

**Studies and Articles of Biblical Theology of the New
Testament in the review “Altarul / Mitropolia Banatului”
[“The Shrine of Banat” / “The Metropolitan see of Banat”]
(1944-1947; 1951-2021)**

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Abstract:

In the middle of the 20th century, in Caransebeș, the foundations of an ecclesiastical publication of a high academic standing were laid: “Altarul Banatului” [“The Shrine of Banat”] (later renamed, in Timișoara, “Mitropolia Banatului” [“The Metropolitan See of Banat”]). Due to its content, the elegance of its ideas as well as its high standards, it soon compelled recognition among Romanian cultural-theological publications. During about seven decades of quasi-continuous publication, more than 200 studies, articles, commentaries and translations from the field of Biblical Theology were published in the pages of this valuable Orthodox publication; half of them refer to the New Testament. They are all particularly important and therefore, contribute to the Romanian and universal Christian Theology and spirituality by completing and enriching them.

Keywords:

Caransebeș, Timișoara, the journal “Altarul / Mitropolia Banatului” [“The Shrine of Banat” / “The Metropolitan See of Banat”], New Testament, Romanian Theology

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Preliminary

In the preamble of a previous study (Dobrei 2021, 109-110), published in the pages of the same university annals of Iași, I mentioned that the bases of a new ecclesiastical publication was being laid in Caransebeș – “Altarul Banatului” (“The Shrine of Banat”), a journal of a high academic standard, “a journal for the development of the soul and theological science”; due to its content, the elegance of its ideas as well as its high standards it soon compelled recognition among Romanian cultural-theological publications (Suciu 1977, 235-236; Carebia 2002, 180). In this first editorial stage his existence was short, on January 27, 1948 editor Marcu Bănescu being forced to surrender his publication authorization to the State Security Service of Caransebeș (Archives of Caransebeș Diocese 1948).

With it, two other theological publications of Banat disappeared, namely “Biserica Bănățeană” (“Banat Church”), the official organ of the archdiocese of Timișoara, and “Duh și Adevăr” (“Spirit and Truth”), the homiletic journal of the clergy from Banat. The old periodical “Foaia Diecezană” (“The Diocesan Newspaper”), started by the great hierarch Ioan Popasu, continued to be published and in 1949, when the Episcopal Seat of Caransebeș was included in the newly-created Archeepiscopal Seat of Timișoara and Caransebeș, it became “Foaia Arhidiecezană” (“The Archdiocesan Newspaper”) (*Foaia Arhidiecezană* 1949).

However, this publication also ceased to appear in the spring of 1951, being replaced by the official organ “Mitropolia Banatului” (“The Metropolitan See of Banat”) that was actually the result of merging two post-war theological publications, “Foaia Arhidiecezană” (“The Archdiocesan Newspaper”), also the result of merging other two older church gazettes: “Foaia Diecezană” (“The Diocesan Newspaper”) of Caransebeș, which had appeared in 1886, and “Biserica Bănățeană” (“Banat Church”) of Timișoara, which appeared in 1941, and “Buletinul Eparhiei Aradului” (“The Bulletin of the Eparchy of Arad”), replacing the old diocesan publication “Biserica și Școala” (“Church and School”), which had appeared in 1877; in time, as its content became more dynamic and of a better quality, this publication revealed its true identity, namely that

of a continuer of the first theological journal of Banat, “Altarul Banatului” [“The Shrine of Banat”] from Caransebeş (1944-1947), name and mission reassumed as of January 1990 (Dobrei 2013, 41-46).

Studies and Articles on the Biblical Theology of the New Testament

During the nearly seven decades of publication, in the pages of this valuable Orthodox publication were published more than 200 studies, articles, comments, translations and theological readings in the field of Biblical theology; more than half of them are historically and theologically circumscribed to the New Testament. The materials in question were published either in the section for *Theological Studies*, present in all editions of the magazine, or in columns like *Documentary*, *Church Life*, *Ancestors' Faces*, *Remembrances*, *Patristic Pages*, *Moral Readings* etc. Most writings are studies conducted with scientific accuracy by Romanian theologians; others are translations.

As for the subjects of the published materials, they cover a wide range of theological studies related to the New Testament such as Biblical archaeology studies and articles, materials concerning interpretative methods and the history of the canon of the books of the New Testament, their structure and content, the Old Law as compared to the New Law of love, etc.; many of these materials are interdisciplinary studies. Also, the magazine in question contains the comments of Church Fathers and ecclesiastical writers on some of the New Testament books, or on fragments of the Gospels, reviews, notes and bibliographic presentations of certain editions of the New Testament as a whole or parts of it, exegesis and New Testament Biblical theology volumes, studies and articles, as well as several valuable readings and poems of New Testament origin.

In the following pages we tried a systematization (by content) and an ordering (alphabetical and chronological) of all studies and articles published in the pages of this journal; we specify that in their enumeration we opted for the abbreviations “AB” (for the old edition from Caransebeş and for the current one of the “Altar of Banat” [“The Shrine of Banat”] from Timișoara) and “MB” (for the edition “Mitropolia Banatului” [“The Metropolitan See of Banat”] from Timișoara).

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CIUREA, Mihai: *Manuscriile pe papirus ale Noului Testament* [The papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament. Chester Beatty and Bodmer Collections] (AB, no. 1-3/2010, pp. 96-113);

CORBU, Agapie: *Istoria politică a epocii Noului Testament* [The political history of the New Testament epoch] (AB, no. 7-9/1997, pp. 83-92);

JINGA, Constantin: *Traducerile Bibliei: o retrospectivă istorică* [Bible translations: a historical retrospective] (AB, no. 1-3/1999, pp. 87-99);

NEGOIȚĂ, Athanasie: *Care erau grupările sau partidele religioase pe timpul Mântuitorului Hristos?* [Which were the religious groups or parties during the time of Messiah?] (MB, no. 9-12/1976, pp. 655-663).

II. Interpretative Methods

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BUDE, Ioan: *Elemente figurative și stilistice în Sfânta Scriptură* [Figurative and stylistic elements in the Holy Scriptures] (AB, no. 1-3/2009, pp. 15-24);

BRECK, John: *Principii ortodoxe de interpretare a Bibliei [Orthodox principles of Bible interpretation]*, translated by Constantin Jinga (AB, no. 1-3/1998, pp. 75-86);

JINGA, Constantin: *Aventura căutării de sens. O istorie a exegesei biblice creștine [The adventure of searching meaning. A history of Christian Biblical exegesis]* (AB, no. 4-6/1998, pp. 14-35);

MARCU, Grigorie T.: *Necesitatea de a cunoaște și înțelege corect Sfânta Scriptură [The need to know and understand the Holy Scriptures correctly]* (MB, no. 4-6/1972, pp. 204-212);

MUNTEAN, Vasile V.: *Vechi interpretări ale Apocalipsei [Old interpretations of the Apocalypse]* (AB, no. 4-6/2009, pp. 7-12).

III. New Testament Exegesis

BĂDILIȚĂ, Cristian: *Episod neo-testamentar [New Testament Episode]* (AB, no. 7-9/2009, pp. 13-18);

BĂNESCU, Marcu: *Aspecte stilistice în cuvântările pauline [Stylistic aspects in St. Paul's speeches]* (MB, no. 1/1988, pp. 16-25; MB, no. 2/1988, pp. 15-24); *Misterul magilor [The mystery of the Magi]* (MB, no. 1/1989, pp. 12-19);

BUDE, Ioan: *Un imn hristologic din lirica creștină a veacului apostolic: Filipeni 2, 6-11 A [Christological Hymn from the Christian Lyrics of the Apostolic Century: Philippians 2, 6-11 A]* (AB, no. 1-3/2010, pp. 8-12);

CAREBIA, Adrian: „*Mica apocalipsă sinoptică*” – prezentare și scurtă interpretare [“*Small Synoptic Apocalypse*” – presentation and brief interpretation] (AB, no. 4-6/2002, pp. 68-71);

COMAN, Vasile: *Ispitirea lui Iisus în pustie [The temptation of Jesus in the desert]* (MB, no. 7-9/1978, pp. 349-357);

COMĂNESCU, Radu: *Rugăciunea „Tatăl nostru” [The Payer “Our Father”]* (AB, no. 10-12/2005, pp. 11-17); *Fericirile [The Beatitudes]* (AB, no. 1-3/2008, pp. 55-72);

COPĂCIANU, Emanuel: *Despre vârsta necunoscută din viața lui Iisus Hristos [On the unknown period in the life of Jesus Christ]* (MB, no. 9-10/1964, pp. 501-506);

FLORESCU, Marius: *Considerații asupra parabolei Fiului risipitor [Considerations on the Parable of the Prodigal Son]* (AB, no. 4-6/2006, pp. 88-92);

GĂLEȘAN, M.: *Scopul Evangheliei a patra [The purpose of the fourth Gospel]* (MB, no. 11-12/1964, pp. 683-697);

GEORGESCU, Ion V.: „*Și a înviat a treia zi, după Scripturi*” [“And he was resurrected the third day, according to the Acriptures”] (MB, no. 4-6/1973, pp. 204-222);

GHEORGHIU, Vasile: *Prologul Evangheliei lui Ioan [The Prologue of John's Gospel]* (MB, no. 4-6/1957, pp. 4-33); *Activitatea Domnului în Iudeea, Enon de lângă Salim (Ioan 3, 22-36) [Lord's Activity in Judea, Aenon near Salim (John 3, 22-36)]* (MB, no. 1-3/1958, pp. 63-75); *Domnul în Samaria (Ioan 4, 1-42) [The Lord in Samaria (John 4, 1-42)]* (MB, no. 4-6/1958, pp. 22-48); *Activitatea Domnului în Ierusalim cu ocazia primelor Paști (Ioan, 2, 23-25) [Lord's Activity in Jerusalem at the first Easter (John 2, 23-25)]* (MB, no. 7-9/1958, pp. 329-353); *Cuvântarea Domnului Iisus Hristos din sinagoga din Capernaum (Ioan 6, 22-59) [The Speech of Jesus Christ in the synagogue of Capernaum (John 6, 22-59)]* (MB, no. 9-10/1959, pp. 18-56); *Domnul în Ierusalim la Sărbătoarea Colibelor (Ioan 7, 1-53). Femeia păcătoasă (Ioan 8, 1-11) [The Lord in Jerusalem on the Holiday of Sukkah (John 7, 1-53). The sinful woman (John 8, 1-11)]* (MB, no. 11-12/1959, pp. 28-67); *Cuvântarea din vîstieria templului (Ioan 8, 12-20) [The Speech in the temple treasury (John 8, 12-20)]* (MB, no. 1-2/1960, pp. 7-17);

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LEON-DUFOURS, Xavier: *Ce se așteaptă de la un exeget? [What is expected of an exegete?]*, translated by Ion V. Georgescu (MB, no. 10-12/1969, pp. 642-654);

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- SAINT HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME: *Demonstrație din Sfintele Scripturi despre Hristos și Antihrist [Demonstration from the Holy Scriptures about Christ and the Antichrist]*, translated by Cristian Bădiliță (AB, no. 4-6/2000, pp. 116-135);
- SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH: *Epistola către Romani [The Epistle to the Romans]*, translated by Dumitru Fecioru (AB, no. 7-9/2011, pp. 119-121);
- SAINT JEROME: *Comentari la pilda celor zece fecioare [Commentary on the parable of the ten maidens]*, translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 3-4/1990, pp. 70-72); *Comentari la Sfânta Evanghelie după Matei [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew]*, translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 11-12/1990, pp. 48-56; AB, no. 1-3/1991, pp. 49-54; AB, no. 4-6/1991, pp. 83-89); *Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Chemarea Apostolilor și trimiterea lor la propovăduire. Iisus săvârșește mai multe vindecări [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: The Summons of the Apostles and sending to preach. Jesus performs several healing miracles]*, translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 10-12/1992, pp. 99-111); *Comentariu la Evangelia după Matei: Slăbănușul din Capernaum. Ucenicii lui Ioan*

Botezătorul. Fiica lui Iair și femeia bolnavă. Doi orbi și un mut. Secerîșul și secerătorii [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: The thin man of Capernaum. The apprentices of John the Baptist. Ari's daughter and the sick woman. Two blind men and a deaf man. Harvesting and harvesters], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 4-6/1993, pp. 77-82); Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Spicele de grâu și tămăduirea făcută sămbăta. Hula împotriva Duhului Sfânt. Cine este adevărata rudenie? [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: The wheat ears and the healing performed on Saturday. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Who is the true kin?], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 7-9/1993, pp. 97-105); Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Șapte pilde despre Împărăția Cerurilor [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: Seven parables about the Kingdom of Heavens], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 10-12/1993, pp. 85-94); Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Tăierea capului lui Ioan Botezătorul. Înmulțirea pâinilor. Iisus umblă pe mare [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: The beheading of John the Baptist. The multiplication of loaves. Jesus walks on water], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 1-3/1994, pp. 106-112); Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Spălarea mâinilor. Femeia cananeancă. Săturarea celor patru mii de oameni [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: The hand washing. The Canaanite woman. Feeding the four thousand], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 10-12/1994, pp. 117-123); Comentariu la Evanghelia după Matei: Semnele timpului. Aluatul femeilor. Vestirea Patimilor. Urmarea lui Hristos, [Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew: Signs of the times. The women's dough. The Annunciation of the Calvary. Following Christ], translated by Nicolae Neaga (AB, no. 1-3/1995, pp. 83-88);

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I Thessalonians], translated by Marcel Hancheş (AB, no. 1-3/2011, pp. 74-79).

UNGURAŞ, Dorel: *Privire exegetică asupra expresiei „Dumnezeu S-a îndreptat în Duhul” [Exegetic observation of the expression “God redeemed in the Ghost”]* (AB, no. 1-3/1991, pp. 29-34);

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VARGA, Cătălin: *Teologia și exgeza episodului „Schimbarea la Față” (varianta lucanică) [Theology and exegesis of the episode “The Transfiguration” (Lucanian version)]* (AB, no. 7-9/2013, pp. 76-101);

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BĂNESCU, Marcu: *Întâiul martir – deschidere spre neamuri [The first martyr – openness towards the peoples]* (MB, no. 6/1986, pp. 28-34); *Ponțiu Pilat sau echivocitatea unei atitudini [Pontius Pilate or the ambiguity of an attitude]* (MB, no. 2/1987, pp. 15-23); *Toma [Thomas]* (MB, no. 2/1989, pp. 18-27);

BÂRLĂNESCU, Ion: *Personalitatea Sfântului Apostol Pavel, izvoarele sale doctrinare și permanenta sa actualitate [The personality of Saint Apostle Paul, his doctrinaire sources and his permanent actuality]* (AB, no. 4-6/1993, pp. 31-42);

BUDE, Ioan: *Sfântul Arhidacon Ștefan – protomartir după Noul Testament și în Tradiția Bisericii [Saint Archdeacon Stefan – protomartyr according to the New Testament and the Church Tradition]* (MB, no.

2/1988, pp. 48-62); *Locul Sfântului Ioan Botezătorul în iconomia mânăstirii după Noul Testament [The place of Saint John the Baptist in the salvation dispensation according to the New Testament]* (MB, no. 1/1989, pp. 29-42); *O interesantă mărturie apocrifă despre martiriul Apostolului neamurilor: documentul „Faptele lui Pavel” [An Interesting Apocryphal Testimony of the Martyrdom of the Apostle to the Gentiles: “Acts of Paul”]* (AB, no. 7-9/2015, pp. 10-15);

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CROITORU, Cristina G.: *Sfântul Ioan Teologul, apostolul iubirii [Saint John the Theologian, the apostle of love]* (AB, no. 7-9/2010, pp. 57-72; AB, no. 10-12/2010, pp. 76-83; AB, no. 1-3/2011, pp. 57-67).

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SPIRU, Ioan: *Sfântul Apostol Pavel și adevărurile evanghelice cuprinse în epistolele sale [Saint Apostle Paul and the evangelic truths contained in his epistles]* (AB, no. 7-9/1993, pp. 79-90).

V. New Testament Theology and Spirituality

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BUDE, Ioan: *Viață și moarte în Hristos. Epistola a II-a către Corinteni 5, 1-10 [Life and death in Christ. Second Epistle to the Corinthians 5, 1-10]* (MB, no. 1/1988, pp. 51-62); *Suprema ispătă a nopții din Ghetsimani [The*

supreme temptation of the night in Gethsemane] (AB, no. 4-6/2006, pp. 7-11); Martorii „plinirii vremii” [The witnesses of “the fullness of the time”] (AB, no. 10-12/2007, pp. 19-31); Simbolismul biblic al Sfintelor Taine și sensurile lor duhovnicești în Noul Testament [The Biblical symbolism of the Holy Sacraments and their spiritual meanings in the New Testament] (AB, no. 1-3/2008, pp. 8-12); Aspecte arhetipale de teologie baptismală noutestamentară [Archetypal aspects of New Testament baptismal theology] (AB, no. 7-9/2008, pp. 7-11); Firescul puterii divine a Mântuitorului Iisus Hristos în săvârșirea minunilor. Câteva considerente [The naturalness of the divine power of Jesus Christ when performing the miracles. A few considerations] (AB, no. 10-12/2009, pp. 10-22); Mărturii euharistice neotestamentare (după Ioan 6, 51-56 și I Corinteni 10, 16-22; 11, 17-37) actualizate în Sfânta Liturghie [New Testament Eucharistic Testimonies (after John 6: 51-56 and 1 Corinthians 10: 16-22; 11: 17-37) updated in the Holy Mass] (AB, no. 4-6/2014, pp. 59-67); Imnologia profetică a Apocalipsei [The Prophetic Imnology of Apocalypse] (AB, no. 10-12/2014, pp. 66-72); Un imn hristologic paulin din lirica creștină a veacului apostolic: Filipeni 2, 6-11 [A Pauline Christological Hymn from the Christian Lyric of the Apostolic Age: Philippians 2: 6-11] (AB, no. 4-6/2015, pp. 29-32); Temeiuri biblice neotestamentare cu privire la oficierea Sfintelor Taine și ierurgiilor bisericești I. Botezul [New Testament biblical grounds for officiating the Holy Sacraments and the hierurgies I. The Baptism] (AB, no. 1-3/2017, pp. 5-33; AB, no. 4-6/2017, pp. 19-43; AB, no. 7-9/2017, pp. 29-53); Temeiuri biblice neotestamentare cu privire la oficierea Sfintelor Taine și ierurgiilor bisericești II. Mirungarea [New Testament biblical grounds for officiating the Holy Sacraments and the hierurgies II. The Christmation] (AB, no. 10-12/2017, pp. 17-44; AB, no. 1-3/2018, pp. 5-28); Temeiuri biblice neotestamentare cu privire la oficierea Sfintelor Taine și ierurgiilor bisericești III. Taina Pocăinței [New Testament biblical grounds for officiating the Holy Sacraments and the hierurgies III. The Sacrament of Confession] (AB, no. 4-6/2018, pp. 59-67; AB, no. 7-9/2018, pp. 9-38; AB, no. 10-12/2018, pp. 18-40; AB, no. 1-3/2019, pp. 8-16; AB, no. 4-6/2019, pp. 19-31; AB, no. 7-9/2019, pp. 18-23); Temeiuri biblice neotestamentare cu privire la oficierea Sfintelor

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Conclusions

The materials published in this prestigious theological journal from Banat cover almost the entire range of the New Testament. As it can be easily noticed, some aspects are given more attention, such as those related to Biblical archaeology and the Holy Scriptures' interpretative methods of the New Law; as for the rest of the materials, on the whole, they include studies and articles on specific topics. Regardless of their content, they are all particularly important and therefore, contribute to the Romanian and universal Christian Theology and spirituality by completing and enriching them.

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