

BOOK REVIEWS

DORU RADOSAV, *Cartea cu prieteni. Solidarități intelectuale interetnice în Transilvania secolului al XVII-lea* (The book of friends. Intellectual inter-ethnic solidarities in Transylvania in the 17th century) (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2016).

Doru Radosav's book proposes an intellectual biography, elaborated from the viewpoint of modal biography. Through Mihail Halici Junior, the historian presents the social and intellectual scenery of the 17th century Banat region and Transylvania. Mihail Halici Junior (1643–1712?) came from a Romanian family from Caransebeș, the Banat region, and he became an important humanist scholar. His education was completed in the colleges of Sibiu and Aiud and, later, in 1665, he enrolled at the University of Nuremberg (Germany). Between 1667 and 1669, he was the rector of the Reformed college in Orăștie. He left his homeland and travelled to the Netherlands and later to England. He probably died in London, where the last mention of him dates to 1712.

As a modal biography, Professor Doru Radosav's book marks three historiography registers: cultural history, late Romanian humanist culture and European humanist and Baroque culture. From the viewpoint of cultural history, the book analyses the social and religious circumstances that defined the 17th century, the "confessional options and vernacular cultural initiatives" among the Romanian elite in the Transylvanian Principality, focusing on a series of *private writing practices* and asserting what is called the *sociability of friendship*. Doru Radosav's interest for debates regarding the characteristics and values of Romanian humanist culture in Transylvania comprises several aspects. Such are the translations of religious books and their publication in Romanian, the first attempts of Romanian lexicography, or identifying the intellectual profile and revealing dynasties of Romanian intellectuals from Banat region and southern Transylvania. Mihail Halici Junior's intellectual profile and the place of his writings within the intellectual trends of his age (Pietism, Puritanism, Cartesianism, Presbyterianism, Cocceianism), the dialogue between Halici Jr and his Transylvanian and European peers defines a horizon of intellectual solidarity of the time, a "Republic of Letters" ("Good Lords, great Doctors, Masters and good Ladies", as he wrote in one of his odes), of which he was

a member. The schools he attended in Sibiu, Aiud, the Netherlands and England, his peers, his friendships, the inventory of his library and the intellectual network revealed by his will represent the main arguments for the agenda of the “Republic of Letters”. In the author’s words, the book’s objectives are stated as follows: “The present research is structured in several introductory chapters about friendship, about cultural, historical and intellectual landmarks regarding the age of Halici, a Romanian nobleman and intellectual of the 17th century, about the religious options and projects for promoting the vernacular language within the project of humanism and the Baroque. Then follows the analysis of M. Halici’s connections with what was the early stage of the European Republic of Letters, as it was perceived and applied in 17th century Transylvania.”³¹

The subjects discussed by historian Doru Radosav represent an extension of the analysis of the late humanist culture of Banat, a field to which he had repeatedly returned before.. The basis of the present book is a previously unknown manuscript of Mihail Halici Junior (1633–1712), colligated to the work of Pál Keresztúri, *Csecsemő Keresztýén*, printed in Alba Iulia (1638), found today in the collections of the library of the Protestant Theological Institute in Cluj Napoca. The manuscript contains “ten odes dedicated to his [Mihail Halici junior’s – A/N I.C.] friends, intellectuals and patricians of the Hungarian and Saxon communities in Transylvania”.³² Some of Halici’s friends were: Ferenc Pápai Páriz (1649–1716), ode published in 1674 in Basel, upon receiving his doctorate from the university; Valentin Franck von Franckenstein (1643–1697), who later became royal judge and Count of Saxons, personal counsellor of the Prince of Transylvania and member of the Gubernium Council; Petrus Bayer (17th century), having studied theology, became a preacher in Smig, a village near Sibiu; Daniel Fronius (17th century), a citizen and famous merchant from Sibiu; Johannes Keiserus (17th century), a patrician from Sibiu; Petrus Fabricius (17th century), dean of the Chapter of Sibiu, “an important figure in the city’s religious life”; Johannes and Christian Haasz (17th century), son and father, rector of the gymnasium of Sibiu, bishop since 1682 and, in 1684, first

³¹ Doru Radosav, *Cartea cu prieteni. Solidarități intelectuale interetnice în Transilvania secolului al XVII-lea* (The book of friends. Intellectual inter-ethnic solidarities in Transylvania in the 17th century) (Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2016), 10, original text: “Cercetarea de față se structurează pe câteva capitole introductive, despre prietenie, despre reperele culturale, istorice și intelectuale privind epoca lui Halici, nobil și intelectual român din secolul XVII, despre opțiunile confesionale și proiectele de promovare a limbii vernaculare în cadrul proiectului umanist și baroc. Urmează apoi analiza conexiunilor lui M. Halici cu ceea ce poate fi perioada timpurie a Republicii literelor, de factură europeană, dar în accepția și aplicațiile ei din spațiul transilvănean al secolului al XVII-lea.”

³² Ibid., 7. Original text: “zece ode, dedicate prietenilor săi (ai lui Mihail Halici-fiul – n-n- I.C.), intelectuali și patricieni din rândul comunităților maghiare și săsești din Transilvania.”

priest of Sibiu; Andreas Henning (17th century), a patrician of Sibiu; Joannes Cekelius (17th century), dean of the Chapter of Mediaș; Petrus Melas (d. 1675), a student of the gymnasium of Sibiu who continued his studies at the University of Altdorf (Germany) and later at the University of Strasbourg, became a teacher at the gymnasium of Sibiu and preacher also there; Petrus Henning (1633–1686), a teacher at the gymnasium of Sibiu.

The book includes annexes containing the transcriptions and translations of the eleven odes dedicated by Mihail Halici to his friends, a unique chapter to which Professor Radosav adds other writings authored by the humanist scholar. One of these is Halici's will edited by Nicolae Drăganu. Doru Radosav also transcribes and translates a "poetic invocation" written by Halici Junior, a text also integrated in the manuscript. As proof of the "intellectual dynasty" from Banat, the author presents the first transcribed and translated psalm in Romanian with Hungarian orthography written by Mihail Halici Senior in 1640. The author also includes the catalogue of Halici's library, made in 1674 and edited in 1964 by László Musnai, János Dani and Károly Engel. The description of this library is seconded by the lists of books belonging to Ferenc Pápai Páriz and Petrus Nelas according to the edition of Géza Nagy in the first case and Radosav's own translation for the latter, in accordance with a list kept in the collections of the Archives of the Chapter of Sibiu and preserved today in the Romanian National Archives.

Apart from the written sources presented above, Professor Doru Radosav's book brings forth a network of 17th century Transylvanian intellectual sociability, connecting scholars of different ethnicities, creating the bond between Mihail Halici and his friends, developing a true culture of friendship. Mapping the intellectual life in Transylvania and in the Banat region in the early modern age, using these interpretive and analytical schemes and using new historical sources that were previously unknown to the academic world represent essential aspects of the unique contribution of Professor Radosav's historiographic endeavour.

Translated from the Romanian by Anca Chiorean and Emese Czintos

IONUȚ COSTEA
costea06@yahoo.com