

LA POLITIQUE RELIGIEUSE DE LA COUR VIENNOISE DANS LA PRINCIPAUTE DE TRANSYLVANIE (1692-1701): LE CAS DES ROUMAINS

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Abstract. *The Religious Policy of the Viennese Court in the Principality of Transylvania (1692-1701): the Case of the Romanians.* In the view of the Habsburg Empire the church union was to strengthen the fragile Catholic block in the Principality, on one hand, and on the other, it was to stimulate politically and socially a large ethnic and confessional group, which was quite marginalized, and to determine implicitly, a strong dependency upon the Habsburg dynasty. Hadn't it been for the involvement of the imperial authorities, the Romanians' union would have had few chances to be fulfilled. By the end of the 17th century in Transylvania the main social categories were dominated by the Reformation confessions, even the Governor was a Calvinist. The partisans of the Reformation were looking with restraint, even with hostility at the consolidation of the Catholic Church. At the very beginning the imperial authorities' involvement in the unionist action was characterized by cautiousness. But as the Reformation partisans expressed their disagreement with the Romanians' union with the Church of Rome, the imperial authorities did their best to make the Romanians unite only with the Church of Rome.

The religious union was realized under very difficult political conditions. The treaties started in 1697 with archbishop Teofil, and they were done with great discretion until they were closed during the period of Atanasie Anghel. The Union started timidly, but as the Habsburg's authority was growing, so was the Union accelerated. The Romanians' enthusiasm wasn't a great one. The Jesuits drew their attention towards the leaders of the Orthodox Church whom they presented the advantages coming from their adhesion. The peak of the Union treaties took place in Vienna, when the Archbishop Atanasie Anghel took again the holy orders, but as a Greek-Catholic bishop who complied with a return to and not with a union with the Roman Catholic Church and who accepted to stop the relations with the Orthodox churches neighbouring Transylvania. The religious union of the Romanians proved to have consequences which none of those involved in it had ever thought of. The national movement of the Romanians from Transylvania had its roots in this religious act with deep political implications. At the same time, the Union generated conflicts between the Greek Catholic Romanians and the Orthodox ones, the latter being deprived of religious hierarchy for almost six decades. Under such circumstances the Orthodox Romanians from Transylvania resorted to the help of Russia and the Orthodox archpriests from Karlowitz in order to practice their faith.

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