

ROMANIAN BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

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Fr. Ioan Chirilă (coord.), Paula Bud, Stelian Pașca-Tușa, Bogdan Șopterean,
Vechiul Testament în scrierile bibliștilor ortodocși români – ghid bibliografic
[The Old Testament in the Writings of Romanian Biblical Orthodox Scholars]
(Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2018).

A bibliographical guide is, essentially, a working tool which any researcher should bear in mind when he/she begins his/her activity in each field. Consequently, significant fields of research have seen the emergence of papers which gather the existing bibliographical references, process them, and arrange them according to specific subjects to make their analysis easier. Thus, through the bibliographical guide entitled “The Old Testament in the Writings of Romanian Biblical Scholars”, biblical theology enjoys a real systematisation of representative writings in the Romanian area.

This guide represents the result of consistent work done by a group of researchers in the field of biblical theology, who belong to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. Fr. Ioan Chirilă, who is the coordinator of this project, has committed and taken care to make Orthodox biblical teaching stand out also through the ease with which it can be known by those who seek to explore it. Sharing the same desire, Mr. Stelian Pașca-Tușa, Bogdan Șopterean and the worthy of remembrance Paula Bud joined the project and, through their work, managed to offer research support to all students, theologians and to all those who are passionate about the biblical studies which exist in the Romanian theological literature.

Presa Universitară Clujeană, the remarkable publishing house of Babeș-Bolyai University, printed this guide, marking a continuity of this kind of papers in the Romanian biblical area. This is the second edition of “The Old Testament in the Writings of Romanian Biblical Orthodox Scholars”, which shows the usefulness and the echo the first edition has had in the Romanian biblical theology. We have written about the pilot edition, which was edited and published in 2014 by *Eikon* and *Școala Ardeleană* publishing houses, both based in Cluj-Napoca, in a review published in *Studii Teologice* [Theological Studies] journal, the fourth issue, October-December 2017, (pp. 265-271), thus marking the success of this thematic compendium in the first years following its “birth”.

Keeping an identical structure, a simplistic, yet limited, content, the abovementioned bibliographical guide is structured in five chapters, which are representative of the lines of research. As the *Foreword* also mentions, the guide was thoroughly completed, updating the information it puts forward: “The volume has been enriched with approximately 50 specialised volumes and with more than 350 studies. A consistent bibliographical contribution was made by the 400 references made to patristic resources, which, together with the already existing sources, provide sufficient reference points to introduce the researcher into an area of research which is peculiar to Eastern Christianity.”

The first chapter (pp. 15-92) presents the thematic writings found in periodicals and specialised magazines, mentioning: the author, the title of the article, the magazine in which it was published, the issue, the year of publication and the page. Compared to the first edition, the bibliographical guide has only been updated in terms of date of publishing and no new journals have been inserted; only those which are representative to the Romanian biblical area have been kept: *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* [The Romanian Orthodox Church], *Revistă Teologică* [Theological Magazine], *Studii Teologice* [Theological Studies], *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei/Teologie și Viață* [The Metropolitan Church of Moldavia and Suceava/Theology and Life], *Mitropolia Olteniei* [The Metropolitan Church of Oltenia], *Altarul Banatului/Mitropolia Banatului* [The Altar of Banat/The Metropolitan Church of Banat], *Ortodoxia* [Orthodoxy], *Glasul Bisericii* [The Voice of the Church], *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Theologia Orthodoxa, Teologia* [Theology], *Ortodoxia Maramureșeană* [Orthodoxy in Maramureș], *Cercetări Biblice* [Biblical Research], *Tabor* [Tabor] and *Sacra Scripta*. The writings found in periodicals are presented according to their date of publishing (using target intervals of ten years, for instance, 2000-2009), their distribution/sorting being preceded by a short description of the given journals.

The second chapter (pp. 93-105) presents the thematic writings found in the *Annals of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology*. By building an image of the academic echo of the studies carried out by Romanian Biblical Scholars, this chapter is meant to provide researchers with a true updating of the message of Biblical Theology within the Schools of Theology across the Romanian Patriarchate. An element worth mentioning, as compared to the first edition of the Bibliographical Guide, is the fact that, besides the *Annals of the Faculties of Theology* which belong to the Universities of Cluj-Napoca, Iasi, Bucharest and Sibiu, this chapter also contains the *Annual of the University of Craiova*, which includes a section on Theology (AUCT).

The third chapter (pp. 106-232) presents the Biographies and Bibliographies of Romanian Orthodox Biblical scholars who specialise in the Old Testament. Unlike the first edition, this one introduces seven new names which are prominent in the Romanian Biblical Theology. The importance of this chapter resides in the fact that, besides acknowledging the merits of the Romanian biblical scholars from the Old Testament Department, it also outlines the research profile of the aforementioned Romanian theologians, thus showing that, through assiduous research, one can reach unknown heights in the Theology of the Old Testament. The approach of the guide is classic, making a presentation of the profile of each biblical scholar and then mentioning their writings (volumes, studies, translations, reviews, forewords etc.).

The fourth chapter (pp. 233-437), which is also the most notable one in terms of length and procedure (partition), is dedicated to thematic systematisation. The structure of this chapter is identical to that of the first edition of the Guide, observing four areas of analysis of Biblical Theology: the Holy Scripture, the Old Testament, Biblical Archaeology and Biblical Theology. Only additions are made to these four areas, the aim being, just like in the case of the first edition, to offer information and patristic reference points to those who study Biblical Theology, in particular, the Old Testament.

The fifth chapter (438-441) systematises the writings on the Romanian Biblical Teaching of the Old Testament and its personalities. This last chapter presents the fruitful activity of Romanian biblical scholars, as written down by their successors. In the Romanian area, Biblical Theology – both that of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament – was built due to the efforts and preoccupation of the Fathers and Professors, who tried to make known and clarify the scriptural message, which is necessary to live according to the rightful law of Christ.

This bibliographical guide represents a testimony of the interest Romanian Theology has in the study of the Old Testament. Likewise, for any student, researcher or theologian, this guide represents the gateway to the scientific baggage of the Romanian Biblical Theology of the Old Testament and this does not only motivate its usefulness, but it also underscores the necessity of consulting it for one to improve his/her scientific, academic and theological path. I share the same hope as the authors of the guide, namely that: “this paper will be a useful working tool for those who understand that the fruit of their encounter with the Word will only be attained by unwearily searching for meaning”.

