Argumentative Strategies in *Cuvînt de îngropare vechiului Ştefan voevod, domnul Moldovei, ce s'a numit «mare» pentru marile vrednicii şi vitejii ale sale*

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Ce discours religieux est l'un des hymnes le plus expressif dévoué au voïvode Étienne le Grand ou Étienne III Muşat de Moldavie (Ştefan cel Mare). Les principaux objectifs de cet article sont de dévoiler et d'analyser les éléments de la composition spécifiques aux sermons roumains typiques que l'on retrouve aussi dans ce sermon du XVIIIe siècle mais aussi de mettre en évidence les caractéristiques insolites de composition qu'elle détient. En premier, les stratégies argumentatives de ce sermon seront comparée avec celles des sermons d` Antim Ivireanul. Seront brièvement décrites les questions rhétoriques et les négations polémiques utilisées par Gherasim Putneanul dans son discours religieux pour persuader le public.

Mots-clés: stratégies argumentatives, question rhétorique, négation, *Gherasim Putneanul.*

The religious discourse that is the subject of this article is not an obituary, as it seems to be if we take into consideration the words that make up its title, but a panegyric because it was not delivered at the Stephen the Great's funeral, funeral that took place in 1504, but much later, most probably in 1770.

The accurate establishment of the paternity of this discourse proved to be a very difficult task for most Romanian researchers. The numerous attempts to solve this mystery are proofs for this. There were many various opinions on who was its real author: „Grigoraş - Chancellor at the Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral from Iaşi"[1], Vartolomei Măzăreanu[2] and Ionică Tăutu. The latest research revealed the real name of this discourse's author: Hierodeacon Gherasim Putneanul. *Cuvînt de îngropare...* was created, according to N. A. Ursu, in order to be „read at Putna

[1] Cf. N. A. Ursu, *Contribuţii la istoria literaturii române. Studii si note filologice,* Editura Cronica, Iaşi, 1997, p. 318: „B.P. Haşdeu este de părere că *Necrologul lui Ştefan cel Mare* a fost scris de logofătul Grigoraş de la mitropolia din Iaşi".

[2] Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 290: „Părerea că panegiricul lui Ştefan cel Mare este opera lui Varolomei Mazereanu a fost susţinută de Iorga".

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Monastery when it was celebrated 300 years[3] from its consecration"[4], being dedicated to its founder, King Stephen III of Moldavia, also known as Stephen the Great.

The following tasks are not to be found among this article's main aims: the establishment of this discourse's paternity, authenticity and context in which it was delivered because N. A. Ursu already wrote about all these in a very complex philological study that was entirely dedicated to solving them: *Un scriitor român necunoscut din secolul al XVIII-lea* (*An unknown Romanian Author from the XVIIIth Century)*. This study was first published in «A. D. Xenopol» History and Archaeology Yearbook, XXIII, 1986. It had been revised and enriched after only a few years by the same researcher who gave it a new and different title: *Ierodiaconul Gherasim Putneanul de la episcopia Romanului, un scriitor căutat timp de un secol şi jumătate (Hierodeacon Gherasim Putneanul from the Roman Episcopate, an author looked out for one and a half centuries).* This study was published in 1997 in another treatise: *Contribuţii la istoria literaturii române. Studii şi note filologice*, Iaşi[5].

Gherasim Putneanul's panegyric has a great number of particularities which individualizes it, and, at the same time draws this discourse out of the classical patterns of the Romanian religious discourses. Both its structural and argumentative features present great interest for our scientific intercession.

Regarding the discourse organization, one can easily see that it follows without exception the classic stages of an oratorical speech. It has an introduction, a short exordium, which is in a good rapport of proportion with the other parts of the discourse: *confirmatio* and *peroratio*. Right after the exordium, the religious discourse contains three central parts subject to *confirmatio*: *PARTEA D'INTĂIŬ, PARTEA A DOUA* and *PARTEA A TREIA*, each of them being of greater extent than the first and the final stages of the discourse they are part of. They can be seen as three fragments that put together make one of the most valuable and complex old „paintings" of the former Moldavian king. In this part of the panegyric, there are presented in the exact order the king's bravery, justice and mercy, the preacher giving the audience a model worthy of every praise[6]. The last part of the discourse structure, the *peroration*, is quite small.

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[3] Olimpia Mitric, *Manuscrisele slavone din timpul lui Ştefan cel Mare. O nouă evaluare,* in *Codrul Cosminului*, new series, Suceava, nr. 10, 2004, p. 13, states: „În anul 1470, anul sfinţirii mănăstirii Putna (...)".

[4] Vezi N. A. Ursu, *Contribuţii la istoria literaturii române. Studii si note filologice,* Editura Cronica, Iaşi, 1997, p. 318.

[5] N. A. Ursu, *Contribuţii la istoria culturii româneşti. Studii şi note filologice*, Editura Cronica, Iaşi, 2002, p. 211, nota 1.

[6] N. A. Ursu, în *Contribuţii la istoria literaturii române. Studii si note filologice,* Editura Cronica, Iaşi, 1997, p. 293, says that „în *Necrolog* e prea puţin vorba despre Ştefan; cele trei capitole ale lui cuprind preamărirea unor virtuţi omeneşti, şi adecă a smereniei, a virtuţii şi a credinţei adevărate".

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The separation between the parts of the discourse entitled *Cuvînt de îngropare vechiului Ştefan voevod...* is made in an explicit way by its author himself. This is not a constant feature, being rather unusual for typical Romanian sermons. For example, in two old collections of Romanian sermons: Varlaam's sermons and Antim Ivireanul's didahii, the transition from one of their part of discourse to another is done implicitly, for example with the help of typical religious salutations and not through words like *PARTEA D'INTĂIŬ, PARTEA A DOUA* and *PARTEA A TREIA* as it happens in the discourse that is subject to this analysis.

On the other hand, many of Samuil Clain de Sad's sermons and also some religious discourses that belong to Arsenie Boca, sermons that were created much more recently, are alike Gherasim Putneanul's sermon at least in this respect, the transition from one part of this discourses to the other being accomplished either through numbers or through subtitles that contain the main ideas, the essence, of the passages that come after each of them: *1. Despre iertare (1. About forgiveness), 2. Despre post (2. About fast)*, etc.

Ovid Densusianu assigns to this compositional features of this panegyric dedicated to Stephen the Great the rank of decisive evidence in his attempt to argue that this „discurs e inspirat în întregime din «oraisons funèbres» a lui Esprit Fléchier" (discourse took its inspiration entirely from Esprit Fléchier's «oraisons funèbres»), a prominent French writer and preache contemporary with Antim Ivireanul, because „Fléchier împarte discursurile lui în trei părţi, tot aşa făcând şi falsificatorul nostru"[7] (Fléchier divides his speeches into three parts, as it does our forger). N. A. Ursu considers that Ovid Densusianu exaggerated when he said that because all these similarities „dovedesc nu un plagiat, ci numai modelul, sursa de inspiraţie pentru autorul român"[8], „autorul *Cuvîntului de îngropare* fiind un scriitor adevărat, nu un falsificator"[9] (brings to light Gherasim Putneanul's source of inspiration, and does not prove that he was a plagiarist).

The use of scriptural and patristic quotations at the forefront of religious discourses by the preacher is another structural feature typical to them, and it's not missing from the discourse that is subject to this article. Thus, one can see that at the forefront of *Cuvînt de îngropare vechiului Ştefan voevod...*, there is a scriptural quotation: „Omul ca iarba, zilele luĭ ca floarea cîmpuluĭ" (Iorga, 1909: 25). This quote belongs to „proorocul şi Împăratul David" (Prophet and King David) (Iorga, 1909: 25) and represents a perfect way for the preacher to capture the audience's attention and, at the same time, an impulse towards philosophical and afterwards theological theories upon the significance of the earthly life.

It is here where the philosophical and religious assumptions are complementary, reinforcing each other: „Şi, văzînd adesele ale lucrurilor prefacerĭ şi premenele, iuţile şi oţeritele ale întîmplărilor loviturĭ, bucuriile cu suspinurĭ amestecate, (...) strigă: «Omul ca iarba». Aşa căind ticăloşia vieţiĭ omeneştĭ, sorţul acelora ce făr'

[7] *Ibidem*, p. 291.
[8] *Ibidem*.
[9] *Ibidem*, p. 292.

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de lege şi păcătoşĭ mor, cu adevărat tînguieşte, iar pe ceĭ credincioşĭ (...) în veac neclintiţĭ şi cu nemurire îmbrăcaţĭ ni-ĭ arată" (Iorga, 1909: 25-26).

On the other hand, the philosophical and religious thesis form Antim Ivireanul's *Didahii* were set, most of the time in opposition, in an antithetical rapport. Antim doesn't hesitate to contradict the ancient Greek philosophers, to enter into a polemical dispute with them, giving biblical arguments in order to reject their thesis. For example, in his sermon entitled *Cuvînt de învăţătură în 26 a lunii lui octomvrie, asupra cutremurului şi a marelui mucenic Dimitrie izvorîtoriului de mir* Antim paraphrases the Greek philosophers Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Democritus and Anaximene, arguing against them, and using as arguments to sustain his ideas the following words that belong to the same prophet David:

„Pentru cutremur spun filozofii elinilor cum să se fie făcut din amestecarea stihiilor, zicînd unii într-un chip, alţii într-alt chip, fieştecarele după putéria sa, scoţînd însă de la mijloc pre Dumnezeu, carele iaste pricina cea dintîi. Ci noi, acum, de această dată, vom lăsa într-o parte céle ce au zis Anaxagora, Aristotel, Dimocrit şi Anaxament şi vom créde mai vîrtos pre dumnezeescul filozof David care zice: «Cela ce caută pre pămînt şi-l face de să cutremură şi, întorcîndu-şi faţa, să vor turbura»" (Ivireanul, 1972: 175).

Luna lui iunie, 29 de zile. Cazanie la sfinţii apostoli Petru şi Pavel is another sermon in which Antim sustains his main thesis by quoting from ancient philosophers only that this time doesn't argue with them. Like the author of the panegyric dedicated to Stephen the Great, Antim agrees with the ancient philosophers from whom he quoted: „Multe feliuri de vrednicii, de stăpîniri şi puteri dau filosofii să aibă luna. Şi întîi zic cum că luna iaste podoaba nopţii, asămînătoare soarelui şi stăpîna mării: acéste însă vrednicii cu dreptate să cuvin vasului celui ales şi cu cale iaste să se numească podoaba nopţii" (Ivireanul, 1972: 59).

Typical and classical are the two most appropriate words to describe the final part of the sermon. As it happens in Antim Ivireanul's sermons, Ilie Cleopa's religious discourses and in many other Romanian sermons that are either old or recent, *amin* is the last word in the sermon created by Gherasim Putneanul. It's not an accident that the peroration is similar to a prayer because, used „în predică, rugăciunea produce un mare efect în mintea şi inima credincioşilor, stimulându-le mult simţul religios creştin"[10] due to the promises that are directed to the audience: „Dar îĭ maĭ deştepta, să cunoaştem că ceĭ ce fac faptele legiĭ, trăind şi murind în Isus Hristos, se învrednicesc nesfîrşiteĭ bucuriĭ întru a Sa cerească împărăţie. **Amin**" (Iorga, 1909: 48).

If the ideas and theories from the sermon are both complicated and complex, the same thing can also be said about the argumentative and persuasive strategies from it. First of all, there will be made some general remarks concerning the types of arguments one can extract from the sermon. After that we will focus on the unusual

[10] Pr. Lector Dr. Petre Comşa, coordonator de disciplină, *Omiletică – Curs*, p. 53, document downloaded from: http://facultate.regielive.ro/download-69673.html, on the 20th of August 2012.

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characteristics of two main argumentative strategies from Gherasim Putneanul's panegyric: **the rhetorical question** and **the negation**.

Although of great length, the sermon contains only four scriptural and patristic quotations, and those of a few words, which is quite atypical for a Romanian sermon. For example, most of Antim Ivireanul's ideas find their support and motivation, unlike Gherasim Putneanul's ideas, in scriptural and patristic quotations, relying therefore on the argument of divine authority. However, in the panegyric, numerous historical arguments can be detected. Their presence in the sermon can be easily explained. We only have to take into consideration the fact that Stephen the Great is known first of all as a historical figure and then as a defender of the Moldavian Orthodox Church.

Gherasim Putneanul used very many rhetorical questions in his sermon. They occur in the sermon mostly accompanied by other rhetorical question that are meant to guide the audience to the answer the preacher has in his mind: „Dar, cu toate acestea ce a rămas? Au numaĭ un nume deşert, au numaĭ o gîndire de lucrurĭ marĭ , dar care aŭ fost şi s'aŭ trecut?" (Iorga, 1909: 40). The two questions support each other, raise and solve problems at the same time, being the framework of the argumentative progress in the sermon. In other words, due to their assertiveness, of which was written in many numerous works[11], the interrogative statements from the sermon, like the two questions mentioned above, do not only raise new problems, but also aim to elucidate the queries raised by the questions that precede them, being logically related one to another. We will give another eloquent example: „Unde sînt puterile, avuţia, slava şi vîlfa lor? Ce s'aŭ făcut? Au nu se par că aŭ fost un vis şi o nălucire?" (Iorga, 1909: 40). Though it seems to be paradoxical, the second question gives the answer to the first question and the third question provides the answer to the second question.

Other times, being less obvious, the answers come immediately after the questions, in a logical sequel: „Aşa este, că toate lucrurile lumiĭ sînt deşarte, o umbră, un vis o apă care curge şi nu se poate opri, nicĭ a se întoarce, şi toate putrejuniĭ supuse" (Iorga, 1909: 40). The answer's first two words „aşa este" reveal that the preacher seems to know that this is the answer the audience had in mind.

There can be found many suites of questions, some of which are of great extent. For example, the longest of these sequences contain not less than seven consecutive questions. These suites of questions are followed in the panegyric, with few exceptions, by exclamatory sentences. We identified fourteen such syntactic constructions, of which twelve are located in the middle section of the discourse, the part where the preacher sustains his ideas with arguments. I selected the following example: „Spuneţi-mĭ, spuneţi-mĭ ce aşteptaţĭ? Ce nădăjduiţĭ? Aice

[11] You can read, for example, Daniela Rovenţa-Frumuşani, *Argumentarea. Modele şi strategii,* Editura BIC ALL, Bucureşti, 2000; Sorin Guia, *Arta dialogului în Prefeţele mitropolitului Veniamin Costachi*, în *Text şi discurs religios,* vol. I, Editura Universităţii „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Iaşi, Iaşi, 2009; Dumitru Tiutiuca, *Retorica şi teoria argumentării*, Editura Pro Universitaria, Bucureşti, 2010 and Constantin Sălăvăstru, *Discursul puterii*, Editura Tritonic, Bucureşti, 2009.

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sînteţî îngreţoşarea firiĭ, dincolo prada nemilostivilor demonĭ!" (Iorga, 1909: 36). All these questions, exclamations, repetitions and also the highly expressive words from them alongside with the preacher's raising tone of voice shatter the audience's mind and soul.

The rhetorical interrogations have different pragmatic roles depending on the part of the discourse they are located. Thus, with the help of the questions that appear in exordium, the preacher capture his audience's attention and at the same time let them know what he is going to tell them, what is the main subject of the sermon: „Au doară socotiţĭ, o auzitorilor, că am venit aice ca să plîng pe vre un om lumesc, ce, în toată viaţa luĭ, după măririĭ deşarte s'a zăbovit, poftind maĭ ales o umbră de slavă, decît adevărata mîntuire să dobîndească? (...) Nu este nicĭ de cum aceasta scoposul mieŭ. (...) şi să alcătuim laudele lui" (Iorga, 1909: 27). Through the last words from this quote, Gherasim Putneanul suggests us that his sermon is not an obituary, but a hymn to Stephen the Great, a panegyric. On the other hand, the questions that are located in peroration ensure the implementation of feedback of the problems that have been presented and discussed in the sermon: „Care cinstire se revarsă asupra inimiĭ mele şi mă sileşte a vesti şi a binecuvînta numele tăŭ? Faptele tale, care staŭ de faţă; lucrările tale, care le-a binecuvîntat Cel Prea-Înnalt, şi s-aŭ dat rodul la vremea lor" (Iorga, 1909: 58). As a conclusion, the argumentation begins and ends with interrogations.

The negations show a regular presence in this discourse. Gherasim Putneanul uses in his panegyric both negations that are integrated in sentences: „Nu sabieĭ, ci rugiĭ, nu tabereĭ, ci Bisericiĭ nădăjduieşte, şi, cunoscînd fîntîna biruinţilor, către ea alergă" (Iorga, 1909: 34), and sentence free negations (profraze): Că a dobîndit războaie? Ba!" (Iorga, 1909: 42).

Getting back to the former quotation containing negations, we can easily see how positive actions: „fîntîna biruinţilor, către ea alergă" are apposed through the use of negations to negative actions: „sabia, tabăra". They are intercalated, having so a strong rhetorical effect upon the audience. Therefore, negations are part of more complex structures, antitheses. They transmit, at the pragmatic level of the discourse, a clear message that supports the preacher's thesis.

The opposition stated between the positive and negative actions is coming out from the adversative rapport between the sentences, some of them being negative while others are positive. This rapport is realised with the help of the adversative conjunction *ci* and it is intuitive and easy to understand for the audience since it is based on the relation of contrariety. This relation has the tendency to create syntactic parallelisms in the discourse: **Ā ci A**. Silvia Săvulescu speaks in one of her books about the rhetorical figure of antithesis and also about the symmetrical parallelism: the antithesis is „bazată pe contrastul dintre două idei, fenomene, situaţii, personaje, expresii etc. plasate în construcţii simetrice care se evidenţiază reciproc"[12]. I will give another example of negation from Gherasim Putneanul's

[12] Silvia Săvulescu, *Retorică şi teoria argumentării*, Editura comunicare.ro, Bucureşti, 2004, p. 87.

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sermon that has this characteristic: „lumiĭ să arate că mulţimea şi tăria împrotiva dumnezeieştiĭ puterĭ nimică nu folosesc, ci milueşte pe care vrea şi nu se îndură de carele îĭ este milă" (Iorga, 1909: 29-30). As a result, the positive actions being located next to the negative ones obtain a greater degree of positivity. Thus, there is an increase in the positivity of the actions that were presented as positive in the discourse.

Other times, the negations do not contribute to the establishment of logical relations of rejection nor exclusion, but rather at the establishment of logical relations of inclusion, of wholeness[13], in order to create a more complex portrait of the Moldavian king: „văzînd că a luat cîrma Domnieĭ acela pe care, nu numaĭ volburile şi mînioasele valuri nu-l sparie, ci şi furtunile potoale, şi drept ştiind drumul său, către scopos aleargă, - sar cu toţiĭ, răsună trîmbiţa fulgeră armele, şi, ca o apă din munte, să ne înnece cu mulţimea oştilor se pornesc" (Iorga, 1909: 29-30). The compound conjunction (îmbinarea liberă) *ci şi* that consists of a conjunction and a semi adverb, which is preceded by a negation, has made possible the implementation in the sermon of the complementary rapport we have just discussed. I will reiterate only the part from the example that shows interest to us: „nu numaĭ volburile şi mînioasele valuri (...), ci şi furtunile potoale". I will give two other examples: „ci să arătăm că n'a fost numaĭ la biruinţe smerit, ci şi la pace drept" (Iorga, 1909: 35), „drepţiĭ nu numai dincolo viaţă veşnică dobîndesc, ci şi aice lăudaţĭ" (Iorga, 1909: 35).

In conclusion, the negations from the panegyric that was dedicated to Stephen the Great and that are part of an adversative rapport whose second term introduces a counter argument, have a very important role in the process of argumentation. The last statement relies on Rodica Zafiu's assumption, according to which the conjunction *ci* fulfils „rolul de corecţie polemică a unei ipoteze negate"[14]. The researcher whose name I have just mentioned highlighted in only a few words the effectiveness of negations in argumentation.

In this article there were briefly presented only a few aspects concerning the argumentative structure of Gherasim Putneanul's sermon as well as some per formative properties the rhetorical questions and the negations have in this discourse. The main aim of this article was to provide a short introductory rhetorical study of this Romanian religious discourse that was created in the second half of the eighteenth century, a very spectacular sermon that impresses mainly through its eloquent language, depth of ideas and multitude of argumentative strategies.

[13] Rodica Zafiu, in GALR, p. 725, says that „sub apartenenţa unei structuri adversative, indică un raport de coordonare copulativă. Mecanismul structurii constă în negarea unei restricţii şi corectarea ei printr-o lărgire a domeniului vizat. Construcţia se grefează pe tiparul negaţiei focalizante".

[14] Rodica Zafiu, *Conjuncţiile adversative în limba română: tipologie şi niveluri de incidenţă*, în Gabriela Pană Dindelegan (coord.), *Limba română – structură şi funcţionare*, Bucureşti, EUB, 2005, p. 249.

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