



Doctoral School of Theology

Doctoral Field: Theology

DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

**ROMANIAN SPIRITUALITY AND TRADITION IN THE
VILLAGE COMMUNITY**

VAD ROMANIAN ORTHODOX PARISH (BRAȘOV)

PHD STUDENT:

Nicușor Sorin MUSTAȚĂ

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR:

Pr. prof. univ. dr. Nicolae CHIFĂR

Contents:

Introduction	6
<i>Theme motivation</i>	6
<i>Current theme status</i>	7
<i>The purpose of the research</i>	9
<i>Research methods</i>	10
<i>Research objectives</i>	10
<i>The novelty and relevance of the research</i>	11
<i>The structure of the paper – brief presentation</i>	12
1. <i>Vad Romanian Orthodox Parish – historical</i>	26
1.1 The settlement and the attestation of the locality.....	28
1.2 The village and its priests in the course of the time and documents.....	30
1.3 The parish becomes Greek Catholic	33
1.4 The changes in the parish, after the union with the Churce of Rome.....	45
1.5 The return to orthodoxy	49
2. <i>The confessional school of the village and its prominent teacher</i>	52
3. <i>Notable personalities: sons of the village</i>	62
3.1 Priest Augustin Bunea.....	62
3.2 Priest Professor Iacob Borcea.....	66
3.3 Professor Nicolae Popa.....	66
3.4 Teacher Octavian Pop	67
3.5 Professor Toma Cocişiu	69
3.6 Professor Nicolae Răcheriu.....	70
3.7 Teacher Viorica-Eugenia Stoica	71
3.8 Officer Avram Caliani – First border regiment from Orlat.....	71
3.9 Military officer Ştefan Boieriu.....	73
3.10 Ion Simion, the hero.....	74
3.11 Iacob Rotar, the patriot.....	77

4. <i>Specificities of the village of Vad: crafts and popular clothing</i>	81
4.1 The oldest phase of the popular port.....	84
4.2 The modern phase of the a popilar port	85
4.3 The contemporany phase.....	87
4.4 The terminology of the pieces from Țara Făgărașului popular port	91
5. <i>Popular and religious traditions and customs of the village</i>	94
5.1 The traditional wedding in Vad	95
5.2 The Boy's Guild.....	106
5.3 The Ploughman, an agrarian custom	108
5.4 The customs related to the birth and death of a person.....	113
6. <i>The Romanians from Transylvania under the times: the emigration of the Vadenians to the United States of Americ</i>	116
7. <i>The reunification of the Christian community by returning to Orthodoxy</i>	131
8. <i>Church Archives of Vad - notes on the pages of religious books. Memories from the First World War</i>	153
9. <i>Iconographic archive from Vad</i>	165
10. <i>Church archive from Vad- religious books</i>	177
Conclusions	190
Bibliography	193
Attachments	203

Romanian spirituality and tradition in the village community.

Vad Romanian Orthodox Parish (Braşov)

Keywords:

Țara Făgăraşului, parish, Greek Catholics, Orthodox, church, ministering priests, school, teachers, customs, holidays, icons, heroes, heritage, library, culture.

Vad, this wonderful village with faithful and hardworking people, became for 9 years, the place I often called "home". The place dear to my heart, where I began my priestly activity through the ordination received in the fall of 2013, from the hands of the Most Reverend Father Laurentiu of Transylvania, and where I was formed.

Living among people, talking with them, listening to their sorrows and sharing their joys, I could observe their beauty and sincerity, but also a certain pride of being born in the "gentlemen's village", as the people of Fagaraş called it in the course of time.

These things led me to try to discover much more about the community's past. Step by step I was able to browse the (not few) pages of the church archive, talk to the elders and sketch some ideas about the place, the people and their past.

What fascinated me from the beginning was the fact that the town always had capable servants, cultured people and devoted to the service of God and fellow men. This is how all the beautiful daily events took place "in the shadow of the Church". From birth to departure from this life, she, through her servants, accompanied people. Even local customs that honored industrious people were carried out on holidays.

Regarding the village school, I cannot forget the words of some old people who said: "as the church was, so was the school", referring to the education that the young people received here. For them, the priest was also their first teacher. He was the one who taught them to learn the secrets of writing, reading or arithmetic, and a very important thing is that the village erected the first school building in the church yard. The school raised those who eventually became priests, doctors, teachers, pedagogues, even an academician for the Romanian Academy

That the church had capable servants can be seen today from the way the church archive has been preserved. The note files, old books, icons on the stick and the many ledgers, give us wonderful information about the past of the village, the church and the school.

Theme motivation:

From the first moment I stepped into the village church, I was surprised by the way it presented itself. No painting, no strangers, with benches and pointed vaults that made me think of a Catholic church and not an Orthodox one. This is how I understood that the church was built by the Greek-Catholic believers in 1874 and that the whole locality was Greek-Catholic, returned in 1948 to the Orthodox Church.

In the Country of Făgăraș, General Bucow's cannons made a lot of havoc, which led many to accept the union with the Greek-Catholic Church, out of fear, enticed with some favors, or forced by certain circumstances.

I had the idea of looking for the reasons why the village accepted the union, the hardships people went through to accept the transition into the new Church and the desire to know as much as I could, the past of these parishioners before the union. It is certain that before 1700, the village was Orthodox, there was even a place of prayer where the priests could serve the Holy Liturgy, baptize the believers, bury them when the situation demanded it. These thoughts followed me for months until I decided to research the historical writings related to Țara Făgărașului and the problem of union, and especially the references to this area, to this village, because each locality must be had its peculiarities.

Current theme status:

Until now, not much has been written about this topic. The proposed theme could be considered as an attempt to monograph the village, but more on the religious side and the involvement of the Church in the lives of the residents here.

The only attempt to write a monograph belongs to the lawyer Emilian Boeriu, son of the village of Vad - settled for a long time in Sighisoara, who in the course of more than ten years collected materials, documents, photographs and even some testimonies from the elderly, for its realization. At the time, his monograph totaled over 1000 pages. This was all typed on a machine. He hoped that by his special work he would place his native village on a high pedestal and leave the work as a legacy to posterity. Although he worked hard to see his work printed, everything remained at the manuscript level. Lack of funds for printing, old age and illness led the author to give up this dream. We don't know the exact reason why the church in the village did not support this publication, but we can believe, based on the documents in the

archives of the Blaj Cathedral, that it did not have the money, which was observed from the many requests addressed to the Cathedral for the repair of the church damaged by the wars.

In the church archive, there are some letters that Mr. Emilian Boeriu carried with Blaj for the printing of this volume. It is certain that Blaj wanted the print, but we do not know the reason why it was not realized.

After his death, the manuscript was lost, in the sense that the person who took care of it until the last moment of his life loaned it to various people who wanted to read it, but never returned. Today, only a few dozen xero-copied pages from the original manuscript are still circulating in the village.

In addition to this monograph remaining at manuscript level, we can also add the mentions that the Greek-Catholic priest Augustin Bunea, son of the village, makes with reference to the appearance of the village, to the area where it was the first hearth of the village and to the way in which with time, the village reorganized itself. These data can be found in the volume with the title: „An attempt at the history of the Romanians until 1382”, published in 1912 (after his death from 1909), in Bucharest, within the Publishing House of the Romanian Academy.

Also, another important mention about the village's past is provided by the historian Nicolae Iorga, who in the volume „Selected pages - vol. 1”, published in 1965, gives a description of the village and the church. His friendship with father Augustin Bunea, with whom he visited the village of Vad, is known.

After the year 2000, Mr. Dr. Gheorghe Faraon, museographer at the "Valer Literat" Făgăraș Country Museum, and son of priest Ioan Faraon (parish priest in the village between 1988-2013) wrote several articles related to the village's past, which were published in magazines of specialty. It is you who supported us morally in this research of the proposed theme.

No other research is known in this regard.

The purpose of the research:

I consider that the topic discussed has, first of all, the duty to pay tribute to all those who over time served at the altar of the church in Vad, people of high moral and cultural standing, people who valued everything that the idea of national consciousness means today and then to shed light on wonderful facts and moments in the history of this land in Țara Făgărașului.

The Church was, is and will be the one that will cause people to "go into battle", to realize that without God nothing great can be achieved and that only in it, life's difficulties can be overcome. This is what we tried to emphasize. The church was always present in the life of the community. Besides the fact that it was built in the middle of the village, she always sought to gather her faithful under her wings, protecting them from evil. It was inconceivable that anyone should miss the holy services on Sundays and holidays. Even the most revelers were present in the church choir in the morning, wearing the beautiful folk costume. On Sundays, after the service there were dances and games. Feasts were kept with holiness, and joys were counted as a blessing from God.

Even the folk dress worn with much timidity at church and on holidays was inlaid with many little crosses, a sign of the strong faith that the housewives impregnated with the sweat of their foreheads on their shirts and woven them.

All this shows us that the locals loved God, they loved the Church, which they decorated with a lot of effort, and that they loved their soul pastors, whose word they did not deviate from.

Research methods:

The research methods proposed for the preparation of my doctoral thesis were those that considered direct research, based on the study of historical data. In this way we investigated the specialized literature and consulted church and county archives.

The main archive researched and which I think was of great importance to me is that of the village church. It includes many documents, registers, files and many objects that I used as data regarding the possibility of studying the church past in this area. In addition to this, there were also several other metropolitan or county archives that provided me with valuable information related to people and places.

The research is descriptive, observational and transversal, so that I analyze the evolution of local church life.

The second method used was comparative analysis. This gave me the opportunity to identify the common points regarding certain problems related to religious life, especially the issue of the village passing to the Greek-Catholic Church and then returning to the bosom of the ancestral Church and the particularities related to the life of the parish here.

The research methods were of a qualitative nature helping to explore the information gathered about the village and the ministers of the village church.

Research objectives:

For the treatment of this doctoral thesis, I had in mind several clear directions that I framed as objectives:

1. To show that the parish, known as Greek-Catholic in the course of time, was originally Orthodox, with priests anchored in the smooth running of Fagaras life;
2. To show that the transition from one Church to another was not done voluntarily, but following a lot of pressure and with many gifts offered to the parish by the leadership in Vienna;
3. That there was a time when people held on to their ancient faith at all costs;
4. To show what was the evolution of the parish under the new Greek-Catholic organization;
5. To show the way and the weight with which the return to the bosom of the Orthodox Church was made and the way in which the life of the faithful followed its natural course of things.

The novelty and relevance of the research:

One of the novelties that the research brings is derived from the living testimonies of those who experienced the church events that took place in 1948 and which they left to posterity in the personal diaries that the families were kind enough to donate to the church in the village, together with their move to the city. They gave their consent for these lines to be used for the purpose of this research precisely to shed light on certain regrets, certain thoughts and anxieties that their ancestors experienced in those moments.

These novelties that we extract from these diary notebooks, present to us the life of the church servants before the return to Orthodoxy, the way they were formed in the blissful theological schools, the personal prayer program and of course the pain of the "loss of faith" in which -they gave birth and formed.

From these lines we capture the struggle of resistance in favor of the union, the troubled moments spent even in prison because of the communist arrangement, the acceptance of return and the way in which the former Greek Catholics, now Orthodox, "put up" with the other Orthodox priest brothers.

The relevance of this research lies in understanding that all these events in church life had profound effects. Even if we are talking about repairing an injustice done at the beginning of the 18th century within the Orthodox Church, with which we agree, we cannot lose sight of the trauma of priests and believers who saw their Church go through extensive religious changes.

As a priest who served for 9 years in such a village, returned to the Orthodox Church, I cannot forget the secret pain that many of the elderly born before 1948 have suffered all their lives, a pain often confessed within of the Mystery of the Holy Confession and with which they went to the world of the righteous.

We believe with all our being that these feelings carried in the soul by these people returned from the Greek-Catholics, will have been felt by our Orthodox forefathers, at the moment when they were forced to renounce the Church of the East in favor of a "new" one.

Another novelty that we want to highlight concerns the customs of the place, which are little known and of particular beauty. One of these customs is the one carried out on the 2nd day of Holy Easter, an agrarian custom that seeks to honor the thrifty and industrious man of the village and also invoke God's mercy for the revival of the sleeping nature, in winter and for multiplying the fruits of the earth.

The structure of the paper – brief presentation:

I tried to structure this work in 10 chapters that each deal with a theme related to the life of the parish in the village. There are 10 chapters that capture the past of the church here, starting with the first attestation of the locality and up to the moment of my installation as a parish priest here.

In the first chapter called: „***Vad Romanian Orthodox Parish – historical***”, I sought to bring to the fore some history of the parish, starting from the definition of the term "parish", as that community of Christians, clerics and laymen, located on a specific territory and subordinated to a diocesan center from a canonical, legal, administrative and patrimonial point of view, headed by a parish priest, appointed by the chiriarch of the respective diocese.

We have shown the names under which we find the village described in different historical sources and we have shown how this community came to bear this name.

I have used here the historical sources that talk about the formation of the Fagaraș villages, about their geographical positioning and how the first locals are historically attested.

The first local found by name in documents are the boyars who owned land here. Among them we even find the priests who at the beginning of the 17th century were enslaved by the Princes of Transylvania. Among them, the priest Radu, who served here in 1637 and the priest Szin raised among the boyars. This Szin knew Romanian and Hungarian, he even held the position of interpreter of the princely court of Făgăraș, and in 1667, he received the title of archpope from the Orthodox metropolitan of Bălgrad.

In this chapter I tried to explain the reasons why the people of the village had to accept the union with the United Church and to explain the fact that there are documents that show us some resistance, a fact that will displease those in the leadership of the United Church of Fagaras.

Although the people did not understand what this union consisted of, the priests were enticed to accept the union by some gifts received around 1750 from the Empress Maria Theresa. Two bells arrived in the village, one in 1778 and another in 1779. On the one from 1778 it was written: "Donated for the Church in Vad, by Empress Maria Teresa". It rang in the village until the First World War, when the Austro-Hungarian army ordered the confiscation of church bells and their transformation into cannonballs. In the year 1779, a second bell arrived in the village, much smaller in size, which exists to this day, on the border of which is also written in Cyrillic letters the donation "Donated to the Church of Vad by the Emperor Francisc Iosif in 1779".

These priests served at the church altar: Radu (1640); Sin (1666); Bucur (1688-1699); Ionaș Caliani (1721-1729); Stan Caliani (1729-1733); Șandru (1729-1733); Ioan (1733-1750); Stan (1733-1750); Iacob Borcea (1753-1765); Samoilă Dăneț (1753-1765); Sin Cociș (1766-1792); Radu Cociș (1792-1820); Sin Boier (1792-1820); Ioan Cociș (1820-1823); Toma Cociș (1823-1850); Arsenie Bunea (1850-1890); Ioan Bunea (1890-1928); Ioan Oniga (1928-1947); Tiberiu Ursu (1947-1948); Grigorie Vuță (1948-1988); Ioan Faraon (1988-2013); Sorin Mustață (2013 - 2022) and Ioan Rînea (2022 - now).

The second chapter, I entitled: *„The confessional school of the village and its prominent teacher”*.

In this chapter, I tried to highlight the educational activity that the teachers from Vad carried out and the sacrifice they made for the formation of those "great people" that the Fagaras society was proud of over time.

The beginnings of education in this locality are linked to the appearance of border schools in Transylvania. These schools appeared in Transylvania during the legislation of Empress Maria Tereza in the second half of the 18th century.

The oldest mention of a school appears in an Austrian conscription from 1776, in which it was mentioned that the education was provided by a teacher, placed among the residents enrolled in the border regiments and was paid for by the students' parents.

The memory of the first teacher known by the name Toma also dates from 1811. There were schools in all the border villages of Olt County, but few had their own premises, in most cases, the school was held in the house of the church singer or in rented houses, as was the case here.

The first school was a poor one, built of wood with walls plastered with clay and painted with lime.

In Vad, there were well-trained teachers who, through their hard work, managed to place the educational process in a place of honor.

In 1851, the border regiments being disbanded, the schools were placed under the jurisdiction and maintenance of the religious community to which they belonged, i.e. the Greek Catholic Church, henceforth being called Confessional Schools.

During this period, the new school building was built, in place of the old one, which no longer corresponded, being inadequate and in a strong state of decay.

Perhaps the most important factor that determined the construction of a new school building was the warning given by the Hungarian inspectorate, which ordered the church commune to build a new, larger building, or this would be done by the state. Under these conditions, education was exclusively in the Hungarian language. Through these attempts, they wanted to denationalize the Romanians.

In order to avoid the transition to state subordination, the task of erecting the new building was assumed by the management of the commune and the church.

On September 13, 1891, a joint meeting of the local and church authorities took place, which decided by vote to erect a new building for the school.

The works began in the spring of 1892 and ended towards the end of the year.

In the church archive, in the school file, I found a copy of the deed placed in the foundation of the building, with the laying of the foundation stone, a deed that I wrote in the content of the work.

The priest was never absent from the management of the school, who from the studied documents always signed as the school director.

We have also highlighted some wonderful teachers of the school in Vad, teachers with outstanding educational achievements and who often received cash prizes or even awards of

merit. Among them I would mention the medal that the teacher Octavian Pop received from King Ferdinand I: the „Reward of Work” order.

Through their attitude and professionalism, the teachers of the school here have educated the children in such a way that the flame of national consciousness was kept alive. They instilled courage and gave parents hope to send their children to higher schools. All this contributed to the reputation that this village has today, namely: „*Vad-the village of gentlemen*”.

The third chapter I named it „*Notable personalities: sons of the village*”.

As I mentioned a little above, many personalities have risen from this locality, brave, hardworking and brave people who for us, today and the younger generations, are an example to follow and a model of living.

Among them we mention the priest Augustin Bunea, son of the priest Arsenie Bunea and the priestess Veronica Urs, educated in his native village, then in Braşov at the Romanian High School, with theology studies in Blaj and in Rome at the „*De propaganda fide*” College, where he studied philosophy and theology. He obtained the title of Doctor of Theology, working alternately as a professor of dogmatics at the seminary, consistory secretary, archdiocesan school inspector and the like.

He was a close friend and collaborator of the great historian Nicolae Iorga, with whom he often came to the village, enjoying the peace, the clean air and the hospitality of the Bunea family.

In 1901 he was elected a corresponding member of the Romanian Academy, and in 1909, appreciating the important historical, socio-political and cultural works of Transylvania in the 18th century, he was appointed as a titular member.

A second personality born from these lands was the priest professor Iacob Borcea, who after graduating from the confessional school in the village, directed his steps to the „Saint Basil” High School in Blaj where he studied for a few years, and then returned in Făgăraş and to study at the „Radu Negru” High School. He took his baccalaureate in Blaj, where he soon enrolled at the Theological Academy here. In addition to this theological training, he completed his studies by enrolling in the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Bucharest, where he studied philosophy and pedagogy.

He was ordained a priest, but after 1948 he no longer accepted the passage into the Orthodox Church, for which he had to give up his ministry and earn his living as a teacher in the villages of Şercaia, Upper Venice and then in Blaj at the „Forestry High School”, teaching French.

Another personality that I wanted to highlight is that of the priest *Popa Nicolae*, born in Vad. He served as a military chaplain during the First World War and later as director of the Normal Teachers' School in Blaj. During his mandate, the new building of the Boarding School was built, a fact that brought him much appreciation.

The fourth personality is that of the teacher *Octavian Pop*. He was considered among the best teachers the village school had. He is one of the participants in the First World War, enlisted in 1914 and returned to the chair in 1917, with his return from the front.

In 1918, he was appointed vice-president of the Association of Romanian Teachers from Făgăraș County.

In 1925, he was decorated, as mentioned above, by King Ferdinand I with the „Reward of Labour” medal for his special merits as director of the Village School.

In 1928, the Chamber of Agriculture awarded school leaders who took care of school gardens as part of the educational process. His remarkable results led them to appoint him as a representative of the people of Fagaras in the Romanian Senate, a position he held for 9 months.

Professor *Toma Cocișiu* is the personality who stood out in terms of pedagogy. He was born on August 28, 1887 in the house of parents George and Ana Cocișiu, simple people, people from the country. He attended primary school in his hometown and then attended secondary school in Brașov. In Blaj he attended the Institute of Pedagogy, which after graduation allowed him to work as a teacher in the village of Pianul de sus (Alba county).

Between 1911 and 1914 he attended the summer courses at the „Popular University” in Vălenii de Munte, a school founded by the historian Nicolae Iorga.

On December 1, 1918, he participated in the Great National Assembly in Alba Iulia.

In the fall of 1919, he was appointed director of the State School in Blaj, where he worked until his retirement.

His name is associated with the famous „The Experiment from Blaj” that took place between 1928 and 1943, which tried to teach the courses according to the didactic recommendations of great pedagogues and thinkers from antiquity to our time, guiding the student to learn and discover through your own effort. The pupil was to have that satisfaction of individual knowledge, and the teacher to give him only the tools of knowledge which the pupil, through self-instruction, would need all his life.

In 1939, his pedagogical ideas received international recognition, by publishing an extensive report on the new methodology in the prestigious magazine „Pour L' Ere Nouvelle”.

On the national level, his attempts were praised by illustrious pedagogues Onisifor Ghibu, Ilie Popescu-Teiușan and others.

Professor *Nicolae Răcheriu* is the one who did honor to the best high school from Făgăraș, „Radu Negru”, through his work as director of this educational institution, that in the end of his term was declared „emeritus professor”.

He is the one who will participate, like others, in the Second World War, fighting on the eastern and western fronts, a fact that will bring him two decorations for his heroic merits.

Viorica Eugenia Stoica is a teacher born in Vad, educated in Blaj, within the Normal School of Teachers and employed at several Fagaras schools over time. He stood out as a teacher dedicated to the department, campaigning for the modernization of the learning units, a fact that brought him the appointment as a Methodist school inspector for the primary classes.

A special personality is the officer *Avram Caliani*, from the 1st Border Regiment from Orlat, about whom we know that he had the rank of lieutenant and that he was considered by his close associates as an active nationalist. He took part in the war of the 1st Romanian Regiment from Orlat in Piedmont (Italy), where six companies of the Regiment faced the French enemy Napoleon at Waterloo. Among the losses of human lives recorded by this Regiment was the officer Avram from Vad.

Captain *Ștefan Boeriu* is another true patriot who fought in the First World War, falling prisoner to the Russians.

A graduate of the commercial school, he held several positions, among which the most representative was that of Director of the General Insurance Bank in Sibiu, later transferred to Cluj under the name „Prima Ardeleană”.

We cannot overlook the contribution that he had, in this capacity, to the publication, on his own, of the volume „The economic situation of the Romanians in Țara Făgărașului” by the Transylvanian historian Ștefan Meteș. This is mentioned by the author in the preface of his book.

As a result of his work as an officer of the Romanian army, he was decorated with the „Ferdinand I” medal and the „Crown of Romania in the rank of knight” order.

Ion Simion is the image of the Romanian hero who endured with dignity all the horrors that the First World War caused. He is the person who describes to the family in luxurious detail the battles fought against the Russians, the difficult moments spent with his comrades in the trenches, the ease with which he could be killed at any moment and the hand-to-hand fight with one of his enemies, which kills him to save his life. That fateful moment will follow him for the rest of his life and for his gesture he prayed continuously that God would forgive him. He is also the one who endured the horrors of the camps and the hardships endured for twenty years, to earn his bread ration.

The patriot *Jacob Rotar* is the face of the simple peasant, of the peasant who always loved his family, country and ancestral land, from whose furrows the peasants from Vad fed their children and grandchildren.

It is the face of the local hero, who fought on the fields of Galicia for his ideals. Once discouraged by the progress of the battles and the purpose of the sacrifice that did not belong to the ancestral glia, he leaves everything of the front and deserts, hiding for a long time in the villages and in the fields with the desire to get back home to his family. After many misadventures he reaches his family, who, in order not to be recognized by the gendarmes who were looking for him, make him wear women's clothes as a disguise.

He was part of the village delegation in the Great National Assembly in Blaj in 1918.

He loved the popular port very much, a fact for which he left on his deathbed to be buried in a Romanian port upon his departure from this world.

The fourth chapter is called „*Specificities of the village of Vad: crafts and popular clothing.*”

In this chapter I sought to highlight the diligence and craftsmanship of the housewives, regarding the processing of textile materials, in order to make the clothing and ornaments with which the villagers used to decorate their homes.

Among the agricultural concerns that the locals engaged in, the cultivation of hemp for weaving took pride of place.

This process of processing the raw material was passed down from generation to generation because it had to be known by any girl who wanted to start a family. From sowing the hemp to reaping and bundling it for drying, the whole process had to be followed with great care, otherwise the production could be damaged.

It was not an easy process. Hemp was dried in the sun, then washed in the river, left for a while under the water so that the threads could come off, and then it was combed and combed. What was obtained was bound in notebooks, on a fork and then poured. A real procedure, which most of the time, for hard-working women, was a reason to meet in the sitting room or at the club.

Very interesting were the methods by which the housewives obtained the liquid which the hemp was colored

The women knew that in order to have white threads for weaving, the hemp had to be boiled in water with ashes, and then dried in the sun for three days. Or, for the black color, alder bark was used that was boiled, and the juice obtained was mixed with iron sulfate. Into this

liquid was introduced the fur and boiled for an hour. Birch bark was used for the gray color, and walnut leaves were used for the yellow color.

The traditional port from Făgăraș is a sober and vigorous port, in its creation harmoniously combining the beautiful with the useful. The component parts of the costume were: the ia or the shirt, breeches or pants, the chaptar, the sherpar, the hat and the boots, and later the boots for male wear, and for the female: the ia, the andro, the pan or the apron, the chaptar, the craftsman, and standing opinci or later slippers and boots.

A final general feature is the port reserved for children, which was the same in all the villages in the area. In the cradle until the age of 2, the child wore a small cap (little hat), which in some villages was also called „gugi”, with a tassel sewn into the top and a shirt. From 2 to 5 years a dress, then pieces of clothing like the adults, but smaller in size, up to 14 years, then children's clothing was no longer different from that of adults.

There was a winter and a summer port for both men and women. In the work I tried to detail a little the particularities of these clothing components as presented to me by the old women who inherited this craft of weaving from their mothers and who practiced it until "the world became modernized" and they no longer wore shirts woven in war.

The names of these pieces that make up the popular port are explained towards the end of the chapter.

Chapter V of the work considers the *„Popular and religious traditions and customs of the village.”*

Among the beautiful customs preserved and passed down from grandparents are those related to human life (from birth, to wedding and funeral) and those related to the great religious holidays.

Perhaps the most beautiful custom preserved until yesterday, was the one in which two young people chose to unite their destinies.

The traditional wedding had certain steps (16 in number) that people had to follow strictly, so that the whole wedding went very smoothly.

1. The girl's kit - since they were young, the girls used their parents to prepare their dowry boxes, bought in Brașov, in which they collected their dowry for the big day.
2. Consensus of young people - young people used to get to know each other from time to time at social gatherings, at organized games on Sundays, this time was intended for getting to know and approaching young people for falling in love.

3. Parents' consent - it was a tradition for each couple to receive their parents' consent for marriage. There were also situations when parents objected, considering that the boy or girl was not suitable for their child, being „weak”.
4. Petit - it was the time when the girl's parents were tried by certain relatives of the boy, in order to get their opinion about the boy suitor for the girl's hand. They were those "middlemen" who made marriage proposals.
5. Will - on a set date, the two families would meet to establish the „dowry sheet”. Each party announced what it could offer the young couple, so that they could start the journey. Such dowry sheets can be found in the church archive to this day.
6. The dowry book - it was the act drawn up to reinforce what was decided at the „will”, act drawn up in duplicate (one for each family) and signed by witnesses brought from outside the families, precisely for this purpose.
7. Engagement - it was the time when families set the wedding date. It was always taken into account the church holidays and the fasts over the year, which were observed. Once the date was set, the priest's blessing was requested for the ceremony of the wedding on that day and the intention to marry was announced at the Town Hall. From that moment, the engaged young people only went together to the game, parties or church.
8. Placing on the board - provided for the public announcement of the wedding on the notice board of the City Hall.
9. Shouting in the church - three Sundays in a row, the priest had the duty to announce the marriage of the two to all believers present at the service. The purpose was for people to announce any possible impediment that could prevent the wedding from taking place.
10. The tailor - around the wedding, at the bride's house, it was customary to make a man's shirt for the groom, a shirt for the mother-in-law and a shirt for the father-in-law, which were offered as wedding gifts.
11. The wedding invitation - took place on the Thursday of the wedding week. The groom with his sons, the bride with her daughters walked through the streets of the village to invite people to the wedding.
12. Start of wedding preparations – during the week of the wedding, on Thursday the preparations began. From the usual cleaning around the house and yard, to the preparation of drinks and food.
13. The wedding cake - on Saturdays, the relatives came with different „cakes”, consisting of food offered to help organize the feast (eggs, sugar, flour, chickens...).

14. The arrival of the musicians - in the evening, the groom and his groomsmen decorated the horses and the cart and left for the famous violinists from Ticuș (Brașov county). Once they returned with the musicians, the wedding party began.
15. The bride's cake - it was the solemn moment that the wedding began. The groom came with the groomsmen to the bride's house where the custom of the cake game took place until around midnight when the party stopped.
16. The wedding - On Sunday morning, the civil wedding took place at the City Hall, and then everyone returned to their home where they feasted with guests while waiting for the moment from the church. Weddings always took place in the village on Sundays, after the church service.

Towards the middle of the day, the two processions met on the street of the church and from there entered the wedding club, and then the party prepared in advance.

Another beautiful custom is that of the *Boys' Guild* (Ceata de feciori), which met every year in the evening of December 6, the day of Saint Nicholas holiday, to start the preparations for the Christmas carols. All this organization was carried out according to certain principles known to the sons and respected throughout this period.

The group met at Saint Nicholas and „disbanded” after Saint John's evening.

A custom that still attracts the gaze and attention of many is that of the *Ploughman*, an agrarian custom, which takes place annually on the second day of Holy Easter.

In the presentation of the custom, I tried to present all the steps that the young men and women take to stage this custom, of which we have evidence since the time of Metropolitan Sava Brancovici.

We cannot overlook the custom at the time of the birth of a child and at the death of a Christian in the village, which I have tried to describe as the elders inherited from their own. A peculiarity of the funeral rite is the *funeral verse*, a poem composed by the elders, which includes important moments in the life of the sleeping person and which is sung when young people or important people of the village are buried.

In chapter VI, I sought to treat the theme called „*The Romanians from Transylvania under the times: the emigration of the Vadenians to the United States of America.*”

On the basis of the donation registers and on the basis of the testimonies collected from the sons of those who left for the United States of America with the thought of a better income for their families, I sought to highlight the situation of the parishioners at the time when the economic difficulties brought to the brink of despair.

This is how it happens that towards the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, many take the road to the West, thinking that there, after some physical exertion, they will be able to send home, to their families, the money necessary to cover the amounts owed to the banks, or the state, or to buy a small patch of land to cultivate.

Many made great efforts to be able to leave legally, many left on their own, clandestinely, most of the time, just hoping that God would help them and they would be able to achieve something.

I wanted to explain the causes and methods by which our Vadians managed to leave the village in such large numbers, that based on church archives and official documents we conclude that more than 150 people from Vad took the road to the United States, where they worked, they won a penny, which they sent home to their loved ones. The church archive records many donations that the Church of Vad received from those in America, for the repair, renovation and equipping of the place of worship with the objects necessary for the service of the holy services. This aspect proves to us once again the fact that the parishioners, even far from home and their loved ones, have not forgotten that there are many shortages and hardships in the village, they have often chosen to make great efforts, through good deeds, from their little giving and to others. Even more, when it came to the needs of the home church, so much loved.

In the VII-th part of the work, I sought to deal with the issue of „*The reunification of the Christian community by returning to Orthodoxy.*”

This chapter is a favorite of mine, because I had the chance to discover some diary notebooks in which one of the priests raised in this village, priest Victor Urian, described his experiences and the problems he went through with the new social and religious regulations after 1948, which provided for the separation of the Greek-Catholics from the United Church and the transition to the Orthodox Church.

In addition to the official information that we can get from the records in the archive and from the press of the time, these experiences come to clarify many doubts and question marks that some people ask today about the church life in 1948.

These testimonies also describe the moment when the village was considered to have passed into the bosom of the Orthodox Church, with the deposition of Metropolitan Nicolae Bălan in the Holy Church of the village, at the feast of Saints Constantine and Elena in the spring of 1949 and with the solemn celebration of the Holy Liturgy.

I would also like to mention here the impressions that this priest, who forcibly accepted church reunification, put down in writing with the invitation of former Greek-Catholic priests

to the training courses in Sibiu and the appreciation he received from the ministers the metropolitan cathedral, following an occasional sermon delivered during a vespers service. This shows the theological training and the high moral standing that this son of the village showed. I tried through all these testimonies to reinforce the idea that this return was nothing but a justice that had to be done to the ancestral Church and that the only ones who suffered were the priests who opposed the transition to the Orthodox Church. The faithful did not feel this as a burden because life continued its normal course.

In chapter VIII I brought to attention a page from the history of the village, more precisely the time of the First World War. I named the chapter: *„Church Archives of Vad - notes on the pages of religious books. Memories from the First World War”*.

I treated this part from the perspective of the documents that I found on the pages of some old books from the church archive, notes made by several soldiers, who fought in this area of the Făgăraș Country. They left them as evidence of their passage through Vad and certainly through the village church, because some of these books were used in the pew.

Also, from the archive of the Șercaia Town Hall, I obtained the lists of local heroes from the commune, as well as the names of those who suffered and fell asleep within the radius of the commune due to the deflagration. Among those mentioned here, we also find the names of those who made notes in the cult books.

I was thus able to review the number of soldiers capable of fighting in the village, as well as the horrors the community went through with the arrival of the Hungarian soldiers.

We know that the priest of the village Ioan Bunea was summoned to his own home at gunpoint to allow the Hungarians to take the church bells to be turned into cannonballs and also that in the fighting, the church was hit several times with shells, causing great damage. The oldest remember how their parents had to take shelter in the cellars of their houses, once the fighting with the Germans broke out, shells flying „over the village” and the fact that 1916 was perhaps the most difficult year in history, because in that year, the village ran out of men to handle household and agricultural chores. Almost everyone was at the front, and at home, the chores were done by the women and the old people. They could hardly get their firewood from the forest, they could hardly collect the little harvest from the field, and they could hardly plow the field.

In 2018, when we celebrated the centenary of the Great Union, I received from two families in the village some written pages, of those who fought on the front and fell prisoners in this World War and who agreed that the written, to be published in this research as a tribute to the ancestors.

I named chapter IX: „*Iconographic archive from Vad*”.

I conceived this chapter as a tribute to those who over time made great sacrifices, in order to be able to purchase and later donate an icon painted on wood or glass to the holy church in the village.

I did this because until the 2000s, with the interior renovation of the church, the walls were covered with icons on glass and some were painted on wood. After the renovation, they were replaced with others, and the old ones, placed in the archive.

One thing I noticed here was that in every house, in the „front” room, on the east wall, even today, one or two icons painted on glass can be found nailed under the protection of a traditional doormat, worked by the forerunners in the war.

Most confess that these icons are the pride of the house. Why? Because, at that time, it was not exactly cheap and within everyone's reach to have an icon painted on glass; they could not be bought anywhere and to be able to do this gesture, some even sold a pair of oxen.

This shows us the fact that the seers valued the church very much and that they made many sacrifices for it. Not so much for them as for God. They were aware that any sacrifice made to the church has value in eternity and that whatever you do for God does not go unrewarded.

I sought to present each icon separately and highlight its characteristics. We brought to attention the remarkable Savu Moga, Nicolae Cațavei, Matei Țâmforea or Ana Deji, painters from Fagaras who left their mark on the many icons found in the villages of Fagaras.

Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală, of Transylvania, making a reference to these icons made on glass, said that man chose to place this kind of representation in a place of honor, because glass, being fragile, forces you to pay special attention, as with a holy thing.

I dedicated the last chapter of this work to books and named it „*Church archive from Vad- religious books*”.

In this chapter I wanted to make a presentation of the library within the church archive, a library containing many volumes, some with Cyrillic writing, which were used in public or private worship.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, towards the end of the 9th century and the beginning of the next, buying an icon or a cult book was not an easy thing because of the many shortages that the villagers had and because it was not available to anyone who can purchase them.

Besides the financial involvement, you couldn't buy a cult book anywhere. The villagers had only a few options. Either from Braşov, where fairs were often held in the Scheii of Braşov and where the people of Fagaras took part in order to sell their things or buy what they needed, or from Sibiu, where they went with the same interests, either from Blaj, where, most of the time, the children arrived to learn books.

From these three sources, the priests took care to procure a holy book for the church.

In the registers with donations made by believers, we often find examples of books donated by „june (x) who studies in Blaş”, or they are bought with money sent by the head of the family working in the United States.

This also shows us that at that time great sacrifices were made for such donations.

I have tried to present such books, showing their age, the place of printing and the condition in which they are today.

At the place of honor in the library we find ourselves in good condition:

1. a **Molitfelnic**, printed in Sibiu, in 1864, with the blessing of Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna, during the reign of Emperor Francis Joseph I, of Austria.
2. a **Psalter** also printed in Sibiu in 1841, in the printing house of Gheorghe de Clozius.
3. a **Psalter** printed in Braşov in 1833, in the printing house of Francisc de Schobel, a Saxon senator at that time.
4. a **Great Octoih**, printed in Sibiu in 1834
5. a **Ceaslov**, printed in Braşov in 1835, in the printing house of Ioan Gött and edited by the famous Ioan Barac, a teacher of the Romanian School in Şcheii Braşov. The book is donated to the church by the faithful Gh. Morar from Vad.
6. a **Bible** printed in Buzău in 1856, printed in the time of ruler Barbu Dimitrie Ştirbei.
7. a **Catechism** book that was used by the village school, printed in Blaj in 1844, during the time of Bishop Ioan Lemeni, of Făgăraş.
8. a **Christian teaching book**, printed in Baj in 1805, during the time of Bishop Ioan Bob of Făgăraş.
9. **THE SEVEN MYSTERY**, the volume of Metropolitan Varlaam of Moldavia, printed in Iasi in 1644, the oldest piece preserved in the church archive, in an advanced state of degradation.

All of this prompts make us to conclude that the Church in this village always had people who loved God and beauty, who took care as best they could for the smooth running of the religious life, and that any donation made to the Holy Church meant a considerable expense and therefore, a joy and a pride of the whole family.