

## ANTHIM THE IVIRITE AN EXPONENT OF CAUCASIAN AND ROMANIAN SPIRITUALITY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

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**Abstract.** The paper approaches the theme about Anthim the Ivirite is an exponent of Romanian and Caucasian spirituality. Honouring this personality we start from the observation that his spiritual heritage remains relevant over the ages. Some biographers claim that Anthim the Ivirite was from a noble family. His life was as well dramatic, as noble. Anthim the Ivirite remains in Romanian history as a deeply religious man and a man of many talents. He spoke several foreign languages among which Romanian, Greek, Arabic and Turkish. Saint Anthim was a scholar, a printer of religious writings, he wrote religious literature and succeeded to leave a deep mark in the Romanian culture that times undimmed. We consider relevant also that among the important anniversaries of the year 2016 along with the anniversary of Saint Anthim the Ivirite the Romanian Orthodox Church celebrates all the Romanian Church typographers who have contributed fundamentally to a rich religious culture in Romanian. A religious journalist notice for a specialized publication that *The fact that the Romanian Orthodox Church, under the clear vision of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel has chosen to inscribe amongst the paramount holidays of the year 2016 the Church typographers represents a memorable and soul-uplifting gesture, a gesture of conscience in agreement with all who wanted and succeeded to conquer time through the eternity of the typed letter, taking the Word of God in all the four skies and seeding the values of Christian faith and Christian moral in the hearts and thoughts of all Romanians.* Posterity's judgment was warm, respectful and fair in what concerns Saint Hierarch Anthim, and the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church glorified him, as a saint and martyr of our Romanian Orthodox Church and this is the reason why the final part of the paper is dedicated to the identification of a string of interesting Anthim anniversaries over the times.

**Keywords:** Anthim the Ivirite, Romanian culture, religious literature.

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### Introduction: Saint Anthim and the Romanian Culture

The paper was occasioned by the traditional spring session of communication at the Romanian Academy of Scientists organized by the Section of Philosophy, Theology, Psychology and Journalism in 2016, dedicated to a renamed countryman of His Excellency Giorgi Kvesitasze, President of the Academy of Georgia, Saint Anthim the Ivirite, who was bishop of the Romanian Country Wallachia, the Hierarch Saint Anthim, “the one from the Caucasian town of Ivir, Romanian in his soul.” The paper, initiated by Victor Botez, was completed and continued at anniversary hour, since 2016 is a year dedicated to Saint Anthim the Ivirite, together with Angela Botez, President of the Section of Philosophy, Theology, Psychology and Journalism of the Academy of Romanian Scientists.

Written Romanian literature – the great Romanian literature critic George Călinescu<sup>1</sup> claimed – was born on the edges of religious literature from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, illustrated in Moldova by the Bishop of Roman, Macarius, and in Wallachia by Prince Neagoe by his famous work *Teachings for his son Theodosius*, Varlaam also, the abbot of the Monastery Secu and more important, from an aesthetical and moral religious perspective the so-called *Didache* (Διδάχη), or the teachings of the doctrine, the masterpiece of Anthim the Ivirite.

He was born in Georgia in 1650 and was named Anthim. Some biographers claim that it was from a noble family. The drama of his life begins and ends with his falling captive in the hands of the Turks. Anton Maria Del Chiaro provides us with an additional two very precious pieces of information about our Metropolitan: namely, that he had been baptized Andrew as a layman - information related Metropolitan defrocking, moment in which the name of Anthim was taken away: “The right to bear the name Anthim is cancelled, thus returning to his name as a layman, Andrew”<sup>2</sup> - and the other information is that he fell captive during childhood, without mentioning where, when exactly and by whom, the Turks or the Persians – it is rather assumed that the Turks took him as a slave about around the period when he lived in Constantinople.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, Editura Minerva, București, 1982, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Apud Gianina Picioruș, *Antim Ivireanul: avangarda literară a Paradisului*, available at [https://archive.org/stream/AntimTheIviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010/AntimTheIviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/AntimTheIviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010/AntimTheIviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010_djvu.txt), accessed at 15 July 2016.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

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On this subject, we have a detail from Djindjivasvili, reaching the conclusion that Anthem “was kidnapped from the Black Sea regions of western Georgia”; it may have been though kidnapped also from other Western or Eastern Georgia, as the fact is known that in the 17th century the tribes Dagestan (North Caucasus mountains inhabitants) took people to sell them slavery in Crimea, where and from there he went to Constantinople and the other parts of Ottoman Empire”<sup>4</sup>, and “at the age of 16 (Anthim) was sold at the auction block in Constantinople”<sup>5</sup>.

Gabriel Ștrempel also writes that, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the inhabitants of Georgia, “Beards, women and children were taken as slaves sell in Constantinople in fairs, as well as in Alexandria, or Egypt. They were highly valued because Georgians were stout and women were exceptionally beautiful. The Turks called Georgia, Gurgistan, which would translate into free slaves”.<sup>6</sup>

He was redeemed and found his place of learning, nurturing his multiple talents while living around the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. There he masters the arts of printing, sculpture and calligraphy. He learnt there foreign languages such as Greek, Arabic and Turkish.

When did Anthim arrive in our country? Gianina Picioruș considers that it is possible that Anthim “came on these areas before the reign of Brâncoveanu, maybe after 1680, through the efforts of the Patriarch Dositheus of Jerusalem, and that he founded at first a Greek typography in a monastery fortress at Iași , where somehow the need for his crafty workforce was direly felt”.<sup>7</sup>

Other specialists consider that it was around 1690 when Anthim was brought in Wallachia by the enlightened prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) “within a beneficial cultural environment where men of great culture worked and gathered some Italians and Greeks, next to renamed Orthodox scholars and hierarchs”.<sup>8</sup>

Anthim became successively head of the printing house in Bucharest, then, abbot of Snagov Monastery, where he laid the foundations of a new printing

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>6</sup> See Gianina Picioruș, *Antim The Ivirite: avangarda literară a Paradisului*, available at [https://archive.org/stream/AntimThe\\_IviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010/AntimThe\\_IviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/AntimThe_IviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010/AntimThe_IviriteAvangardaLiteraraAParadisului.ViataSiOpera2010_djvu.txt), accessed at 15 July 2016.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>8</sup> Mihai Săsăujan, în articolul *Sfântul Ierarh Antim the Ivirite cu suflet de român*, Wikipedia, September 27, 2009, p. 12.

press, then bishop of Râmnic, and in 1708 Bishop of the Wallachia. An intellectual movement formed around the printers in churches and monasteries. To all these, his own foundation was added, the beautiful church and monastery Anthim from Bucharest. He completed the process of Romanization of church services, published 63 books, of which 39 he authored himself. Worthy to mention echoes resonated in his home country. One of his worthy disciples, Mikhail Stefanovich, had to print at Tflis in 1710, *The Georgian Missal*, which contains some verses dedicated in Romanian to prince Wahtang the VI<sup>th</sup>.

Anthim's main work, the *Didache*, contains 27 sermons spoken in churches where he served. In there, Anthim let himself conquered by lyrical exaltation when evoked the innocence world. The amicable relations between Anthim and Brâncoveanu deteriorated at some point, near the tragic end of Brâncoveanu's reign (he was killed by the Ottoman Turks together with his sons). Brâncoveanu was discontent with the increase in fame and spiritual and religious power of Anthim over the Clergy and the believers. He asked at the Patriarchate of Constantinople Anthim's defrocking the rank of metropolitan and expulsion to Sinai, as a simple monk.

Brâncoveanu's successor to throne, Nicholas Mavrocordatos (1715-1716) wanted to continue to maintain Anthim in his position as Metropolitan, but raised terms of obedience that were bluntly refused by Anthim. Then the defrocking followed, but on the road towards Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, the escort of Turkish soldiers killed him in a cowardly manner by chopping up the body and throwing the remains into river Tundjia, near the town of Adrianople.

"Anthim's knowledge of the Romanian language is amazing and anyway from all his attitudes his the Iviriteseems perfectly assimilated. Speaker of foreign languages, he is also a rhetorician, an ardent spirit, with charming sincerity outbursts," noticed George Călinescu, while including him with precision within the frameworks of late Middle Ages literature (the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries)<sup>9</sup>.

It seems that the institution of Anthim as Metropolitan of Hungaro-Wallachia was quite providential, taking place in the Orthodoxy Sunday, as a prophetic sign for everything that he was going to fulfil in the service of the Church, with beneficial influences in the entire Orthodox East.<sup>10</sup> Gabriel Ștrepmel, as Gianina Picioruș cites him, says that it is interesting to notice that the

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<sup>9</sup> G. Călinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> Gianina Picioruș, *op.cit.*

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religious service took place in Romanian although there were present two other patriarchs and other Greek bishops, as a gesture of high consideration for the prince and boyars and as a demonstration of mastering of the Romanian language, which he considered able to express feelings as high and exquisite as the Greek language.<sup>11</sup>

At that occasion Anthim presented a Didache with a role similar to an institution discourse suitable for a Metropolitan of Hungaro-Wallachia and constructed around a favourite biblical verse: “Come to me and I shall make you fishermen of men” (Mathew, 4, 19).<sup>12</sup> But in that particular “Orthodox Sunday of investiture, as Radu Greceanu states in his work *Cronicari munteni (Wallachian chroniclers)* the readings were not from Mathew, but from John 1, 43-51, where the verses refer to the calling to apostolate of the Saints Philip and Nathaniel and about the discovery that our Saviour Jesus Christ is the embodied Son of God. The new Metropolitan synthesized the eight verses from the Evangelical period of (Apostle) John through a certain verse of Mathew developing 'eloquence, poetry and pathos that was not overcome until our times', in a homily about the apostolic calling, a similar theme with that chosen by the Metropolitan Meletie Syrigos at the enthroning of Varlaam as Metropolitan of Moldavia, exactly when Anthim was himself called to serve as Metropolitan and pastor of the entire Christian flock of Hungaro-Wallachia, the one who was to become 'the apostle and the martyr Anthim the Ivirite’”.<sup>13</sup> The sources and the specialists consider this homily true oratorical jewellery characterized by a special rhetorical and poetic craft as well as by theological wisdom - “a hymn dedicated to the shepherd of souls”.<sup>14</sup> He preferred to use the fledgling Romanian language, a language in the making, which was necessary not only to be mastered, but also created, because he loved this language and he was not opportunistic and did not follow personal interest.<sup>15</sup> Nicolae Iorga remarked that out of all the Metropolitans who followed Anthim, some of them scholars, soulful shepherds, no one climbed up the stairs to the pulpit to strengthen and comfort in Romanian the souls of the believers.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem.*

His Beatitude the Patriarch Daniel summarized the life and the personality of Saint Hieromartyr Anthim (or Anthimos) the Ivirite in a very concise and substantial manner: “We can observe St Hieromartyr Anthimos the Ivirite in the miraculous catch of fish, bringing the crowds of people into the boat of Christ’s salvation, enlightening them through his words, through his printing. He printed books in Romanian, Greeks, and Slavic languages in order to help the surrounding peoples – Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs – and also in Georgian language, sending once to Tbilisi a printing machine. We face a holy man of culture, and also a man of practical sense, a man of church embellishment, as can be observed in his three-year activity in the Eparchy of Râmnic he painted and consecrated many monasteries. He was a merciful man with a practical sense. He developed the social and philanthropic work of the Church and left in his testament that this very monastery would help the poor. Saint Anthimos the Ivirite built this church according to the plans established by himself. The church was consecrated in 1715, which means that this year we celebrate 300 years from the consecration of the church of Anthim Monastery. However, in the month of March 1716, he was arrested, accused of betrayal, defrocked by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and sentenced to life imprisonment, being exiled to St Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai. He never arrived there because, as the story goes, the Turkish soldiers killed him on the way and threw his body into Tunca River, next to Adrianoupolis (Edirne) of today’s Turkey. Saint Anthimos the Ivirite died as a martyr because he wanted very much to preserve the Orthodox Faith, and at the same time to protect the Orthodox Church of Wallachia so that she would not be subjected to foreign rulers.”<sup>17</sup>

### **Saint Anthim the Ivirite and the importance of religious literature in Romanian culture**

His main book, *Didahiile*, the *Didache*, is illustrative for this late Middle Ages literature, as we have already shown, with its contents of 27 sermons of high theological, rhetorical, literary, artistic, meditative and moral value. This book is a wonderful expression of scholarship as well, as he did not cite only the Bible, but also from ancient philosophers.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. <http://basilica.ro/en/patronal-feast-of-antim-monastery-in-bucharest/>, accessed at 10 August 2016.

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This book was not published during his life and remained in manuscript. The copies that circulated around during his life were as well copied by hand writing.<sup>18</sup> The specialists talk about four copies, but the original was not found. Dan Horia Mazilu thinks that this book was only a preparation for another book that Anthim had in mind, the collection of his homilies.

There are three important editions for this book which was over the time identified and lost, completed erroneously (when other homilies in Anthim's hand writing but not authored by him) were included in his work) and pursued with reverence by various specialists, namely, after the manuscripts of Mehisedec, Erbiceanu and Ștrempel, which do not register many differences. 1886 Mehisedec's edition is similar to a manuscript transposed by archimandrite Grigore Deleanu and called the manuscript from Căldărușani including five more homilies dedicated three to funeral, one to requiem and one about confession.<sup>19</sup> There is another important manuscript, dating from 1722-1725 not too well preserved in its entirety but which is found similar to the one from Căldărușani, but maybe in terms of ordering amongst the various didache.<sup>20</sup>

Specialists consider that *Didahiile* by Anthim Ivireanul were published nine times after the crucial edition from 1886. All these are extremely important for the exegesis of the work written by Anthim in Romanian as well as for the studies dedicated to the older Romanian language.<sup>21</sup> Gabriel Ștrempel considers that there was an autographic manuscript that informed all the others. Two writings found among all the Anthim's productions are written in defence of Brâncoveanu not known by the scribes and which it is very likely that they were part of a volume with all the other works.<sup>22</sup>

Considering also the sermon on consecration there are twenty nine didaches preserved from Anthim, but adding the funeral sermons and the requiem sermon, we have a total of 33, most likely only from the period when he was a Metropolitan of Hungaro-Wallachia and, although we can imagine that they were much more, they offer us a fair idea about Anthim's great talent, about the stage of language development, of his artistry, of his exceptionally oral style.<sup>23</sup> In this

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<sup>18</sup> Gianina Picioruș, *op.cit.*

<sup>19</sup> Gianina Picioruș, *op.cit.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem.*

respect, we find appreciations at numerous great Romanian writers, such as Mihail Sadoveanu<sup>24</sup> and great literary critics, such as George Călinescu.

The history of *Didahiile* of their gathering, their precise dating, their principle of ordering within the book, the place where they were spoken for the first time and their publication is much more intricate, but for the purpose of this communication – to honour and celebrate the memory of Anthim the Ivirite and his role in Romanian culture, these details are enough.

In what concerns the themes present in *Didahiile*, except for the consecration one, there are some dedicated to Transfiguration, to the Assumption of the Blessed Mother of God, to the shrove for cheese, homilies to Saint Nicholas, other didaches to the Holy Emperors Constantin and Helen, to Palm Sunday, to the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Saint Dimitrie, to the Sunday of Publican and of Pharisee, to Candlemas, to the Saint Apostles Peter and Paul, to Twelfth Day, to Christ's circumcision, to the Synaxis of Angels and even if there are two dedicated to the same event, for sure there are not two alike.<sup>25</sup>

In the *The History of Romanian Literary Language*, Al. Rosetti, B. Cazacu, Liviu Onu consider that “Anthim the Ivirite's language impresses by clarity, by its natural flow of phrase and in contrast with Dosoftei, Anthim does not let himself go with the syntaxes and lexicon of the Greek or Slavic sources that he uses, or, this happens extremely rarely. Due to these qualities he may be called a founder of Romanian liturgical language and one of the founders of religious oratory at Romanians”.<sup>26</sup>

*Didahiile* are inscribed in a genre of liturgical oratory called homiletics. This is extremely oral literature, with verve and fresh savour that gives the impression that it was produced on the spot right then, before the audience.

George Călinescu was rather enthusiastic about *Didahiile*. The presentation of *Didahiile* honours Constantin Brâncoveanu as protector of sacred eloquence, precisely because Anthim's work which was stimulated somehow by this ruler demonstrates the expressive capacities of the Romanian language, which were used to praise the nobility in Wallachia by a foreigner, he said. G. Călinescu continued by emphasizing that his preaching writings are extraordinary as stylistic quality and they mark the birth of Romanian discourse.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> Rosetti, Al. Cazacu, B. and Liviu Onu, *Istoria limbii române literare*, Bucharest, Ed. Minerva, 1971, pp. 194-194.

<sup>27</sup> See also Eugen Negrici, *Antim Ivireanul. Logos și personalitate*, Bucharest, Ed. DuStyle, 1997, p. 7 sqq.

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Anthim had a special lyrical exaltation and a special gentleness, whether he evoked the innocence of the world passing away, “pure and innocent,” and “without sign of wreck”, or whether he evoked it full, when barking dogs cannot stand her light, whether he realized a description in admirable cadence displayed in an opulent manner, as a peacock's tail, oratorically praising the Virgin, in Franciscan style.”<sup>28</sup>

G. Călinescu cites for illustration a rhetorical fragment with masterpiece value: “Fair and chosen she is truly, as the sun for she is crowned in the rays of all the God bestowed gifts and shines stronger amongst the other lights in the sky. Fair and chosen she is and beautiful as the moon, for the light of her holiness puts out the other stars and for her great and wonderful imperial brightness is sacred as the necklaces made of the conundrum stars. Fair and chosen she is as the effusion of dawns, for she drove away all the night and the darkness of sin and she brought into the world the life bearing day. Fair and chosen she is, since with the flows of heavenly goodness feeds the Holy Christian Church and each and every Christian soul. Fair and chosen she is for she is cypress that with its heights covers the sky and heavenly smells afar from any decay. Fair and chosen she is for she is a lily, for even when she gave birth amongst the thorns of the unfortunate, those of the grove, while never losing the adornment of immaculate grace. Fair and chosen she is for she is veil that did not crump purity and did not clog sin. Fair and chosen she is for she is virgin, before birth, virgin in birth and she is an unperceived depth of goodness and a lively icon of heavenly beauty. She is a locked up garden from which the pale flower sprung and the sealed up fountain, from which flown the very spring of life, Christ.”<sup>29</sup>

Noteworthy are the naturalness of the phrase, the subtle exegesis done gracefully, the vocation of excellent orator and accomplished stylist. “But mostly, concludes Călinescu, Anthim has the gift of turning sharply to the listener in the Church with his full of sap rhetorical but daily speech and, on grounds of common sense, to paint a variety of moral portraits,”<sup>30</sup> admonishing the one who swears, the hypocritical to confession, the one who grimaced at the fasting food, and the possible reaction of the faithful ones to the admonitions of the preacher. Some, we believe, are worth citing for they are still relevant and for the charms of the Romanian spoken five centuries ago.

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<sup>28</sup> G. Călinescu, *op.cit.*

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

“We have no faith, no hope or love and we are, please forgive me, worse than the pagans ... and you know it, that it is as I say, for which people swear as we swear, of law, of cross, of tomb, of the wheat and nut requiem cake, of the wafer, of confession, baptism, marriage and all the mysteries of our Holy Church and we revile and insult ourselves our law. Who among pagans gives themselves or their law like us?”<sup>31</sup>

He vituperates then, similarly to the outraged prophets facing the hypocrite at the confession, starting with the heads of state: “We say that we ate with the prince, on Wednesday and on Friday, during the fasting periods and that we had lobsters and oil and wine. We do not say that we hold in our heart the basilisk with seven heads, the demon of envy, eating away our liver, as rust consumes iron, as the bugs eat wood, but say we did no one harm. We do not say the wrongdoings that we always do, the gossip, the nurture of desires, the sanctimonious quality, the hate touching to foreigners, the selling and the telling of each other, to crumble the other’s positions of honour, and we say: we would be merciful, but we cannot do that for we have many needs and many obligations, families with many children...”<sup>32</sup>

From a social perspective, according to Călinescu’s quotation, Anthim shows: “In the vestments of the Christian ethics under the bitter vehemence of the preacher are the ‘rich’ who rob and enslave the ‘people’ and the wickedness of the times. In the spirit of the Bible, the *Didache* written by Anthim represent the most violent criticism of the feudal order and the Ottoman oppression.”<sup>33</sup>

### **Saint Anthim the Ivirite: A rich cultural anniversary tradition in Romania**

An impressive portray of St Anthimos as an example of social and philanthropic worker of the Church, not only as a writer, a believer and a thinker was conveyed by His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel who emphasized at the end of the divine Liturgy held at the 2015 anniversary the exceptional activity of St. Anthimos who was characterized as the greatest Metropolitan of Wallachia in the Romanian history.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> *Idem.*

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This way, it is useful to notice that the homage that we are bringing today for this extraordinary personality of Romanian and universal culture Saint Hieromonach Anthimos the Ivirite is inscribed in a tradition that already took shape. Thus in 2013 there were 300 years since the foundation of Anthim Monastery and at the time the anniversary was marked by a monetary emission, which remained until today a very beautiful gesture in his memory. Below we reproduce the observe of the coin and the reverse of the monetary piece as found online.



The obverse of the coin has the following characteristics 37 mm diameter, 31.103 g, 99.9% silver, special edge and displays the inscriptions: ROMANIA, the coat of arms of Romania, face value 10 LEI, and the anniversary year 2013. The architectural details are exquisite and emphasize a cross above the entrance and a rosette.

As we can notice from the image, the reverse of the coin presents the church of Anthim Monastery, an image of metropolitan Anthim the Iberian, another name for Anthim the Ivirite or Antim Ivireanul, year 1713 and inscriptions "Antim Monastery Bucharest" and "Saint Anthim the Ivirite" in the Romanian language.



Two years later, as various sources registered hundreds of faithful people from all over the country took part on Sunday, September 27, 2015, in the celebration of the patronal feast of Anthim Monastery in Bucharest, founded by hieromartyr Saint Anthimos the Iberian, Metropolitan of Wallachia.<sup>34</sup> "The Divine Liturgy was officiated by His Grace Varlaam Ploieșteanul (of Ploiești), assistant bishop to the Patriarch, and His Grace Timotei Prahoveanul (of Prahova), and assistant bishop to the Archbishopric of Bucharest. Also serving were His Grace Qais Sadiq, Bishop of Erzurum (Patriarchate of Antioch), the Very Rev. Archimandrite Veniamin Goreanu, Administrative Adviser of the Archdiocese of Bucharest, and the Very Rev. Protosyncelus Vicențiu Oboroceanu, abbot of Anthim Monastery, as well as other hieromonks, priests and deacons."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Cf. <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/7283.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel who emphasized at the end of the divine Liturgy held at the 2015 anniversary of Saint Anthim the Ivirite the importance of his philanthropic work and the statuary symbol which he remain among the high hierarchs and the workers of the Church explained also with that occasion an idea that was dear to Saint Anthim the Ivirite, too: “Every Success in the Church Comes By God’s Grace”.<sup>36</sup>

The anniversary was enriched by the thoughts that His Beatitude emphasized. His Beatitude also underlined the teachings arising from the Gospel passage read on the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Luke 5, 1-11), referring to the miracle wrought by our Saviour Jesus Christ at the Sea of Galilee which refers to the miraculous work of God's grace which gathers masses of people into His Church: “What is the lesson that our Lord Jesus Christ teaches His disciples from the boat, as from a desk? That every fisherman, representing every servant of Christ’s Church, doesn’t have to put his hope in his personal strengths, competencies, specialization, expertise and, of course, performance, but first he has to acknowledge that every success in the Church comes by God’s grace. We need God’s help even when we are well-prepared. It is a good thing to labour, but at the same time we have to be humble in order for God to grant us His support”.<sup>37</sup>

The publications of Saint Anthim the Ivirite those in Romanian language and those in Slavic Romanian alike are exemplary as efforts of preparing the Romanian people to embrace God’s Grace and to live closer to his word. And this is another idea that was beautifully explained at anniversary hour by His Beatitude: “God’s Grace is offered to those who prepare themselves to receive it”.<sup>38</sup> His Beatitude said: “From this Gospel reading we understand that God’s grace is offered to those who humble themselves, as a result of their spiritual labours. Note that this wondrous catch of fish that the fishermen apostles were made worthy of didn’t occur for some lazy fishermen who had slept all night and woke up in the morning with their nets full of fish, but rather the miracle happened for these industrious fishermen who laboured and attained humility through fatigue and labour. Their abounding humility made them worthy of this miracle. Therefore, we cannot affirm that God’s grace is given to the lazy, but to those who prepare themselves for receiving it. That is why the prayer read during the ordination of a priest says that sanctification, promotion and commitment to

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem.*

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serving the Church come through divine grace which always heals that which is infirm and completes that which is lacking.”<sup>39</sup>

This anniversary was also marked by generosity: “His Beatitude also offered to the church several volumes published by the Publishing Houses of the Romanian Patriarchate, and to the faithful small icons of St. Anthimos the Iberian, and His Beatitude received an icon of St. Anthimos as a gift from the community of Anthim Monastery, emphasizing the fact that the monastery was built between the years 1713 and 1715 at the initiative of St. Anthimos of Wallachia according to his personal plans. An author, typographer, engraver, theologian, bishop and Romanian metropolitan of Georgian origin, St. Anthimos was one of the greatest Wallachia's personalities of the eighteenth century. He was canonized by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church in 1992”.<sup>40</sup>

Both local and national events are more numerous year after year. We noticed that the Archiepiscopate of Râmnic has organized with County Library “Antim Ivireanul” Vâlcea and the Cultural Foundation “Sfântul Antim Ivireanul” at the County Library and Cultural Foundation Vâlcea “Antim Ivireanul” Days (already at an impressive 22<sup>nd</sup> edition) on September 21, 2015.

The opening speech belonged to university lecturer Remus Grigorescu, PhD, manager of the County Library “Antim Ivireanul” Vâlcea. There were many interesting papers presented on the topic: Pr. Petre Veșeleanu, “*Mărgăritarele Sfântului Ioan Gură de Aur și un prim „mărgăritar” al Sfântului Antim Ivireanul-tipograful*” The “pearls” of Saint Ioan Gură de Aur and a first “pearl” of Saint Antim the Ivirite– the press; Conf. univ. dr. Ioan St. Lazăr, *Tipărituri antimieni de Târgoviște în colecții din Muntele Athos*/ The printed works by Antim at Târgoviște from the collections at Mount Athos; 3. Doru Căpătaru, *O mărturie inedită despre Sfântul Antim the Ivirite*/ An unknown testimony about Saint Antim Ivireanul; 4. Prof. univ. dr. Stefan Găitănanu, *Sintaxa Conectorilor în „Didahiile lui Antim Ivireanul”*/ The Synthax of Connectors in “Didahiile by Antim the Ivirite”; 5. Paul Aretzu, writer, *Antim Ivireanul în lumina corespondenței recent editate*/ Antim the Ivirite in the light of the correspondence recently edited; 6. Prof. dr. Marius Vasilescu, *Valențe parenetice ale cărturarului și ierarhului ortodox*/ The parenetic dimensions of the Orthodox scholar and hierarch. The event was continued with the presentation of the book exhibition

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem.*

prepared by the “Antim Ivireanul” publishing house by the writer Ioan Barbu. Then there were launched the journals no. 23 and no. 24 of the “Lumina Lumii” – presented at the occasion by university lecturer Ioan St. Lazăr, PhD, the President of the Cultural Foundation „Sfântul Antim Ivireanul”.

We consider relevant also that among the important anniversaries of the year 2016 along with the anniversary of Saint Antim the Ivirite the Romanian Orthodox Church celebrates all the Romanian Church typographers who have contributed fundamentally to a rich religious culture in Romanian:

“The fact that the Romanian Orthodox Church, under the clear vision of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel has chosen to inscribe amongst the paramount holidays of the year 2016 the Church typographers represents a memorable and soul-uplifting gesture, a gesture of conscience in agreement with all who wanted and succeeded to conquer time through the eternity of the typed letter, taking the Word of God in all the four skies and seeding the values of Christian faith and Christian moral in the hearts and thoughts of all Romanians.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Instead of Conclusion**

Posterity’s judgment was warm, respectful and fair in what concerns Saint Hierarch Anthim, and the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church glorified him, as a saint and martyr of our Romanian Orthodox Church. The canonization took place in 1992 and the celebration takes place annually at the 27<sup>th</sup> of September. If we were to adapt a famous quote by John Adams<sup>42</sup> we may say: "Posterity! You will never know how much the present generation is in debt to offer you the legacy of Saint Hieromartyr Anthimos the Ivirite at least as it received!"

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. <http://ziarullumina.ro/sfintenia-cuvintelor-tiparite-114417.html>

<sup>42</sup> The actual quote by John Adams is: "Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom! I hope you will make a good use of it."

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