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**The Ecclesiastical State Politics and the Roman-Catholic Church
from Transylvania (1867-1900)**

(Summary of a Doctoral Thesis)

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Abstract

The present paper engages in delineating the issue of the introduction of the religious reforms in the circumstances of the late 19th century dualist monarchy. The national-liberal governments sought to modernize the state institutions. The religious reforms firstly consisted of a clear separation of the church and the state. The ideologies developed under the influence of the enlightenment – namely liberalism and nationalism – had exercised a decisive effect on the policy of the church, most significantly the state administration of the secular civil wedding and the legalization of the mixed religious marriages; these in particular have met a hot and strong reaction at the level of the public opinion as well as at higher levels, namely the superior chamber of the Hungarian parliament, which has two times rejected the law. By of such measures the state seeks to assure equality between its citizens.

Key Concepts: liberalism, reforms politico-religious, the attitude of the Roman-Catholic clerics , Transylvania, Catholic autonomy, mixed marriages.

Introduction

In the choice of the research the following idea had provided us with a professional guidance: these three decades have been of a decisive importance with regard to the establishment of the dualist monarchy, and the two dates mentioned in the titles refer to the most significant moments of its evolution. Following the national compromise of 1867 the building of the modern and liberal state had taken effect having as its model the western modern states, a project which required the installment of several liberal reforms. These reforms have triggered radical changes in the midst of the society, and these alterations have led to the formation of contradictory groupings which of the supporters of traditional ideologies on one hand consisted the representatives more innovative, liberal ones, on the other. One might rightfully affirm that the year 1900 constitutes the beginning of the 20th century, having in view these evolutions in ideology; however, taking into consideration the aspects of this particular research, namely aiming to delineate the events of the politico-religious battles, it is also the year of major tensions, this is due to the fact that the political scene will be gradually overwhelmed by the events connected to the international evolution.

In the period tackled by our study the social and economic changes, the establishment of the bourgeois society had been factors, which openly challenged the Churches, and the latter institutions were obliged to take responsibility for the social and political positions detained. Due to these alterations the influence of the Churches on the personal affairs, private lives of the citizens had decreased considerably, thus the individual mind sets were less and less influenced by the values promoted by the church. The paper revolves round the forms of reaction of the Church towards these alterations, how did they gain influence, and what effects did the liberal concepts have on the activities of the Church.

We are convinced that the present research can effectively contribute to the more thorough comprehension of the Transylvanian history, that it can reveal certain aspects of the Catholic Church's manifestation and activities, of the latter institution's attitude towards the reform projects promoted by the liberal governments. The purpose of these reforms was mainly the modernization of the state, a fact, which encouraged us to conduct an investigation and to analyze the impact of the policy in question on the course of Transylvanian History. Therefore,

we have endeavored to approach the issue through multiple viewpoints, namely from a political and a religious perspective alike. The reaction of the Transylvanian Roman-Catholic Church to such reforms is an issue which has not yet been covered by any comprehensive research. One may easily conclude, after investigating the source literature on this subject, that aspects, which regard the situation from Hungary have been investigated, and the historiographies appointed the proper interest to the reaction of the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches to these reforms.

Our research begun with the close study of the Romanian and Hungarian literature on the subject, furthermore our main sources consisted of the collections found in the archives of the State and the Churches. These were replenished later on by the information obtained from the press articles with a liberal tinge as well as articles of other interests, and last but not least the press articles which exhibited a strong clerical influence. The articles published in the newspapers, magazines from Hungary and Transylvania, which tackle the issue of Church vs. State policy, shed light on the convictions and concepts promoted in the period between the years 1876 and 1900. From the analysis and the interpretation of these ideas one might draw some conclusions concerning the position of different social classes and concerning some clerical factors as well.

The historiography had been engaged in a relatively large representation of this particular topic. The Historian Salacz Gábor published a corresponding analysis with regard to the position of the High Clergy of Hungary in his book *Egyház és állam Magyarországon a dualizmus korában 1867-1918 [The Church and the State in Hungary in the Period of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism(1867-1918)]*; Adriányi Gábor in his monography entitled *Az egyháztörténet kézikönyve [The Manual of Church History]* has succeeded to synthesize the whole evolution of this reform introduction, furthermore, the renowned researcher of church history Hermann Egyed has acted similarly by creating his monumental work entitled: *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig [The History of the Catholic-Church in Hungary until the year 1914]*

The aspect of the of the state machinery reforms, of the policy of the governments from the Austro-Hungarian dualism with regard to the Churches were covered by the researcher from Transylvania as well. It has been duly pointed out that the Compromise of 1867 had abolished the political and institutional autonomy of Transylvania by means of its inclusion to the

Monarchy of Hungary. Through the new organizational system these territories fell under the autonomy of the Hungarian government and parliament.

Thus, the year 1867 in Transylvania equaled its administrative inclusion to Transleithania, the Hungarian part of the dualist Monarchy. In the year 2006 Simona Nicoară publishes under the title *O istorie a secularizării (sec. XIX-XX)[A History of the Secularization (19th and the 20th Century)]* a work, which presents the process of secularization, the change of roles concerning the state and the church. A collection of studies has appeared in the year 2003 under the coordination of Teodor Pavel entitled: *Tradiție și modernizare în societatea transilvăneană 1850-1918 [Tradition and Modernization in the Transylvanian Society between 1850 and 1918]*. A book which bears likeness to pornographies has been created by a group of researchers conducted by professor Ioan Bolovan it is engaged in investigating the church legislation: *Legislația ecleziastică și laică privind familia românească din Transilvania în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea. O istorie a secularizării (sec. XIX-XX) [The Clerical and Secular Legislation Concerning the Romanian Family from Transylvania in the Second Half of the 19th century]*.

In what aspects did the position of the Roman Catholic Church of Transylvania differ from that of Hungary had proven to be a less investigated issue. By the close study of the Diocesan Archives of the Roman Catholic Church we have traced down a series of documents which clearly specify the attitude of the Roman Catholic clergy in matters of civil matrimony and its reactions towards the policy of the dualist governments. The result of this study will be included in the following pages of this discourse.

The Impact of Liberalism in the Dualist Monarchy – The Reception of the European Models

In a most influential period of European history, some ideas have significantly influenced the state institutions' organization and its activities. These constituted, for numerous people models of mindsets and actions, which could be implemented, since they issued values broadly applied and recognized. Throughout this period the principles of liberalism and nationalism were created.

Numerous political structures were created in the Hungary of 1867 under the influence of the national liberalism. Those who possessed political power have embarked on a political journey carrying ideologies inspired by the bourgeois transformation, namely the need of the feudal system's abolishment and the arousal of the modern national consciences. The most thorough guarder of the feudal remains had proven to be the Court of Vienna, and in the meantime the latter institution had been the main impediment in the creation of the national self-determination. In the year 1867, when the suzerainty of the country was established, the revival of the national liberalism had been obvious. The free dénouement of the Hungarian liberalism was limited by the anti-liberal and conservative forces, which were based on the existing social and political structures. The prerogatives of the Monarch, which consisted of absolutist elements as well, and were established by law also provided a powerful support to conservatism. Any legal project presented to the parliament could not have been discussed merely there, such a decision making needed the assent of the Monarch. Another conservatory impediment to the enactment of liberalism had been the Compromise itself, which could not be altered by legal means. To these aspects a third factor had been added, namely the multi-national character of the Hungarian state. This factor had a significant impact on Hungarian political liberalism, since the promotion of a coherent political liberalism endangered the existence of the state itself. Therefore, after the year 1867, there have been supporting forces of the liberalism and of the conservatism alike, which functioned by way of compromise, and influenced to a great extent the function of the system.

By the expression *Free State*, one might refer to one historical type of the modern civil state, which executed the separation of the state and the society, and which encroach in a small extent in the private sector. In this state the bases of the modern institutions which ensure the individual freedom had provided grounds for the begotten constitutional guarantees. In the development of Western Europe the peaking period of the liberal state had been the 19th century. On the other hand by the sintagm: *Free State* we can refer to state activities, which appoint great importance even in the situations of necessity for the state, to the maintenance of the individual rights and of the autonomy. In the liberal mindset the state order and the society is in continuous balance, which derives from the fluctuation of conflicts and consensus.

For many decades the aristocratic liberalism had been the only dominant Hungarian ideology, practically this lasted until the 1890s. This had been the only form of national liberalism. In the modern epochs, with the exception of the neo-absolutistic ones, Hungary could be considered a parliamentary Monarchy, similar to the western ones. Its parliament had been bicameral, consisting of chamber of representatives and the superior one. The central organ of the management activities had been organized on the cabinet systems, a council formed by the responsible ministers and the government had been established with its leader. The activity of the government included a wide area, from the tackling of political issues to some unique, concrete cases.

In the course of the formation of the Hungarian modern state, the insurance of the citizens' rights had not always been executed to the legal level. In the meantime especially at the end of the dualist era, some liberal rights as for instance the free publication right had been strongly limited.

On a political level, liberalism had raised the issue of nationalism, which was appointed a somewhat mystical existence. In stead of such forms of the state which favored the reign of dynastic families, the public wished for the establishment of a strong free state and unified from a nationalistic point of view. The creation of a national state is sought after along with the insurance of the right of different nationalities, the latter, however has not at all been put into practice.

As well as in countries of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, the church detained an important role in the development of the national state and in the formation on the national identities. For instance the Romanian Orthodoxy, as an autonomous, Church could strengthen the national consciousness even without political means, it could develop the national language and culture, it could even apply measures which served national interest..

The social and political foundation of the dualism in Transylvania consisted of the middle nobility, a social class which fathered many influential figures of the political scene. This leading layer of the political life in order to assure an autonomous Hungarian policy and to assure the Hungarian supremacy had confronted all the tendencies coming from Vienna, and from the part of other nationalities which could constitute a threat to its political status.

There are many examples to be found in the history of the modern era with regard to the blending of the battles for national and religious freedom. For the early form of the Transylvanian tolerance one might find this a very salient one in this respect. This was the area which hosted for the first time the legal, that is supported by the constitution, cohabitation of more religions (by institutionalizing multi-religiosity), in order to insure freedom, even if this by freedom they did not refer to a religious one. The union of the three nations and the four religions set an illustrative example for the Europe of that period.

The religious distributions of the society had different roles with regard to the nations. In the organization of the Hungarian elite this aspect had a minor role, however, in the case of the elite of other ethnic groups this constituted a significant aspect. In the formation of the political aspirations of the ethnic groups (in case of Romanians the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Church and in the case of the Slovaks the Evangelical and Roman-Catholic Church) the church had explicitly an integrative role.

The revolutionary movement of 1848 had weakened the church's supremacy, delineating the fact that the church has a special commitment, with her own specific life and purposes, which provide her the rights to be independent in her actions. The basic idea of the new concept is the fact that the church and the state need to be separated with respect to their organization and function. They will, however, stay linked to one another as two ethical powers, indispensable for the orderly and healthy function and development of the society. The concept of church autonomy had started to pierce its way through.

Overall this new period represented a continuous movement aiming the estrangement of the church. The states have distanced themselves more and more from their clerical ties, and afterwards from their religious ones as well, and have settled to serve the national interest exclusively. The attack addressed to the church has been perpetuated and it triggered a formation of a kind of spiritual life which sought to be independent from the institution. Mankind refused to recognize the installed clerical order without conditions, and did not submit to the order of the world imposed by God.

The Reaction of the Roman Catholic Church to the Reception and Promotion of the Liberal Ideas

The Holy See wanted to repulse of the incoming attacks, to strengthen the faith, and to make the church more united and more resistant with the help of the council. Therefore the main objectives of the First Vatican Council (1870) were the following: defense and assertion of the attacked or threatened truths; strengthening the resistance by increasing the internal unity (therefore strengthening the papal power, because the system of a centralized church could totally assure the defense of the church); increase in the moral weight and in the prestige of papacy over the prestige of the nation. Even if the papacy would lose its secular power, the moral prestige should remain to represent the perennial interests of the church.

In „*Dei Filius*”, the incipit of the dogmatic constitution, besides the concise explanation of the Catholic doctrine, the council also condemned atheism, rationalism and pantheism.

One of the sighs of the church defense was the formulation of the Dogma of Infallibility. After the First Vatican Council the definition of the papal infallibility aroused vehement hostility from the liberal world. The papal infallibility on faith and morals in the church, if pronounced *ex cathedra* or referring to the faith and morals of the supreme power of government, were not new church teachings. A politic tension was created by the wrong ideas of the liberals, according to which the council pronounces the sovereignty of the Pope over the problems of the people and the sovereigns, which would lead to a permanent tension between the state and the faithful Catholics. At the First Vatican Council the Hungarian bishops expressed their concerns that the definition of dogma will alarm and increase the distance between the Protestant and the Orthodox people even more. The Hungarian clergy did not wish to enter into conflict with the state, they had seen as a solution of this problem the renewal of the right of patronage (the bishops proclaimed the dogmas and the papal documents only if they were presented for approval also to the sovereign on their way to the state).

The church policy initiated by Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846), who did not distinguish between the positive and less positive shades of liberalism but condemned it as a whole, was continued also by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878). In the notes attached to the encyclical *Quanta cura*, in the 80th paragraph of the Syllabus he condemned the mistakes of the era, including liberalism. The change occurred only during the reign of Pope Leo XIII who formulated specific teachings

on the state, society and modern public freedoms, including the relationship between the Catholic Church and the liberalism (*Diuturnum illud, Immortale Dei, Libertas praestantissimum*).

The encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) meant a turning point, they were not anymore documents of pure negativism, protest and condemnation, as in the tradition of his predecessors, but he wrote also positivist documents in which he identifies the contemporary reality, discussing the problems in a complex and articulated way.

The Politico-Religious Reforms Expected to Modernize the State Activity

It is known that for Transylvania the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 meant the both the loss of the politico-institutional autonomy and the administrative inclusion in Hungary, the Eastern part of the Monarchy. The national-liberal governments during the dualism wanted to modernize state institutions. The religious reforms meant, above all, the separation of the state and the church. In Western Europe these reforms were already achieved. The modern state administration was inconceivable without them.

The political issues brought to the church after 1867 had always been present in the background of the Hungarian politics. This fact follows from the speeches in Parliament of Deák Ferenc and from Tisza Kálmán's proposal on the introduction of civil marriages. The 1869/1872 Parliamentary session meant the inauguration of the political confrontations which culminated in the battles of 1894. The legislative proposal issued by Irányi Dániel characterized accurately the opposition's policy; since then this policy was shared by all liberal politicians of the time. His legislative proposal expressed the radical tendency of the end of the century (such as granting the custody for parents to choose their children's religion, equal rights and obligations for different churches, encoding civil records at national request, binding of civil marriages, passing of several processes to civil courts which had taken place in church courts before). This proposal caused great disturbances in the political life. Discussions on this legislative proposal had widely extended, but the situation was not yet mature enough to accept such proposals.

In the next 25 years the Parliament does not make other laws on church policy. Several initiatives and proposals are noted in this respect, but they will all remain on the same level for various reasons.

The government led by Sándor Wekerle prepared politico-religious draft bills already from the year 1892. They were followed by two years of intense debate, negotiations between the parties, open statements which involved the ecclesiastical authorities, the Hungarian government and Parliament, the Holy See, the emperor Franz Joseph and, through the media, the civil society. The parties which manifested for or against the politico-religious draft bills were formed gradually: on one side the liberal phalanx (Protestant politicians, the clergy of the Protestant churches, the Israelites); on the other side was the Catholic Church, the most affected by these laws, but also the Orthodox churches.

The sovereign got into a difficult situation, as most of the Western European countries had much earlier adopted and legalized state records, civil marriages, the reception of the Israelite religion and the free practice of religion. Their marginalization would have discredited the image of the royal house abroad. However, the Catholic Church formed the chief support for the Habsburg monarchy in a traditional way; therefore the monarch was very prudent not to turn it against him.

After long internal fights, when the delay threatened already with the overthrow of the public situation, the sovereign sanctified the laws on December 9, 1894. With the sanctification, the law of the marriages and divorces came into the body of the laws, as well as the law which recognized the free choice of the children's religion and the law about the state records which did not admit the authenticity of parish registers for the future. In 1895 the king sanctified also the laws about the reception of the Israelite religion and the free exercise of religion. The adoption of these laws ended the internal fights also. The first three laws of church policy came into force on October 1, 1895.

Two different attitudes have emerged towards the reform of the church policy. Both were eligible and their principles were clear. Representatives of the first attitude fought for uniform state regulation of marriage rights. This attitude was supported by several liberal representatives of the government, of the liberal party and even of the opposition. Defenders of the other attitude wanted to maintain the law institution of marriage in religious skills and according to religious

doctrines. The first attitude took into account state interests, objectives and the natural function of the state, while the second attitude wished to serve the requirements of religious doctrines and religious interests. The national unity of the Hungarian state claimed the uniform regulation of the marriage; that the institutions of the state perform their tasks within their borders, according to their objectives. The clergy fought for the state's acknowledgement of the marriage being legal only with conditions acceptable by the church also.

The Jewish emancipation movement achieves its objectives in 1867, by the law XVII, which leads to acquisition of right to citizenship of the Jews in Hungary and Transylvania. The new dualist regime sought to legitimize its belonging to a modern Europe also by these measures.

It is known that in Transylvania, as throughout the whole Habsburg Empire, the records of births, marriages and deaths fell under the exclusive responsibility of the church. The reform initiatives of the governments that the civil status records should be prepared by state authorities were meant to change this process naturalized by centuries.

The confessional civil status records had had at the beginning an exclusively religious character, their purpose being to record the celebration of various rites: baptisms, weddings, funerals. However, the state recognized the importance of the confessional records in the evidence of population and guaranteed their authenticity, influencing the quality of the registers by different laws and ministerial orders. The priests who were preparing the records were appointed as public servants with the duty of preparing for free, on the account of the authorities, recruitment tables and other statistical forms; or issuing the extracts of civil status which served as public acts before the law.

The Attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Politico-Religious Reforms

During the debate in the Parliament on the politico-religious draft bills, the representatives of the confessions took opposite positions from their own sphere of interest. The Hungarian Catholic bishops, with the consent of the Holy See, initiated a movement against these reforms. Their opposition was highlighted by a series of pastoral circulars addressed to the

clergy and to the faithful Catholics. A common message of them was that the new civil laws did not cause any modification in the religious dogmas.

The intention of the government (led by Wekerle) of introducing civil marriage caused a great stir in the Catholic public opinion. Bishops were concerned with the mystery of marriage and they condemned the civil marriage. They turned to the king for help against these dangerous innovations. In the memorandum submitted to the government they opposed the civil marriage and ensured their loyalty to the Pope against the mystery and indissolubility of marriage, promising that they will do everything possible to stop this draft bill.

The members of the clergy did their utmost to keep the rights of the church and the faith unbroken. Following the guidance of senior priests from other countries, the Hungarian bishops also instructed their priests to manage properly the situation induced by the coming into force of the new law.

The bishops will accept unanimously the reception of the Jewish religion in the sense that they can express their religious convictions in public, without restrictions, and to benefit from the same protection and support as the believers of other religions. However, that reference of the law in which is wished the foundation of reciprocity between Jewish and Christian believers (i.e. allowance of the passing from the Jewish religion to Christianity and from Christianity to the Jewish religion) will be rejected. This attempt is against the church doctrines, as the Christianity labels the soul of the baptized person (without any possibility of its deletion) that if a person once became a Christian, he cannot become non-Christian anymore.

In Hungary, there is a difference between the free exercise of religion and general freedom of religion. (In Hungary only the received religions have corporate rights, in terms of corporative the tolerated religions [for example Anabaptists, Anglicans] are considered inexistent by the state. In this way not the individuals are limited in their rights but the religious body itself). For the individual the freedom of religion is guaranteed, but the possibilities for religious associations are limited. If this proposal abates the difference between established and tolerated religions, this would open a way to an unlimited freedom for the religious body (recognition of religious bodies in an unlimited number). According to the clergy this still has a disruptive effect on the state, like the national and religious diversion. Under the free practice of religion the

Catholic Church cannot accept the recognition of the tolerated religions. According to the clergy, not belonging to any church will spread unchurchedness and immorality.

The clergy recognizes the right of the state power, the fact that it can manage the civil status records, but also warns of the financial aspects: preparing of the registers by the state will mean new taxes required from citizens. The unchurched people evade their obligations towards the church, such as request for baptism; this fact would open doors for expanding unchurchedness, thus the number of the unchurched people will increase. Many children will remain unbaptized.

The fights of the religious policies were hampered by the resistance to reforms of the Monarchy's nations. They opposed the introduction of reforms, because on the one hand they collided with the teachings of their churches (for example the Romanian Orthodox Church opposed the adoption of the laws on civil marriage, justifying it with the mysterious nature of it), on the other hand they considered as a rebellion against the nation which accelerates the process of Magyarization.

According to the analysis and reports of the sources we can say that the Roman Catholic clergy tried to stop the introduction of the politico-religious reforms. According to the information from the press, from literature and archival documents, appears that in Transylvanian areas the changes were received in a more tolerant way than in Hungary; the transition to the new system was gradual and sequential. All the Transylvanian bishops, except Schlauch Lőrincz, did not get involved in political discussions, they expressed their opinion only when asked for it, and their attitude did not differ from the theories of the universal church. The Roman Catholic clergy considered that the liberal ideology is against its institutions. Compared to Hungary, where the high clergy triggered a sustained campaign against the reforms, the reaction of the Transylvanian clergy was more moderate. The Transylvanian clergy did not engage in debates with state authorities, sought to keep intact the rights envisaged before. It tried to reach a compromise with the state.

The Catholic Autonomy

The autonomy of the church and of the cults was the most extensive relationship to the state and the economy. In autonomy all religions had their own place whose political provisions were not against the teachings and the moral norms of the church. Also the economic independence was achieved largely. In most cases the full member of the church authority was only that person who had satisfied also the financial contributions (church tax). However, to the material independence the church estates, first of all the lands also contributed.

In Hungary, the autonomy of the church was practiced properly and it had the following meanings: it could control the private sector, the internal issues, schools, foundations and other financial affairs and it could manage them legally and individually to the state.

The position of the Roman Catholic Church depended strongly from the state. Metropolitan archbishops, bishops and prebendaries were appointed by the king; he established and abolished dioceses and religious positions, granted and revoked ecclesiastical fields, held in his hand through the government the administration of the funds and of the whole wealth of the church, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church existed under the regime of a genuine state church. It was based both on the right of patronage of the apostolic king and on the concept of royal prerogatives.

The Catholic autonomy in Hungary has experienced several distinct phases over time given especially by the political and confessional context; each of them having its own specific. The right of the patronage, which had evolved together with the state foundation, played an important role in the relationship between church and state. In Hungary, since the reign of Saint István, the state took a series of church measures, the Catholic being the religion of the state. In these circumstances the laws of the state were based on the laws of the church, and the interests of the church were also the interests of the state, whose role was to defend and protect the church.

The need for autonomy, whether speaking of interior or exterior life of the church, was strengthened when essential changes in the relationship between state and church reached in the agenda. This happened first in 1848, then at the Compromise of 1867 and also at the time of the political debates of the church in the 1890s.

The law adopted in April 1848 pronounced the perfect equality and reciprocity between the different religions and threatened with the secularization of church property and equalization of the cults' wealth. In this radically changed situation the Catholic Church generated the need for the creation of the Catholic autonomy. But the assembly of the autonomy congress did not take place because of the outbreak and the suppression of the revolution.

After the Compromise of 1867 the idea of self-government, of autonomy reappears, because the liberal governments can engage through the right of patronage in the internal affairs of the church. The Hungarian hierarchs understood by the church autonomy the independent state government and they wished to give the laity the right to intervene only in the questions of management of the church properties and of education.

The defeat suffered in politico-religious fights and the strengthening of the state power over the church raised again the problem of the autonomy. In 1895 the king authorized the convening of the congress to create autonomy. It was opened on November 11, 1897 by the primate Vaszary Kolos as president. The congress accepted the regulations referring to the organization of the Catholic autonomy in Hungary. These were handed to the king by the commission sent to him led by the cardinal-bishop Schlauch Lőrincz at March 13, 1902. The procedure of regulatory acceptance lasted until 1908, when it was blocked. So it became evident soon that the achievement of the autonomy in Hungary is impossible.

In Transylvania, a special situation occurred: here the power of the church was not achieved. After the Diet of Turda, in the Transylvanian principality the received religions (Reformed, Evangelical, Unitarian, Catholic) achieved their own state autonomy. Their legal status, structure and development differed fundamentally from that of Hungary.

The autonomy of the Catholic Church in Transylvania, i.e. the *Roman Catholic Status from Transylvania*, was introduced by necessity; Catholics were repressed in the background by the expansion of the Protestantism in Transylvania. Because it was formed as a diocesan institution, it was named diocesan autonomy or Catholic autonomy in which the dioceses remained without cleric bishops where those who made the important diocesan decisions, managed the schools and a part of the diocesan property. Later all these existed under the leadership of the bishop.

The history of the Transylvanian Catholicism between 1867 and 1894 can be understood only if we consider the life of the Transylvanian Roman Catholic Status of the time, especially the Status meetings where the problems of the Transylvanian society and the Roman Catholic Church were discussed.

While in Transylvania the Status regained its previous power, Hungary was preoccupied with the organization of the national Catholic autonomy. With the discussion of the Catholic autonomy, the issue concerning the terms and the conditions was raised several times, through which the Catholic autonomy of Transylvania could be integrated into the body of the national Catholic autonomy.

The Catholic autonomy in Transylvania, as a living and functioning reality, was raised in the Hungarian Parliament with public support. It was addressed with respect and treated in a way in which its rights could not be offended.

Conclusions

The changes occurred as a result of the liberalist influences affected deeply the relationship between state and church. After the Compromise, the church experienced a period of difficulties and trials. The modern state introduced reforms which broke with the centuries-old traditions: for example the marriage, the management of the civil status registers was plucked from church duties which deeply affected the church organs. As grounds for measures taken the liberals made reference to the development and modernization of the Western states.

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