

Reference Points of the Education Reform in 19th Century Moldavia: Filaret Scriban

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Abstract: The theological education system in Moldova has had throughout its history, largely, a constant evolution, but an evolution marked by some jumps in terms of quality and the approach of the pedagogical process. One of these episodes of progress is due to Filaret Scriban. What made Filaret a professor of theology able to sustain a consistent reform of education was the education he received in his family, and especially by attending the educational institutions such as Mihaileanu Academy of Iasi and the Theological Academy in Kiev. Throughout his studies, and as a teacher, he wrote and published several important books, and most importantly, theological school textbooks. In this respect, Filaret was a true pioneer. Filaret's work in the organization of theological education had results in the entire region of Moldova as the seminar he led had graduates became in their turn teachers in other schools.

Keywords: national education; Moldavia; ecclesiastical seminary; educational reform

1. Introduction

The present article aims at evoking the personality of Bishop Filaret Scriban, focusing more on the input that he had in the reforming of education in Moldavia. In order to approach our theme, we will take into consideration a series of guidelines. We will present Filaret Scriban's intellectual training within the country, as well as the one received abroad, both of them being important as far as Filaret's training as future educator and innovator in the education field is concerned. Concurrently, we will evoke his educational outcomes which consisted of various notable publications at that time and which denote the untimely desire of the young clerk to bring something new and useful to his activity area. Next, we will cover his return to the country, in Iasi, where, as teacher and chancellor of the local Faculty of Theology, he was the main factor of reformation in the educational

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system. Finally, we will try to also outline some of the impact and consequences that this academic reform had.

2. Studies and first Publicistic Results

At the throne of Moldavia's Mitropoly in the first half of the 19th Century, reigned Veniamin Costachi, who worked so much for the church and national culture, that all the libraries could not comprise the writings about his personality (Udișteanu, 2005, p. 310), a policy of encouragement for those who wanted to work within the spiritual field of the Romanian lineage, from both the church rostrum and the lecturing desk. Not few are those that Veniamin was there for, but out of all, the most brilliant ones were the Scriban monk brothers: Neofit and Filaret (Udișteanu, 2005, p. 310).

The historical background which frames Filaret Scriban's activity is marked by two reference points: The Unification of Principalities, as an indisputable patriotic act, and the fight for the Church's instating in its own rights, generically known as "*the fight for canonicity*". Between these two historic episodes which were surrounded by much turbulence, another aspect which has –in its turn- undergone notable changes was the education.

Filaret Scriban was born in Burdujeni, Suceava, in the year of 1811, receiving at his christening the name of Vasile, the second son of Priest Ioan Artimescu, registered in the documents as Popescu, and the one through whom the entire family adopted the last name Scriban. The history of the name Scriban, proper name which will establish the generations of this family who proved to be very resultful in the many activity areas in which its members have been involved, is connected to Filaret. The latter, bearing the official name of Vasile Popescu – the future Bishop Filaret – attended middle school and later became a student of the Mihaileana Academy of Iași (1835-1837) where, among prestigious professors such as Eftimie Murgu and Cristian Flechtenmacher, he had a tight connection with Professor Vasile Fabian-Bob. The latter, awestruck by the young disciple's inclination towards study, added the pseudonym "*Scriban*", a name which means *writer*. Young Vasile loved this name, therefore he adopted it. From here on, the majority of his family members, initially named Artimescu, later on Popescu, carried the name Scriban.

As we have mentioned above, young Vasile studies at the Vasilian Gymnasium (on June 1st 1831, among the three 1st grade gymnasium pupils who have been awarded prizes, there was a boy named “*Teodor Popescu (later Scriban)*” (Urechia, 1982, 157) and the Mihaileana Academy from Iași during 1830-1837 and works as a teacher at the Normal School from “*Trei Ierarhi*” (“*The Three Hierarchs*”) throughout 1837-1839. From the certificate issued on November 28 1838 it appears that Vasile Scriban Popescu attended the courses: Catechism, Romanian Grammar, Latin Grammar, Rethoric, Poetry and Mythology, Universal Geography, Universal History, Mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra, Trigonometry), Philosophy (Logics, Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy), Russian, French and Latin. (Păcuraru, 1959, 103) He is named substitute teacher of French Language in 1834, a position which he holds until 1836, when he becomes teacher of Romanian Grammar, Arithmetic and Catechism for the first grade pupils. In 1837 he is named substitute teacher of the Rhetoric, Poetry and Mythology lecturing desks at the Mihaileana Academy, while in 1838 he helps cupbearer G. Săulescu with the history course. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 104)

In 1836 his first work goes out: *First learnings for the Moldavian youth learning French*, published in Iasi in 1836, and consisting of 253 pages. The preface is signed: “*Vasile Popescu, student of the Academy, Iași, April 3rd 1836*”. The work contains only retroversions, with Romanian parallel text (in Cyrillic letters) and French. The excerpts are taken from different subjects: astronomy, physics, zoology, botanics, chemistry, geography, and at the end it has a section of French language basic grammar. In 1837, in the report of what was then called The Public Teachings Trusteeship of the Moldavian Principality, Vasile Scriban is mentioned with 6 out of 29 works written by pupils, works which had gone out that year. These works are: 1. *Biography of philosophers, based on Fenelon* in 2 parts (translation from French), 2. *French literature collections of Noel* 3. *From Cicero: Old Cato* (translation from Latin). 4. *Word of Mesalion*, translation from French, 5. *The night and day of Russia*, 6. *Guiliom Tel based on Florian*, (translation from French). (Urechia, 1982, p. 371)

Moreover, Vasile Scriban is mentioned as being co-translator for other 7 books. (Urechia, 1982, p. 371) In 1838 he publishes in Iași *Mica Geografie a Daciei Moldovei și a Țării Românești*, (*Short Geography of Dacia, Moldavia and Wallachia*), a work in 122 pages, which is among the first Geographies in Romania.

Among the works written throughout this length of time, there are adaptations and translations of certain literary excerpts. Here we speak of *Brutus' tragedy* (adapted in Romanian from French), a translation from *Cornelius Nepos* in Latin, *Dialogues of the dead* from French and *Socrates' life*. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 5)

By the end of this studies cycle, he prepares and sends a letter to The Public Teachings Trusteeship of the Moldavian Principality in which, showing his remarkable inclination towards theological studies, he asks to be sent to a foreign university where he would widen his studies in this area (Excerpt from the letter text: "*Being raised in and performing the course of philosophical teachings and history parts, I've been instinct with a truth as big as it was holly, that is: that the Christian Religion is the easiest means to lead humanity towards the destined purpose! Accordingly, since I have such a determined and thorough inclination towards the adequate career of the above mentioned purpose, I humbly ask you to send me to any Univeristy abroad, in order to complete my theological studies...*"). (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 5)

This letter-application comes before the very eyes of Metropolitan Veniamin Costache, who, as president of the The Public Teachings Trusteeship of the Moldavian Principality, all the while knowing that young Vasile was fitted for the widening of the respective studies, approves the application and sends him to study at the spiritual Academy in Kiev. Receiving the positive response to his letter with immense joy, young Vasile Scriban makes, as a reply, a much more notable gesture of gratitude by donating "*three hundred volumes of books in various languages to the national schools library.*" (Urechia, 1982, p. 86) The affirmative response to this request is materialized in a "*very curious*" school attestation issued in order to serve him abroad: "*Curatella scholarum publicarum in principatu Moldaviae reperibillum*" awarded for "*Dominum Basiliu Popesku Scriban nobilem Moldaviensem, pater sacerdote, ortodoxo natum, ex oppodo Bordojan oriundum, aetatis 22 annorum*". (Urechia, 1982, p. 61)

We must mention here the fact that young Vasile Scriban's departure to Kiev has met certain difficulties. Although Metropolitan Veniamin Costachi had prepared the request that Vasile be received at the studies, the approval of the Kiev Academy was long in coming. This situation made it so that history records a very interesting episode. During that period of tension, the consul of Russia visited the Mitropoly. Right before the consul arrives, Metropolitan Veniamin Costache loses his temper and "*bursts into a flood of tears*", a scene which is witnessed by Vasile

Scriban. Finding the Metropolitan in this state, the Russian consul asks him if he can be of any help, to which the Metropolitan replies: “*You see this young man (n.n. Vasile Scriban), expressed his wish to study Theology in Kiev, and after all the mediation I’ve been doing for all this time, I still haven’t got any answers from Russia. I am in need of people and I cannot train them, nor do I have enough means to*”. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 8)

On hearing these complaints, the Russian consul commits to personally handle this situation. Thus, Vasile Scriban becomes a student in Kiev, while also receiving approval to attend the 4 study years in only two. (Păcuraru, 1959, p. 105)

Thus, during 1839-1842 Vasile Scriban attends the courses of the Faculty of Kiev from which he benefits from study scholarship, an insufficient amount, which will be complemented by the financial aid of the Metropolitan who had defended and promoted him (From the same source we find out that Metropolitan Veniamin Costachi, was supporting with financial amounts, outside the scholarships and mentions the name of some of them: “*Panaiteanu, M. Strat in Berlin for Law (that is for legal sciences, n.n.) and two others in the counties (namely for Administration, n.n.) with 40 ducats per year/each*”). (Erbiceanu, 1884, p. 11)

Throughout this difficult period of time for any student in a foreign country, Vasile exchanges letters with his brother Neofit. (Erbiceanu, 1888, p. 328) Moreover, the letter exchanges with his father reveal glimpses of the young student’s activity in Kiev. He was very interested in researching national documents which could be found in the libraries there, especially those related to the Romanians’ Church history. (Erbiceanu, 1888, pp. 13-14)

We must mention the fact that the boarding house and work conditions in Kiev were pretty difficult for Vasile Scriban, especially as far as his health was concerned. To that effect, Constantin Erbiceanu reminds us that “*in the Kiev Academy boarding house, the discipline rigor, bad nourishment and continuous working weakened his strength*”, adding that he was prone to such weakness, having “*a delicate-feeble body build*”, which further led to his being admitted in the hospital with “*the nostalgia disease*” in 1840. (Erbiceanu, 1888, pp.13) There is a poem written by Neofit – “*Lonely in a hospital*” – in tune with the ill-conditioned mood in which he was being, convinced that the illness would be fatal to him (The entire text of the poem: “*May Romanians finally see the light/ I would gladly die having this certainty!/ Do cook tonight, so I can have my dinner here/ Cause*

tomorrow I don't know where I'll wake up – where I'll be)". (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 13)

Even with all these hardships, young Vasile distinguished himself not only among his colleagues, but mostly in the circles of the Kiev Academy professors. As an acknowledgment of his quality, many of them saw him not only as a distinguished student, but as one who was a teacher. Even the Metropolitan of Kiev, Filaret Amfiteatrov, was his friend and anytime they had the chance, they would talk to each other in French. At the Kiev Academy, Vasile Scriban has the chance to meet some of the most outstanding Russian Theology professors of the time, such as Ivan Scvorțev, professor of Moral Philosophy, Iacob Amfiteatrov, father of Russian Homiletics, a.o. He also enjoyed the friendship of certain colleagues who were famous in the Russian area, such as Macarie Bulgacov, future Metropolitan of Moscow and Alexei Novoselov, future Bishop of Ekaterinoslav. (Păcuraru, 1959, p. 105) But he forms the tightest friendship with diplomat Alexandru Sturza (Păcuraru, 1959, p. 105), the writings of whom he translates from, according to Eufrosin Poteca. (Iorga, 1930, p. 248) Also in this period of studies, Filaret manages to draft "*in patriotic spirit*" –being the first after Petru Maior- "*The Church History of Romanians*". This work, drafted in Russian, is being kept in a "400-sheet" manuscript. (Iorga, 1930, p. 248)

Throughout this entire period of studies, Vasile Scriban is continuously driven by the desire to join monachism. Thus, to that purpose, he makes the first step on February 3 1841, when he asks for the Metropolitan Filaret Amfiteatrov's blessing. Moreover, he asks the Ukrainian hierarch to intervene to the Metropolitan Veniamin to make concessions for the receiving of the blessing to enter the monastic order. Metropolitan Filaret replies to the request and forwards Metropolitan Veniamin the intercession written and dated January 13 1841. In its content, the hierarch reminds of the fruitfulness of the candidate's work in monachism and asks his correspondent to allow him to personally turn him into a monk (The text for the intercession act: "*Ut tuam respectu hujus rei sententiam mihi manifestam reddas. Quod ad me, supradictum juvenem, ob egregia ejus in litteris progressus praesertim vero ob morem ejus mitem, valde docilem humilemque, ad vitam monasticam, quam maxime aptum esse puto*"). (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 15)

Sure enough, Metropolitan Veniamin, satisfied with the journey of the student whom he had promoted, answers in the affirmative through the address sent in 1841 "*in festo Apostolorum*".

Not being an Unkrainian, this step of entering monachism encounters difficulties. According to his biographer, Constantin Erbiceanu, those in Kiev were worried that Vasile, once having become a monk and carrying a rich profile as teacher and master of Theology will become a very powerful candidate for the Episcopalian stools thereout. Accordingly, wanting to finish off this stage, Kiev's Metropolitan approached Metropolitan Veniamin and the School board "*justifying his intervention on the fact that "he couldn't have obtained the master's degree in Theology, if he were a civilian – that's how things were in Russia!"*" (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 16)

Once the difficulties were overcome, on August 5 1841, young Vasile Popescu Scriban enters monachism at the "*great Lavra Pecerska in Kiev,*" only to be "*ordained hieromonach*" (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 19) on August 6, that is, the Transfiguration holy day. Following the ritual, Vasile receives the name of Filaret, a name chosen right by Kiev's Metropolitan himself, Filaret (Erbiceanu explicitly mentions that the Metropolitan of Kiev "*loved him so much that, during his entering into monachism, he gave him his name*"). (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 9)

In a letter from that happy time in his life, in which he confesses to Gh. Asachi the joy caused by the step he took, hieromonach Filaret also mentions some of his concerns. Firstly, he expresses the idea that "*The Socola Seminary won't do well unless it complies to the Public Teachings Board's surveillance, as do all the other public schools*". Next, Filaret writes that he found four historical books "*about the life of Mr. Vasile Lupu and P. Movilă, in which one can clearly find, that that Mister founded schools within the Trei-Ierarhi Monastery*". These books, Filaret emphasizes, could be used as legal proof for claiming, "*The estates' revenues from the Greeks, estates which appear in the paper found by the Honorable Trusteeship to be signed and destined for the keeping of schools!*" Moreover, Filaret bemoans the fact that he will probably never get to live enough to see his ideal of United Romanian Principalities come true.

Along with completing the studies cycle in Kiev, Filaret Scriban obtains the title of "*master in Theology*". On April 5 1842, the Kiev Academy declares him, by Diploma no 9 "*Dominum Hieromonachum Filaretum Scriban Magistrum sacrosanctis Theologiae humaniorumque literarum ...*" (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 22), making

Filaret the first Romanian to graduate as Theology master of a Spiritual Academy in Russia. (Păcuraru, 1959, p. 106) The title of his Licence paper was "*Certain historical knowledge on the state of Moldavia's and Wallachia's Church from the very beginning until today*", a work which has also been discussed in the Church of Russia's Synod. (Urechia, 1982, p. 226)

3. Return to Moldavia and Reformation of the Education in Iași

Returned to Romanian land, Filaret enjoys the support of his friend Gh. Asachi, whose intervention helps him enter the Mihaileana Academy, where the teaching staff was just changing. Once the former director Suhopan leaves, the teachers whom he brought from Bukowina leave as well, their place being taken by a new teaching team: Filaret Scriban, Ioan Maior, Leon Filipescu, V. Melinescu, I. Verdeanu. (Urechia, 1982, p. 219) Furthermore, having a good relationship with the brother of Prince Mihail Sturza, whom he had met in Kiev, he benefits from support in order to get the position of Rector of the Socola Seminary, "*a position which he manages to keep with much difficulty for 18 years*" (Erbiceanu, 1982, pp. 24, 26) starting September 20 1842 (Urechia, 1982, p. 220) until November 10 1860, when he is superseded by his brother Neofit. (Moraru, 2006, p. 346)

It was this position that enabled Filaret to manifest his calling. As rector, he managed to develop the educational institution, by implementing a type of "*Theology faculty system*" structure, with branches such as "*Theology, Philosophy, Exegesis and Latin Language*". (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 9) Although, during this period of time, the educational system which he was looking after "*gained great momentum, remaining the first clerkly school of the Principalities*" (Urechia, 1982, p. 220), Filaret had many difficulties following Mihail Sturza's leaving of throne. Because of his unionist ideals, Filaret is considered a dangerous man, while the seminary which he manages is thought to be "*a nursery of revolutionaries*" (Iorga, 1930, p. 248), and, thus, he is removed from his position of rector by Metropolitan Meletie, who notifies him on January 29 that he "*is free of responsibilities*". (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 30) He also loses his position of hegumen of the Socola Monastery. Throughout this period of time, the Seminary starts falling into decay. The upper education is dissolved, while the lower secondary education is reduced. During these hostile times, although having neither an income, nor a home, Filaret Scriban remains at the Seminary with the purpose to keep the institution open and manages to do that since, through the intercession of the Prince, Meletie resigns

and on January 31 1849 the Prince appoints Filaret as rector. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 31)

Metropolitan Meletie, a man who had been against Filaret from the very beginning (Meletie had become Metropolitan by bribing the Prince, so in order to recover the amount, he layed down conditions for the candidates in priesthood. Since Filaret Scriban didn't conform to these requests, but "*all trhoughout his Metropolitan years, he only made him one gift, a set of prayer beads, although he always made everything possible to squeeze money out of him*", Meletie was hostile towards him). (Erbiceanu, 1982, pp. 30-33), died of cholera, so the problem of closing the Seminary is now resolved.

At the Moldavia throne comes Grigore Ghica, a man who Filaret Scriban gets close to, by gaining his trust and appreciation. The way in which Filaret gained the reckoning and protection of the new Prince is providential. Prince Grigorie Ghica had been "*denounced before the Sublime Porte*" by other aspirants for the reign as being "*not in his right mind*". Subsequently, Filaret Scriban was consulted on this matter by consuls, to whom he replied: "*if those who make virtuous acts, have a religion, and found charity establishments are crazy, then Gr. Ghica is crazy*". These words came upon the Prince's ears, a fact which made him respect and value Filaret "*all throughout his reign*". (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 31)

While enjoying the Prince's support, Filaret developed a relentless work of organizing the education at the Socola Seminary. Meanwhile, in 1851 he compiles "*Legislation for the organization of clerkly teachings*" (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 9), which readjusted the functioning of the diocesan seminaries, of a big central seminary, a gymnasium cycle and a faculty, measures which raised the level of local education. (Iorga, 1928, p. 248) The context was perfectly favourable, since the "*Disposition for the reorganisation of public teachings within the Moldavian*" is issued. This document stated that "*high teachings*" would be united under an Academy, which would incorporate a Faculty of Theology as well (article 54) and, furthermore, it was mentioned the fact that the theological subjects would be taught in the seminaries within the country. This document was practically laying the administrative-legal bases of the founding and functioning of any university.

Through the "*Legislation for the organization of clerkly teachings*" two other "four-year studies" Seminaries were founded in Roman and Huși. The one in Socola had two cycles of four years each. The more important positions both in education and clergy were reserved for the "*Higher Seminary*" graduates. At the

same time, one could not be ordained unless having graduated four years of Seminary. The General Administration of Seminaries was entrusted to a trusteeship, made of a Metropolitan for Socola, or eparchial bishops for Roman and Huși and also the Minister for the Churchly Patrimony and Public Teachings.

As far as the internal administration was concerned, appointed was a committee composed of the Seminary's rector, inspector, catechumen, manciple and secretary. According to this legislation, the following subjects were scheduled within the catechetical schools: Catechism, The Holy History, Interpretation of churchly traditions, Arithmetic, Churchly singings and The Ritual Law, Reading and writing according to Grammar.

In the secondary Seminary: Romanian Grammar, Holy History at large, Churchly History, Arithmetic, Geography, Universal and National History Patriei in short, Rhetoric, Dogmatics, Pastoral, Greek Language, Russian Language (optional), Vocal Music, Churchly singings and The Ritual Law, Reading and interpretation of the New Testament. This curriculum remained in force until 1864.

Within Socola's higher education cycle the following subjects were taught: Churchly History at large, Logics and Psychology, History of Philosophy, Homiletics with rhetorical exercises, Biblical archaeology, Pragmatical Churchly History, Hermeneutics, Scriptural texts, Ecclesiastic, Moral Theology, Fundamental Theology, Canon Law, Polemic Theology, Languages: Latin, French and Russian (all optional).

On January 12th 1852, with the powerful support of Prince Grigorie Ghica, Filaret Scriban is ordained Bishop of Stavropoleos by Metropolitan Sofronie Miculescu, a man whom he had a very good relationship with. It was also thanks to the relationship with Sofronie Miculescu that both the modernization of the Socola Seminary, as well as the significant improving of the education curriculum became possible.

Another extremely important aspect in this education reformation process was the renewal of the teaching staff along with the introduction of new subjects. Here, Filaret performed a campaign for the recruitment of new teachers whether among the eminent graduates of the seminary, who were subsequently sent to study abroad, or the Transylvanian scribes who had come to Moldavia. Among these teachers we must mention: Archimandrite Ghermano Vida, a native of Maramureș, for the Greek and Latin languages, Archimandrite Neofit Scriban, for History,

Philosophy, Greek and Rhetoric, Hieromonach Melchisedec Ștefănescu, Master in Theology and Letters at the Clerical Academy of Kiev, for the theological subjects, Hristofor (Teoctist) Scriban, “*candidate*” for Theology at the same Academy in Kiev, for History and Geography, Dr. Anton Velini, for History and Philosophy, Hieromonach Isaia Teodorescu, Hieromonach Isaia Vicol, later Bishop of Roman, Hieromonach Isaia Dârțu, later bishop, and others. (Păcuraru, 2003, p. 90)

Constantin Erbiceanu, who in 1852 becomes a student while Filaret was the rector of the seminary, reminds in his work the fact that the Bishop had many enemies, mentioning Nicolai Istrate, who complained that “*The Bishop spends too much money on the Seminary and he must be replaced*”. These plots sparked Filaret’s reaction, who compiles and addresses to the Prince a Memoir entitled “*Clarifications upon the bewilderment of the Department of Churchly Patrimony and Public Teachings*”, a document which comes as a response to the accusations brought to the Socola Seminary’s directorate.

In 1855 he receives from the Country Council the mission to reorganize the national education, while in 1856 he becomes an active member of the Unionist, Party, joining his brother Neofit Scriban and fighting together for their joint ideals. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 37)

On September the 6th 1859, The Socola Seminary Committee sends a memoir to Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza in which there is a detailed description of the educational institution’s way of functioning, details which are used one’s instrument of getting acquainted with Filaret’s activity. The document also contained a series of resolutions, namely that the first degree of education be Moldavia Diocese’s Seminary, which should be destined to seculars, a seminary which contained 17 study subjects; while the 2nd degree should consist of a Theological Faculty destined for the high-degree clerks, also with 17 study subjects. (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 11) The memoir reaches the School Committee of Moldavia, which on October 22nd 1859 observes that the Socola Seminary has a subject curriculum proposed in the gymnasium. Furthermore, that Committee qualifies the Iasi Seminary as “*theological faculty*”. (National Department of Archives Iași, *Memoir upon the status of Moldavia’s Central Seminary 1859. School Inspection Committee Fund*, File no 31 / 1860, page 46-r)

In November of the same year, the Minister of Public Instructions makes up a committee assigned to develop a project for the reorganization of seminaries and the Theology Faculty. About this college, Adamescu states that “*it functioned right*

within the Socola Seminary,” and this fact is real, as we’ve seen in those mentioned above, only that “*de jure*” hadn’t happened yet. (Adamescu, 1904, p. 103) On the occasion of the 1859-1860 school year opening, the Ministry of Cult and Public Instruction’s director V. A. Urechia stated that the Ministry displays works for the displacement of the Socola Faculty of Theology in place of the Faculties of Philosophy and Law, which proves the fact that the Faculty had already been functioning. (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 11) Also, Simion Bărnuțiu mentioned in his speech held on the occasion of the Iasi University opening “*The Theology Faculty had been functioning for a long time within the Episcopal seminary*”. (Mănuță, 1960, p. 876)

This high level, evolutionary organization of the local education in Moldavia at the time shows that Filaret Scriban’s activity in this field was successful. He was the first dean of the faculty (National Department of Archives Iași, *The Alexandru Ioan Cuza Univeristy of Iași Fund*, Rectorate File no 10 – 1860 f. 8), afterwards followed by his brother Neofit Scriban. One thing worth mentioning: before becoming dean, Filaret had been chosen “*with much acclaim*” interim president of the Academic Council on November 28th 1860, while on November 26th of the same year he is chosen vice-chancellor of the University și and dean of the Theology Faculty. (Moraru, 2006, p. 356)

Another thing worth mentioning, related to Filaret’s organisational work results is V.A. Urechia’s statement in “*Memoar*” when he refers to the status of Moldavia’s public education of 1859: “*The only college fully completed in the country now is the Theology College, forming an entire special course, with 15 catechetical primary schools in each residential location and three seminaries, in Huși and Roman and the Socola Seminary, completed with second degree teachings and the optional one for the third degree.*” (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 12)

His activity in the organisation and teaching formation field had significant results in the entire Moldavian region, since the seminary managed by him was forming graduates who could, subsequently, thanks to their good training, become teachers in other teaching institutions, in their turn. A powerful example to that effect is the way in which Filaret Scriban answers to Melchisedec Ștefănescu’s request. The latter, acting as Bishop of Huși, asks the chancellor of the Seminary of Iasi to recommend teachers for both Romanian and Latin lecturing desks of the Seminary of Huși, desks which had remained vacant. Filaret, who had helped Melchisedec attend his studies in Kiev years ago, recommends two graduates of the then

generation, namely: Constantin G. Severin and N. Bosuioc. (Ploieşteanu, 1936, p. 96)

The opening of the 1860-1861 university years was marked by the presence of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza. The beginning of the university year was being made with four faculties: Law, Theology, Medicine și Philosophy. The opening ceremony was held at the Talpalari Church, and within the Te-Deum service, officiated in the uniceristy's building, Bishop Filaret Scriban performs the sanctification of water, accompanied by a much appreciated prayer composed by he himself, a prayer which reminded of the Prince's role, which, through the education institutions, is beckoned to spread light and truth to the people.

Two years later, Filaret Scriban withdraws from the education field, asking for retirement. The next chancellor of the university was Vladimir Suhopan. (National Department of Archives Iași, *The University...Fund* File no 26 – 1863) The moment in which he chose to retire is not casual. It coincides with the moment in which the fight for canonicity begins, a problem in which he had gotten intensely involved and which led him to conflict with Alexandru Ioan Cuza, a ruler whom he had described in such beautiful words.

An episode worth mentioning takes place on the occasion of his Mihaileana Academy professor, Vasile Fabian-Bob's funeral. Filaret receives the responsibility and honor to make the eulogy, and he "*describes the qualities of his beloved professor with a charming language.*" On this occasion, Filaret Scriban grows in the favour of the teaching staff, who from now on start having enormous respect for him. (Erbiceanu, 1884, pp. 4-5)

Another aspect which is an intregral part of Filaret Scriban's activity within Moldavia's education reformation was the completion of his graduates' academical training by sending them to study abroad, at the big university centres. Starting with 1848 Filaret sends a series of young graduates of the Higher Seminary of Socola to study abroad, with the final purpose of training the teachers who were needed for the seminary education. The first were Hierodeacons Melchisedec Ștefănescu and Christofor Scriban (future archimandrite Theoctist Scriban) sent in 1848 to the Clerical Academy in Kiev, where they returned from in 1851, the first with the title of Master in Theology and Letters, while the second comes back with the title of Master in Theology. Both of them were hired as teachers at the Socola Seminary in the same year.

In 1832 se sends Ioan Mandinescu and August Scriban to Petersburg, who came back in 1857 with the title of “*candidates in laws*”, both of them being thereafter named teachers. In 1856 se sends another group of young people, namely: Hierodeacon Climent Nicolau, Monach Filaret Dimitriu and Gheorghe Erbiceanu to Athens, Hierodeacon Damaschin Matiescu and Monach Ghenadie Enăceanu to Halchi and Vasile Agapie to the University of Paris.

All these students became important people, trainers and innovators, in their turn, of the education in Moldova. They could tell without fearing they would fail, that they were forming a Filaret Scriban kind of “school” to which we can add numerous other clerics, graduates of the higher cycle of Socola, who had become teachers of Seminaries, catechumens at the county schools, protopopes etc. (Adamescu, 1904, pp. 70-92)

In all of these years of pedagogical, administrative, clerical activity Filaret Scriban distinguished himself by a flourishing work in the intellectual-scholar field. In his entire clerical and educational upward trend, he compiled theological books, translations of educational textbooks, and others.

The most important part of his scholar activity was the one regarding the compiling of educational textbooks for the Seminaries’ use. To that effect, Filaret may as well be considered a true path breaker, since no one before him had ever managed to publish but a few catechism and elementary textbooks. “*The first properly textbooks which went out were thanks to Chancellor Filaret Scriban*”. (Păcuraru, 1981, p. 984) At his urge, some of his students, among whom we must mention Melchisedec Ștefănescu, enriched the educational literature with other new textbooks.

Among the textbooks written by Filaret Scriban, the most important were:

- *First learnings for the Moldavian youth who learns French*, published in Iași in anul 1836, having 253 pages;
- *A small Geography of Dacia, Moldavia and Wallachia*, Iași, 1838.
- *Catechism in short, arranged for the churchly schools*, published in Iași in two editions 1846 and 1856, comprising 122 pages;
- *Holy History in short or the History of the Old Settlement’s Church... interpreted and revealed for the teaching within seminaries and other churchly schools*, published in Iași in two editions 1847 and 1855, having

- 160 pages; republished under the title *Holy History of the Old Testament*, Iași, 1872, having 130 pages;
- *Christian Ethics or Moral Theology in short...* published in Iași in 1855, having 220 pages;
 - *Sanctified Hermeneutics or the science of understanding and explaining the Holy Scripture...*, published in Iași, in the year 1858, having 232 pages, a work which was republished in 1869, having 142 pages, then in 1874, with 204 pages;
 - *Churchly History of Romanians in short*, published in Iași, in the year 1871, having 200 pages. The material for this work was chosen primarily from the libraries and archives in Russia.

His fruitful activity in composing the textbooks and the works meant to help the emancipation of clerical education, especially his organisational efforts to that purpose haven't remained unobserved or unrecorded. Thus, Dionisie Udișteanu, a monk who valued theological culture, wrote about Filaret and Neofit Scriban the following: "*The Scriban brothers wished that the Church servitors be very well prepared in the theological sciences. At their urge and insistence a Faculty of Theology was founded in Iasi, based on the model of Russian Theological Academies. ... When in Neamțu the Monk Seminary is refounded a second time, Filaret Scriban prepares the study curriculum for 16 years, in three stages: normal, seminary and academic education*". (Udișteanu, 2005, p. 312)

Following the secularization of monastery patrimony, the great majority of the educational institutions which were under the Church patronage reached a deplorable state from the financial and subsequently, organizational point of view. Once the situation became critical, a committee was made on November 8th 1859, with the purpose of preparing a project for the reorganizing of the seminaries and the Faculty of Theology. (Popa, Vizitiu, 2007, p. 126) Among this committee were more clerics, representatives of the Church, such as Filaret Scriban, Iosif Bobulescu, Gh. Apostoleanu and Teodor Veisa. (Mănuță, 1960, p. 876)

Although he made considerable efforts in all his activity areas, Filaret Scriban didn't enjoy a journey's end marked by fulfilment and recognition. He was accused by a great majority of his political opponents by russophilism and was attacked several times, being considered an enemy of the people, because of this view towards the fight for canonicity. On the other hand, the Russians were accusing

him of hostility and lack of loyalty since he had been a student of their schools, but had refused to be an agent of their interest in the Romanian States.

The pressure in which he was performing his activity eventually became too difficult to bear, so that toward the end of his life, one could easily sense his inner inquietude. His biographer, Constantin Erbiceanu, mentions the fact that all throughout his professorate at the Faculty of, Filaret Scriban was “*always sad and meditative, and sometimes even disgusted*” having the wish to withdraw from the public eye. (Erbiceanu, 1982, p. 64)

4. Conclusions

One of the main merits of Filaret's, along with his brother Neofit, was the fact that the Socola Seminary, in which they have taught as teachers and which organization they cared for, formed a generation of young clerics who, in Iorga's own words, “*could stay on the same culture rank as tany laic who had received better education*” (Iorga, 1930, p. 248). The first among these young people of Bukowina origin were the Erbiceanu brothers: Gheorghe, a good knower of Greek language, and Constantin, professor at the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest and member of the Romanian Academy, who brought their large contributions to the knowing of the Romanian Orthodox Church's history. It was this very seminary who also trained: Ioan Mandilescu, author of a Universal History which was very famous at that time, Ghenadie Enăceanu, student in Athens and Kiev, professor of Greek at the State Seminary in Bucharest, director of the “Nifon” Seminary, professor within the new Faculty of Theology in Bucharest and, in 1887, Bishop of Râmnic. He edited the Olt publication “*Condica sfântă*” (“The Holy Register”) and printed many documents from his generous collection which is to be found today at the Romanian Academy. Part of the same generation is also Bishop Iosif Bobulescu, a native of Burdujeni, Suceava, whose wife was a member of the Scriban family, namely Filaret's niece. Iosif Bobulescu was Archbishop of Sivas, Hegumen at Sf. Spiridon (Saint Spiridon) in Iași and, from 1880 until 1886 Bishop of Râmnic.

Among these young who were trained at the Scribans School we must mention Teoctist Scriban, who was also subsequently a teacher at this institution, Romulus Scriban - poet, student in Torino and licentiate in Law, a passionate supporter of the Principalities' Union and of the other causes for which the Scribans had fought.

We also need to mention August Scriban, Ghenadie Şendrea, Marchian Folescu, who founded the first and most important elementary school in Botoşani.

Mentions regarding the last part of Filaret Scriban's life belong to Dionisie Udişteanu, who describes him as being "*of a less fighting, rather more sensible nature.*" To this, he adds that Filaret "*passes away, tired, before his brother, at the Bucium vineyard close to Iaşi and is buried at Burdujeni-the place of their childhood, in the same church he had founded.*" (Udişteanu, 2005, p. 312) Before passing away, Filaret prepares his will, through which he leaves his properties "*a vineyard and a library on the Socola property, next to the former Prince Mihai Sturza's vineyard, with all the household and its belongings,* to his nephew, Bishop Iosif Bobulescu. Furthermore, the library which was at the Bucium vineyard, consisting of four wardrobes, is left to the "*Central Seminary of the Socola Monastery*", a fact which shows that, despite the disappointment that he had felt toward the end of his life, Filaret had stayed faithful to his pedagogical ideal.

Filaret Scriban passes away on March 23rd 1873 (Dumitriu, 2011, p. 235), and the beneficiary of his will, along with his brother Neofit Scriban, fulfilled Filaret's last wishes and buried him as the custom requires, in the family crypt, next to his parents.

History holds a luminous memory of Filaret Scriban. A passionate patriot, a persuasive fighter for the realization of the Romanian Principalities' Union and subsequently, against the interventions of the state in the Church decisions, fruitful scholar and innovator of the educational system which he had formed, Filaret Scriban had had a major contribution in the flourishing of his kin through all his achievements.

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