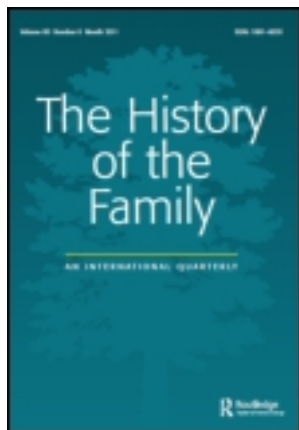


This article was downloaded by: [Ghitulescu Constanta]

On: 02 December 2012, At: 08:17

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



The History of the Family

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rhof20>

‘Women in Church, Men at the Public House’: religious experience in Romanian society, 1700-1830

Constanta Ghitulescu ^a

^a Institute of History, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania

Version of record first published: 27 Sep 2012.

To cite this article: Constanta Ghitulescu (2012): ‘Women in Church, Men at the Public House’: religious experience in Romanian society, 1700-1830, *The History of the Family*, 17:2, 220-235

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1081602X.2012.706370>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

‘Women in Church, Men at the Public House’: religious experience in Romanian society, 1700–1830

Constanta Ghitulescu

Institute of History, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania

(Received 4 January 2012; final version received 21 June 2012)

This study analyzes religious practices in the Romanian lands in the long eighteenth century. Research for it was based on a series of largely unpublished archival documents which illustrate ordinary people’s attitudes to faith, magic, superstition and the church. In periods of instability and insecurity, quite understandably, as daily worries become more acute, faith and religion step in to offer spiritual comfort. This study looks at spiritual practices in the Romanian old regime and explores the ways in which women and men used them as focal points for building sociability and solidarity networks.

Keywords: family; women; religion; everyday life; Romania; religious practices

We wish to impress upon you that the duty of a true Christian is to uphold the faith and show true love for godly matters, attend church and observe the holidays, go to confession and generally abstain from unruly behaviour and misdemeanour. Should a people show such faith and act upon it, they will certainly earn God’s love and will live in their community free from all evil. (Urechia, I, 1891, p. 370, 10 December 1783)

The above edict was issued by Prince Mihai Sutu (1783–1786), with the endorsement of church representatives in the persons of the Metropolitan and two bishops. This text, a reminder of basic Christian duties and practices such as attending church services and observing feasts, confession and communion, shows that church regulations had a secular counterpart in the period’s code of laws. Why was it necessary for such precepts to be publicized, read out aloud by town and village criers and in church sermons, and for reminders to be sent to parish priests and local civil servants urging them to disseminate them? What was specific to religious practices in the Romanian lands? Was there a separate sphere of Christian spirituality for women and another one for men? Our analysis of documentary sources for the long eighteenth century will venture some answers to these questions. In a first instance, the analysis focuses on the ecclesiastical and civil prescriptions guiding the Romanians’ religious attitudes, which are subsequently contrasted with actual practices as narrated by the social agents in the period’s documents.

Secondly, we shall attempt to highlight the roles of magic practices within this belief system. For instance, cartomancy, crithomancy (grain divination), beliefs in the undead, spells and other forms of magic had specific roles in the management of daily lives by providing solutions to many daily ‘mysteries’. At the same time, a series of components of the ‘official’ faith (the veneration of icons, saints, relics, etc.), promoted and sustained by

Email: cghitulescu@gmail.com

the Church, were incorporated into and were finally hijacked by a system of supernatural practices which over time became more important than official religion. But why would people resort to such practices at all? Was it the case that official religion failed to fulfil their spiritual needs? And what was the Church's attitude towards such more or less orthodox practices?

The analysis covers Moldavia and Wallachia, often referred to in the text as the 'Romanian lands'. In the course of the long eighteenth century, 1830 was an important milestone with the publication of major law codes – the co-called Organic Regulations – designed as 'fundamental laws' which marked an important shift in legal practices. The Church spoke of a moral crisis in the region from the late eighteenth century, but it was only with the major legislative changes introduced by the Regulations that the Church was faced with new challenges. Such challenges were to alter the dynamics in relationships between the Church and its flock. Our research focuses on the long eighteenth century in the Romanian lands without, however, touching on issues related to the processes of modernization and secularization triggered by political change.

The Church acquired a prominent place in the lives of Christians in the Romanian lands by maintaining both 'the unity of society as well as its social divisions' (Thomas, 1997, p. 180). It was an enduring source of inspiration for forging and strengthening character and for enforcing a set of common values. The Romanian eighteenth century was a period of acute political instability.¹ As a result, the Church was able to expand and consolidate its power and its control over individuals' lives.² An ecclesiastical tribunal, created in this period, enabled the Church to insinuate itself into the most intimate niches of an individual's life, as well to expand its regional coverage in the Romanian provinces.³

Many religious practices were born and perfected under the Church's scrutiny: some were tacitly accepted and integrated into 'official' practices, others were marginalized and 'ostracized' via punitive measures. This constant negotiation and re-negotiation of practices within the community reflects essential aspects of Church-society relations. But the manner in which religious 'innovation' was assimilated differed from one social agent to another.

'Who should be seated in the higher pews?': sociability and religious practice

Besides their essential and well-established role as sites of sacrality, churches were also arenas of sociability. Alongside other available channels, access to 'gossip' and to 'community appraisals' could be secured via church attendance. As a place for 'seeing and being seen', to use the description by the Metropolitan and writer Antim Ivireanul (1997, pp. 20–26), the church attracted parishioners not only for the celebration of Sunday liturgy and major festivals, but also for the opportunity to 'endorse' status and social position, to disseminate information and appraise behaviour. In church, everybody tried to display the most favourable 'presentation of self'. Gestures, dress, jewellery, size of client networks, type and quality of horse-drawn vehicles were some of the symbols of this social representation of self. However, such symbolism was often an inadequate indicator of personality and social status and was difficult to decode by parishioners when they congregated to celebrate a sacred event. The Greceanu sisters, for instance, attempted to use church attendance as a means of gaining a place in the local hierarchy. For them, church-going was not simply a daily Christian duty, but also an act of 'self-valorization'. The sisters Ilinca and Maria Greceanu were members of the circles of 'notables' of the Mihai Vodă suburb of Bucharest and as such, they demanded respect, submission and a recognition of their social status. Descendants of a boyar lineage, they believed

that even in God's house, they had to be accorded a privileged position. Their parish priest was astounded when they complained that he 'had not granted them their rightful place on holy days and Sundays when it was their turn to be anointed' and had allegedly anointed parishioners of 'lower standing before their ladyships, without minding their honour'. In the Sunday liturgy rush, and also perhaps out of a 'stage-managed' oversight, he had failed to organize a private, more secluded place for anointing the two ladies.⁴ The use of a sacred site as a means of establishing social distinctions was similar in cases where such distinctions were barely applicable. For example, the initiative of a church founder to have pews built in the church of the Oțetarilor suburb (the vinegar-makers' quarter) of Bucharest, which had had no pews before, created a similar status-centred conflict. 'Who was to sit in the higher pews' was an issue which led to animosity [Rom. *dihonie*], especially amongst women, previously forced to stand in the antenave. And, as the ensuing arguments disrupted the service ('priests were unable to grasp what they were reading, and local parishioners could make no sense of the proceedings'), the solution was simple: eliminate the pews (Urechia, I, 1891, pp. 372–373, 8 August 1785).⁵

In the early nineteenth century the church remained a major venue for 'being seen' and for socialization.⁶ But the meaning of this social function was different for those directly involved in administering the faith and for those who attended. The Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul condemned church-going as a mere outing for 'watching people'. Ioan Dobrescu, an artisan and lay preacher at the Bătuștei church in Bucharest, was an abrasive critic of this usage of the church at the expense of others:

In earlier times the houses were topped with wood, now we have them covered in iron . . . Then a formidable drought came. And still we did not heed. Living for ever in fear, we were almost enslaved by the heathen. And then lo and behold! The females with heads uncovered and hair cut short, naked down to their waist. The men had discarded their own dress and assumed foreign garments, like unbelievers, some German, others Sfrench [sic], and in other ways, some with close-cropped hair, others with curls like women. And some of us, the more gifted, would mix with them and read their books, some in Sfrench [sic], others in German, still others in Talian [sic]. And thus entered the teachings of that God-forsaken Volter [sic], whom the pagans hold in such esteem, like a God. And we would no longer observe the days of Lent. Always meats at table. At church we went as to a promenade, to show off our best clothes, the females their devilish ornaments; instead of entering the church with fear of God and pray for our sins. In brief, vanity had her throne in Bucharest. We no longer believed in God, but only in fine houses, and clothes, in cheating, and rich meals, in drunkenness, and especially in open whoring. (Corfus, 1966, p. 341)⁷

In church – 'for fear of disobeying'

This was a period when the 'civilization of manners' was on the agenda of society and state alike. The moral improvement of the subjects was inscribed within a programme based on the idea of law and order. Everywhere in Europe princely edicts and Church encyclicals included 'orders' and prescriptions for the improvement of manners which widely contributed to the criminalization of modern man (Muchembled, 1988, pp. 141–142; Porret, 2003). The observations of Robert Muchembled on this 'civilizing process' are valid for the Romanian lands too: it was a lengthy process which affected first the urban milieu, where it met with tacit resistance, and subsequently the countryside, where resistance was passive but relentless. Wallachia and Moldavia responded slowly to this reformist and civilizing process. Even though the principles were the same, their application differed from one province to another.⁸

In the early eighteenth century, Antim Ivireanul, the Metropolitan of Ungrovlachia (1708–1816) 'commanded' his parishioners, and especially the artisans and merchants

among them, to be respectful of the time allocated to the church, a time for prayer and recollection: 'close your shops, and neither sell to nor purchase from anyone, be they Christians, Turks or other nations, and do not work on that day' (Antim Ivireanul, 1997, pp. 24–25). This defence of 'church time' was to continue relentlessly for the rest of the century. As we have seen above, towards the end of the century Prince Sutu was engaged in the same effort. Attending liturgy remained an option for the flock, in spite of efforts by Church and State to impose it as an obligation. Prince Sutu's advice was followed by a comprehensive survey of religious practices at the end of the eighteenth century: 'we have heard that you disdain the proper Christian ways and traditions, and that you do not go to church and do not pay due respect to the great holy feasts as ordained by God' (Urechia, I, 1891, p. 370, 10 December 1783). Christians were by then being tempted away from church both by their work commitments and by the time they thought they should allocate to 'pleasure'. 'Close your shops and run to church', was Antim Ivireanul's demand. His word carried weight and the penalty was heavy, yet most market days took place on holy feast days or on Sundays and thus coincided with the liturgy. It was rare for a market day to be rescheduled in consideration of the mass. Merchants from Râmnicul Vâlcea sent a petition to the Prince, asking for market day to be changed from Sunday to Tuesday to avoid the end-of-service scramble of people rushing out to secure a market stall (Urechia, II, 1892, p. 314, 15 February 1803). Prince Constantin Ipsilanti approved the change, and the text of his decree referred specifically to the purpose of his approval: 'let everyone go the God's holy church, as Christian duty demands, to pray and listen to the holy liturgy'. He specifically insisted that this time was not one for 'pleasure': 'Sundays are not for drunkenness and base idleness' (Urechia, II, 1892, p. 314). During the entire century, the Prince and the Church were engaged in an uphill struggle to keep people tied to this 'time of the Church'. The measures taken ranged from simple advice to harsh penalties. In 1783, Prince Mihai Sutu (1783–1786), seconded by the Metropolitan and two bishops, sent out 'books of commands' to be read out publicly 'in all towns and villages' and to be 'heard and understood by all and sundry'. These outlined a Christian's duties: 'he is duty-bound to be respectful of the holy Church and observe the Sundays and the holy feasts; he should pray and kneel at the divine services and mass, go to confession and take communion'. Such prescriptions envisaged an entire way of life, in which days would start with 'morning prayer'. The Prince authorized the use of force when 'gentle persuasion' proved ineffectual, and urged local authorities: 'you must force them, threaten them with the pillory and other punishments, so that they know that beside the toil of the land, they should pay the Church its due on the appointed days' (Urechia I, 1891, pp. 371–372, 10 December 1783). The princely decree did not have the desired effect, though, even though the authorities did use the pillory. This yoke-like device was placed in front of the church (there was one at the Bucharest Metropolitan Church).⁹ The culprit would be pilloried on a Sunday or on another holy day to maximize the visual impact of the punishment. The pillory was the punishment meted out to those who did not attend the liturgy and did not observe religious holidays, or those, such as drunken, violent or spendthrift husbands and disrespectful sons, whose behaviour was deemed unacceptable.¹⁰ This punishment was never carried out consistently, which explains why the circular was reissued a year and a half later, with the same exhortations towards a decent, Christian life (Urechia, I, 1891, 8 August 1785).

One year later, there was a new prince on the throne, but the battle for community and stability continued: for what were in fact all these attempts at tying subjects to an easy-to-control time and space if not a quest for social order? Prince Nicolae Mavrogheni (1786–1790) adopted a two-pronged strategy: on the one hand, he envisaged measures encouraging the active involvement of the clergy, on the other a system of penalties

designed to coerce subjects into attending mass.¹¹ Until then, punitive measures had been directed solely at the flock, on the assumption that the church was always ready and kept its doors open for Christians, and that the priests were constantly available for spiritual guidance. However, that this was not always the case is attested by many of the period's records, which often speak of collusion between priests and flock when it came to resist orders from the secular or even ecclesiastical authorities.¹² The ruling prince asked for churches to be kept open day and night, for priests to minister to their flock throughout the day and for the evening service (*vecernja*) and early-morning service (*utrenja*) to be conflated in order to save time for the congregation. There were ad-hoc inspections, and the prince himself, disguised as a humble priest or friar, would often arrive of an evening on the steps of a randomly-selected parish church. The faithful were required to involve themselves actively in this programme, and were 'enjoined' to enter the church on their way home from their daily activities in the evening. The target audience for this programme was chiefly an urban constituency of artisans and traders, who were now required to include Sunday mass and church holidays into their daily lives. Non-compliance was penalized, and the 'culprit' flogged in public. In the early days, the prince himself would oversee the implementation of his prescriptions and at first, it seemed to work. An eye-witness wrote that he 'filled the churches with people who came out of fear of disobeying rather than out of love of God' (Eclislarhul, 2004, p. 25).

All of these measures can be easily observed in urban communities, especially in major cities like Iași and Bucharest, where secular and church authorities were in permanent contact with the subjects.¹³ However, in the countryside, such control was more difficult to impose and, as a result, information on religious practices is only available to us in cases where protagonists were found in serious breach of expected social norms. In urban and rural milieux alike, it was often the case that an entire panoply of icons, relics and other saintly emblems had to be paraded in front of a restless population in constant need of reassurance for order to be restored.

Those sections of the population who did not attend church and did not engage in ritual out of 'ignorance and indifference', to use Keith Thomas's phrase (Thomas, 1997, p. 189), have been left out of the remit of the present study. This situation was specific to rural areas removed from centres of political power. For many such areas, the documents speak of a lack of churches and priests and of a mobile population chiefly focused on daily survival and left off the radars of the central authorities.

Akathist hymns and icons

The long eighteenth century in the Romanian lands (Wallachia and Moldavia) appeared to be a seemingly endless series of epidemics, wars, military occupations and famine. Life was perhaps no better or no worse than elsewhere in Europe, but the Ottoman domination and the country's location at the crossroads of three empires – Russian, Habsburg, Ottoman – added to the oppressive sense of insecurity already felt by the population. There were no fewer than seven wars and 25 years of ensuing military occupation between 1700 and 1834. The plague and cholera epidemics spread by the occupying armies decimated, impoverished and kept the population in a permanent state of fear. The only solace in these circumstances was provided by God, and both Church and State used the sacred to allay fears and provide a sense of security. Holy relics were brought out on display and carried in procession to bring remedy to a host of ills from the plague to droughts and invasions of locusts. People would often come from afar to partake of the miraculous energies unleashed by these open-air community events. The state's

involvement in the 'mise-en-scène' of these ceremonies is now well documented¹⁴, therefore in the next pages we will only look at a few individual case studies apt to highlight the importance of such arsenals of sacred emblems in the everyday lives of pious people.

The canonical visitations of Metropolitan Neophyte, the only such events to have been described in detail for the entire eighteenth century, are a good illustration of this widespread need for protection. On a mission to inspect the Church's not inconsiderable material assets, the metropolitan travelled across Wallachia in the summer of 1745 and 1746. Although the metropolitan was not primarily interested in the views of the local faithful, the presence of such an august figure attracted people, who came in search of 'benedictions', 'solace', miracles, healing, and security. 'I comforted the assembled people and read a prayer for the forgiveness of their sins', or 'upon my arrival there, I gave them words of advice, and then left', the metropolitan noted after each such encounter. In every village and market town, people assembled to narrate their experiences and demand some comforting 'sign' of divine benevolence. Their experiences were tied to popular beliefs, superstitions, and magic practices used to ward off the ills inherent to their everyday lives. Whenever such popular magic did not seriously contravene Christian dogma, the metropolitan logged them in his journal¹⁵ and encouraged their use. However, when such practices derived too obviously from ancient 'pagan' beliefs, the prelate promptly sent out circulars in which he condemned their use under threat of canonical punishment.¹⁶ Among the accepted practices was a cult of miracle-working icons, which some churches and monasteries had in their possession, cults of saints and *akathist* hymn singing. Men and women alike used such pious practices which, more often than not, were meant to secure the achievement of an objective, success in an enterprise or comfort in suffering. For example, people believed that they could find some 'resolution' for their emotional or romantic troubles through intense invocation of the saints, by various means. The miraculous was intrinsic to the Christian imaginary. The appropriation of sacrality, the belief in the supernatural powers of icons, crosses and relics gave believers a sense of security and hope.

...an idea occurred to my parents that my mother, my sister and I should go the Metropolitanate church [in Iași], which had a miracle-working icon of the Mother of our Lord, and pray for my peace of mind. But when we entered the church, whom should we behold standing in front of the icon, but the very young man with a priest who mentioned my parents' names, asking the icon to render them favourable to his courtship of me; my mother, too, overheard these words. When the prayer was read out, he turned to exit the church. And in doing so, he beheld my family, and was so struck by this sight, that he wondered whether this was a miracle wrought by the Mother of God, and so sat down in one of the pews until we in our turn had finished with our prayers.

The story of Elena Hartulari is a classical tale of 'star-crossed' lovers. As a 15-year-old girl, Elena fell in love with a young man of 20, from a modest background and with an addiction to gambling. Her family, slightly better-off than his, and with firm ideas on marriage, was against the match. On her side, Elena had an arsenal of protector saints, miracle-working icons, prayers and hymns, deemed to support and protect her through life. After the episode narrated above – which all the parties involved perceived and interpreted as a miracle – the couple received the blessing from her parents, who would not want to oppose the divine will. Elena was a woman of her time (she wrote her memoirs between 1810 and 1830), who lived in a world impregnated with sacrality: she went about wearing a small icon of her protector saint, believed to offer protection in all occasions, as she says in her text, she appealed to a miracle-working icon in times of hardship, prayed and attended church regularly, and believed in miracles, which she sought and found in her

daily life. Her difficulties issued from daily situations: poverty, famine, illness, birth, death, hatred, envy, love. She was not immune from any of them, but her faith, with all its aforementioned arsenal, provided support against fear:

[...] ten months later I was delivered of my baby, after four days of labour; my mother and father, aggrieved upon seeing how I suffered, came to me bearing a small icon of the Mother of our Lord and gave it to me, saying that the icon helped his own mother deliver him. Indeed, less than an hour later, I was delivered.

This is how Elena Hartulari narrated the birth of her first child in 1827 (Hartulari, 1926, pp. 729–839).¹⁷ For most young mothers at the time, at the age of 16–17, birth and motherhood were new, terrifying experiences, which often had to be made bearable through magic practices.

Some of these mechanisms of ‘sacred support’ were also used to achieve the opposite outcomes such as, for instance, the severance of love ties or the ‘annulment’ of an unwanted pregnancy. ‘Blessed water’ (*agheasmă*), ‘blessed bread’ (*azimă*), and basil (used for the production of blessed water, but also in magic and love potions), crosses and icons mingled haphazardly with elements of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ magic practices (Lorint & Bernabé, 1977, p. 184): mercury (known in popular idioms as quicksilver) herbal remedies, body parts of mice or toads, etc. The gatekeepers to such occult knowledge were almost without exception women: they did and undid spells, averted evil spirits and invoked saints and demons. Many of these spells were recorded and disseminated in miscellanea, which illustrates their importance in the period considered.¹⁸

Rushed by her parents into marriage to a Vasile Dobruneanu from Bucharest, on the ‘recommendation’ of the priest in the town of Mavrodin (Teleorman county), Elena Repezeanu found herself ‘besieged’ by her new husband’s creditors less than three weeks into the marriage. As she refused to clear his debts from her dowry assets, her new married life became a battleground: the husband started by alleging that his wife had not been a virgin on their wedding night¹⁹, and that their ‘love’ in any case had evaporated as a result of daily magic practices and amulets placed in the ‘pocket of his jacket’. To support his allegations, Vasile Dobruneanu built a comprehensive scenario, complete with supportive eyewitnesses and ‘expert witnesses’ (the village hags and witch doctors). His narrative is worth reproducing in full, as it offers fascinating details on practices and superstitions deeply entrenched in the popular mind:

[...] and as we dined together, her daughter being present [he refers to his mother-in-law – CVG], as I reached into my pocket I found a small bundle with various beads and charms... Having found that, I became very suspicious, thinking that it might be magic for undoing our married life together, so I wished to understand their meaning and showed them to honest people and people with knowledge. Upon seeing them, they took great fright, as they showed me how each of the charms worked. I could now see the true meaning of what Lady Anica and Lady Sultana, her daughter, as well as the honourable *serdar* (third class boyar) have said, for I brought forth before them all women who confessed everything about their intentions. I, therefore, taking fright and in order to protect my mind and my life, I left Bucharest to seek redress through the court and defend my honour.²⁰

The above scene occurred prior to another one, in which Elena, supported by her mother, allegedly declared to her husband that she ‘found him displeasing’ – which meant that she did not love or want him. In the circumstances, casting a spell could only lead to the irreversible collapse of all affective bonds. The inquest run by a court of clerics offers further details on the nature of the spells cast (‘a bundle of basil, bread and others’) which earned the young wife a reputation as an ‘enchantress’ (Rom. *fermecătoare*).²¹ An ‘enchantress’ or ‘caster of spells’ was not the same thing as a ‘witch’. The enchantress

used natural remedies such as basil, rosemary, hedge bedstraw, hemlock, dew drops, 'unspoil' water (i.e. water from a source or a fountain not used that day), incantations, and prayers, especially to the Virgin Mary, to 'do or undo' spells to do with love, health or good luck.²² Court archives show that recourse to casting spells, cartomancy and divination by grain (crithomancy)²³ was common, and that 'spell-casters' – predominantly women – were frequently called upon to 'bind' or 'unbind' someone into or from the ties of love.²⁴ In all these cases, the attitude of the ecclesiastical tribunal was one of reserve: all the data were minutely recorded, but the court refrained from using them as charges against the defendants.²⁵ Elena Repezeanu's case was no exception: the trial was long and convoluted, but the debates never brought into discussion the spells themselves, nor did the court require the testimonies of the 'artful old women' who knew how to manipulate humans with their occult powers.²⁶ Rather than speak of a passive Church, one should perhaps assume a tacit acceptance by the Church of such practices, which were part of a well-established repertoire of sacred traditions. The Christian Church may have decided to safeguard its survival and its authority by allowing these minor occult rites to continue, recognizing that such practices were a significant feature of women's daily lives and an important component of entrenched oral traditions. Only when such occult rites resorted to the use of mercury, for instance, or other hazardous substances, the Church intervened, stopping short of witch-hunts or official interdictions, however. Such interventions were made in individual cases and only on demand from those involved. The enquiries focused on the effects of spells on bodies and the penances reflected the 'crime' that had been committed, rather than the theological or doctrinal aspects of the cases.

In church or at the public house?

If, as official documents suggest, people did not really go to church, then what did they do with their time? What meanings did they ascribe to religious practices? Were there age- or gender-related differences in spiritual pursuits? Archival sources show that there was a great diversity in individual approaches to faith and in degrees of involvement. Women were by far more inclined than men to observe 'Church time' and were more involved in Church ritual. Church attendance was not perceived by them as a painful obligation, but as a Christian duty, as well as a time spent away from domestic chores, a time for meeting female friends and for socialization.²⁷ Women were quite keen to be seen as pious, but also as willing to recognize and submit to the masculine authority, as the Church demanded.

Participation in the community's rites created order and predictability in an individual's life, softented gestures and words, and gave people a sense of belonging as well as of being protected and supported in the community. While complaining of men's 'wickedness', women often saw such 'erratic' behaviour as a sign that their men had strayed from the 'rightful' path prescribed by the Church. Their discourse overlapped with that of the Church, which met such complaints by inscribing the 'errant' husband within a religious programme. Thus, for instance, when Zamfira from the suburb of Scaune, Bucharest, complained for a second time to the Metropolitanate that her husband of 19 years, Andrei, constantly beat her up and abused her in his 'wickedness', the ecclesiastical judges tried to 'bring him back to his senses' by pinning him down to a program of moral rehabilitation centred round the Church and the faith: 'let him go the holy Church every Sunday and on holy days, attend the holy mass and during fast let him go to confession which is every good Christian's duty and should he become ready for it, let him take communion'. Placed under the supervision of his parish priest, Andrei had to learn how to be a 'good

Christian' again.²⁸ It is noteworthy that the only way back to Christian values was via a canonical penance, which suggests there were sections of the population for whom involvement in Christian practices was at best sporadic. The fact that the priests had to intervene in what should have been a daily, routine pattern suggests that many individuals, predominantly men, never attended church, never went to confession and never took communion except in extreme situations such as in illness or on the point of death. What should have been an internalized Christian attitude had to be transformed into a canonical prescription. One should perhaps note that women were never pilloried: even when accused of serious misdemeanor, of which adultery was the most common, women were 'redeemed' by virtue of their internalized faith which they practiced naturally in the course of their daily lives.

The building of public houses in the vicinity of churches created sites for a new type of sociability which gradually came to compete with sacred sites. The time for 'pleasure' became much more valued than 'Church time' in the period under consideration (Gurevich, 1990; Burke, 1994, 2004; Thomas, 1997). The roles of the two 'institutions' were so distinctly conceptualized by people that popular discourse eventually situated them at the two extremes of sociability: 'whoever sees you enter the public house will know that you didn't go there to pray', ran one of the period's proverbs.²⁹ This new type of sociability of men gathering together to have a drink quickly became a stereotypical image in proverbs, folklore and even music. Anton Pann collected and transcribed many of the 'drinking songs' which had become a significant section of urban and rural folklore by the early nineteenth century. 'On Drunkenness', for instance, captures the decline of sacred sociability in favour of public house conviviality: 'The priest sounded the wooden board/ and called them to the church/, They ran to the public house. With a vessel in their hands early in the morning/ They sprinkle the incense all day long'. Beyond the broad caricature, this is a critique of excessive behaviour: drunkenness. Going to the public house was not in itself necessarily a bad thing, but excess was. The drunk destroys families, reputations, relationships and ends up being 'the talk of the village'. 'Whoever drinks himself into a stupor, forsakes his good name in the world', is Anton Pann's poetic conclusion (Pann, 1991, p. 73).³⁰

Princely decrees were issued in quick succession in desperate attempts by the authorities to stem the rush to public houses, but met with as little success as when they tried to boost church attendance by resorting to coercion. Epidemics created a new awareness of public houses as places of contagion and led to them being placed on indexes of legally proscribed sites. In 1813, at the height of the plague, when Prince Caragea ran out of ideas for means of stopping the spread of the disease, public houses, inns and cafés were among the venues that were temporarily closed by decree. But while 'congregating' in public houses was no longer possible, people were allowed to buy wine and drink it at home. As people no longer gathered in public places, fiddlers, too, would no longer be allowed to 'go and ply their trade in public houses' (Urechia, X/A, 1902, p. 952). But a glass of wine is better enjoyed in company, so the prince was compelled to reiterate the July decree in August, in a more emphatic formulation:

My lord Great *Aga*, when the office of the *Spathar* issues orders to its lieutenants and the orders are not followed, those lieutenants are therefore said to fail in their duties. We have many times issued orders, both verbally and in writing, that people should no longer be allowed to gather in public houses for drinking together, but that wine should be sold in vessels instead and taken home [...] but We have heard that public houses are still open and people still gather there in full view of everybody.

The prince issued another order asking civil servants to apply his decree, under threat of sanctions. However, obviously the lure of drink was stronger than threats and even than the

morbid stench of the plague, for the prince was compelled a few months later to seal the entrances to all the public and drinking houses in the city (Urechia, X/A, 1902, pp. 953–954, 972).

Preparing the body for feast days and celebration

Feast days were times when people could take time off work and forget about the routine constraints of daily life. Both women and men involved themselves in organizing and taking part in this time of leisure. Daily life was punctuated by such milestones of the Christian calendar round which people organized their work, repose, love and family, domestic chores, etc. Feast days were strictly observed and the body was carefully prepared for them. Neither illness nor hunger would prevent Christians, men and women alike, from mortifying their bodies with endless fasting to cleanse the body in view of the holy day. Testimonies about the strict observance of fasting come from a fairly large and diverse range of sources. Contemporary literature considered self-denial during fasting as a key characteristic of the period's major personalities. For example, the great *Vornic* of Târgoviște (high ranking boyar), Iordache Crețulescu, was said to be a worthy Christian who 'loves the Church' and who attended mass wherever he was, 'be it summer, be it winter', braving 'rain, snow and winter chills' (Cantacuzino, 1902, p. 373). The great *Ban* (high-ranking boyar) Teodor Văcărescu was depicted almost as a saint:

he was a man who feared God's wrath, and he would not miss *liturgy* one single Sunday or holy day; each morning and night he prayed and knelt for one hour in front of the icons; he would observe the fasting on Fridays and Wednesdays; on holy days, before Epiphany, on Holy Friday, on the day of the beheading of St. John or on the Day of the Cross, he would not touch food, not even a drop of oil, and he would never break the four major fasting periods of the calendar. (Ghica, 1950, p. 350)

Ordinary people had such human models in their midst and venerated them, even though not everybody followed their example. The death of the great *Vornic* Iordache Crețulescu caused a veritable mass hysteria and his funeral became a mass procession:

his body was buried at the Metropolitan Church in Bucharest, upon which the crowds converged, men, women and children, and even those from the villages who happened to be there; they all lamented him loudly, saying that it was their father who had died, the pillar of the Romanian Land. (Cantacuzino, 1902, p. 373)

Fasting was quite merciless, as people were not allowed meat, milk or eggs for weeks on end, but it was considered an essential preparation of the body for the feast to come. The obstinacy with which it was observed sometimes triggered reactions from doctors, who asked for the ailing, the disabled and the children at least to be spared these long periods in which often the only food was polenta with onion or garlic. Constantin Caracăș, the city of Bucharest's chief medic from 1800 to 1828, who saw the negative effects of a poor nutrition on famished bodies, was frustrated in his appeals to the church hierarchs, the families of the ill and the mothers of newborn babies (Samaritan, 1937, p. 100). Non-observance of these rites of corporal and spiritual purification was noted by witnesses and the culprits were duly penalized.³¹

Within families, 'fasting' had a very broad definition which encompassed other forms of self-denial apart from specific dietary requirements. Couples had to abstain from conjugal relations before they could enter the church and be worthy of purification through the mystery of confession and the holy Eucharist. Not all couples, however, took part in this necessary spiritual preparation. The following is an admission by Smaranda from the town of Ploiești, who narrates thus her life with Nițu, her husband of six years:

for many years now, I was not able to go to the Holy Church, for he wouldn't let me go; on all Sundays and on other holy feast days, he would fornicate with me, just so that I cannot go to the Holy Church. Miserable sinner that I am, I do try to stop him from preventing me to go to liturgy, but to no avail, for he beats me up and has his own way with me. At Holy Easter I tried to go in secret to the Holy Church to confess and take communion, but he wouldn't let me and we committed bodily sin against my will. Therefore I did not dare go and take part in the Holy Mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ, all because of him. Another woman from next door came and brought me a piece of paschal loaf to have as a Christian that I know I am. So, in a word, I have not stepped into church, nor taken communion in the last six years.

Smaranda was no exception. There were many women in her time who confessed to carnal relations during periods of prescribed abstinence. Nițu was, however, more than a possessive, controlling husband: his attitude suggests a permanent revolt against all rules that might restrict his personal freedom. He would cry: 'What is God and what is this Christian law?' and would try to prevent his wife from joining in any form of Christian sociability: 'he says that as he eats meat on Fridays and Wednesdays, so should I',³² Smaranda explained in her narrative.

Sources suggest that this need for bodily purification before feast days was largely a female concern. Alongside fasting, the Church recommended and expected sexual abstinence during periods which overlapped with the fasting (*Îndreptarea legii*, 1962, p. 173). But, whereas for a man sexual intercourse during Lent, for instance, was not a sin that required confession, a woman would consider it a major sin which defiled the body and which prevented her from entering the church.³³ Smaranda, and many other women of her time admitted that they felt defiled by carnal sin committed during what should have been a time of penance (Ghitulescu, 2004, pp. 337–344). In such cases, even fasting would not allow such women to go to confession and take communion. Similarly, they were not allowed into the sacred space of the church during their menses, when they were considered unclean (*Îndreptarea legii*, 1962, p. 303).

But, once the period of fasting was over, men and women, young and old, met again at the village dance or at the public house. They felt that, having purified themselves through communion, they had earned the right to enjoy themselves: 'on Sundays and on feast days, especially in the summer, the villagers ran straight to the public house early in the morning, often without attending Holy Liturgy', wrote the doctor Constantin Caracaș (Samaritan, 1937, p. 111). Thus, for many the period of fasting did not conclude with a ritual moment of spiritual elevation through confession and communion, but simply with the first day when they could break the fast. In his pastoral of 1739, Metropolitan Neophyte showed that many Christians were not aware of the true meaning of the Eucharist: they believed that the blessed bread and wine were enough to absolve them of their sins, even though they had failed to go to confession and thereby prepare themselves spiritually.³⁴

*

'Being a good Christian' and 'living the Christian life' were grounded in simple rituals which, while giving depth to people's faith, did not necessarily give it weight. Church attendance, observance of feast days, of fasting and of the ten commandments were the basic principles of a Christian way of life. This was the message preached in churches by priests who often came from the same rural background as their parishioners and were often as little conversant with dogma as they were.³⁵

Moreover, the 'Christian way of life' in the period under consideration was replete with magic practices, worship of relics and miracle-working icons, and populated with enchantresses, witch-doctors and village hags. But did such simple forms of 'faith' and ritual make people less spiritual? Evidence about the strict observance of fasting,

the preparations for feast days, the construction of churches, pilgrimages, and charitable donations would suggest that, on the contrary, the Romanians were a pious people. None of this evidence justifies the extreme views often taken by historians who have written about the Romanians' religious life in the old regime. The Romanians had their own way of experiencing 'Church time': observing the fast, for instance, seemed more important to them than going to church regularly. The fact that Christian worship was gendered was due, in our view, to three important factors: the specific nature of female experience, women's relative lack of mobility and their need for solidarities. As they migrated less than men, women were much more available for the sociability networks in their parishes. Religious practice brought women together and imparted a meaning to their lives. The experience of birth, the high rates of infant and maternal deaths, their socially inferior status – accepted, but burdensome – the constraints of life in a couple, all contributed to enhance women's spirituality.³⁶ In addition, while men were often away, women had to build solidarities simply as daily survival mechanisms. Often, such solidarities were built around the parish priest seen as local 'leader'. Women's time management was different from that of men, who had to be away often in search of work to sustain their families. In other words, men's work-oriented lifestyles meant that building solidarities at the public house often made more sense to them than going to church. However, the family offered a shared space for the expression of piety as well as for the practice of magic ritual. Within their households, men and women, young and old, congregated to celebrate the holy days of the Christian calendar, carefully prepared through specific rites and behaviours. But the family home was also the space where magic could be performed to ensure the survival of the couple in difficult circumstances.

The Eastern Orthodox Church placed almost no emphasis on the dissemination of dogma. Its chief concern was for the observance of prescriptions and for the integration of a series of rites of passage. This was partly due to the fact that a significant number of the Church's servants did not possess the kind of theological culture which would have allowed them to reveal the 'true faith'. Hence their role as guardians of morality and manners rather than as 'enlighteners' of the people. Hence also their involvement in unconventional practices which the central authority believed to deviate so seriously from the 'true faith' as to be almost pagan. This close and enduring solidarity of people and lower clergy meant that the Romanian lands never experienced a 'rationalization' of faith and that secularization arrived much later and via channels which differed significantly from similar processes in the Western world.

Acknowledgements

My special thanks for the English translation of this study are addressed to Angela Jianu. This work was supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/89/1.5/S/62,259, Project 'Applied social, human and political sciences. Post-doctoral training and post-doctoral fellowships in social, human and political sciences' co-financed by the European Social Fund within the Sectorial Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007–2013 and the University of Bucharest.

Notes

1. In 1711/1716 Moldavia and Wallachia acquired new regimes known as the 'Phanariot' regimes. The ruling princes, elected from the Greek elite of the Phanar quarter in Constantinople, were appointed and deposed by the Sultan every three years, and sometimes even earlier. Such frequent changes led to a permanent administrative and juridical instability in the principalities. For further details, see Georgescu, 1991, pp. 85–105.
2. A similar process affected the Russian Orthodox Church, whose status in society grew considerably in the eighteenth century. However, as research by Gregory Freeze and Robin

- Bisha has shown, the rigidity of its precepts undermined its authority in the following century. To this were added processes of change and modernization in society which inevitably also affected the family. See Freeze, 1990, pp. 709–746; Bisha, 2003, pp. 227–242.
3. For this court and its activity see further details in Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 2004/2005, pp. 188–210; 2009, pp. 77–99; 2011, pp. 141–160.
 4. Taken to court, the priest was required to observe social hierarchies during church services by ‘minding the honour due to them when attending the church service’. (Biblioteca Academiei Române [The Library of the Romanian Academy], Manuscripts Collection, ms. 638, f. 133v, 21 September 1783, hereafter BAR, ms., followed by the pressmark).
 5. The conflict did not end with the removal of the ‘chairs’: the women rebelled, asking for their rights to be restored, a petition was sent to the Metropolitanate and an inquest was held among priests and parishioners to establish the origins of the initiative. But the preservation of peace and order during mass prevailed and the pews were never brought back.
 6. The church hierarch Dionisie Romanov was equally critical of the new mores of Wallachia in a short moral tale written in 1840: ‘It is a terrible sight to see multitudes dressed as for a masquerade turning the church into a dance hall; the heart is in pain when one sees that most men and women do not come to church to perform the due rites, but only to show their dress and adornments and settle the time of their evening engagements’. The text was published in the church periodical *Vestitorul Besericesc* in March 1840. This was the earliest church periodical in Wallachia. The first issue appeared in 1839 from the printed presses of the Bishopric of Buzău. The Hieromonk Dionisie Romano produced this publication almost single-handedly. Its content consisted chiefly of short stories with a moral message and advice to priests. The periodical was short-lived and ceased publication within a year.
 7. See also Barbu, 2001, pp. 120–121, and Jianu, 2007, p. 216. Aici si la Hartulari mai jos ar trebui sa ai 2007a si 2007b (?)
 8. For further details, see Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 2005, pp. 77–110.
 9. At Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in neighbouring Transylvania, a pillory was installed in 1550 in Piața Mare (Rom. central square), but was removed in 1783. Alongside the pillory, another control device was the so-called ‘fools’ cage’ (Rom. *cușca nebunilor*), used to contain disorderly behaviour. Cf. Sigerus, 2006, pp. 17, 33, 41.
 10. For instance, on 19 November 1781, Călin from the Dichiului suburb was ‘«canonised» (i.e. sentenced according to canon law) to be pilloried’ for drunkenness and ‘whoring and for dishonouring his parents and wife with his behaviour.’ He was reported to the authorities by his own father (BAR, ms. 636, f. 91r). A man called Dragul from the suburb Precupeții Vechi ‘had his neck thrust in the pillory’ to bring him ‘back to his senses’, as he had threatened to lock his wife up in the family home and set it on fire. (BAR, ms. 638, f. 220^f, 1 July 1784. See also ms. 637, ff. 5^v–6^v, 3 October 1784).
 11. All these measures repeatedly enforced by the political and ecclesiastical authorities were geared towards the modernization of the state. One noticeable change was the increasing intrusion of church and state in the individual’s life. Many of the Phanariot princes regarded themselves as ‘enlightened despots’ and, in line with the new ethos of the time, felt that it was their duty to enforce reform. Many ordinances targeted ordinary people, the ‘mob’, who had to be educated and ‘civilised’ in the spirit of social order and discipline. They covered all aspects of daily life: street sweeping, young girls’ sexuality, the demeanour of priests, oath-taking, church attendance and the observation of Lent, the ways in which people administered their wealth and property, the use and abuse of cosmetics by women, were all subjected to the new legislative initiatives (BAR, ms. 648, f. 6^r, < 10 July 1810 > ; ff. 39^v–43^r, ff. 57^v–58^r; ANR, ms. 141, ff. 99^v, 101^v–103^r; ms. 143, f. 194^v–195^v; Urechia 1891, I, 370–373, 401; III, 48, IV, 101–105; V, 255–258, 294–296, 472; VI, 741; VII, 144, 174–175, 428–429). The Church and the State had identical objectives and such measures were meant to create good subjects who paid their taxes, respected social hierarchies and order, went to church and refrained from challenging authority. However, control was neither efficient nor comprehensive. State and Church often overlapped or contradicted each other in the application of the same prescription. Ambiguity, incoherence and brutality often marred the application of these policies. It was only later in the century that new mechanisms and strategies could be put in place for enforcing public order.
 12. Court records show that many priests were very active in their parishes: they arbitrated conflicts with the authorities or within families, offered advice, read or wrote documents

- and letters for the less literate parishioners, helped them with their testaments, and even headed local rebellions. For specific case studies, see Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 2003–2004, pp. 144–174.
13. For the early nineteenth century, Alain Corbin links church absenteeism to a 'profound process of de-christianisation', without however being able to measure the extent of the phenomenon (Corbin, 1975, I, pp. 621–625).
 14. For this topic see Păun, 2001, pp. 63–73; 2002, pp. 125–139.
 15. There were numberless legends about miraculous fountains and icons, saints' lives (such as saint Philophteia and saint Mercury), as well as exceptional cases of divine retribution. Parishioners would relate such stories, which the metropolitan duly noted down in detail in his travel log. See Caratașu, 1980, pp. 243–315.
 16. The 1739 edict of Metropolitan Neophyte attempted to put an end to a series of 'devilish customs' practised by 'priests and laymen alike, by men and women, by old and young' in villages and suburbs. These were rites enacted on the days of religious festivals such as Holy Thursday, Christmas, the day of St. Basil, Epiphany, etc. The metropolitan linked such practices to ancient pagan and Dionysian rites and therefore did not consider them compatible with Christian values. Cf. the document published by Năsturel, 1984, pp. 251–257.
 17. For further details see also Jianu, 2007, pp. 429–444.
 18. The spells have formed the object of a significant number of linguistic and ethnographic studies. For a recent contribution, see Timotin, 2010.
 19. This allegation was quickly rejected by the couple's wedding witness, who was able to produce the evidence: the young wife's bloodstained chemise, given to him by the grateful young husband himself after the wedding night. (Arhivele Naționale din România [National Historical Archives] Bucharest, Fonds Mitropolia Țării Românești, CCCLXV/3, 16 June 1820, the deposition of Ghiță Turnavitul [a former grand *serdar* – a high-ranking boyar title] regarding the virginity of Elena Repezeanu of Mavrodin, Teleorman county). (Hereafter ANR, ms., followed by the pressmark)
 20. ANR, Bucharest, Fonds Mitropolia Țării Românești, CCCLXV/2, 14 June 1820, Vasile Dobruneanu vs. Elena Repezeanu.
 21. ANR, Bucharest, Fonds Mitropolia Țării Românești, CCCLXV/4b, 22 June 1820, the inquest led by the priests of the market town of Mavrodin, Teleorman county.
 22. For further details on spells, incantations and other occult practices in the period, see Roman, 2006, 2007.
 23. Constantin from the town of Câmpulung went to see a 'hag' who practised chiromancy: he wanted to know whether 'the girl who lives up the hill is with child'. A 'tax on carnal sin' was the punishment for illicit affairs in both customary and canon law. This, and the opposition to the marriage of the girl's parents, made him run to the 'enchantress' and to the priests to assess the 'danger' he might be in (should the girl be pregnant). (BAR, ms. 647, ff. 112v–113v, 4 January 1810).
 24. In such cases, an enchantress was said to be able to 'enslave' the person placed under a spell, to subjugate him or her, to 'make them mad' or to 'change their ways'. Thus, for instance, Stana 'shed hot tears' as she begged the Metropolitan to summon the 'accursed' Maria and '*force her to undo the spells which led my husband astray*'. Her husband, the fisherman Dinu had been 'involved' with that Maria for a long time, even before his marriage to Stana. None of the measures taken – numberless summons to the ecclesiastical court, pledges recorded in the church register, corporal punishment and even short periods in prison – had been successful in separating the two. (BAR, ms. 646, f. 177^r, 18 August 1804).
 25. The law code included a series of penalties for those who practiced magic and for those who resorted to their services. (*Îndreptarea legii*, 1962, 302, 410). See also the manual of Antim Ivireanul, 1997, 206.
 26. For details on these practices and the attitude of the Church, see Ghițulescu, 2004; Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 2006.
 27. See also Capp, 2003, pp. 353–374; Crawford, 1993.
 28. BAR, ms. 636, f. 2^v. See also the case of England, where only women, never men, were ever accused of neglecting their faith, Foyster, 2005, p. 94).
 29. In Rom. 'Popa toacă și îi chiamă/ La biserică să meargă./ Ei la cârciumă aleargă. Cu oala de dimineată/ Să tămâie în toată viața'; 'Cine bea până la îmbătare, nume bun în lume n'are' (Pann, 1991, p. 72). 'Toaca' is a wooden sounding board used in Romanian monasteries to call the faithful to prayer.

30. Anton Pann devoted many of his writings to the critique of this particular vice: *Indreptătorul bețivilor, care cuprinde faptele care curg din beție* (1832), *Cântătorul beției* (1851), *Triumful beției sau diata ce o lasă un bețiv fiului său* (1852).
31. Deacon Dragnea from the village Poienari was seriously wounded by a reveller while on call in the middle of the night to administer the last rites to the publican's dying father. The deacon could not help admonishing a drunken customer, captain Ianoș, with the words: 'my son, why are you eating meat and cheese during Christmas fast?' The drunken captain attacked the deacon with a knife and the victim had to 'lie in bed for three months'. BAR, ms. 636, ff. 37^v–38^r, 13 April 1781.
32. BAR, ms. 648, ff. 33^r–34^r, 26 February 1814.
33. Even though religious norms were the same for all Christians, in practice male debauchery was regarded with more leniency, even by the church itself. See Capp, 2003; Foyster 2004.
34. Document dated 4 March–22 April 1739 published by Năsturel, 1984, p. 257.
35. The training of priests was often deficient in the period considered. The recruitment of a parish priest was sometimes dictated less by a formal degree in theology than by the fact that the candidate could show that he knew the liturgical texts by heart and could perform the basic sacraments. For further details, see Ghitulescu, 2002, pp. 121–136.
36. Cf. also Capp, 2003, pp. 353–374; Crawford, 1993, pp. 73–75.

References

Manuscript sources

Biblioteca Academiei Române [Romanian Library of Academy], Bucharest, (BAR). - Registers of Romanian Church about dowry, testaments, divorce and mores, 1700 – 1830.
 Arhivele Naționale ale României [Department of National Archives], Bucharest (ANR). - Registers of Romanian Church about dowry, testaments, divorce and mores, 1700 – 1830.

Published sources

Cantacuzino, Mihai banul (1902). In N. Iorga (Ed.), *Genealogia Cantacuzinilor*. Bucharest.
 Cronica meșteșugarului Ioan Dobrescu (1802–1830) (1966). In I. Corfus (Ed.), *Studii și articole de istorie*, VIII, (pp. 309–403).
 Ecclesiarhul, Dionisie (2004). In N. Trandafirescu (Ed.), *Hronograful (1764–1815)*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române.
 Antim, I. [Antim of Iveria] (1997). In G. Ștrempel (Ed.), *Opere. Didahii*. Bucharest: Minerva, (First published in 1710).
 Ghica, I. (1956). *Opere*. Bucharest: ESLA.
 Hartulari, E. (1926). Istoria vieții mele de la anul 1810. *Convorbiri Literare*, October–November 729–839.
 Îndreptarea legii (1652), (1962). Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române.
 Jurnalul călătoriilor canonice ale mitropolitului Ungrovlahiei Neofit Cretanul (1738–1752), translated and edited by M. Caratașu, P. Cernovodeanu and N. Stoicescu (1980). *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, 98, 1–2, 243–315.
 Năsturel, P. Ș. (1984). Le christianisme roumain à l'époque des invasions barbares. Considérations et faits nouveaux'. *Buletinul Bibliotecii Române*, new series, Freiburg i. Br., Germany, vol. XI (XV), 251–257.
 Pann, A. (1991). *Povestea vorbei*, Facla, Timișoara [first published in 1847].
 Samarian, P. (1937). *O veche monografie a Munteniei de dr. Constantin Caracaș (1800–1828)*. Bucharest.
 Urechia, V. A. (1891–1902). *Istoria Românilor*, 11 vol. Bucharest.
 Vestitorul Besericesc, 1839–1840.

Secondary sources

Barbu, D. (2001). *Bizant contra Bizant. Explorări în cultura politică românească*. Bucharest: Nemira.
 Bisha, R. (2003). Marriage, church and community in 18th century St Petersburg. In W. Rosslyn (Ed.), *Women and gender in 18th-century Russia* (pp. 227–242). Ashgate: Cornwall.

- Burke, P. (2004). *What is cultural history?* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Burke, P. (1994). *Popular culture in early modern Europe*. Ashgate Publishing.
- Capp, B. (2003). *When gossips meet: Women, family and neighbourhood in early modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Corbin, A. (1975). *Archaïsme et modernité en Limousin au XIXe siècle, 1845–1880*, vol. 1 *La rigidité des structures économiques, sociales et mentales*; vol. 2 *La naissance d'une démocratie de gauche*. Paris: Marcel Rivière.
- Crawford, P. (1993). *Women and religion in England, 1500–1720*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Foyster, E. A. (2005). *Marital violence: An English family history, 1660–1875*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeze, G. (1990). Bringing order to the Russian family: Marriage and divorce in Imperial Russia 1760–1860. *The Journal of Modern History*, 62, 709–746.
- Georgescu, V. (1991). *Istoria românilor. De la origini până în zilele noastre*. Humanitas: Bucurest.
- Ghițulescu, C. (2004). *În șalvari și cu ișlic. Biserică, sexualitate, căsătorie și divorț în Țara Românească a secolului al XVIII-lea*. Bucharest: Humanitas.
- Ghițulescu, C. (2002). Preoți și enoriași în Valahia secolului al XVIII-lea. *Revista istorică*, 1–2, 121–136.
- Gurevich, A. (1990). *Medieval popular culture. Problems of belief and perception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Paris: Editions de la Maison de l'Homme.
- Jianu, A. (2007). Women, fashion, and europeanization: The Romanian principalities, 1750–1830. In A. Buturović & I. C. Schick (Eds.), *Women in the Ottoman Balkans: Gender, culture and history* (pp. 201–230). London: B. Tauris.
- Jianu, A. (2007). Elena Hartulari's Story: The presentation of the emotional self. In F. Bilici, I. Candea, & A. Popescu (Eds.), *Enjeux économiques, politiques et militaires en Mer Noire, XIVe–XXIe siècles – Etudes à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu* (pp. 429–444). Romania: Editions Istros.
- Lorint, F. E., & Bernabé, J. (1977). *La sorcellerie paysanne. Approche anthropologique de l'Homo Magnus, avec une étude sur la Roumanie*. Brussels: Editions A. de Boeck.
- Muchembled, R. (1988). *L'invention de l'homme moderne. Culture et sensibilités en France du XVe au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Fayard.
- Păun, R. (2001). Reliques et pouvoir au XVIIIe siècle roumain. Le dossier du problème. *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes*, XXXIX, 63–73.
- Păun, R. (2002). Fêtes et prise en possession de la capitale au XVIIIe siècle roumain: quelques réflexions sur la centralité du pouvoir. *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Européennes*, XXXX, 125–139.
- Porret, M. (2003). *Beccaria. Le droit de punir*. Paris: Michalon.
- Roman, N. (2006). *Manifestări ale magiei în Țara Românească la începutul secolului al XIX-lea în 'Omul și Mitul'* (pp. 387–398). Iași: Editura Universitas XXI.
- Roman, N. (2007). *Femeile din Țara Românească și 'farmecele' lor (descânțete, leacuri, doctorii)*, 'Revista Istorică', tom XVIII, 5–6, 591–605.
- Sigerus, E. (2006). *Cronica orașului Sibiu 1100–1929*. Sibiu: Honterus.
- Thomas, K. (1997). *Religion and the decline of magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Timotin, E. (2010). *Descânțetele manuscrise românești (secolele al XVII-lea–al XIX-lea)*. București: Editura Academiei Române.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2011). Mariage et parenté à travers les actes dotaux roumains (1700–1865). *Annales de démographie historique*, 1, 141–160.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2009). Autour du divorce: Disputes et réconciliations au tribunal (Valachie, 1750–1830). *Annales de Démographie Historique*, 77–99.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2004/2005). Divorce and divortiality in eighteenth-century Romanian society. *Südost-Forschungen*, 63/64, 188–210.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2006). *Focul amorului: Dragoste și sexualitate în societatea românească (1750–1830)*. Bucharest: Humanitas.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2005). Bonnes et mauvaises mœurs dans la société roumaines du XVIIIe siècle. In I. Băluță & C. Vintilă-Ghițulescu (Eds.), *Les bonnes et les mauvaises mœurs dans la société roumaine d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (pp. 77–110). Bucharest: New Europe College.
- Vintilă-Ghițulescu, C. (2003–2004). Vecini, reputații și control social în societatea românească, (sec. XVIII). *evista de Istorie Socială*, 8–9, 144–174.