

**'LUCIAN BLAGA' UNIVERSITY – SIBIU  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND ARTS**

**THE JOURNALISM OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL  
METROPOLITAN NICOLAE COLAN**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORATE THESIS**

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## **1. BIOBIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE GREAT HIERARCH NICOLAE COLAN**

### **Life and activity of the ecclesiastical metropolitan Nicolae Colan**

The ecclesiastical metropolitan Nicolae Colan was born on 28 November 1893, in Arpătac (today called Araci) in the county of Covasna. He finished the six years of primary school in his native village, after which his father entered him for the Orthodox High School 'Andrei Şaguna' in Braşov, where among others he was the colleague of the great poet, Lucian Blaga, the academician Andrei Oţetea and the philosopher D.D. Roşca. After graduating the university, between 1914 and 1916 he attended the courses of the 'Andreian' Pedagogical – Theological Seminar in Sibiu (today the Theological Academy). In 1916, Nicolae Colan settled in Bucureşti. He attended the courses of the Faculty of Letters (Romanian Language and Literature and Roman Philology Section). In October 1917, Nicolae Colan moved to Chişinău; here he became a contributor to the newspaper *Transylvania in Bessarabia*, which later became the *New*

*Romania*. After the union of Transylvania with the Mother country, Romania, Nicolae Colan returned home. Thus, on 19 April 1919, he obtained the ‘Absolatory’ at the Seminar with special results (at the Theological Academy of Sibiu), and later, the license degree at the Faculty of Philology in Bucharest. In 1922 he was appointed professor at the Study of the New Testament, and in 1928 he became the rector of the ‘Andreiane’ Theological Academy of Sibiu. He became a member of the clergy in 1934. As a theology teacher, besides the numerous theological works and studies and guidance articles, as a responsible editor and then director (1923-1936) he managed the monthly published *Theological Magazine*. In 1934, he founded the family magazine *Illustrated Life* (which he later transferred to Cluj in 1936). In 1935 he was chosen president of the editorial committee of the *Transylvania* magazine (Technical bulletin of culture), where he wrote many valuable articles<sup>1</sup>. He also saw to the appearance of the collections of religious writings *The Good Shepherd’s Library* and *Problems of Our Time* (annex publications of the *Theological Magazine*) and was the main advisor and collaborator of the metropolitan Nicolae Bălan at the time when he founded and developed the collections of religious and clerical writings *Theological Series*, *Didactical Series*, *Spiritual Halts* and *Turn to Christ*. On 29 April 1936, the Electoral Ecclesiastic College, which met at Bucharest, unanimously elected him as Episcopo of the Eparchy of Vad, Feleac and Cluj. The episcopo Nicolae Colan was chosen as an honourable member of the Romanian Academy in 1938, and in 1942 he was called for to occupy the position of academician (active member), which fell vacant through the untimely death of the great Nicolae Titulescu. The solemn reception of the new-comer in the Romanian Academy was postponed until 28 May 1945. In his reception speech he tackled the subject *Church of the Nation and Unity of the Romanian Language*. On 23 May 1957, the Electoral Ecclesiastic College – expressed by their unanimous votes – elected the episcopo of Cluj, Nicolae Colan as Archbishop of Alba Iulia and Sibiu and Metropolitan of Transylvania. On Sunday, 26 May 1957, he was ceremoniously consecrated in the Episcopal chair.<sup>2</sup> His guidance as a metropolitan was wise. He passed away on a Sunday morning on 15 April 1967. He was buried at Rășinari, in the cemetery of the *Great Church*, beside the metropolitan Andrei Șaguna. Although initially he had been buried there, Î.P.S. Antonie Plămădeală fulfilled his ‘will’ and thus the metropolitan Nicolae Colan now lies next to the metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, since complying with his last will he was reburied in the Brâncoveanu Monastery in Sâmbăta de Jos.

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<sup>1</sup> Iosif E. Naghiu, *Bio-bibliography P. S. Episcopo Nicolae Colan of Vadiu, Feleac and Cluj, years: 1916-1936*, in ‘Theological Magazine’, Sibiu, year XXVI, 1936, nr. 11-12, p. 407.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 409.

## 2. LITERALITY AND LITERARINESS IN THE WRITINGS OF NICOLAE COLAN

### Colan's style in the religious writings

The scholar and theologian, Nicolae Colan wrote numerous religious studies, but the largest amounts of work were his pastorals. The pastorals are the texts he sent to the priests in the eparchy to be read in all churches as part of the Divine Liturgy, at the occasion of the two Great Feasts: the Nativity and Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They<sup>3</sup> are written in a synthetically oratorical style, warm and flowing, in an elegant language, and express profound thoughts in a distinct language, yet accessible to anyone. Their message is conveyed to the open minds, of both the people who feel the need for the transmission of the evangelical message in a stylish garment, and to those who lack this kind of need. In their elaboration, the author respected the structural elements of a discourse (**exordium, proposition, narration, confirmation, refutation, peroration**): exordium – the winning of the auditor's benevolence (usually, the very opening formula, familiar to all pastorals: 'Dear beloved brothers'), proposition or theme (*Nativity and Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*); the division of the parts of discourse (containing social, political, historical and cultural themes), the main ideas, treatment, argumentation and closing that has an unique and well – known formula: 'Yours and everybody's, who wishes for the best, Nicolae' – Episcopo or Archbishop and Metropolitan (depending on the period when he wrote them).

In addition to their oratorical style, the pastorals also contain the informal version conversations. It is characterized 'by actualising the stylistic proceedings to the conditions of the expressive function, especially to its emotive aspect – sometimes entirely lacking any referential action.'<sup>4</sup> Although the expressive function is predominant, due to the well – balanced structure and the language used, style is not the most important asset in Nicolae Colan, the hierarch's pastorals. Synthesizing, we can observe, that for example the Pastorals on the Nativity of our Lord begin by expressing true and eternal joy that surrounds us during this great holiday, since God's love towards us is true and everlasting; it is also the source of this kind of joy. It is a mysterious joy that 'comes from beyond the kingdom of heaven and the borders of time.' Then he goes on, showing the reason and goal of God's embodiment. The reason for His embodiment is God's infinite love for the world, manifested even in Man's fallen 'state.' Created on God's image, Man was ingenerated so that His life and love be shared with. 'Without this scent of Christ that we are meant to spread wherever we may thread, the world would stay what it still is in a greater

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<sup>3</sup> See Nicolae Colan, *Pastorals*, edition supervised by Dorel Man, Cluj, Archiepiscopal Publishing House, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Dumitru Irimia, *Stylistic structure of Contemporary Romanian Language*, Bucharest, Scientific Publishing House, 1986, p. 82.

amount: ‘a vale of tears,’ with all the troubles and sorrows that are brought forward by sin.’<sup>5</sup> Thus in a distinguished but clear poetical language, the distinct metropolitan manages to put in edgeways in the souls of those who listen to his pastorals, the profound Christian teaching, that true and complete freedom can be attained only by living a life through the Holy Spirit, which delivers us from all servitude. The style of the pastorals, likewise to that of all preaches is characterized by elaborate language, select, rich and varied vocabulary. Instead of altering their content, the role of the figures of speech is to ornate the texts in a beautiful mantle, conferring expressivity and eloquence to them. Through the content of his pastorals the metropolitan managed to satisfy both the revelatory dimension of the teachings and the listeners’ need for clarity and beauty. The explicit, natural and precise style of Colan’s preaches (pastorals) contain numerous metaphors, epithets and even wonderful symbols. The logical structure of the exposition removes prolixity and digression, conferring unity to them and a manner of expression in accordance with man’s natural way of thinking and feeling.

### **Literariness with a laic character in the writings of Colan**

Probably the most important literary attempt among the writings of Nicolae Colan is the biographical work *Medallions*, published in Cluj, in 1940, in the anthology *Books of Life*. The book presents illustrious personalities of our Church and nation such as Andrei Şaguna, Nicolae Ivan etc. The chapters treat Orthodoxy and national revival, family and nation but the most representative fragments, from the point of view of literariness in *Medallions* by Nicolae Colan are those that describe the school period. Here are some suggestive excerpts in this sense: ‘The very first winter at high school passed pretty well and fairly quickly. The end of the school year was approaching when – one day in spring – my father came to visit the direction of the school, to acquit half of the maintenance fee in the boarding school (I was exonerated from the other half). He grabbed my hand – and after we had made a few steps in silence, he told me with a sort of gravity in his voice: ‘The principle assured me that next year I won’t be having any expenses.’ I started crying as if I had had a tragic premonition. My father understood my feelings and consoled me with his words: ‘Don’t cry, my dear son; you know that I haven’t got any children to sell... I know that I’ll have to work hard and save every penny, but I will most definitely take you to the Romanian Gymnasium in Brasov, in autumn!’ Telling me these words, he pushed his hat from one side of his head to the other, and out of the leather bag that was hanging on his shoulder, he drew out two apples that he had brought from home and gave them to me, wrapping me in a warm regard that I will never forget... [...] From this moment on, the Romanian School in Groaveri Braşov became my second paternal home. She was the one that endowed me

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<sup>5</sup> Nicolae Colan, *Pastoral at the Nativity of Our Lord, spoken at Cluj in 1947*, in the vol. *Pastorals*, p. 57.

with the first scientific armour for the battle of life; she was the one that lit in my heart the sacred flame of love for my nation and intensified orthodox faith in my soul, the religious education in which I had also been raised by my beloved parents. She was the one, that drew the marking lines of my Christian and Romanian style of life, which I was about to follow for the rest of my life. This is the incomparably precious spiritual dower I brought with me, when I left the Şaguna College from beneath Tâmpa in Braşov – and that all sons of our nation had brought as well, who had the chance to learn at the source of light of this Jerusalem of Romanian culture, on this side of the Carpathians.’<sup>6</sup>

### **3. PANEGYRICAL ASPECT IN THE WRITINGS OF NICOLAE COLAN**

#### **Religion and its representatives in the panegyrics of the hierarch Nicolae Colan**

Theologian par excellence, but also a good writer, a fine analyst, with a developed sense for criticism, Nicolae Colan wrote many valuable articles; as an innovation he wrote panegyrics, stepping beyond their classical model of structure, which are mainly identical with the construction of a discourse. Many articles have been written by Nicolae Colan with the purpose of eulogizing and praying for the metropolitan Andrei Şaguna. In his article ‘*Giver of laws and traditions*’ he describes him with a lot of warmth and appreciation, feeling a need to continue his legacy. The author begins by giving a brief summary of the great hierarch’s life and activity. In this sense, he sketched those events and happenings at which he took part, or to which he feels close in one way or the other. He took part in the impetuous events in 1848; on which Nicolae Colan notes: ‘He organized the Romanians in Transylvania into a *fighting nation*, and remained their actual leader until his death, not only due to the fact that he was the first president of the national party but also due to his great personality that drew into the orbit of his activity all national energies, capable of fruitful action.’<sup>7</sup> Then he goes on eulogizing every deed of the metropolitan Şaguna, among which the laying of the foundations of the *Transylvanian Association*, which in its turn ensured the political and cultural salvation of the Romanian nation, on this side of the Carpathians. In the author’s opinion this is another activity that assures a place for Andrei Şaguna among the great leaders of the nation.

#### **Bright figures evoked in the panegyrics written and spoken by Nicolae Colan**

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<sup>6</sup> Nicolae Colan, *Medallions*, collection *Books of Life*, Cluj, 1940, pp. 106-107 and 107-108.

<sup>7</sup> *Idem*, *Giver of laws and traditions*, in *Romanian Telegraph*, Sibiu, year LXXI, 1923, nr. 51-53, p. 2.

A traditionalist with solid culture in literature and lecture and generally all that is valuable mainly in Romanian literature, Nicolae Colan had the talent to express pertinent opinions about literary writings and about their authors. Sure enough, the opinions of the philologist Colan were often subjective and even contradictory. Nevertheless he had great respect for the contemporary canonical authors and their works. Among the people eulogized was also the classic **I.L. Caragiale**. ‘The mentioning of great personalities, creators of cultural values is always invigorating. Particularly the mentioning of the celebrities in the field of literature has this magical power,’ are the opening words similar to a confession, which begin the evocative. *The Remembrance of Caragiale*, which had first been published in the review *Illustrated Life*, in 1942, thirty years from the disappearance of the unique Uncle Iancu. Admirer of Caragiale and lover of valuable literature, Nicolae Colan begins by telling how he perceived Caragiale as a student, and although he had read his entire work, it was only after participating at the representation of *Lost Letter* and of *Calamity*, within the framework of a tour organized through Transylvania, by the Antonescu group, that he understood – as he confesses – Caragiale, the playwright’s true greatness. Touched and overwhelmed by what they saw and heard on stage, the college-student Colan and his colleagues, ardently searched for ways to put in their conversations lines like ‘Raison!’ ‘Have a little patience’ ‘Big family, but recounting, based on the budget, actually quite small’ –or ‘aphorisms, like those pronounced with adorable volubility by the great master of soap balloons, Nae Cațavencu’. These confessions are illustrative of a teenager’s admiration – an admiration that he would rediscover at mature age as well, when it is also expressed by the point of view of someone, who understands well the phenomenon, thus having the competence to set forth opinions – a thing which he does in the case of Caragiale. Making use of literary language and supplying examples to support his affirmations, this writing brings homage to the person eulogized. ‘No matter which fragment you might read from Caragiale’s rich literary dowry, you are bound to stay amazed by the diabolical plot, the lively rhythm of the action, the zest of the characters and the coat of language, tailored by the hand of a master, to suit the spiritual body of each hero, conceived by the great artist’s demiurge-like power. [...] The world will evolve – the critics said – and Trahanache, Cațavencu, Ipingescu, Pristanda, or Coana Zoița will remain but the literary fossils of an epoch of political and social transformation. Evidently, the prophecy was wrong. After half a century ‘the figures’ of Caragiale are still as alive as they were on the day of their birth. That is to say, life and the world are constantly changing, but in their essence they stay the same. [...] Caragiale was an artist of mockery, of irony, of ridiculing social and political shortcomings. [...] Caragiale particularly worshipped the Holy Scripture. Like any other Christian ought to do. It is said that once the Master was travelling from Bucharest to Berlin. During the journey, a friend of his was walking across the carriages in order to meet a familiar face, to have a talk with



them and thus to pass away the time during the journeys that he was so often making. Finally after a lot of searching, he met Caragiale in a carriage.

– Good morning Uncle Iancu! What a joy! The Master was reading. The curious friend glanced at the open book and obviously surprised, he said:

– Oh my God, what’s got into you? You haven’t been reading the Holy Scripture, now, have you!

Caragiale slowly raised his eyes and measuring up his friend with a meaningful regard, he answered:

– Well, my son, I have the habit of taking with me three books on every journey I make: the *Timetable of Trains*, to know when trains travel; a *calendar*, to know how time goes by; and the *Holy Scripture*, to know how life works. Caragiale was not a moralist, but he then taught his young friend a lesson to remember. [...] Anyone can learn from Caragiale, among others, the cult for Romanian language. Rereading his literary work, the elderly as well as those less burdened by age will taste the pleasure of the most authentic hours of ‘entertainment and learning.’ And the fragile offsprings in the school desks – now on holiday – will have still a chance to get friendly with the grammar of Romanian language. In this way, educating themselves will bring decent homage to the Master, from the death of which three decades have passed.

#### **4. LITERARY ATTEMPTS IN THE WRITINGS OF NICOLAE COLAN**

##### **The descriptive and the narrative in Nicolae Colan’s works**

Even though they are written in the form of articles, the works of Nicolae Colan are in fact essays, memoirs, recollections, portraits or descriptions. All of these aspects lead to the certitude that the writings of Colan have great language and sense.

Those produced by the writer – hierarch’s pen, contain all modes of exposition. In the article *Our Monasteries* he makes a successful descriptive – argumentative step in favour of visiting the Romanian monasteries. The first part of the text presents our tourist and host ‘customs,’ which lead the foreign visitors through the same tourist routes: Brăila–Galați–Deltă –in the first round, Constanța with the Sea – in the second, and Valley of Prahova–Brașov–Sibiu–Săliște – in the third. The author considers that these itineraries are monotonous, and they reveal only a small part of the places and things worthy to visit in Romania; for example, our monasteries ‘with the piety of which the hospodars and boyars have covered the Romanian land. They are usually positioned in beautiful, luring places – genuine thresholds of Paradise. And they represent architectonic and pictorial monuments of a rare artistic value. They also hide unaccountable treasures of miniaturist art, worked with passion, with scrupulous

care and with the patience fed from the inexhaustible source of orthodox faith.’<sup>8</sup> In the next sequel of the text, the author points out that because of the mistakenly understood hospitality, we ‘give ourselves airs and graces’ although we are still a ‘country of villages and monasteries’ and he sustains the idea of popularizing the monasteries by visiting them ourselves. The end of the article is a warm intercession in this sense, impressive through the lyrism and the warmth of the request, addressed to the reader: ‘My reader, the summer is here. I know that you are tempted to set on a trek. If you want to get acquainted with the most representative parts of our past, if you want to feast your eyes by looking at the monuments with the most authentic artistic value and bathe your soul in an atmosphere of peace and restful mystery, take a few days explore the monasteries as well, which ornate the valleys, hills and mountains of the Romanian land....’<sup>9</sup>

## 5. JOURNALIST AND LITERARY INTERFERENCES IN THE WRITINGS OF NICOLAE COLAN

### Literary genres and forms in the writings of Nicolae Colan

Nicolae Colan wasn’t a fiction-writer, although many of his articles have literary value. They belong to the ‘literary – publicist’ category, a term given by some of the specialists. The **literary tabloid** is also part of this category. The most important and at the same time the most well – written pieces were published in the rubric named *In the School of Prophets*, in the periodical *Rebirth* in 1949. The themes have a moralizing aspect and are commented upon on the analogy of the teachings of the Holy Scripture. The discourses of Colan’s tabloids have an **apodictic character**, and have harmoniously combined in their structure, carefully chosen words that integrated perfectly into the semantic context. Thus the texts have *ethos, pathos and logos*. Although they still contain the common elements of the great hierarch’s style of writings, their language and style, are constantly diversified, each element bringing something new – an innovation, a combination of apparently different elements or even some that are in contrast with each other. This is the case with the article entitled *Fabian’s Dog*, a text in which we can find elements of the anecdote and religious reflection tunefully integrated in a successful literary tabloid. The text is a combination of a narration with declarative and here and there apodictic features, and a lyric parable of an apocryphal style. It is interesting the mastery by which the author manages to assure the cohesion of these elements that are so different from each other. The writing opens with a narrative discourse (*ethos*),

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<sup>8</sup> *Idem*, *Our Monasteries*, in ‘Illustrated Life,’ Sibiu, year II, 1935, nr. 6, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 1-2.

specific to anecdotes, both in content and in language: ‘Fabian was our neighbour. Several years ago he moved to the Heavens. But his name remained, because he was a peculiar man. Surely he was hard – working. He led his household thoughtfully. His lands were ploughed and sowed in due time. As a master of fruit growing, he kept an orchard that was a delight to look at. He also knew all about hives, and he himself made the systematic bee hives, as well as all the other household tools. He didn’t frequent the law, since he was a decent man. He didn’t do harm to anyone and he wasn’t at quarrel with his neighbours.’<sup>10</sup> From a purely literary perspective, it is a felicitous excerpt of descriptive narration; from the point of view of the rhetoric of discourse, it represents the part through which the author can offer credibility to the narrated theme; it has the role to pave the way for both the writer’s and the reader’s motivation, for animating the content of the discourse. (*pathos*). This part contains the *proposition*, namely the enunciation of the theme and *argumentation*, namely the discussion of the arguments: ‘Nevertheless he had a flaw: he didn’t make it up with his dog, which had been tied to the leg of the hovel. When someone entered the courtyard, the dog began to bark ferociously. Then Fabian would snatch at it and hit it with the broom or anything he could quickly grab: ‘Shut up, you beast! Don’t wake up the village, because the Turks aren’t coming!’ After the dog had understood that if it was barking its master would get angry and beat it, it stopped barking. But it still got the dirty end of the stick, because Fabian would beat it up again, this time just because it wasn’t barking anymore: ‘Have you gone mute, you vile thing? The house may just as well burn down, and you’re still not barking!’<sup>11</sup> The text has anecdotic characteristics, specific to a tale like this, but more importantly, it arouses the reader’s curiosity, fulfilling its function from the point of view of the rhetoric perspective. The most important part of the discourse follows – its content (*logos*). It comprises the other rhetorical parts of the discourse: *probation* – *refutation* – thematic arguments for and against, *peroration* – the concluding part, and in the end, instead of the *postscript*, i.e. the greetings, the *eucharistia* appears – the expression of gratitude (here, a prayer of wish). Literarily, this part of the text is a lyric discourse, in which the meditative reflection dominates and is combined with a biblical quote at the end, this time from a Psalm: ‘Hard was the fate of neighbour’s dog, for it could not do as his master wished in any way. Fabian is not alone in his peculiarity. There are plenty of people like him. The Saviour resembles them to restive children whom you fail to reconcile with anything: *We played the flute for you, and you didn’t dance. We mourned for you, and you didn’t lament* (Matthew 11, 17). [...] And the Pharisees didn’t listen to Him either, but said to themselves: He is a sinner, since he eats and drinks with publicans and sinners. Neither John the Baptist or Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, could guess his humours and reform him. Now what can we do,

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<sup>10</sup> *Idem, Fabian’s Dog*, in *Rebith*, Cluj, year XXVII, 1949, nr. 15-16, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

when we have to deal with people like him, to shun the fate of Fabian's dog? Avoid them and let the Lord pay their dues. Because most of the time we cannot succeed in reforming them. We should try doing this, at least when we are not tied as Fabian's dog was. And if we should be seized with the defiance of childhood, so that no one could get a word with us, let us endeavour to cure ourselves from our faults, by praying and fasting, so not to remain alone – an eccentric. Let us say as often we can together with the Psalmist: *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me* (Psalm 50, 11).<sup>12</sup>

## 6. THEMATIC DIVERSITY, REFLECTION AND PASTORAL IN NICOLAE COLAN'S WORKS

### **Moral themes and thoughts in the pastorals written by Nicolae Colan**

All of Colan's pastorals, in addition to a clear and natural style, reveal a particular symbolism, which highlights the sensibility of their author. Nicolae Colan's last pastoral – epistle, viewed from this perspective, is full of meaning. It was written at the occasion the Resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in 1967, a few weeks before his death. Feeling his end near, the metropolitan talks about the significance of death, with serenity of the mind and spiritual reconciliation; thus by these lines paving the way, for his passing into eternity. The text presents the Christian symbolism of death. Father Dorel Man, who took care of collecting the great bishop's pastorals in a posthumous volume, gave a title in full agreement with the essence of the text: *The Tomb – Christ's Throne*. The archbishop, Colan talks about the significance of our Saviour's death and resurrection. He describes the death of Christ Messiah on the cross. In the author's opinion, Jesus Christ was crucified twice. A crucifixion was made by his conflicts with the Pharisees and scribes, who not once had made his heart bleed. The second and genuine crucifixion was that *'on the desolate peak of Golgotha, through which He brought by the liberating sacrifice and in the same time consecrated and lay in honour of Christianity the previously disgraceful wood, now become the Holy Cross.'* The language the author used is representative of the spiritual piece of mind of the great hierarch – a sign that he had been ready for the passing away into eternity, at piece with himself and having faith in his rebirth, surpassing humane and earthly dimension. *'In the grave we, humans go by necessity, taken by those who stay alive. Christ our Lord descended into the tomb – and into the world in human flesh – willingly, for love of the creatures that resemble 'God, in image and in likeness.'* Therefore, the tomb could not embrace Him, and He was protected from

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem.*

putrefaction. We depict the Lord's tomb, in accordance with this, in every church, at each yearly feast of Easter. That is why we take a bow before it, because there's emptiness in it. And it is empty, because the Son of God had used it as a throne. He stayed to wash away the many sins – of others, of our personal ones, not dying for his own sins, since he had not any of these, just as he wasn't responsible for the sins of human ancestors. Once *'risen from the death as a God'* – as the church hymn testifies, from which I started out in composing these words of Christian teaching – the Christ shall never die. He shall stay with us until the end of time, in our Holy Church, the sole Head of which he is. [...] He shall stay with us to guide the steps of our lives not only to the serene sanctuaries of eternity, but also to the triumphs of our times. Always by our side, in His Church, Christ our Lord teaches us with endless kindness to love each other similarly to the way He loves us –incessantly. He teaches us to be forgiving as our merciful Father from the Heavens proved to be towards us, when He sent His Son to our redemption. He calls on us to have unrelenting faith in the stall of His Holy Church. [...] We have confessed our sins under priestly stole and have received the purest Mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ. Knowing such things, now we can sing with uplifted hearts: *'Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ, Today I arise with Thee in Thy resurrection. Yesterday I was crucified with Thee: Glorify me with Thee, O Saviour, in Thy kingdom.'*<sup>13</sup>

Written in a distinct, expressive language Nicolae Colan's pastorals emanate poetic lyrism, and in this respect, they most certainly have genuine literary value.

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS

By the help of words, the metropolitan Nicolae Colan laboured all his life on the realm between faith and Romanian language. Through these concerns, he tackled religious, political and cultural issues. The results of these endeavours and preoccupations have materialized in numerous speeches, pastorals, press – articles, and published books. They have constituted a true spiritual nourishment, especially to the Romanians in Transylvania, who had to face a lot of injustice and hardship along history, thus in the previous century as well. He had managed and founded reviews that asserted Christian faith, transmitting his righteous, pious nation the heavenly work, due to which in a way the prelate Colan can be considered a 'man of God,' sent by celestial will to the pious nation in Transylvania, a place where he faultlessly carried out the heavenly Father's work. The writings and articles published by Nicolae Colan were numerous; apparently their number went beyond one thousand, attracting readers

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<sup>13</sup> *Idem, The Tomb – Throne of Christ, in Pastorals*, p. 277 and p. 275.

not only by this number, but also by the rich variety of the chosen themes and by its style. The thematic field of the Transylvanian prelate's writings started out from profoundly religious subjects and came to those of universal culture. He even wrote articles and studies that have as their motif, biblical and social pieces of advice, each and every one of them having as their essence the evangelical teaching of the Good. All the texts of the great writer – hierarch are characterized by simple language, which facilitates the deciphering of the message. They display many figures of speech that have the role of accentuating the meaning, without diminishing their content. These are constructed on a sound and expressive traditional basis, in complete accordance with the specific features of Romanian conscience. Each word in the Colanian writing bears the signs of a 'literary gift,' the metropolitan considering that each text that is garmented with a 'language, simple and beautiful,' even 'made religious,' gets to people's hearts more easily. The literary feature of the ecclesiastical writer's journalism is closely related to his literary talent. The episcopo Colan has narrated and depicted *the good* and *the beautiful* with much warmth and in a common language. He has made use of various artistic devices, various modes of exposure in order to narrate events or describe historical, canonical and literary personalities with much fervour, often from the perspective of someone who directly participated at the events, a fact that endowed the texts with a literary language standing in contrast with the purely scientific or dull language of history books.

The true value of Nicolae Colan's writings – whether a pastoral or a description, a portrait or the narration of an event – is given by the blending of religious language with the specific features of laic fiction. In all respects, this fusing led to the storing of an experience in time and allowed the episcopo, Colan do the translation of the New Testament in 1942, starting from Şaguna's Bible. Nicolae Colan bore in mind these commandments in each of his writings. His panegyrics have praised many religious personalities – Andrei Şaguna, Nicolae Bălan, Nicolae Ivan, Roman Ciorogariu, – the fundamental feasts of Christianity: Christmas and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and various laic personalities – King Carol II, King Michael I of Romania, George Enescu, Octavian Goga, the general Averescu, Sextil Puşcariu, Vasile Pârvan, Mihai Eminescu, Ion Agârbiceanu, I.L. Caragiale, Victor Ion Popa etc.

The study of Colan's writings leads us to the conclusion that the majority of them take a stand on the borderline between journalistic and literary. He was a man of the Church, who won unanimous recognition through his activity. Although he was endowed with a remarkable literary talent, the writer – hierarch cannot however be considered as a fiction writer in the classical sense of the word. Nevertheless, all his texts are imbued with many literary features. The richness and diversity of his journalism lead us to the conclusion that they have promoted it on a literary genre rank.

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