look to all who are honoured and praised/For keeping the house and for what to do and what to know for being a good host."[33]

Divanul sau Gâlceava înțeleptului cu lumea sau giudețul sufletului cu trupul (The Salvation of the Wise Man and the Ruin of the Sinful World), by Dimitrie Cantemir, the prince of Moldavia, was published in 1698, in Romanian and Greek. In *Divanul* we can identify the first reflections that support the need to establish a differentiated education, by age, as Cantemir introduced in the Romanian educational literature elements of differentiating education according to the age criterion, and established, in an empirical manner, the steps in the individual evolution.

To Cantemir, the human life is the expression of a succession of stages[34]: *the infancy*, the first age, corresponds to the first seven years of life, called "the flower of life, the example for other ages, as it has no evil"; the next is the *childhood*, followed by the *catarigia (puberty)*. Cantemir considers that childhood

[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 97.
[33] Ibid., 222.
[34] D. Cantemir, *Divanul sau gâlceava înțeleptului cu lumea sau giudețul sufletului cu trupul*, Established textbook, translation of the Greek version and glossary by Virgil Cândea (București: Editura Minerva, 1990), 22-33.

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and puberty are "stages that determine the moral constitution of man through the good habits acquired"; *voinicia (early adulthood)* is the forth age, corresponding to youth, coming with "high desires, energy and mobility"; *manhood* is the fifth age, described as the "maturing of the human life"; *cărunţenia (young seniority)* or "the beginning of the man's life decay"; *bătrâneţea (old age)* is the last and seventh age. The comparison of man's evolution with that of the tree is frequently used in both scholastic and humanistic education approaches, as highlighted by Jan Amos Comenius, in *Pampaedia*, a reference text for that time. In Cantemir's view, the purpose of education is to form the spirit, the individual who possesses the "supreme gift of wisdom, a superior state of the soul," built by a set of characteristics: the disposition to premeditate the action, "for doing all the work in good faith," the disposition to respect the rules of life "set by laws, a strong will, the ability to comprehend, and humanity."[35]

Gradually, real cultural centers are formed near the great monasteries, supported by the throne. It is the case of Three Hierarchs Monastery, organised by the Moldavian Ruler Vasile Lupu in 1640, and Horezu Monastery (Hurezi), founded by Constantin Brâncoveanu in Wallachia, in 1690, that were both hosting schools, workshops, printing houses, laboratories where the culture and "the language of the Romanian people" were being "processed," to spread the Orthodox faith[36]. Towards the end of the 17th century, these schools sheltered true centres that included calligraphy schools that taught manuscript copying and copywriting, which contributed to the development and organisation of education. In fact, the 17th century is known as the one in which the first schools that "are required by the specific needs of the time" appeared[37]. Based on the stated purpose of supporting Orthodoxy, the schools of those years are among the first educational institutions similar to the Western schools according to their content and purpose.

5. The first instructional and practical texts for adults (18th century)

The 18th century brings important structural changes. From a political point of view, Moldova, in 1711 and Wallachia, in 1715, came under the domination of the Phanariotes families, and Transylvania under the Hapsburg Empire. The clerical schools that functioned within monasteries, bishops or churches continue to work with similar objectives to the previous stage:

[35] Ibid., 28.

[36] V. Citirigă, "Cina Domnului după Calvin, privită din punct de vedere ortodox," *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai-Theologia Orthodoxa* 51, no. 2 (2006): 45-59.

[37] Gh. Părnuță, *Istoria învățământului și gândirea pedagogică din Țara Românească* (sec. XVII-XIX) (București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1971).

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attracting as many believers as possible and preparing priestly staff[38]. A characteristic of this period is the fact that, beyond the wide use of Greek education, associated with the new state governments, the focus of the scholars on establishing an education system in Romanian is amplified. If, over a century ago, the privilege of education, religious in general, belonged exclusively to the clergy and to those trained in the monastic schools, since the 18th century there is a tendency to generalize education among the people, the education in Romanian being, gradually, the main means of creation and materialization of knowledge. Ştefan Bârsănescu (1941) shows the importance of this period for "the history of the Romanian teaching books" and marks the 18th century in the "stage of early manuals"[39], The literature and educational institutions of this stage reflect the change of paradigm.

Ceasornicul domnilor (The Compass of Princes), text translated by Nicolae Costin between 1710 and 1712, records the first Romanian contents with explicitly expressed aims in the direction of adult instruction, and mainly materialized in counselling for parents. The main educational ideas identified in the text refer to differentiated approaches to education, based on gender characteristics, parents' responsibilities in children's education. For Nicolae Iorga, the examples in *The Compass of Princes* were "full of teachings and contemptuously read by contemporaries"[40]. The criticism on social stratification and the excessive care for children of the parents belonging to the ruling classes become milestones in the analysis of the educational literature of the 18th century. The text also shows the idea of family empowerment in the teacher selection phase, but also a first description of its qualities:

> "A mature man, between forty and sixty years old, pure, loving truth, gentle, temperamental, moderate, steadfast, righteous, known for understanding the books he read, both the holy and the profane ones.
>
> The parents are to be blamed for the teachers' defects, as they are the ones who choose them badly, for I have chosen unknowing tailors, it is my my fault that they to ruined the coat!"[41]

This is when the earliest didactic texts and rural economy books were published, in order to popularise science and help the people to overcome their limits.

[38] Giurescu, *Istoria*, 65.
[39] Bârsănescu, *Istoria,* 38.
[40] Iorga, *Istoria bisericii,* 44.
[41] Ibid.

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In 1785, in Vienna, there was published *Carte trebuincioasă pentru dascăli (A Useful Book for Teachers)*, in Romanian and in German, as the first pedagogy paper written in Romanian[42].

Aimed at developing the concept of teacher education, proposed by Iosif Moesiodax several decades ago, *A Useful Book for Teachers* is one of the first textbooks for teacher training, as a "teaching guide for teachers for educating the young people," so that "this dignity should not fall into the hands of undignified people without the needed knowledge"[43]. The paper is structured on two sections and a conclusion, called "addition." The first part outlines the profile of the teacher, his "spiritual assets," the second describes the contents of the education, and the postface ("addition") mentions aspects related to the organization of the educational institutions "in order to keep the school order in good condition"[44].

> "This book should train qualified, useful people and true teachers for schools. All these books were written to help teachers educate as soon as they can wise and courageous Christians, good citizens, workers, married, honest, honest, obedient, faithful servants, in a word, the perfect men—as much as possible."[45]

The teaching books series is completed by the teacher's manual, *Lecţione*, of Toader Şcoleru, published in Iaşi in 1789, aiming at teaching the "Moldovan" and Russian languages, and *Desvoltatele şi tâlcuitele Evanghelii (Gospel Developed and Explained),* published in 1790 in Sibiu. The latter paper develops the teaching methods used in delivering religious contents, with emphasis on the valences of reading and catechetical conversation:

> "Together they should rarely read, but when the disciples do not have books, then the teacher or a skilful disciple must read the Gospel rarely and clearly, to be remembered."[46]

Economia stupilor (The Economics of Beehives) is a rural economy manual drafted by the Transylvanian doctor Ioan Piuariu Molnar in Vienna, in 1785, in both Romanian and German, and it was widely spread in Moldova and Wallachia. Considered to be the first Transylvanian economic publication written by a Romanian, *The Economics of Beehives* remains in the Romanian historiography as

[42] Părnuţă, *Istoria,* 245.
[43] Bianu and Hodoş, BRV, II: 360.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 335.

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the text that not only transmits the necessary information to improve farming methods, but also makes significant contributions to the development of the Romanian language (see the studies signed by Stela Petcu, 1965, R. Tudoran, 1960, Ovidiu Densuşianu, 1915). The adult education has two relevant aspects: first of all, it has to answer to concrete teaching needs, because "only through the science and application of verified agricultural methods, the contemporaries will succeed in leaving the state of ignorance and poverty." Therefore, the text contributes to the enrichment and diversification of the contents with teaching values of those times. Second, the author's focus on making the new information widely accessible is obvious, fact that leads his efforts to "adapt the literary language to the unique language of the people"[47], through the use of popular language, the frequent use of regionalisms, as well as some agricultural notions borrowed from the old Slavic language, known by the most of the inhabitants. Below are the author arguments for writing this text:

> "Dear reader! Whoever you are, a priest or other worker, home-keeping, bee-lover, seeing myself and knowing how the bee-keepers pass over the goodness of this economy with cunning eyes, and how they take the bees under guard, until they fill their baskets with good things, and then they punish them with death, I felt the duty to show, besides other teachings, what the bee keepers should know."[48]

Oarecare secreturi ale lucrării pământului (Some secrets of the work of the earth) is another manual in Romanian, published in 1796, in Bucharest, having the role of educating peasants in the field of plowing and sowing, in order to increase the agricultural production":

> "Our plumbers do not have the science of their craft, but they only follow what they have learned in their villages, from the locals, and this is the reason they cannot multiply their sown and fruit. This is the reason for which we have gathered these secrets, and we have put them in our people's language, because the craft is an endless treasure. Many times, people who used their craft have worked wonders.
>
> If anyone could see how a skilful plowman makes hundreds kilograms of wheat, by preparing his field beforehand with wisdom, and sowing it in proper weather, it would consider it a great wonder."[49]

[47] S. Petcu, "Limba lui I. Molnar-Piuariu în *Economia stupilor*," *Extras din Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Series Philologia, Fasc. I*. (Cluj, 1965): 107.
[48] Bianu and Hodoş, BRV, II: 309.
[49] Ibid., 389.

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Simultaneously with the influence of the humanist texts in establishing the foundations of an indigenous culture, the Romanian educational literature continues to have two tendencies, until the end of the eighteenth century: a modern one, that replaces the Slavic language with Romanian, both in church and religious documents and in schools, and a traditionalist one, which maintains the Slavonic culture, especially in the clergy schools, where the study of religious texts prevails[50].

6. Discussion and Conclusion

An incursion into the history and historiography of the 16th and 18th centuries seems important to establish the roots of a differentiated education, religiously driven, in its first stages, carried out on the territories of Moldavia and Wallachia in the period that followed their constitution. In order to identify the main stages of the evolution of the domain, two criteria of analysis were taken into consideration: the content characteristics of the educational literature and the specificity of the historical and cultural context of the Romanian society, reflected in the explored texts. At the level of exegesis and historiography there is a consensus that the signatories of these texts have benefited from influence and authority in the communities they have represented, but for certain periods in Romania's history they remain the only written sources that provide information on social life and educational practices relevant to the education of the adults.

The investigated documentary materials demonstrate that, without existing a systematic pedagogical literature devoted explicitly to adult learners, the ideas, reflections of contemporaries, and the educational solutions relevant to the field can be identified, starting with the first religious texts printed in the Slavonic language, and in their translations into Romanian and in the first teaching books that appeared at the end of the 18th century. Even though adult education is predominantly secular in the contemporary world, historical research reveals important connections between the early stages of adult education and the first printed texts, with a predominantly religious nature, but also the activity of the first organizations responsible for education during the medieval ages, i.e. the religious institutions. The original purposes of adult education are religious, as only the copywriters and book writers in the monasteries were literate and able to copy religious texts. Towards the end of the 17th century, the texts with

[50] M. Momanu and M.E. Samoilă, "Elements of Continuous and Adult Education in the Romanian Literature and Institutions of the 15th-17th Centuries," *Scientific Annals of "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Educational Sciences Series* XV (Iași, 2011): 5-16.

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educational purpose gain an eclectic character, and the Christian teachings are being gradually supplemented, then replaced, with philosophical, moral and applicative sentences. The diversification and multiplication of secular cultural elements and the orientation of the educational literature towards more practical disciplines become the main constants of the 18th century.

Even though the idea of a systematized education adapted to the characteristics of each age materializes a few centuries later, the content of the old religious texts confirms that the beginning of adult education in the Romanian cultural space is deeply rooted in the historiographical tradition, while the predominantly religious pedagogical reflections and educational approaches will be maintained until the end of the 18th century, when they become the source for the actions associated with a new stage, the "Romanian stage."

Knowledge in the field of adult education is not a static corpus, but an open structure, conditioned by developments that send to the accumulation of facts, ideas and reflections, from the widest, general to the most specialized and applied, derived from experiences concrete, and often difficult to generalize to the new theoretical perspectives, being enrolled in a continuous reconfiguration process. The discourse on adult education addresses both the conceptual, theoretical and the axiological sphere, with prescriptive function, and last but not least approaches the empirical educational levels that determine interrogations and invites to search for solutions articulated to concrete situations and social actors.

Historic research validates the existence of an interest in adult education, registering the activities of Romanian scholars starting with the 16th and 17th centuries. Works of Romanian pedagogical historiography mentions the formalized actions of adult education and learning, more or less institutionalized or systematized. Nowadays, talking about the field of adult education in Romania represents a necessary yet laborious undertaking, and the assertion becomes certainty as the studies in the field are advancing. We believe the ideas, theories and practices that we identified in the Romanian educational literature, starting with the 16th century contribute to the establishment of the field's identity and favor the contextualized significance of contemporary approaches.

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