

in history and the relationship of each liturgical rite or liturgical formula with a certain ecclesial configuration.

This work should be known by as many Christians as possible, in order to better understand what liturgical worship means, what are its meanings and why a certain formula or liturgical structure appeared in one part or another of the Christian world.

The issue of this work can be an opportunity to initiate a dialogue between liturgical theologians from the East and the West, in order to better understand the deep meanings of divine worship, its revealed roots, why and how these foundations of liturgical worship were reflected in different times and places of the Christian world.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Ioan TULCAN

Florin DOBREI, Sebastian-Dragoș BUNGHEZ, *Preotul profesor Teodor Botiș (1873-1940). O viață în slujba bisericii, a învățământului și a neamului românesc [The priest teacher Teodor Botiș (1873-1940). A life in the service of the church, education and the Romanian nation]*, Editura Universității “Aurel Vlaicu”, Arad, 2022, 576 pp.¹

“Happy is he who writes things worth reading,
happy is he who does deeds worthy of writing,
but happier is he who does deeds worthy of writing
and write things worth reading”.

Plinius Minor

I believe that these highly valuable words of the Roman writer Plinius Minor or Plinius the Younger (61-113), friend of the historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus and close to the emperor Marcus Ulpius Traianus, suggestively paint the effigy of the priest teacher Teodor Botiș, whose

¹ Book presentation held in the festive hall of the Arad County Council (March 30, 2023).

life, activity and work is masterfully restored in this historical monograph, signed by my distinguished colleagues, the historian priest Florin Dobrei from Deva and the lay historian Sebastian-Dragoș Bunghez from Bacău, both of whom became Aradians by adoption.

Intellectually trained at the Universities “Lucian Blaga” from Sibiu and “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” from Iași, under the competent coordination and recognized historiographical authority of the academician priest Mircea Păcurariu (1932-2021), of pious memory, and the university professor Dr. Gheorghe Cliveti (b. 1952), corresponding member of the Romanian Academy (since 2022), the father university professor Dr. Florin Dobrei (b. 1978) and the professor Dr. Sebastian-Dragoș Bunghez (b. 1971) carried out a vast and very serious research, whose monographic result we look at now, in the spring of the Lord’s year 2023, with obvious admiration and I dare say that we celebrate it in a happy synax, which takes place between the two wonderful days of the Fifth Week of Great Lent. Paraphrasing two stanzas from the 4th canto of the Great Canon, I say, together with Saint Andrew of Crete, that the two authors endured the “heat of the day” and the “cold of the night”, striving not to acquire Lia (the work) and Rachel (thinking), like the patriarch Jacob from the Old Testament, but to plan, write and complete, through countless efforts, the historiographical work, being aware that, “without efforts, neither the work nor the thought will be completed” (*Triod*, 8th edition, Publishing House of the Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1986, p. 363).

The documentation effort and the result of the intellectual work of the two authors deserve to be crowned with the praise, appreciation and gratitude of all of us, historians, theologians, politicians and people of culture from Arad and the whole of Transylvania. Some skeptics might reply that this is a deeply subjective, friendly statement, motivated by this happy and solemn editorial and soulful event. If you read the book, however, you will discover the bright character that he restores to us and you will observe the way and the way in which his outstanding personality is reconfigured for us; then I hope and believe that you will share my desire

to eulogize both the book and its authors, and especially the luminous effigy of the man in the book.

The authors are two valuable intellectuals and historiographers, holders and officials of high school and university history chairs in Arad, who fulfilled, through this work, their duty of conscience and professional vocation towards a priest, teacher and historian-theologian who marked indisputably the Romanian education in Arad, illustrating the model of a priest, teacher, administrator and devoted, responsible, cherished and loved patriot, who left posterity a good and honest name, “a teacher from Transylvania from the old days”, as Nicolae Iorga wrote in evoking the who dedicated it to him, with respect and admiration, in the pages of the newspaper *Neamul românesc* (no. 189 of 1940), eulogizing him as the national priest, teacher and fighter (p. 385-386). The moral and intellectual profile of father Teodor Botiș is completed by the perennial value of his historiographical work, about which the authors claim, rightly, that “it remains valuable even today, its consultation being indispensable for researchers of the issues he addressed” (p. 275). I have no doubt that these assessments are also suitable for this monographic research, which proves the professionalism and seriousness of its authors, being built on primary sources – collected from various institutional and private archives in Arad, Banat and Bihor –, on numerous information gathered from the press of the time and on an exhaustive specialized bibliography, so on a vast documentation work, which will hardly be surpassed in the coming decades.

The book belongs to the typology of classic historical monographs, “the man and the work”, being structured in 14 chapters, followed by the bibliography and three particularly valuable appendices, which highlight the personality of the priest Teodor Botiș. As for the man, the work reconstructs Teodor Botiș’s ancestry, studies, family and his relations with the famous Mocioni family from Banat, highlighting, at the end, the three poses that defined him in the eyes of his contemporaries: the man, the priest and the teacher. The work of the illustrious man from Arad is detailed in the sections of the five major fields of activity in which he asserted himself during the decades spent in Arad: 1) church activity, as

a shepherd of souls and occupying some dignities in the ecclesiastical administration; 2) the didactic activity carried out at the Arad schools; 3) the activity of guiding Arad pedagogical and theological education as director of the diocesan Pedagogical-Theological Institute and as the first rector of the Theological Academy; 4) national-political activity, highlighted by Teodor Botiș's contribution to the achievement of the Great Union in the fall of 1918 and its consolidation in the interwar era, in the political realm, as a member of the People's Party (1931-1938) of Marshal Alexandru Averescu and as a senator (1931-1932) in the Bucharest Parliament, as well as his involvement in the "Anti-Revisionist League" actions; 5) cultural activity, where his historiographical work is presented first (the most important works are the monographs of the Mocioni family, Preparandia and the Pedagogical-Theological Institute) and theological, and then his editorial activity, editing the diocesan calendar, the well-known periodical *Biserica și Școala*, of the yearbook of the Pedagogical-Theological Institute, respectively the yearbook of the Theological Academy, as well as Teodor Botiș's membership and contribution to the activity of various cultural and research associations and societies in Transylvania, Banat and Crișana, the best known being the "ASTRA" Association and Banat-Crișana Social Institute. The intellectual profile, of a true scholar and talented pen-handler, is completed in the first annex, *Florilegium*, very inspired and welcome, which includes a collection of texts signed by the priest professor Teodor Botiș and published in various periodicals and volumes of the era, today less known and more difficult to access. The second appendix, entitled *Teodor Botiș in the appreciation of some contemporaries*, restores the festive speeches, given in Arad on the occasion of the teacher's retirement in 1938, and the obituaries written at the time by a series of hierarchs, university professors, historians and former students of the priest Botiș, among them counting Andrei Magieru, Nicolae Popovici, Ștefan Pascu, Melentie Șora and Gheorghe Cotoșman. The evocations, signed in the years 1938-1940, reveal to us, like an arch over time, the respect and appreciation that the longest-serving director and rector of the Arada theological school enjoyed in the ecclesiastical, lay cultural and Transylvanian university environment. Last but not least, the

very good quality illustrations reproduced at the end of the volume allow us to paint a much clearer and more complex image of the person and family of Teodor Botiș.

Living in a Romanian society marked by an uninterrupted series of scandals of plagiarism by some academics and politicians, from which, unfortunately, some clerics were not missing, so in a society haunted by the demon of intellectual and spiritual corruption, honest intellectual work embodied in this book fully deserves our sincere appreciation and congratulations! At the same time, I want to emphasize that I did not find any grammatical or typographical errors in the book, which is commendable and denotes the seriousness of the authors, the techno-editor and the publishing house, achievements that even the big publishing houses, which have more and more such escapes. Given that we have before us a work about a priest and a vocation teacher, aureole of an impeccable moral and intellectual profile and distinguished as a good patriot, respected also by the elite of the other two ethnic groups of Arad (Hungarians and Jews), enrolled among creators of the union of Transylvania with Romania on December 1, 1918, the monograph of the priest professor Teodor Botiș transcends the sphere or the strict area of historiography, gaining obvious symbolic valences, of an ethical and pedagogical nature, for the current Romanian society, because it presents the face of a model that can be imitated by theologians, priests, teachers and historians alike.

In this regard, I note an eloquent fragment of the speech of Professor Botiș at the end of the 1936 school year, in which the teacher from Arad summarizes the noble mission of the institution he led:

“Our blessed ancestors put on the frontispiece of this Institute the words *Litteris et virtutis*, dedicating I thus to the sciences and the virtues. This is your life program. In this school you will receive the knowledge that has spread in the souls of generations of priests, and at the same time you must become virtuous and shine in Christian virtues, for only in this way will you be able to fight through the hardships of life. As a nation we must be elevated in spirit, enlightened in mind, have a strong moral foundation in all our manifestations” (p. 357).

Thus, we observe that both Teodor Botiș and the two historians and their book completely fit the words of Plinius Minor: “Happy is he who writes things worth reading, happy is he who does deeds worthy of writing, but happier is he who does deeds worth writing and writes things worth reading”.

The two coordinators of the *Theologians of Arad* collection, fathers professors Cristinel Ioja and Nicolae M. Tang, are also happy, because they initiated and supervise a singular project in the contemporary Romanian theological environment, an initiative for which they deserve to be congratulated and encouraged to be able to bring it to fruition. The representatives of the political-administrative and cultural county authorities in Arad must also be happy and congratulated, who understood the cultural, memorial and historiographical importance of the editorial project of the “Ilarion V. Felea” Faculty of Theology of the “Aurel Vlaicu” University in Arad and financially supported the printing of this volume and the other two appearing in the same collection. We are also happy, who take part in this editorial event, in this cultural feast, as happy will be those who will carefully go through the pages of this volume.

Dr. Mircea-Gheorghe ABRUDAN²

Craig S. Keener, *Miracles today: The Supernatural Work of God in the Modern World*, **Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2121, 284 pp.**

Craig Keener’s book, *Miracles Today: The Supernatural Work of God in the Modern World* is a chronicle of God’s contemporary miraculous interventions in the midst of His people and in support of His believers. It is a book made up of stories and evidence that aim to prove the reality

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