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JACOB OF PUTNA. SPIRITUAL FATHER AND TEACHER



ABSTRACT: *What concerns us in this study is to analyze two different segments of the life of Saint Jacob of Putna, namely: his reporting as a spiritual father and the way in which he manifested himself as a teacher of the nation. As we will see, the contribution of St. Jacob of Putna took place both spiritually, through his guidance from the seat of the metropolitan and then as a monk at the Putna Monastery, and socially through his active involvement in the revitalization of Moldovan education.*

Keywords: *Jacob of Putna, Moldavia, Monastery of Putna, spiritual father, teacher, history*

Among the great learned men and teachers of our nation, among the shepherds on the divine path of salvation, among hierarchs that the Church of Moldavia gave for centuries, Jacob of Putna distinguishes, if not by the extent of his pastorship, at least by the richness and depth of his works, by the numerous fields on which he left his unique hallmark. Already on her way to modernity, the Romanian society of the 18th century finds in him a promoter of the Romanian typography, of literacy both among clergy and common people, supporter of the formation of a solid educational system through

the foundation of many schools within the ecclesiastical centers and in the laic administrative ones. Last but not least, his activity of construction, most obvious in the case of Putna Monastery, the monastery where he received the tonsure, but also in the case of other churches. To these churches he left all his benefits, goods and money he raised during his life.

The chroniclers and historians both ancient and contemporary unanimously underline the upstanding character of the hierarch from the middle of the 18th century, his will to know and guide his people. In his study on the history of the church life and of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Mircea Păcurariu characterizes Jacob of Putna as follows: “a distinguished spiritual life and an upright character fervently interested in the good of the Church and of his country. Amid the Phanariote era he had the courage to stand against the ruthless abuse and exploitation to which the Moldavian Christians were subjected by the Phanariote rulers and boyars”. At the same time, he fought fiercely against the Greek influence on our ecclesiastic life, he took care of the printing of several theological, liturgical, and educational books in Romanian, he took care of the education of children by supporting the schools from Iassy and Putna Monastery, which led to the revival of the scholar life in the Romanian language in Moldova. All these place Jacob Putneanul among the great hierarchs who sat on the metropolitan chair from Iassy”¹. Patriarch Teoctist also names him, in the volume dedicated exclusively to Jacob of Putna “the gentle and worthy hierarch, meditative nature and wishing for a monastic life from early childhood, with an endless love for the calling of this order and diligent doer of the common good”². Jacob of Putna is also considered “the most



¹ Pr. Mircea PĂCURARIU, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 2, Ed. Trinitas, Iași, 2006, p. 364.

² † TEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești, a năzuințelor de unitate națională și de afirmare a culturii române. Mitropolitul Iacob Putneanul. 1719-1778*, Mănăstirea Neamț, 1978, p. 6.

important hierarch from Moldavia in the 18th century”³ in a more recent study written by Bogdan-Mihai Atanasiu.

Jacob of Putna dedicated his entire life from early childhood to serving God, the Church and the society, especially to simple people, to the oppressed people, downtrodden by the heavy financial obligations of the Phanariotes, to the children from poor families eager to study. Born in 1719, he joined the monastic life when he was only 12. At 25 he became, for a short while, abbot of the Putna Monastery, then he became a bishop when he was 26 and metropolitan at 31. He occupied this position only for ten years (1750-1760), but the extent of his pastorship was not proportional with the richness of his work. His exemplary life supports the appreciations from the broad work *Holy Putna Monastery* compiled in 2010:

“Bearing his cross worthily, he dedicated his entire life to the service of the Church, to the enlightenment of the people through books and teaching, to the defense of the aggrieved and to the promotion of the Romanian culture and spirit. His great efforts and his sacrificial service as shepherd made him worthy of Christ, the Good Shepherd”⁴.



The present study wishes to underline the essence of the message and thinking of Saint Iacov, his spiritual activity, and his teaching for his spiritual sons, for the priests and monks that listened to him, as well as for the entire community.

³ Mihai-Bogdan ATANASIU, „O danie a lui Iacov Putneanul și semnificațiile ei”, in: *Analele Putnei*, VII (2011), 1, p. 191.

⁴ ***, *Sfânta Mănăstire Putna*, Ed. „Mitropolit Iacov Putneanul”, Centrul de Cercetare și Documentare „Ștefan cel Mare” al Sfintei Mănăstiri Putna, Putna, 2010, p. 425.

The teachings of Jacob of Putna in printings and correspondence

Metropolitan Jacob never settled with simply fulfilling his mission through his activity as a typographer. All the books published on his initiative are accompanied by beautiful and explanatory forwards⁵. The hierarch expresses many important ideas in his correspondence with his favorite monastery, while he was away from it, during the time he was a Metropolitan of Moldavia. His correspondence and his writings in general focus on two main themes: the goods and the activity of the monastery and the redemption of the metropolitan's soul⁶.



Furthermore, his role as a teacher and spiritual father did not cease once he left the metropolitan chair. The documents that mention this event, the ruler's license that accompany it, financially and materially, prove the fact that the former metropolitan enjoyed long-term precognition, which supposed a continuation of the activity after retirement⁷.

His conception on the role of the spiritual father in the work of Metropolitan Jacob of Putna is presented in the letter of approval of the respective function by one of his closest collaborators in the cultural field, hieromonk Nathanael from Putna: to receive the thoughts and things and passions of those who came to confess, to set penitence for each of them according to their strength, to forgive the ones that could be forgiven and to retrain those that had to be retained. Regarding the advice and sending of other young men to

⁵ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 26.

⁶ Dosoftei DIJMĂRESCU, Ioan-Augustin GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, in: *Analele Putnei*, V (2009), 2, p. 7.

⁷ Daniel N. DIJMĂRESCU, *Fundamentele teologice ale autocrației în tradiția ortodoxă*, Teză de doctorat, Iași, 2012, p. 97 (in manuscript).

become priests, the spiritual father must take full responsibility, as one who advises a future shepherd of the faithful: “and those you will send to become priests, you are equally responsible of all their things, you have to try them intentionally, as the apostle’s rule commands, so that you don’t become accessory to foreign sins because of laziness or tempted by some rapine”⁸.

The theme of the relation between the wish of the earthly, material world and of the heavenly one occurs in the *Alfavita sufletească* (*Spiritual Alphabet*) which has the suggestive subheading *Why it is only right to rejoice in the Lord and not for the mischievous things of this world*⁹. The nowadays, world is presented in its true nature, a real valley of tears, existing in the dark and in the shadow of death, in which people rejoice of the “animal pleasures”, and the beauty of the image transforms into dust and ashes. The faithful must acknowledge, he must accept that he has nothing to enjoy in this life, but even more to cry. The world of that time is illustrated by the hierarch in terrifying images: valley of tears, expulsion (which replaces the term “inheritance”), war (instead of peace and repose), indebted overwhelmingly, sitting in prison, sentenced to death, world full of crying (instead of joy), torment and bitterness (and not consolation). The writing of the holy father emphasizes the terrible time of the 18th century, in which the rulers of the Country of Moldavia had to endure the external invasion and the internal oppression of the Phanariotes. But the atrocious human fate is also due to the nature of man in general, the entire world is full of dangers and tumult, on the one side there are dangers and on the other there are quarrels and fear:



⁸ Mihai-Bogdan ATANASIU, „Un colaborator al lui Iacov Putneanul: ieromonahul Nathan(ail)”, in: *Analele Putnei*, V (2009), 1, p. 316.

⁹ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 79-83.

“wherever you go, you see jealousy and hate, you hear quarrels and arguments: on the one hand you are tempted by food, and on the other by drink, on the one hand you are tempted by laziness, and on the other by senselessness; on the one hand there is craving, and on the other there is fornication, on the one hand there is fear and on the other hand there is sin and trespassing: there is not a place without fear and there is no reason to rejoice in this century which is full of crying”¹⁰.



All the things are changing and temporary, joy is mixed with abhorrence, jollity with crying, glory fades, wealth disappears, beauty turns into dust, the flesh becomes food for worms. Man’s entire life is a long series of trials and sufferance: “vanity of vanities is human life; for man is born of sin, grows up in pain and weakness, he struggles all his life in torments and troubles, in quarrels and jealousy and in adventures he did not hope for and in all the restlessness”¹¹. The terrestrial world, born of the original sin and corrupted by the torments of life, by bad examples, which don’t allow the education, the formation of a person in the spirit of fear from God, must be avoided, as father Jacob shows in the forward of his *Bucvar*. It is only an occasion of perdition, of contamination:

“Even more so, the natural evilness exercised every day, increases with every hour, and becomes stronger. What is there to say when man will come closer to the collective evil and his own evilness will become more powerful? And the child will learn the evil that he does not know yet?”¹².

¹⁰ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 80-81.

¹¹ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 80.

¹² Gabriel MIHĂILESCU, „Bucvarul Mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul”, in: *Analele Putnei*, VI (2010), 2, p. 102.

From this perspective one must not fear death, on the contrary, death must be received with joy by the good christian, for “it will bring happiness to the one who is in pain and suffering; it will bring joy to the one standing in the dark”¹³. We must not rejoice in the present life, because “all things are unsteady and hypocrite, all are untrue and mutable”, we must put all our faith in the Lord, to rejoice and console in Him, for the joys of the body fade, and the ones in the Lord are eternal. We must rejoice in the Lord for “the Lord is great, eternal, deathless, all powerful, almighty, Lord of compassion, merciful, righteous, lover of man and gracious, Father of mercifulness, Lord of all consolation”¹⁴. His are the waters, seas, rivers, winds, rain and hail, lightning, and thunder. His are heaven and earth, the sky, the mountains, hills, forests and groves, His are all the beasts, animals and birds. He is all the people, all the nations of the world, but also the heavenly creatures, the angels, the archangels, the thrones, the dominions, the cherubim and seraphim and all the earthly powers. In Him people find everything they need, in Him there is justice, the uncoined trial, the kindness and love for people, the wisdom and the origin of understanding. In the Lord we find peace, repose, fearlessness, and carelessness, but also glory, wealth, unlesened treasury, eternal rejoice, light, beauty, decency, sweetness, joy and all consolation, liberty, caress, and the unchanged century. To all these men will partake not one or two or three thousand years, but for eternity, if he rejoices in the Lord with whose image he was created and for whom the Lord created heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, the garment of the sky with stars, animals, waters, rivers, all kinds of fish, forests, deserts. Our duty is to rejoice and to listen to the Lord, to thank Him for He “always cares for your soul, uses you, defends you, protects you, strengthens



¹³ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 80.

¹⁴ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 81.

your soul, offers you health, life, makes you wiser and illuminates you to every good thing¹⁵. And especially, we have to rejoice in the Lord because He became human for us and out of love for us and he came in a poor manger, and He received baptism although He did not need it, He was beaten for us and He was rebuked and spit, tied, He wore a thorn crown, He allowed His hands to be penetrated by nails and His body to be penetrated by a lance, and it is also for man that He resurrected and ascended to heaven. For this man is indebted to God to remain faithful, because “they did not reject you after baptism, they did not leave you to another faith or to perish into heresy”, despite the repeated mistakes man made¹⁶.



And in his *Word* to the monks from Putna, in which Metropolitan Jacob tells them about the significant beneficences to the monastery, he sets the commemorations that the Holy Monastery owes to the benefactors, of which he is part, but he also speaks about the perennial human condition and life, but also of the material wealth and power, compared to the benefits of the heavenly life: “my beloved brothers, set aside the earthly vanities and dedicate your whole heart to the unspeakable goods of the heavenly kingdom¹⁷. The reward for a righteous life on earth is disproportionately bigger: “the efforts are small, and the repose is eternal, there is less travail, but the benefits are innumerable. There is little cry, but the joy is rich. The storms are small, but the words blossomed eternally. And most important is that the effort is temporary, while the joy and happiness is unspeakable and endless¹⁸. The same idea, of the transience

¹⁵ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁶ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 82.

¹⁷ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 89.

¹⁸ † ТEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 90; Alexie COJOCARU, „Pomelnicul Mănăstirii Putna (1756)”,

of all material things, of the earthly wealth and power is presented again by Metropolitan Jacob of Putna in *Penticostarion*, when he asks the faithful and the clergy to look for benefits not in the rotten transient earthly things, but in the heavenly eternal and uncorrupted things, for “the bodily things are perishable and turn to dust and we are asked to take less care of them, for the wealth and glory of the world is nothing but shadow, figment, twisted good and real evil that brings nothing but pain and suffering”¹⁹.

Even at the time when he left the metropolitan chair, determined by the intrigues of the men from the court who wished for him to be removed and replaced because of his intransigency with which he opposed the break of the curse that tied the feared tax on cows, Metropolitan Jacob of Putna speaks about the ephemeral terrestrial wealth and glory compared to the eternal one. In the chronicle of Enache Kogălniceanu he speaks before the boyars and the court: “now I have left the glory and the Mitropoly, and all the things of this world, but I will not take into my heart and mind the fire of the oath; and think about the fact that we are all guests of this world, and on the other side we will have to answer for all our deeds and farewell”²⁰. Jacob of Putna expresses the same attitude towards the earthly life in his will from 1762, preserved among the documents of the Doljești Skete and printed by Toma Gh. Bulat in 1964: he starts by stating the vanity of the world, with the necessity of preparing for death that may come anytime and with the regulation of



in: *Analele Putnei*, VIII (2012), 2, p. 187.

¹⁹ *** , *Penticostarion*. Ce are întru sine slujba ce să cuvine. Care acum întâiu s-au tipărit, în zilele preainălțatului domn Io Costantin Mihai Racovița Voevod, cu blagoslovenia și cu cheltuiala preasfințitului mitropolit a toată Moldovlahia, chir Iacov, în orașul Iașilor, la anul 7261, Iași, 1753, pp. 5-6. A se vedea: † TEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 98-99.

²⁰ Mihail KOGĂLNICEANU, *Cronicele României sau Letopisețele Moldaviei și Valahiei*, vol. 3, Ed. Imprimeria Națională, București, 1874, p. 242.

his material possessions: “since I know that this world with all its things is vain and transient and there is nothing more real in it apart from death. And that we, all the people, are subjected to death and disintegration, and that we do not know when the commandment of the Lord will come”²¹. For this reason, all his goods “whatever it may be, even a stick”, were to become the possession of the monastery, to tidy his grave and to pray for him and for his parents. Hence, Jacob of Putna understands that he has to prove in his deeds the role of “owner of the power that sacrifices himself to the good of the community”²². Following his opposition to the decrees of the ruler of the country, which affected the community in general, he gives up personal dignity, a personal benefit, even his own life, to achieve the good of the community.



Metropolitan Jacob of Putna wrote the first list of all the Metropolitans of Moldavia according to the documents of the Mitropoly and to the information he was able to find in other sources²³. In the forward he wrote, with the title *Cuvânt către preosfințiții mitropoliți* (*Word to the Holy Metropolitans*), he addresses those who will follow him to the metropolitan seat, reminding them of the impermanence of the terrestrial life: “take care not only of the earthly politic, that quickly fade away, but also of the eternal uncorrupted ones, where the human inheritance is”²⁴.

The role of prayer in a man’s life is also taken into consideration by Jacob of Putna. In the *Antologhion* from 1755, in the forward,

²¹ Toma Gh. BULAT, „Diata Mitropolitului Moldovei Iacob I Putneanu”, în: *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, XL (1964), 7-8, p. 606.

²² D.N. DIJMĂRESCU, *Fundamentele teologice...*, p. 111.

²³ N. GRIGORAȘ, „Figuri din viața bisericească a Moldovei. Mitropolitul Iacob I Putneanul (20 ianuarie 1719-15 mai 1778)”, în: *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, XXXIV (1958), 9-10, p. 806.

²⁴ Constantin ERBICEANU, *Istoria Mitropoliei Moldaviei și Sucevei și a Catedralei Mitropolitane din Iași*, Ed. Tipografia Cărților Bisericești, București, 1888, pp. L-LV.

addressed to the Voivode Matei Ghica, to whom he was a spiritual father, he emphasizes the role of prayer, the benefits it brings: “there is no other thing that can resurrect the soul and unite man with God, as is the divine prayer”. Similar to the sunrise and to the rays of light that “scatters and casts away all darkness and when shining illuminates the face of the earth and grows it and turns it green”, so does the divine prayer “by bringing the light of Jesus Christ into our souls scattering the darkness that harms it, makes it then shine brighter than the sun”, for the one who speaks to God “is mightier than death and corruption”²⁵.

On the cult of icons, Metropolitan Jacob of Putna speaks in *Synopsis*, starting from the refusal of the heathen, Jews and also of several christian communities, lutherans and calvins, to venerate the holy icons, starting from the urge, they wrongly understand, given by Moses, to not make carved images, any likeness of anything that is in heaven, or in the earth, or in water or under the earth. Nevertheless, Metropolitan Jacob confirms, Moses himself commanded, starting from what he saw on Sinai, to replace the tent of the presence, in which the tablets of the covenant were and the tabernacle and the rod, as well as the golden angels that covered the altar, and before all these he glorified the Lord. Hence, if in the Old Covenant God was praised through all these objects, even more so we, the new Israel, must “glorify the Lord Jesus Christ through, our Savior, the true God, and His mother and all the saints through icons”²⁶.



An important place in the thinking and advice of Jacob of Putna is taken by the fight against the heathen traditions, of superstitions and idolatry. In *Synopsis*, in 1751, urges christians to stay away “from all the heathen things that the Greek did”, such as praising the

²⁵ Ioan BIANU, Nerva HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, nr. 293, Ed. Academiei Române, București, 1910, p. 128.

²⁶ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 93.

idols, since they were the ones who danced at feasts on the streets, believed in the voices of the birds (magpie, raven and other birds) and other erroneous beliefs and practices, more or less tolerated by the Church up to that moment: “and who say that what’s written for them is what they want to be, and those who light up herbs and danewort to the graves or in front of their houses on Holy Thursday, or men who dress in women’s clothes or those who go dancing on Easter or other feasts”²⁷. In the edition from 1757 he adds other sins and erroneous teachings, such as the faith in Papaluca, the one that commands clouds to bring rain, the fires in the yards from the Holy Thursday, which are “a reminiscence from the heresy of the Greek”, the tradition of “vălăret” or the firing in the valley from the second day of Easter, with many quarrels and fights, the tradition of the gipsy carol singers from Christmas Eve: “all these traditions, it is known that they are performed by Christians, although these are all evil and are reminiscences from the worshipers of idols”. The metropolitan observed that the faithful who practiced these traditions without knowing their real significance and started an action of purification the Moldavians traditions and eliminating the old heathen practices²⁸. In fact, from the forward of the edition from 1757, he explained the troubles he had to translate and print the book he compared to a flower and through the need of opposing the wrong traditions that became rooted into the hearts of both the faithful and the priests who do not know how or do not have the instruments to fight against these:



²⁷ ***, *Synopsis, adică adunarea celor șapte taine și a celor șapte laude a sfintei biserici și canoane din sfânta pravilă, cu sunt trebuincioase la taina dubovniciei. Ce s-au tipărit acum întâiu cu cheltuiala a prea sfințitului chiriu chir Iacov, Mitropolit a toată Moldavia*, Iași, 1751, f64.

²⁸ Lucian Valeriu LEFTER, „Un învățător al neamului. Iacov Putneanul”, in: *Analele Putnei*, V (2009), 1, p. 260.

“In root that is: to show for each dangerous circumstance what would happen into the holy and life giving Sacraments, at the time of the Holy Liturgy and how to correct it. In the strain that is: teaching for your very prayers priests and deacons, how you ought to prepare your souls before you participate to the Liturgy and during the Liturgy with what fear and after the liturgy with what vigilance. In leaf and flower, as they are many in number, so the antidotes are many that is: correction of many evil things that corrupt the soul and in the image like those of the idol worshipers, that are until today performed by people, also clearly explaining to them what it is that they’re doing, since when they are doing it and why are they doing it”²⁹.

And in the body of the work, page 51, there is the chapter with the title *Short teachings against many evil figments, which some Christians do unknowingly and proofs of the origins of those evil things and their meaning*³⁰.

The practices performed on funerals or memorial services also drew the attention of the holy father. One of the reasons for which the metropolitan was dissatisfied was the fact that people believed in revenants, which, according to him, was due to the devil, who can take the image of an angel of light, dragon or can create the impression of life in a dead body. “But how could the body of a dead man kill a living person? These are all the figments of evil with which the Greek were brought to venerate herb with many types of impure dances and games and laughter with no shame”. The priests were urged to guide the christians on the Orthodox path in fulfilling the funeral rituals, not to allow any games, screams and other inappropriate manifestations. If such manifestations should occur “do not officiate the service, do not burry the man, for these



²⁹ I. BIANU, N. HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, nr. 305, p. 140.

³⁰ I. BIANU, N. HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, nr. 305, p. 140.

are Satan's things", and every priest that "will confess or bury the dead where games and creams and such things happened"³¹ should be defrocked. Hence, Jacob of Putna, following the same line of Dosoftei and of the influences of the Reform within the Romanian space, asks the priests he pastorates to "reconvert" the Romanian people through a categorical rejection of the pagan rituals dressed in Christian clothes. His efforts were not continued by the following hierarchs, and thus the respective cults were perpetuated until the 20th century.

As we showed in the previous pages, Jacob of Putna, who was called by Nicolae Iorga "the metropolitan who loved knowledge"³², is the initiator of the foundation of both church and laic schools, and of the printing of schoolbooks. The teaching regarding the necessity of doing some "courageous efforts" pleasant to God, to inherit "the unthinkable heaven, this kind of beauty, this kind of unspeakable light, this kind of eternal happiness", can also be found in the *Forward* to the fathers of Putna Monastery, given by Jacob during the time when he was a metropolitan³³, and which precedes the *New List* of the Putna Monastery, compiled at his request in 1756. However, the respective teachings are addressed firstly to the people of the Church, to the monks from the metropolitan's favorite monastery, for they also have the role of guiding the other faithful towards salvation, they are "the shepherds of the speaking sheep", and the archbishops and "all the clergy" are those "to whom



³¹ L.V. LEFTER, „Un învățător al neamului. Iacov Putneanul”, pp. 261-262; ***, *Synopsis...*, f63-64.

³² Nicolae IORGA, *Istoria învățământului românesc*, Ed. Demiurg, București, 2020, p. 39.

³³ Published in the book of: † TEOCTIST, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 86-87. Full text in the study of: A. COJOCARU, „Pomelnicul Mănăstirii Putna (1756)”, pp. 185-188.

God entrusted His vineyard that is the speaking flock, so that they work in it, and give their lives for it”³⁴.

Some researchers that know very well the typographical activity from Moldavia in the 18th century remarked that, starting with Jacob of Putna, who reestablishes the activity of the typography of the Mitropolity from Iassy, until the end of the 18th century is conceived and put to action a real editorial plan, whose initiator he was. This consisted of three categories of works: religious lectures, ritual lectures and schoolbooks. The books of religious lectures and of spiritual edification for christian were addresses to the priests: *Sinopsis sau Adunarea celor șapte taine, Mreaja apostolică, Adunare de multe învățături, Îndreptarea păcătorului* (*Synopsis or the gathering of the Seven Sacraments, the Apostolic Toils, Gathering of Many teachings, Correction of the sinner*). Jacob of Putna considered that from this perspective it was his moral duty to print books for the clergy³⁵.

He asked the priests and monks to use wisely the ecclesiastic talent, to give the faithful “the sweet and satiating waters”. The same urges addressed to the clergy, to guide the flock of God wisely, are also comprised in *Synopsis (adecă Adunare a celor șapte Taini și a celor șapte laude ai Sinteii Bisericii)*, printed in Iassy in 1755. Although it is the duty of the hierarch to dedicate all his efforts and, if necessary, even to give his life for the souls of the faithful, this is not possible without the help of several servants, priests and monks, people of the Church. The role of the priests is that of members of the shepherd, who cannot fulfill this duty alone: “no matter how worthy and skilled, and learned a shepherd is, he cannot see everything and he cannot know everything, but he has priests and the spiritual fathers, who serve the holy shepherd, so that a pair of



³⁴ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 87.

³⁵ Elena CHIABURU, *Carte și tipar în Țara Moldovei*, Ed. Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași, Iași, 2010, pp. 349-350.

eyes sees everything, a pair of hands work for the necessary things, a pair of legs run to help everyone, so they are helpers to this great work”³⁶. The address to the priests ends with the warning that “it is your ceaseless duty that with your word and act to work, to make all the efforts day and night, together with your shepherd for the salvation of this flock that God gave to us”³⁷.

Metropolitan Jacob wishes to have a learned clergy, able to understand and transmit to the faithful the truth from the holy books, this is why it is a duty of the priests to use the respective work to nurture with “the light of knowledge”. “And if you will prove to be so obdurate that you cannot understand it, nor correct yourselves [...] then it will be known that you don’t want to make any efforts for the love of Christ, for the foundation of the Church, for the benefit of the christians and for your credit”³⁸. And in the address to the future metropolitans of Moldavia, in the forward to the list of metropolitans of Moldavia, he draws the attention on the fact that not knowing the truth is the “entire cause of the mistake”³⁹.



He also supports the idea of a learned clergy in *Antologhion*, to whom, through his typographic activity, he offers the necessary instruments, religious and ecclesiastic books in Romanian. In his forward he expresses his typographical conception: “since we saw our soldiers, the priests, unarmed with necessary weapons, which are the books of prayers to God, books that were fewer and fewer, and those that still existed were printed in other languages, so that in our country the psalms do not understand what they read, for this reason we made our own typography and we printed besides other

³⁶ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 91.

³⁷ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 91-92.

³⁸ I. BIANU, N. HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, nr. 279, p. 119.

³⁹ C. ERBICEANU, *Istoria Mitropoliei Moldaviei și Sucevei...*, p. LV.

books this *Antologhion* with which I think we armed our soldiers good, those who are under our rule and as well those to come”⁴⁰. The preoccupation of Metropolitan Jacob of Putna for the education of the clergy, as persons who had to teach the faithful the righteous path, did not refer only to the printing of church books, but also to sending these books to the villages of Moldavia. Copy of the *Penticostarion* printed in 1753 were found in Strășeni, in the bishopric of Huși, where they arrived at the expense of Metropolitan Jacob and on the command of the bishop. In the same year, a copy arrived in Vama, in the county of Suceava. The example of Jacob will also be followed by his successor, Gavriil Calimachi, who entrusted 115 copies to be distributed in the villages of Moldavia⁴¹. Some of the printed books were destined to sale, as it is mentioned in a document from September 1759, the funds obtained being used to pay the debt of the Mitropoly⁴². The commission was formed of five boyars, called by the ruler to take a counsel with the metropolitan regarding the price of books, established the price of 10 lei, as opposed to 12-13 lei which was the price for the books that arrived from the Romanian Country, so that “they don’t burden the priests, deacons and inhabitants with this new tax”, although “with this price, the debt of the Mitropoly was not paid”. Hence, in the perspective of Metropolitan Jacob, the access to books and culture was more important than the debts of the Mitropoly, which he assumed, because “the Mitropoly will do its best to complete the



⁴⁰ Marcu PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, in: *Analele Putnei*, V (2009), 1, p. 239. Full text in the study of: E. CHIABURU, *Carte și tipar în Țara Moldovei*, pp. 290-291. See also: I. BIANU, N. HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, nr. 293, p. 129.

⁴¹ Elena CHIABURU, „Distribution of the printed books during the 17th-18th Century”, in vol: *Lucrările simpozionului internațional Cartea. România. Europa, ediția I: 20-23 septembrie 2008, 500 de ani de la prima carte tipărită pe teritoriul României*, Ed. Biblioteca Bucureștilor, București, 2009, pp. 108-109.

⁴² E. CHIABURU, „Distribution of the printed books...”, p. 112.

remaining amount”⁴³. These books were to be given “to the monasteries within the country and to the Greek monasteries, because they too are under the pastorship of our Mitropoly. They are to be sent to sketes as well and to the churches built by rulers and boyars”⁴⁴.

To the direction of the fulfillment of the role of guide of the christians on the right path by the Church and its servants, also comes the defense of the independence of churches in Moldavia. The churches should not be subordinated to foreign institutions that are more interested in the material aspect than in the fulfillment of the divine services. In 1756 he confirmed and reinforced the right of Putna Monastery to administrate itself and in the context of the malicious suppositions that he would like to subordinate it to the Mitropoly:



“it earned more as it is, not having any other submission, as its founders arranged it to be its own master of the properties, and did not subject it to anyone (...) for by being subjected to another institution it may cause scatter and devastation of the monastery, as we see in the case of other monasteries that have been submitted [...]”⁴⁵.

He defended the right of the Putna Monastery “with the liberty of the Mitropoly, according to the duty of our pastorship, as a guardian and defender of the ecclesiastic things that are in this christian country”⁴⁶.

Metropolitan Jacob of Putna was a fierce supporter of the education of the children that were not involved in the ecclesiastic

⁴³ Constantin TURCU, „Cărți, tipografi și tipografii din Moldova, în secolul al XVIII-lea”, in: *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, XXXVI (1960), 1-2, p. 30.

⁴⁴ C. TURCU, „Cărți, tipografi și tipografii din Moldova...”, p. 31.

⁴⁵ Teodor CODRESCU, *Uricarul sau colecțiune de diferite acte care pot servi la istoria românilor*, vol. 14, Ed. Tipografia Buciumul Românului, București, 1889, pp. 182-183.

⁴⁶ T. CODRESCU, *Uricarul sau colecțiune...*, p. 183.

environment, considering that even a laic education is beneficial and creates a better person, more agreeable to God, capable of good deeds. Nicolae Iorga himself, in the forward to the documents of the Calimachi, characterizes Jacob of Putna as “humble and pious monk from Putna, who did not lack the knowledge necessary for his mission as a shepherd and loved teachings”⁴⁷ but also as a “lover of education, a learned man fervent supporter of books and schools”⁴⁸. In the *Bucvar* printed in 1755, the metropolitan dedicates numerous lines to expressing his arguments thought to determine parents to send children to school and remarks the low level of education of the children in Moldavia, a state that originated in the parents’ lack of interest for school and knowledge: “How can you hope for the best when there is not good enough food for the children? And who does not see how much this country needs the food?”⁴⁹. According to Jacob of Putna, between the earthly life and the divine one there is a strong connection, and the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom: “when he grows up, if he is taught righteousness and fear of God (which is the beginning of wisdom) from early childhood, it is fair to hope he will grow up good. And if he is already grown up, and he does not know fear and teachings from childhood, then there is little hope that the rest of his life will be good”⁵⁰. Thus a conditioning is born between the formation of the individual during childhood through education, the creation of a good and moral environment which allows the appropriate formation of the future individuals and faith, accepting the good, the fear in God: “If someone lives in peace with his neighbors, then



⁴⁷ Nicolae IORGA, *Documente privitoare la familia Callimachi, adunate, publicate și întovărășite de o prefață*, vol. 1, Ed. Institutul de Arte grafice și editură „Minerva”, București, 1902, p. CXI.

⁴⁸ Nicolae IORGA, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea*, vol. 2, Ed. Institutul de Arte grafice și editură „Minerva”, București, 1901, p. 594.

⁴⁹ G. MIHĂILESCU, „Bucvarul Mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul”, p. 102.

⁵⁰ G. MIHĂILESCU, „Bucvarul Mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul”, p. 102.

it is known that he is a good example for the children, but if he lives in quarrels, envy, plots and theft and other mischievous habits have no doubt that he will be a bad example for children”⁵¹. And in *Învățătură pentru ca să-și dea fiește – care om feciorii lui la carte* (*Teaching for Every man to send His Children to School*) he presents the importance of education and its relation with faiths. Education, knowledge is given by God and appreciated by Him:

“since the teaching inspired by God is the light of the body and the divine faith is an elevation of the human nature, it is a dogma of the High and Heavenly Emperor and a vigilance of all the commandments of His holiness (...) This teaching is an icon and a divine vision and a rudder that leads the soul that is on this terrestrial ship, this teaching, are the chords of the mind, which are touched with faith and with the fear of God and generate the lyrics of the relish and become their sweetness until they reach the divine throne”⁵².



Moreover, from a humanistic point of view, only education can create the true man: “each learned man that is called a talking man, and the unschooled man is similar to the animals”. Compared to the truths of faith and to the knowledge of God, these cannot be complete without knowledge, because “it is missing the teaching without which it is hard to get to know God, and they know Him partially, as animals do”. He asks the parents “open your hearts to the spiritual relish, as ideal parents and guardians of the benefit of your sons”⁵³.

Jacob of Putna could not disassociate from the role of teacher of the nation, from education, from guidance and growth of the nation. For the good education of children, he prints in the metropolitan

⁵¹ G. MIHĂILESCU, „Bucvarul Mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul”, p. 102.

⁵² Constantin ERBICEANU, *Cronicari greci care au scris despre români în epoca fanariotă*, Ed. Cronicar, București, 2003, p. XVII.

⁵³ G. MIHĂILESCU, „Bucvarul Mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul”, pp. 102-103.

typography several schoolbooks, among which one may remark the *Bukvar* from 1755⁵⁴. The relationship between faith and education is also emphasized by the fact that these schoolbooks comprised, at the same time, the fundamental truths of faith and the teachings necessary to a good Christian. In 1759 he establishes a laic school in the village Putna:

“his eminence the metropolitan shows that such as school is necessary at Putna Monastery, for being far away, children cannot walk to the other schools, especially since they have in the monastery a teacher that has been of great use for several years now to the disciples, so I decided to have a teacher and school there”⁵⁵.

We are not talking about the school of Putna Monastery, as one may consider at first sight, but of an elementary school in the village Putna. Later, Vartolomeu Măzăreanu built, during the restoration of the old monastery, a school with two classrooms for the village that is a school for the children that lived there, in the village and not for the monks from the monastery⁵⁶.

This dedication to the support of education, both laic and religious, in Romanian and in Slavonic and Greek, is also proven by the fact that in 1759 Ioan Teodor Calimachi names at the lead of the commission formed to analyze the status of education Metropolitan Jacob of Putna. Together with him, in the same commission, we find Critias, the great rhetor of the Patriarchate from Constantinople, renowned for his teaching⁵⁷. Metropolitan Jacob made his mark through the accuracy of his critics and through the solutions of



⁵⁴ E. CHIABURU, *Carte și tipar în Țara Moldovei*, pp. 351-352.

⁵⁵ Ioan CAPROȘU, Petronel ZAHARIUC (eds), *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași. Acte interne*, vol. 6, Ed. „Dosoftei”, Iași, 2004, p. 196.

⁵⁶ L.V. LEFTER, „Un învățător al neamului. Iacov Putneanul”, pp. 255-256.

⁵⁷ N. IORGA, *Documente privitoare la familia Callimachi...*, p. CXI.

improvement she offers⁵⁸. The commission decided that education declined, but not because of the teachers, but from causes specific to the Romanian medieval society. The first of these causes is that some of the young men, sons of boyars, interrupted or neglected their studies to take over functions and ranks, obviously, some of them forced by their parents. Others, being foreigners and not having the material means, did not afford to attend school. Finally, the activity of the big school, of the princely school, was affected by the apparition of “various” schools, which most probably designated the practice of students to gather around a teacher, outside the official organization of the school. As measures it was established the acknowledgement only of the studies of at least six years, dissolving of private schools, interdiction for the teachers hired in the houses of the boyars to accept other children and to form classes, and the teachers had to take an exam to check their knowledge and their capacity to fill in this position⁵⁹. Hence, the measures proposed were radical and advanced for that time if we take into account the fact that those who proposed these measures belonged exclusively to the ecclesiastical environment. Hence, the measures required the elimination of all those who were unprincipled regarding the level of education, preparing inferior graduates that represented the competition of the princely school. But, as some authors observe in contradiction to those who have studied the school from Moldavia in the 18th century, it did not require the dissolution of the princely schools in Slavonic and Moldavian from Iassy to leave only “the Greek Academy”⁶⁰.



⁵⁸ N. IORGA, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea*, vol. 2, p. 714.

⁵⁹ Ariadna CAMARIANO-CIORAN, *Academiile domnești din București și Iași*, Ed. Academiei Române, București, 1971, pp. 76-77; N. IORGA, *Istoria literaturii române în secolul al XVIII-lea*, vol. 2, p. 503; Pr. C. EFTIMIE, *Viața și activitatea mitropolitului Moldovei, Iacob I-ul Putneanul (1750-1758)*, Ed. Tipografia Guternberg-Joseph Göbl, București, 1900, pp. 24-25.

⁶⁰ Constantin A. STOIDE, „Contribuții la istoria învățământului în școlile din Iași în secolul al XVIII-lea”, in vol. *Contribuții la istoria învățământului*

One must not forget the fact that Jacob of Putna, at that time bishop of Rădăuți, took part at the Christmas assembly in 1758, convoked by ruler Grigore Ghica, through which the establishment of a school in each bishopric was decided. Bishop Jacob expressed his consent, if not encouraged, for a legislative stipulation through which the bishops were obliged to establish the respective schools, to recruit the appropriate teachers to teach in Slavonic and Romanian, of the graduates of the school or from elsewhere, who must be paid with 80 lei per year, to “ceaselessly control schools, visiting them frequently, how children learn and what they excel at, so that the teachers make all the efforts and children become rich in knowledge”. The money for the teachers’ salary was to be gathered through a tax of one golden coin that the priests and deacons had to pay. The legitimation of the establishment of episcopal schools was the very necessity to be able to educate poor children as well, who did not have the possibility to come to school to Iassy: “since some regions are too far away, not all the parents can come with their children to Iassy, especially the poor ones”⁶¹. Also, while Jacob of Putna was metropolitan, towards the end, in December 1759, the princely school from Botoșani was established through a decree of the ruler Ioan Theodor Calimachi, a document which also set the salary of the teacher.



The movement specific to the pedagogy of the 18th century, to which Metropolitan Jacob of Putna also belongs, characterized by printing of many laic books, adapted to the children from the urban and rural communities, adds to the theological justification of the teaching a laic, humanistic one. We observe that in the discourse

românesc. Culegere de studii, Constantin C. GIURESCU (ed.), Ed. Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1970, pp. 103-104.

⁶¹ Melchisedec ȘEFĂNESCU, *Cronica Hușilor și a Episcopiei cu aseminea numire după documentele episcopiei și alte monumente ale terei*, București, 1869, p. 218; V.A. URECHIA, *Istoria școalelor de la 1800-1864*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1892, pp. 16-18.

of Metropolitan Jacob of Putna, the teaching according to which through knowledge man can find his way a clearer way to salvation interferes with the one through which children and parents are told that only through education young people will become real men⁶². Maybe this is the way to explain the fact that, in the time of Jacob of Putna, the dominant personality of the mid-18th century from a religious point of view, the activity of the typography continued to become more and more laicized although it returned between the walls of the Mitropoly. The editorial program imposed by the metropolitan became more diverse in comparison with the previous decades: princely documents, schoolbooks, office form, so that the printings made on the initiative of Jacob of Putna addressed several institutions and categories of readers: members of the clergy, teachers, contributors, parents, children. Around Jacob of Putna a group of scholars was formed, predecessors of the modern intellectuals (Ioan Simeonovici Ardeleanul, Grigore Stan Braşoveanul, Duca Sotiorovici, Cosma Valahul, future metropolitan of the Romanian Country, Constantin Daponte, Evoghie). The cultural orientation sketched by Jacob of Putna is at the origin of the cultural contacts with the European currents, ended towards the end of the 18th century with the transformation of the social conceptions and a sensible increase of the cultural level of the country⁶³.



The vast theological culture of Metropolitan Jacob of Putna can be observed in his writings, in his letters and words addressed to the Moldavian clergy, the introductions and forwards of the books printed on his initiative. Also, one must start from the principle according to which all the honest acts of the people of the Church are necessarily put under a spiritual reason⁶⁴. In the Word to the monks

⁶² N. BAGDASAR, Traian HERSENI, S.S. BĂRSĂNESCU, *Istoria filosofiei moderne*, vol. 5: *Filosofia românească de la origini până astăzi*, Ed. Societatea Română de Filosofie, Bucureşti, 1941, p. 637.

⁶³ E. CHIABURU, *Carte și tipar în Țara Moldovei*, p. 207.

⁶⁴ M. PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, p. 245.

from Putna he refers to the writings of Saint Basil the Great when he speaks about the role of the priest within the community, in guiding the faithful on the righteous path: “also from the words of this great Basil who says: that the burning fire is put out with water and the unbloody sacrifice of the priests will save us from sins; and that He will give us back the spirit and our life with mercy on the bright day”⁶⁵. Also, numerous quotes and commentaries prove a perfect knowledge of Scripture. For example, in *Synopsis*, he reminds us of the words of the lord who urges the few reapers to the great harvest⁶⁶, and also there he encourages priests and monks to become educated, for a better pastorship of the people, using quotes from the Gospels (*Matthew 22*) and from the Old Testament. One may often find expressions such as “as great Basil says” or “according to the word of Basil the Great”. In *Antologhion*, when he speaks about the importance of prayer for the salvation of the soul, Metropolitan Jacob supports his statements with examples of prophet Daniel, prophet Ezekiel, but also with quotes from the epistles of Paul⁶⁷ and even from the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.



The perfect knowledge of the Gospels and of the Holy Fathers is proven by Jacob of Putna in the chapter from *Synopsis* in which he takes position on Communion with unleavened bread and steadfastly supports the office with bread. Bread is made of three materials, flour which represents the soul, the bread which represents baptism and the salt which represents the meaning of the teaching, just as Jesus told to His disciples, “you are the salt that is the

⁶⁵ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 88.

⁶⁶ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, p. 91.

⁶⁷ I. BIANU, N. HODOȘ, *Bibliografia românească veche, 1508-1830*, tomul II, , nr. 293, p. 128.

teachers of the earth”⁶⁸. And the form of the lamb is in four corners because the creation of man was made by God of four elements, earth, water, fire and air, and the Pure Body of Jesus Christ sanctified the four corners of the world.

Metropolitan Jacob of Putna was also a good knower of the laic rules and of the traditions of the country, but also of the foreign codes of law, especially the Byzantine ones. This is demonstrated when he leads the courts of law, in deciding on certain causes. To this respect, he receives an authorization on December 24th, 1753, to trial the case of the treasurer Vasile Ruset, the big brother from the first marriage of Iordache Ruset, with the little brother from the second marriage, at the request of the latter, for a new division of the dowry. The metropolitan explained his sentence with the decision of the rule, offering quotes from the *Syntagma* by Matei Vlastares, the *Hexabilblu* by Armenopol, *Neara* by Leon the Philosopher, *Falchidie*, *Îndreptarea Legii* (*Correction of the Law*) and *Cârja Arbiereilor* (*The Rod of the Hierarchs*). The latter was translated by monk Cosma the Wallachian, a Romanian from Macedonia, at the advice of Metropolitan Jacob of Putna. The sentence showed that since the testaments were proven to be valid, so was the signature of the deceased, and since the law said that their father was obliged to keep only a third for his sons and he was free to do whatever he wanted with the other two thirds “We considered that this rule and parental decision that is also reinforced with a curse over the sons to remain unchanged and well established as the late High Steward, as father of his sons and possessor of his wealth decided what he considered right”⁶⁹. The analysis of the sentence indicates that the metropolitan was a good knower of the rule and



⁶⁸ † ТEOCTИСТ, Mitropolit al Moldovei și Sucevei, *În slujba ortodoxiei românești...*, pp. 95-96.

⁶⁹ Iulian MARINESCU, „Copii de documente din diferite arhive”, in: *Buletinul Comisiei Istorice a României*, VIII (1929), pp. 80-85.

of the traditions of the country⁷⁰. In 1754 the metropolitan together with the three bishops, confirmed and reaffirmed for Humor Monastery the possession of the villages Dersca and Comănești⁷¹, also solving other situations that occurred between the boyars and the monasteries, while the first tried to trespass the old right given to the monasteries by the founders⁷².

Starting from his judicial attributions, Jacob of Putna interfered in an important issue regarding the procedure in civil trials. This was due to the fact that the old habits allowed abuse and, even worse, trespassing of oaths, curses and holy words. On the advice of the metropolitan, Matei Ghica commands on August 1st, 1755, that any type of transaction should have an act signed before three witnesses so that trials oaths and curses are no longer needed:

“Since we found out from the metropolitan of our country, his eminence Jacob, our most honorable spiritual father, that in this country is customary that both the political and the religious party, to take part of all the agreements and other issues and they do all these agreements without witnesses or documents, so that most of the sentences can be given only through oath or curse [...] we have decided together with his eminence the metropolitan that from now on anyone who wants to bargain with another is obliged to write a document signed by two or three witnesses for any type of bargain, so that we no longer use oaths and curses to the perdition of the souls”⁷³.



⁷⁰ Nicolae V. DURĂ, „Preocupări canonice în activitatea mitropolitului Iacob Putneanul (1719-1778)”, in: *Glasul Bisericii*, XL (1980), 10-12, pp. 817-818.

⁷¹ Ioan BIANU, G. NICOLAIASA, *Catalogul Manuscriselor românești*, vol. 1, Ed. Scrisul Românesc, București, 1931, p. 249.

⁷² N.V. DURĂ, „Preocupări canonice...”, p. 818.

⁷³ Th. CODRESCU, *Uricariul cuprindetoriu de brisoave, anaforale și alte acte din sută a XVIII și XIX*, vol. 1, Ed. Tipografia Buciumul Românesc, Iași, ²1871, pp. 170-171.

Jacob of Putna, spiritual father

The spiritual attitude of Jacob of Putna was generated starting from his spiritual filiation, in several documents he mentions his spiritual father, Metropolitan Anthony. He was born in Chernivtsi, he became a monk at Putna Monastery, then he became a bishop in Roman in 1728 and metropolitan in 1730. The solemn abolition of the tax for cows, that was so significant for the inhabitants of Moldavia, took place on the 1st of March 1757, which was not random, because on the same day, 59 years before, the tax was first abolished by Metropolitan Savas of Putna, the latter a spiritual father of Anthony.



It is impossible to identify all the spiritual sons Jacob of Putna had. To Vartolomei Măzăreanu Jacob of Putna was probably not a spiritual father but a close friend. They became monks and then ordained in about the same time, the second one in 1733, and they were both disciples of Anthony, the hieromonk from Putna, who then became Metropolitan of Moldavia. An inscription on a Bible from 1751, kept in the library of the monastery, shows that the book was given to the monastery by the Moldavian Metropolitan, who had it from “by his eminence, Vartolomeu the archimandrite”⁷⁴. Disciples of Anthony were also the bishop of Rădăuți, Dositei Herescu, and the Metropolitan Gavriil Calimachi, as one may read in the note by Vartolomei: “This register was written in the days of his highness, loving of Christ ruler, voivode Grigorii Ioan, in the days of the metropolitan, his eminence Gavriil, the uncle of his highness, and the bishop of Rădăuți, his eminence Dosoftei, both disciples of the holy Metropolitan Anthony, who died in the Muscovite Country in 1748, Jan.1”⁷⁵. Among the spiritual descendants of Anthony, and therefore a close friend of Jacob of Putna

⁷⁴ M. PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, p. 243.

⁷⁵ M. PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, p. 243.

and probably sharing common ideas and principles, is also Paisius Velichkovsky. During his stay in Kiev, Anthony lived for a while in the metropolitan palace, where he met schema monk Pachomius, whom he had ordained as a hieromonk, and asked him to come live with him in the palace. The latter was the spiritual father of Peter (future Plato, then Paisius), who thus had easier access to the metropolitan palace, came closer to Anthony and to the Moldavian clergy and started to appreciate Romanian language and Moldavian realities⁷⁶.

The rulers of Moldavia from the 6th decade of the 18th century turned to the wisdom and piety of the metropolitan of the country from that time. On his advice, several fiscal and social reforms are adopted, benefactions for the churches and for those who built them. In 1756, ruler Constantin Racoviță, returned to the seat of Moldavia, shows interest in the abolition of the tax for cows, which was a heavy burden for the Romanian farmers and in the same time affected the economic life of the country. In his action, historian Nicolae Canta shows that the lord of Moldavia was urged by the metropolitan of the country, and what counted more was “the spiritual advice of the holy Metropolitan Jacob of Moldavia”⁷⁷. Also, Metropolitan Jacob, the spiritual father of the ruler of the country, is the one who inspires the latter for several charities for the churches. In the description on the restoration of the church Saint Demetrius from Suceava it is shown how



“Now, in the year 7265, in the days of his Highness I Lord Constandin Mihail Cehan Racaovițe, while our father Jacob is metropolitan of the whole country, in whose heart the Lord gave thought and ardor and urge, as for many other good things worthy of mentioning, that

⁷⁶ M. PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, p. 249.

⁷⁷ M. KOGĂLNICEANU, *Cronicele României...*, vol. 3, p. 188.

his eminence did and always does, that with his advice and efforts this Church is restored”⁷⁸.

The same ruler calls the Metropolitan of Moldavia “our holy spiritual father”, in the document from 1757 through which he decides, at the metropolitan’s advice, to restart the guild of grave diggers in Suceava⁷⁹. Also, in the document of consecration of the Church Saint Spyridon and transformation of the church into monastery, Constantin Cehan Racovița speaks about the advice he received from “our honorable and holy spiritual fathers, his eminence Jacob, the Metropolitan of this country and his eminence Innocent, Bishop of Huși”⁸⁰. Also, in the document through which the same ruler eliminated the tax on wine, took this decision “myself, willingly, with the advice of his eminence and our spiritual father chosen by God as Metropolitan of Moldavia, Jacob, and with the God-loving Bishops”. This because “such a thing was ugly before God and disagreeable to everyone”, and “it is not a small sin, but a great and endless one”⁸¹. Thus, we remark on the fact that all the measures adopted by Constantin Cehan Racovița in the direction of easing the fiscal efforts that oppressed the people and affected severely the economy of the country were taken only at the advice of his spiritual father.



Also, the successor and son of Ioan Teodor Calimachi, Grigori Calimachi, who came to the throne in 1761, issued a document on the 15th of January 1762 to reinforce the exemption from taxes obtained by the former Metropolitan of Moldavia on the occasion of his retirement to Putna Monastery. On this occasion he calls

⁷⁸ Ioan CAPROȘU, *Însemnări de pe manuscrise și cărți vechi din Țara Moldovei: un corpus*, vol. 2: 1751-1795, Ed. Demiurg, Iași, 2008, pp. 119-120.

⁷⁹ ***, *Suceava. File de istorie. Documente privitoare la istoria orașului, 1388-1918*, Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului din Republica Socialistă România, București, 1989, nr. 249, p. 398.

⁸⁰ M. PETCU, „Monahism, filiație și paternitate duhovnicească”, p. 246.

⁸¹ T. CODRESCU, *Uricarul sau colecțiune de diferite acte...*, vol. 2, pp. 69-71.

him “our most holy spiritual father, his eminence Jacob, former Metropolitan of the country”⁸².

In the document through which Matei Ghica establishes the income of all the royal functions, in November the 23rd 1754, the ruler of the country confirms the respective decisions with “the loyalty of myself, I Matei Ghica voivode, and the loyalty of my sons: Grigorie voivode, Ghiorghe voivode, Neculai voivode, and the reinforcement of our holy spiritual fathers, of four hierarchs of this country of Moldavia: his eminence Jacob Metropolitans, his eminence Joannicius Bishop of Roman, and his eminence Dosoftei Bishop of Rădăuți and his eminence Neochentie Bishop of Huși”⁸³.

In the list written by Nathanail for the Skete from Doljești, in 1759, called *Sinodic adecă Pomealnec al sfântului schit al Soljeștilor carele iaste în ținutul Romanului, preste Sireatiu, din sus de Roman* (*Synodic that is List of the Holy Skete of Soljești which is in the county of Roman across Siret, North from Roman*), on the third page, the ktetor Dositei Hudici confirms that he asked to write the new list because “it is an eternal document which, until the days of the pastorship of our holy father Metropolitan Jacob, was never before written in our country”⁸⁴.

Numerous aspects of the spiritual activity of Jacob of Putna are expressed in his correspondence with the monks from Putna Monastery in the sixth decade of the 18th century, while he was on the metropolitan chair. His rich correspondence, his attention to the daily details of the life of the monastery, his attention to its properties suggests a closer link than a hierarch usually had with a monastery under his jurisdiction.



⁸² N. IORGA, *Documente privitoare la familia Callimachi...*, p. 453.

⁸³ Ioan CAPROȘU, Petronel ZAHARIUC (eds), *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași...*, vol. 5, nr. 820, pp. 539-542.

⁸⁴ M.-B. ATANASIU, „Un colaborator al lui Iacov Putneanul...”, p. 311.

Numerous times he involves in the actions of the community from Putna, which he approves of, he validates: “With the house you are trying to do your best and keep on trying [...]. You did great again and we thank you for your efforts [...] you thought correctly so now go ahead and do it”⁸⁵. The metropolitan is convinced that his advice will be listened to and that he has a spiritual role for the father from Putna⁸⁶. All these prove a special care of the metropolitan for Putna Monastery and for those who activated here combining three simultaneous qualities: hierarch, ktetor and spiritual father, his gestures being legitimated mostly in the last two⁸⁷.



From the word read to the monastery on the occasion of the memorial service on January 20th 1758 one may observe the relationship between the Metropolitan of Moldavia and the monastic community from Putna: “Not only as a hierarch and shepherd I address this understanding flock of Moldavia, but also as a spiritual father of your community, and I urge you with all my heart to this spiritual thing agreeable to God, so that you can draw everyone before God”. In the same document it is suggested the spiritual subordination through various expressions: “the parental humbleness”, “my beloved sons in Christ”⁸⁸. Jacob of Putna almost never addresses the monks from Putna from his position as metropolitan, but only in that of ktetor and, especially, of spiritual father. A potential address of Jacob of Putna as hierarch no longer makes sense in these conditions.

Sometimes, in the time while he was metropolitan, he asks in detail to his spiritual sons to accomplish one task. Thus, when he wants

⁸⁵ D. DIJMĂRESCU, I.-A. GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, anexa 6, pp. 28-29.

⁸⁶ D. DIJMĂRESCU, I.-A. GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, p. 8.

⁸⁷ D. DIJMĂRESCU, I.-A. GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, pp. 8-9.

⁸⁸ D. DIJMĂRESCU, I.-A. GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, p. 14.

to send a letter to the Bishop Ioanichie of Roman, when he donates 500 lei for the restoration of the monastery, the metropolitan writes the letter himself: “do not write another letter besides this one that I’m sending you, you just have to sign it and write the name of the one that will take the letter, for I left enough space for you to write the name and the note that is for the icon should be put inside the letter. But do not sign the note and for that letter you should send it as soon as possible, but for this mission choose only Calist the confessor, or Theodosius Gheorghiescu, and do not wait long”⁸⁹.

It is very interesting the fact that the study that father Dosoftei does on the decision of retirement from the metropolitan chair of Jacob of Putna in 1760, starting with the text of the document through which this action is recorded by the ruler of the country and where he indicates the reasons and the subsequent material favors. Although no text was preserved where the metropolitan explains his decision, one may only suppose the interior dialogue and the principles from which the holy father starts and the similar events from the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church or of the Oriental one. One of the considerations the metropolitan started from is that of the peace of mind which prevails over that of obeying the ruler. Thus, Jacob opposes the ruler when he perceives the action of the latter as pernicious for the community or the Church, but he bends when he is asked for a personal sacrifice. This because the retirement was in agreement with God’s will, since the opposition to the ruler of the country would lead to a conflict with him, which would not be to the benefit of the community, but to his own spiritual benefit⁹⁰. This is proven by the subsequent prodigious activity of the former metropolitan, developed in perfect spiritual peace, both personal and in relation with the ruler Ioan Teodor



⁸⁹ D. DIJMĂRESCU, I.-A. GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul către obștea Mănăstirii Putna”, anexa 4, p. 27.

⁹⁰ See: D.N. DIJMĂRESCU, *Fundamentele teologice...*, pp. 99-104.

Calimachi and with the Metropolitan Gavril Calimachi⁹¹, who led the Mitropolia of Moldavia to his death. The latter continues the bishopric program initiated by Metropolitan Jacob of Putna, with whom he maintains amicable relations. He names Vartolomei hegumen at Solca, one of the closest collaborators of Jacob, administrator the former hegumen from Putna, Calistrat Roschip, he sends Vartolomei with the delegation to Russia in 1769. Under the lead of Gavriil Calimachi the intense typographical activity continues for one more decade, with the team of Jacob of Putna, as well as the activity of revitalization of the education. Also, he adopts the same attitude regarding the tax on cows, refusing to riddle out the curse. This can also be explained by the fact that they were both spiritual sons of the same Anthony⁹².



Final conclusion

Jacob of Putna was remarked through the wisdom of his advice that he addressed to a large variety of people that we can find in the forwards of the books that were printed at his initiative or from his correspondence carried on especially with monks from Putna Monastery. He advises the monks and priests to take every effort to educate themselves, to guide the faithful on the right path. He asks parents not to forbid their children the benefits of education. He addresses the whole people with urges which aim to preserve faith, to protect them from heresy and from reminiscence of the pagan cults. Jacob of Putna also had doctrinarian preoccupations, defending the characteristic features of Orthodoxy, among which communion with bread and wine, veneration of the icons and of the

⁹¹ See more information in the study of: Ioan-Augustin GURIȚĂ, „Mitropolitul Gavriil Callimachi și Mănăstirea Putna”, in: *Analele Putnei*, IX (2013), 1, pp. 195-226.

⁹² D.N. DIJĂRESCU, *Fundamentele teologice...*, p. 106.

saints. His wise advice was also followed by his spiritual sons, including most of the Phanariot rulers who led their ephemeral rulings during his time. In this position, Jacob could defend the oppressed people, the poor ridden by the big taxes. On his initiative, rulers such as Mihai Ghica or Constantin Cehan Racoviță made some reforms, such as foundation of schools, building institutions and issuing legislative documents that were necessary to a society on its way to modernization, and reducing or eliminating several taxes that aggravated a lot the situation of the poor and in the same time blocked the progress of economy. Due to his persistence in defending the poor and to the consistency in defending the church rules he had to retire from the metropolitan seat, which he left convinced that he did his best in fulfilling his mission.

The remarkable achievements of the great hierarch Jacob of Putna, are due greatly to his moral character, that combined both vitality and piety, manhood and humbleness. Through the human model he presented to his contemporaries, Jacob of Putna the subsequent life and activity of those who followed his advice, spiritual sons, monks, priests and hierarchs, boyars and even rulers of the country. On his spiritual advice, those who occupied the throne of Moldavia, adopted fundamental decisions for the prosperity of the country, among which we may mention the elimination of the tax on cows. Also, on his initiative, on his request and under his guidance, a rich cultural work was developed, which equals a rebirth of the Romanian education and printing in Moldavia: Evloghie translates many Greek and Slavonic writings, and Vartolomei Măzăreanu writes chronicles, lists and takes care of the good development of education. Hence, Jacob of Putna must be appreciated for his personal work, that of hierarch, theologian, ktetor and learned man. His efforts, however, is also reflected in the activity of his disciples, those who followed his advice and example, who continued his achievements, leading the Country of Moldavia and the entire Romanian space closer to the light of civilization.



Rezumat: *Iacob Putneanul. Părinte spiritual și învățător*

În pleiada de cărturari și de învățători ai neamului, de păstori pe calea dumnezeiască a mântuirii, de ierarhi pe care Biserica Țării Moldovei i-a dat timp de câteva secole, Iacov Putneanul se remarcă, dacă nu prin întinderea păstoririi sale, cel puțin prin vastitatea și profunzimea operei, prin multitudinea de domenii asupra cărora și-a pus inconfundabila pecete. Pornită pe calea spre modernitate, societatea românească a secolului al XVIII-lea găsește în el un promotor al tiparului în limba română, al răspândirii științei de carte în rândurile clerului, dar și între rândurile copiilor oamenilor de rând, al constituirii unui sistem de învățământ bine încheiat prin constituirea de cât mai multe școli în centrele bisericesti, dar și cele administrative laice. Nu mai puțin importantă a fost opera sa ctitoricească, cel mai vizibil manifestată în cazul Mănăstirii Putna, lăcașul său de metanie, dar și către alte sfinte biserici. Acestea el le-a destinat toate beneficiile, bunurile și sumele de bani adunate în timpul vieții.

Ceea ce ne preocupă în acest studiu este să analizăm două segmente diferite din viața Sf. Iacob Putneanul, și anume: raportarea acestuia ca părinte spiritual și modul în care s-a manifestat ca învățător al neamului. În ceea ce privește prima direcție a studiului putem observa că rolul părintelui dubovnicesc în lucrarea mitropolitului Iacov Putneanul apare în cartea de încuviințare a funcției respective unuia dintre cei mai apropiați colaboratori ai săi pe tărâm cultural, ieromonahul Nathanaïl de la Putna: să primească gândurile și lucrurile și patimile celor care vor veni la spovedanie, să stabilească pocăința pentru păcate ficăruia după puterea sa, să dezlege pe cele care puteau fi dezlegate și să lege cele ce trebuiau legate.

În plus, Iacov Putneanul nu se putea disocia de rolul de învățător al neamului, de educare, călăuzire și propășire a poporului. Pentru buna educație a copiilor tipărite în tipografia mitropolitană unele manuale școlare, printre care se remarcă Bucvarul din 1755. Legătura dintre credință și învățătură este evidențiată și de faptul că aceste manuale cuprindeau, în același timp, și adevărurile fundamentale de credință și învățăturile necesare unui bun creștin. În 1759 pune bazele unei școli laice în satul Putna: „arată Sfinția Sa mitropolitul că la Mănăstirea Putnei este trebuință ca să se aple o școală, căci fiind loc depărtat, nu pot copiii a ajunge pe la celelalte școale, mai ales că se află acolo un dascăl care de câțiva ani învață cu mare folos ucenicilor, deci domniia me, și aculo am întărit ca să fie dascăl și școale am întărit”. Nu este vorba despre școala mănăstirii Putna, cum ar putea părea la prima vedere, ci o școală elementară în satul Putna. Dedicarea pentru susținerea învățământului, atât bisericesc cât și laic, în limba română dar și în slavonă și greacă, o dovedește și faptul că, în 1759, Ioan Teodor Calimachi pune în funcția comisiei alcătuite pentru cercetarea stării învățământului tot pe mitropolitul Iacov Putneanul.



Iacov Putneanul s-a remarcat și prin înțelepciunea sfaturilor pe care le adresează unei largi diversități de oameni, pe care le găsim în introducerile cărților ce s-au tipărit din inițiativa sa ori din corespondența desfășurată mai ales cu membrii obștii monahale de la Putna. Pe călugări și preoți îi sfătuiește să nu precupețească eforturi în a se instrui, în a călăuzi pe credincioși pe calea cea dreaptă. Părinților le cere să nu interzică copiilor lor binefacerea învățaturii. Întregului popor îi adresează învățături menite a îi întări credința, a se feri de rătăcirile eresurilor și ale rămășițelor cultelor păgâne. Iacov Putneanul a avut și preocupări de ordin doctrinar, apărând trăsăturile specifice ortodoxiei, printre acestea numărându-se împărțășania cu pâine și vin, închinarea la icoane, cinstirea sfinților. De sfaturile înțelepte ale lui Iacov Putneanul au ținut cont toți copiii săi de suflet, cei care l-au urmat ca duhovnic, inclusiv cei mai mulți dintre domnii fanarioți care și-au dus domniile efemere în timpul păstoririi sale. În această calitate, Iacov a putut lua apărarea poporului asuprit, a oamenilor săraci, împușcați de cumplitele dări. La inițiativa sa, domni ca Mihai Ghica sau Constantin Ceban Racoviță au înfăptuit reforme, cum ar fi înființarea de școli, constituirea de instituții și elaborarea unor acte legislative necesare unei societăți în drum spre modernitate, și reducerea sau desființarea unor taxe care îngreunau mult starea locuitorilor săraci și, în același timp, împiedica progresul economiei țării. Consecvenței sale în apărarea oropșișilor sorții, dar și statorniciei cu care apără rânduielile bisericești, se datorează și retragerea sa de pe scaunul mitropolitan, pe care l-a părăsit cu conștiința ușoară și cu convingerea misiunii îndeplinite.



Remarcabilele realizări ale marelui ierarh care a fost Iacov Putneanul se datorează, în mare măsură, caracterului moral al acestuia, ce a îmbinat deopotrivă vitalitatea și pietatea, bărbăția și umilința. Prin modelul uman pe care l-a prezentat contemporanilor, Iacov Putneanul a influențat viața și activitatea ulterioară a celor care i-au ascultat sfatul, fii duhovnicești, călugări, preoți și ierarhi, boieri și chiar domni ai țării. La sfatul său duhovnicesc, cei aflați pe tronul Țării Moldovei au adoptat hotărâri fundamentale pentru bunul mers al țării, printre acestea remarcându-se eliminarea grelei dări a văcăritului. Tot la inițiativa, la cererea și sub îndrumarea sa, a fost realizată o amplă operă culturală, ce echi-valează cu o renaștere a învățământului și a tipăriturii românești din Moldova: Evloghie traduce numeroase scrieri grecești și slavone, iar Vartolomei Măzăreanu scrie cronici, pomelnice și se îngrijește de bunul mers al învățământului. Iacov Putneanul trebuie apreciat așadar pentru opera sa personală, cea de ierarh, teolog, ctitor și om de cultură. Eforturile sale însă se reflectă și în activitatea discipolilor săi, cei care i-au urmat sfatul și exemplul, care i-au continuat realizările, ducând Țara Moldovei și întregul spațiu românesc mai aproape de luminile civilizației.