

**“Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca
Faculty of Orthodox Theology
Doctoral School “Isidor Todoran”**

**The attitude of Christians towards the Roman
authority in the light of the Epistle to
Romans (13, 1-7)**

- abstract –

Professor,

Rev. Prof. PHD. STELIAN TOFANĂ

Candidate,

Pr. GLODEAN RAUL IOAN

CLUJ-NAPOCA

2023

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	1
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
I. CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PROLEGOMENS	6
1. 1. Introduction	6
1. 2. The current stage of the research	9
1. 3. Research methodology and objectives	13
1. 4. The problem of the research object: Epistle to the Romans 13, 1-7	16
II. INCURSION INTO THE HISTORY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. A MACROSTRUCTURAL ANALYSIS	18
2. 1. Background elements.....	18
2. 2. The historical context of the writing of the Epistle to the Romans. The Church of Rome - origin and constitution	20
2. 3. The place and time of writing the Epistle to the Romans.....	25
2. 4. The author of the Epistle to the Romans.....	31
2. 5. Addressees of the Epistle to the Romans	37
2. 6. Motivation and purpose	53
2. 7. The structure, language, genre and style of the Epistle to the Romans	55
2. 7. 1. Structure	55
2. 7. 2. Unity and integrity.....	57
2. 7. 3. Vocabulary.....	60
2. 7. 4. Classification in gender	64
2. 7. 5. Style	69
2. 8. Conclusions to the chapter	72
III. THE PROBLEM OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE TEXT OF ROMANS 13, 1-7 – A POSSIBLE INTERPOLATION?	74
3. 1. Brief history of the issue	74
3. 2. The contradiction of the pseudo-epigraphy	74

3. 3. Critical - textual evidence for a possible interpolation	77
3. 3. 1. Contextual evidence	78
3. 3. 2. Linguistic records	79
3. 3. 3. Ideational records	80
3. 3. 3. 1. Submission to the authorities in Romans 13, 1-7 and the different meaning of the texts in I Corinthians 6, 1-8; 7, 31; Philippians 3, 19-20; Galatians 1, 4.....	81
3. 3. 4. Comparative records	90
3. 3. 5. Situational, motivational and local records	90
3. 4. Patristic considerations and personal reflections.....	91
3. 5. Considerations of modern researchers and personal reflections.....	92
Conclusions	93
IV. EXEGESIS OF THE TEXT.....	94
4. 1. Reconstitution of the original text: interferences and differences between the Greek, Latin and different Romanian editions of the New Testament	94
4. 2. Linguistic-semantic analysis of the text Romans 13, 1-7	95
4. 2. 1. Hypothetical translation	100
4. 3. Exegetical analysis in the view of modern and patristic theology	103
Excursion: The double dimension of civil authority: servant of God and representative of justice	127
Preliminary conclusions.	143
4. 4. God, the supreme Ruler of the world. Biblical arguments	144
4. 4. 1. In the Old Testament (Is. 45, 1-7; Jer. 25, 9; Dan. 4, 32; Prov. 16, 10; Prov. 21, 1)	145
4. 4. 2. In the New Testament (Mt. 22, 17-21; Gal. 1, 4; Phil. 3, 19-21; Col. 1, 13; I. Cor. 6, 1-8; I. Cor. 7, 31);	156
V. THE RELATIONSHIP CHRISTIANITY – CIVIL AUTHORITY FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	176
5 1. Luke 20, 25 - The revealed Christian expression of authority in the heavenly-earthly relationship and the correlation with Romans 13, 1-7.....	176
5. 1. 1. The biblical context of the text from Luke 20, 25.....	177
5. 1. 2. Brief exegesis and syntactic parallelism: Luke 20, 19-25 and Romans 13, 1-7. Linguistic peculiarities	177

Excursion: The antinomian character between the earthly Caesar and the eternal God.....	184
Conclusions	189
5. 2. Romans 13, 1-7 and I Peter 2, 13-17: Biblical argument for the submission of Christians to the state in an apostolic key.....	190
5. 2. 1. The leit-motif of submission to authority in syntactic parallelism.....	191
5. 2. 2. Delimitations of the text in the corpus of Epistles to Romans 13, 1-7 and I Peter 2, 13-17	192
5. 2. 3. Analysis of syntactic parallelism regarding submission to domination.....	193
5. 2. 4. The origin and purpose of governance. The ethical dimension	197
5. 2. 5. The Christian dimension of submission: respect, honor, respect.....	200
Conclusions	202
VI. HERMENEUTICS OF THE TEXT. AN OVERVIEW: THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS AND THE CURRENTITY OF THE THEME IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES.....	204
6. 1. The theme of divine authority in Romans 13, 1-7 – its relevance and interest for today's world	205
6. 2. The attitude of Christians towards the state in the context of the Roman authority	207
6. 3. The attitude of Christians towards the state in the contemporary context	209
6. 4. The topicality and interest of the topic - The special relevance of the Epistle to the Romans for contemporary society.....	211
6. 5. Current problems of the Church in relation to the state under social, educational, philanthropic aspect	215
6. 6. Contradiction of submission to the state. The forms of revolt (protest, strike, uprising) and the danger of anarchy; legislative perspective	218
6. 7. Submission from freedom - obligations and limits. The mistaken meaning of freedom.....	225
CONCLUSIONS	229
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	233

Key words and key phrases: God, divine authority, attitude, authority, Christianity, Church, the relationship of Christians to civil government

The relationship between Christians and the governing civil authority is a unique theme addressed by Pauline theology, specifically apophatic, in the Epistle to the Romans 13, 1-7. The subject, characteristic of earthly social life, has been intensely debated by modern biblical scholars in the geo-political context of each age.

The theme of the biblical text which is subject to our analysis is an insistently pronounced imperative by Apostle Paul: the submission of Christians to government authorities, an attitude that would ennoble Christianity with an attitude that can be called "conscientious citizenship" (13, 5). The exhortation is reinforced by arguments that cannot be contested: "all authority is from God" (13, 1) and "he who does not submit to authority does not submit to God" (13, 2).

Although the topic addressed mainly concerns the attitude of Christians towards the Roman authority of the historical time in which the Epistle to the Romans was written, in the study of the theme we extrapolated the topic, focusing on the analysis of the attitude that Christians should display towards civil governance in different socio-political and religious situations of different historical eras. In this sense, I started from a problematization: how, under what conditions can a human government be an image of divine authority so that an imperative attitude of obedience is imposed on Christians, as it emerges from the Epistle to Romans 13, 1-7, especially when that government opposes Christian principles and salvation.

The theme discussed in the Epistle to the Romans 13, 1-7 is also of interest for the modern world since man, by the dichotomous constitution, as "citizen of heaven and citizen of earth", has the duty to submit to the heavenly Empire and also to the earthly. Through this text, Apostle Paul wants to indicate what should be the Christian conduct and reporting towards the civil authorities, which are God's representatives on earth, according to the expressed principle: submission to the authorities means submission to God.

The hypothesis proposed in our research is that the biblical text from the Epistle to Romans 13, 1-7 includes general principles that apply at all times. In the analysis of the biblical paragraph, it is noted that Apostle Paul describes the role or purpose of government as ideal, since God intends for this ideal to be fulfilled according to His will. This is the typology of "government as it should be", "the divine ideal, not the human reality".

After the exegetical analysis of the text from Romans 13, 1-7, which constitutes the core of the work, in order to strengthen the argument and intensify the message, biblical texts

with a message similar to that of Romans 13, 1-7, such as the one from The First Epistle of the Holy Apostle Peter 2, 13-17, of a surprising similarity, in the perspective of issuing a general axiom to establish whether the imperative of submission to the civil order represents, in an apostolic key, the valid and applicable Christian model for Christians of all times.

Since the text constitutes a paradigm for the conduct of Christians towards the state authority, we considered it of essential importance to identify the origin of Saint Paul's teaching, respectively, if the text has its source in the teaching of our Savior Jesus Christ. For this purpose, I have carried out an exegetical analysis of the biblical text from Matthew 22, 17-21 in parallel with the texts from Mark 12, 14-17 and Luke 20, 22-25.

As a reinforcement and clarification of Saint Paul's statement in the first verse of chapter 13, some relevant texts from the Old and New Testaments were analyzed which state that God is the supreme Ruler of all existence, the One who orders the responsibility to rule and the state to be led. The principle that every form of civil leadership is determined by God's Providence clearly emerges from biblical revelation. God has guided the destinies of the people, proactively leading the world to achieve the best goals for carrying out the work of world salvation.

Regarding the issue of interpolation, as a response to the ideological reasons invoked by the supporters of this theory, I made a comparison with other antinomian scriptural texts (I Corinthians 6, 1-8; Philippians 3, 19-20; Galatians 1, 4) , which seem to contradict the imperative statement of submission to dominion. In the text of I Corinthians 6, 1-8, Apostle Paul expresses his disagreement with the judgment of Christians in pagan courts, affirming eschatological sovereignty over the whole world and urging the establishment of a church law that operates according to Christian morality, because the judgment of a pagan state is guided according to completely different laws.

According to the Pauline principle, the Church is called to exercise collective responsibility for the training and discipline of its members, indicating clear directions to follow, in the form of practical commandments, drawing canonical boundaries within which it works. Following the analysis of the contrast between the mentioned texts, the conclusion is that although they have an antinomian character, the texts in question are complementary and not contradictory: in the first one it is about an eschatological plan of judgment, within which, in order to wait for God's Judgment in repentance, the Christian is asked not to attend pagan courts, but to regulate his problems within the Christian community, and in the pericope of Romans 13, 1-7 the plan of events is strictly telluric, human, belonging to the present age,

where submission and obedience to the ones who have the power is a demonstration on the part of the Christian of respect for God's appointed authorities.

In fact, there is no internal contradiction in the Pauline epistolary journey, its dual attitude being constant: the separation from the spirit of this sinful world will further increase the adherence to the future world in which God is the eternal King. This does not mean that the Church must rise up against the civil authorities of this world, but try by submitting to it, as long as it does not attack the conscience of a good Christian, to convert non-Christians as well.

I chose this topic considering that it will be a plus in Romanian biblical theology, being a subject too little addressed in specialized biblical literature in Romania, but of vital spiritual and civic importance for any Christian, with major implications for moral-spiritual conduct .

Structure and content of the thesis

The thesis can be structured in three large parts. The first part is focused on the presentation of the methodological tools used in the research of the biblical text and on the historicity of the Epistle to the Romans, the historical context of the appearance of the writing, the genre and the literary form of which it is a part. The second part, the main part of the work, is the exegetical and theological part and the last part, the hermeneutic part, aims at the reflection of the message in contemporaneity.

Structured in six large chapters, with related sub-chapters, the actual content begins with the second chapter in which a macro-structural analysis of the Epistle to the Romans is made, looking at the historical context of its appearance, the place and time, the author and the recipients, the issue of the Christians in Rome, the structure, language, genre and style of the Epistle, presenting the results of the most significant research in the field being.

In the third chapter, the issue of interpolation of the text is debated, given the contradiction of the pseudo-epigraphy of the text from Epistle to Romans 13, 1-7, in which contextual, linguistic, ideational and comparative evidence is presented for a possible interpolation, but also arguments from modern theology, patristic considerations and personal reflections.

The actual content of the theme begins with the fourth chapter, the exegesis of the text, in which a reconstruction of the original text will be made by analyzing the linguistic and semantic characteristics of the text from Romans 13, 1-7, to establish whether during the history of the transmission of the text there were intentional changes in the text that would

have introduced changes in the actual and truthful transmission of the paideic message intended by Saint Paul the Apostle. The content presents the research of modern theology on the subject and the patristic interpretation.

St. Paul's exhortation reflects the most fundamental aspect of the relationship model between the government and its citizens. Apostle Paul deliberately uses the universal terminology, "all the world" (πάσα ψυχή), to show that what he is about to say applies to all people and not just to Christians. Regardless of how the expression is translated in the various Bible editions, "the whole soul" does not mean the inner spiritual nature distinct from the body (as in Mt. 10:28; Rev. 6:9), but rather refers to the person in its dual wholeness: body and soul (2, 9), or "each person", this being the common meaning of the term.

The tone is made clear by analyzing the meaning of the word ἐξουσία (exousia), authority, the right to control or rule over. "Authorities", ἐξουσίας, is the plural form of the term ἐξουσία (exousia) and is used here in the narrow sense of "official power or authority" (Lk. 7, 8; 19, 17; 20, 20), a term which, by natural using, also means the bearers of such authority (Lk. 12, 11). The context shows that the Apostle refers to human rulers or "duly constituted human governing authorities" (Lk. 12, 11; Titus 3, 1), and not to "dominions" in the sense of heavenly powers.

The Church Fathers, in their great majority, without questioning the Pauline authorship, offer more of an analogical and moral interpretation of the text of Romans 13, 1-7.

Saint John Chrysostom, referring to the text in Romans 13, 1, resembles obedience to the authorities to the obedience of Christians to the Law of Christ and refers to all people, regardless of their social state: „This commandment is given to everyone, without exception, to priests and monks and not only to those in the world, and that is why he proclaimed this principle from the beginning... even if he was an apostle, or an evangelist, or a prophet or whatever, because such submission does not offend evsevia... The main right of such legislation is God's; that's why he puts before the faithful this righteous reasoning..., that everything is the work of God and His wisdom”.

The term ὑποτάσσω (ὑπό, under; τάσσω "place, order") has the meaning of "subordinate subject", and in the passive, "be subject, subordinate" (stronger than ὑπακούω, which has more the meaning of "to answer"). Submission means cooperation, loyalty, willingness to obey.

The term διαταγή "row", is directly related to the term τάσσο ("row") from the first verse. The use of this term again emphasizes the divine origin of all human authority. As

servants of God, a quality expressed by the terms διάκονος and λειτουργός, the state fulfills a function appointed by God and therefore mediates God's judgment in history. Although that judgment is temporary and earthly and cannot be absolutely identified with the eschatological judgment, those who are judged by the state for some evil done in the present will also experience the wrath of God's judgment in the last day if they do not repent.

The apostle Paul presents this thinking in terms of "terror" or fear in the sense of fear of punishment, the term φόβος denoting "that which arouses fear". Rulers are not a terror to those who display good conduct, but to those who do evil, a remark highlighted by the antithesis ἀγαθός (good) / κακός (evil). The state is the servant of God to induce people to do good. The government's function is also that of God's "revenge of wrath" (ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργήν); the visual wrath is the judgment in history carried out by the civil rulers in anticipation and foreshadowing of the divine judgment. The apostle Paul appeals to the general meaning that good citizenship and moral caliber are to be praised (ἔπαινος), a fact indicated by the translation "do good" or "live honestly."

Christians have two good reasons for obeying their leaders: to avoid punishment and to listen to their own conscience, as conscience leads them to do what is right. Contrary to the strong cultic background of the verb λειτουργεῖν, the context here is that of technical lay usage in Hellenistic society, where λειτουργεῖν and λειτουργία refer to the rendering of public services to the political institution, traditionally saying the obligation that good citizens had to undertake their services for the benefit of the community.

The peroration of the text represents the practical application of the teachings given above: „Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour”. Unanimously, the Fathers of the Church affirm the thesis of submission to the authorities as a moral duty of Christians, a paidee of duty to the Gospel of Christ.

In chapter V, two biblical texts are analyzed, in syntactic parallelism, by presenting the main similarities and distinctive elements, namely the Epistle to Romans 13, 1-7 and the Epistle to I Peter 2, 13-17, a text that expresses the same fundamental reality of the theme, the relationship between Christianity and civil authority from a biblical perspective, texts that emphasize the relief of the exhortations given by the two great Apostles of Christianity, the Holy Apostle Paul and the Holy Apostle Peter.

Chapter VI presents the hermeneutics of the text, an overview of the theme, the topicality of the theme in contemporaneity, its validity in the recent world, by mentioning some current relations of cooperation between the Church and the state. A special mention is

debated regarding the contradiction of submission to the state, a fact that can generate forms of revolt (protest, strike, uprising) and the danger of anarchy. At the end of the chapter, an excursus is presented regarding the attitude of submission between obligations and limits and the erroneous meaning of freedom.

Research objectives and methodology

The general objective of the thesis is to analyze, through an exegetical and theological study as much as possible, the text of the Epistle to the Romans, 13, 1-7, in the perspective of establishing a reference principle for the relationship of Christians with the civil authority, in different social contexts and politics.

A first objective of the research concerning the analysis of the abrupt framing of the text in the corpus of the epistle, which primarily involved the historical context of the appearance of the text in the corpus of the Epistle, in the perspective of establishing the issue of interpolation.

The problem of apparent discontinuity has been analyzed and resolved in terms of recent research that proves the authorship and authenticity of the paragraph. Those who claim that the text 13, 1-7 is a part of the Word of God and was composed by the Apostle Paul, fitting the current context throughout the writing, presents two arguments:

A. The section is not foreign to the context – either the preceding or the following. In the previous text in chapter 12, 1-2, the Apostle Paul urged the addressees to worship God and indicated what should be the relationship of the believers with God, with their peers, (3-14), with those outside (14-21), but also with the authorities, in discussion the Roman Empire.

B. The exhortation to obey the authorities seems contradictory when considering the fact that the majority of Christians who belonged to the Roman church were Jews, many of them looking for an opportunity to get out of subjection to Rome (Jn. 6, 14 , 8, 33, FAp. 5, 36, 37).

An objective of the research consists in the translation of the text and its use in the exegetical analysis of the pericope through the comparative method and the method of verse-by-verse interpretation,

Another objective aims to analyze the text in parallel with other texts related to the theme from the Old and New Testaments (I Peter 2, 13-17), in order to establish the attitude of Christians in relation to the ruling state authority. The final exhortation is imperative. The apostle exhorts Christians to fulfill all their duties, to give everyone what is due, so that they can devote themselves to their new (spiritual) obligations.

During the research, the statements on which the following arguments are based were examined:

- the abstract principle of government is from God;
- the existing rulers were placed by God in a position of power.

As a result, the opposition to the people with powerful positions, in most cases, the opposition to the divine principle of government, God being the One Who created the felt necessity for government (Dan. 2, 37-38; Isaiah 37, 26; 45, 1-5).

From a methodological point of view, the biblical pericope which is the subject of the research from the Epistle to Romans 13, 1-7, is approached exegetically and hermeneutically, using all the methods involved in specialized biblical literature: text criticism, literary criticism, the history of the drafting of the biblical text. The methods used are: the descriptive method, for gathering information, the historical research method, the study of documents, necessary to establish the objectives of the type: knowing the context, formulating hypotheses and solving the problem, the comparative method, the interpretive method.

As an exegesis tool for this thesis I used the following editions of the Holy Scriptures: the Bible or Holy Scripture, printed with the blessing of the Holy Synod, Publishing House of the Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1988; The Bible is the Divine Scripture of the Old and New Testaments, printed for the first time in 1688 during the time of Șerban Vodă Cantacuzino, Lord of the Romanian Land, reprinted 300 years later in facsimile and transcribed with the approval of the Holy Synod, the more recent edition being printed with the blessing of the Most Holy Teoctist, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Publisher of the Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1997; The Bible, that is, the Divine Scripture of the Old and New Law, printed in the days of His Majesty Charles I, King of Romania, Editions of Holy Synod, Printing of church books, Bucharest, 1914; The Bible or Holy Scripture, Improved Edition after the Septuagint, Variorum by Bartolomeu Valeriu Anania Archbishop of Cluj, Jubilee Edition of the Holy Synod; Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland (Greek Edition), Tyndale House Publishers, Illinois, 2012; New American Bible, Revised Edition, American Bible Society, Philadelphia, 2019.

In the interpretation of the text, an important role is played by the linguistic analysis of the key terms, for this purpose it is absolutely necessary to use special lexicons, dictionaries and encyclopedias, such as: International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature, (BDAG), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago,

2000; A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 32000; Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament (EDNT), Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, 1990; Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 2001; New Encyclopedia of the Bible, The House of the Book, Oradea, 2013, Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia, Encyclopedia Britannica, Incorporated, Chicago, Illinois, 2006; Grammar of Septuagint Greek, With Selected Readings, Vocabularies and Updated Indexes, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1995, Dictionnaire de linguistique, Larousse-Bordas/VUEF, Paris, 2002; The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible, vol. 2, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011; Dictionnaire encyclopédique d'éthique chrétienne, Les éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2013; The Catholic Encyclopedia, Robert Appleton Company, New York, 2021; Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976; The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976; The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976.

The current state of research in the academic literature and its analysis

a) National status. If on the international level the Epistle to the Romans counts a lot of academic research titles, on the national level, the occurrence is very low.

In Patristic Theology, some commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans can be found in St. John the Golden Mouth - "Homilies on the Epistle to the Romans of St. Paul the Apostle", a larger commentary, also used in modern studies, at Editura Christiana, Bucharest, 2005; There is a patristic commentary by St. Cyril of Alexandria, published by the Agaton publishing house, Făgăraș, 2016, entitled "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans of St. Paul the Apostle", an exegetical, non-exhaustive, small-sized work that addresses a selective topic, not being a academic paper. Theodore of Mopsuestia and St. Cyril of Alexandria each wrote a "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans of St. Paul the Apostle", edited by Agaton Publishing House, Făgăraș, 2016. Blessed Teodoret of Cir emphasizes some pertinent, valid and current observations for the relationship between rulers and society in any period of human history in "Interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans", published by Doxologia publishing house, Iasi, 2020; Saint Theophylact of Bulgaria wrote "The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans", published by Sofia Publishing House, Cartea Ortodoxă, Bucharest,

2005; Saint Nicolae Cabasila has several references to the subject of our research in the work "About life in Christ", Publishing House of the Biblical and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 2001.

An old far-reaching study, which I consulted, is that of Father Professor Vasile Gheorghiu, published in Chernivtsi in 1938 entitled Epistle to the Romans of the Holy Apostle Paul, a reference study for Romanian exegesis, the only one that deals exegetical and theologically with the whole the medium-sized content of the Epistle to the Romans, for which external sources had to be used, which contain more detailed information. A study of the theme appeared under the signature of Father Professor Stelian Tofană, in the journal *Studia Universitatis*, 2015, entitled Submission of Christians to Roman rule 13, 1-7. This study was in fact also the point of reference for the preparation of my doctoral thesis, under the guidance of Father Professor. In this study, the author extracted from the biblical text and presented exegetical and theologically, in a detailed, competent and exacting manner, the six arguments, for which the Holy Apostle Paul imperatively asks Christians to submit to the Roman rule: 1. The rule is allowed by God (13, 1-2); 2. Rulers are not a cause for fear" (13, 3); 3. Rulership (ἐξουσία) is God's servant (13, 4); 4. Dominion is the avenger of God's wrath (13, 4d); 5. Submission should be from conscience (13, 5-6); Submission out of love (13, 7-8). In the doctoral thesis, the treatment of these arguments was also referred to recent historical time.

In the work Introduction to the study of the Holy Scriptures, of small dimensions, priest professor Ioan Vasile Botiza treats in passing, without delving into the subject under discussion.

Due to the lack, in the field of Romanian research, of a bibliographic material related to the proposed theme, we consider that such research can be a necessity for the reintegration of the biblical picture from our country.

Since the bibliographic material in the national environment is very limited, I used resources from modern theology in the treatment of the thesis. From the translations of the studies in Romanian I used: from the collection What I Know, "Noul Testament", the book published by Publishing House Humanitas, 1993, in which the author, Oscar Cullmann, treats the Epistle to the Romans in a concentrated but competent, well-documented study. A limited chapter on the Epistle to the Romans is in Introduction and Commentary on Holy Scripture - Pauline Literature, volume VII, collection edited by biblical scholars Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm, translated by Galaxia Publishing House Gutenberg by Pr. Dumitru Groșan; another consulted work that addresses the proposed theme

is Biblical Commentary, Epistle to the Romans, vol. 10, by Heiko Krimmer, from the "Paul for all" series. N. T. Wright produced a study entitled *Epistola to Romani*, published by Succeed Publishing, Medgidia, 2019 and a biographical work entitled *Pavel Apostolul lui Iisus Mesia*, published by Deisis Publishing House, Sibiu, 2020. Other commentaries I used are: Keener Craig S., *Cultural-historical commentary on the New Testament*, Casa Cartii, Oradea, 2018; Stott John, *Romans (Minimum expository comments)*, Ed. Logos, Cluj-Napoca, 2000; Maier Gerhard, *Hermeneutics, Cultural-historical Commentary of the New Testament*, Casa Cartii, Oradea, 2018.

b) International state of the research

International biblical scholarship excels in studies and commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans, each author exploring the text in an attempt to reveal the meaning thought by the Apostle Paul. In the exegesis chapters, I have used studies appearing in the best classic collections of scholarly commentaries, among which I mention: Douglas J. Moo, "The Epistle to the Romans," in *New International Commentary on the New Testament*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1996, considered the best exegetical study of the Greek text, with exegetical remarks in footnotes, also involving systematic theology; a second edition appeared in 2018, with minor revisions, emphasizing the new perspective. In the same series should be mentioned John Murray's commentary, "Romans," in two volumes, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1965, an older resource, superseded by biblical scholar Douglas Moo's commentary, but an important reference source; in the *New International Greek Testament Commentary* series, biblical scholar C.E.B. Cranfield, in his commentary 'Romans', two volumes, published by T & T Clark, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 1975, presents a massive and thorough study of traditional exegetical and pastoral criticism, bringing a series of commentaries on the Greek text, and interacting with the ideas conservative, opposed to his perspective, excelling in relating syntax to theology. In the *Word Biblical Commentary* series there are outstanding commentaries that have been produced by biblical scholars: J. D. G. Dunn, "Romans", Vol. 38A, Word Incorporated, Dallas, 2002, a landmark study by presenting a new perspective on Pauline theology in the context of nineteenth-century Judaism i.

In the *Baker Exegetical Commentary* collection, Thomas R. Schreiner presents a traditional commentary, entitled "Romans," in which he uses syntax to develop understanding of Pauline thought, at Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1998; in the *Bible Speaks Today* series, John R. W. Stott presents a study suggestively titled "The message of Romans", published in 1994,

with revisions and additions in 2020, at InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, United States; Robert Jewett, "Romans," in *Hermeneia*, Fortress Press, Washington, Minneapolis, 2006; Leande Keck, "Romans," in *Abingdon New Testament Commentaries*, Abingdon Press, 2005, an exegetical commentary, focused on the Greek text and the content of the epistle, deeply theological, with differences between the English translations.

A 2018 study in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary series, a newer series but considered by biblical scholars to be among the best, is that of Frank Thielman, "Romans," Zondervan Academic, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in which it presents the literary context, the Greek translation, the exegesis of the text, through the verse-by-verse method and a theological explanation. Of reference were the studies published by John Murray and Leon Morris, entitled "The Epistle to the Romans", Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2018, in *Eerdmans Classic Biblical Commentaries*, 2018, as well as that by David E. Garland, "Romans," in *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries Series*, IVP Academic, Downers Grove, Illinois, 2021.

In The 21st Century Biblical Commentary Series we mention Woodrow Kroll's study, "The Book of Romans: Righteousness in Christ," AMG Publishers, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 2002; in *College Press NIV Commentary*, a study by Jack Cottrell, Romans, The College Press NIV Commentary, Volume 2, Joplin, Missouri, 1998. From The New Testament Commentary series, the commentaries of scholars W. Hendriksen & S. J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary, Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Vol. 12-13*, Accompanying biblical text is author's translation, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 2001; G. R. Osborne, "Romans," in The IVP New Testament Commentary series, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, Illinois, 2000; Brendan Byrne, "Romans", *Sacra Pagina*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1996, in which the author uses the rhetorical critical method, offering an interpretation of each pericope, lexically, syntactically and intertextually; William Hendriksen, "Romans", in Hendriksen & Kistemaker, Baker Books, Ada, Michigan, 1981; F. F. Bruce, "Romans," in *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1985; Robert Mounce, "Romans: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture," vol. 27, in *The New American Commentary*, Holman Reference, Nashville, Tennessee, 1995, a commentary based on the biblical text in The New International Version, in which he follows an academic methodology and rendering in the original language of the biblical text.

Extensive scientific studies on the Epistle to the Romans in international journals: *The Romans Debate*, Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, Massachusetts, 1977, revised 1991, a

collection of studies, presented thematically, in sections, in which a reconstruction of the theology of the Apostle Paul is attempted. A more recent study, "Imagination Made Real: Paul between Political Realism and Eschatological Hope" in *Early Christians Adapting to the Roman Empire*, by Niko Huttunen, Brill, Boston, USA, 2020, in which the author, putting in tandem the political realism and the spiritual change preached by the Apostle Paul, highlights the way in which it influenced the attitudes and social life of Christians, beyond the limits that the Apostle himself thought, so that he hoped eschatology preached by Apostle Paul becomes a spiritual change.