

**"BABEȘ BOLYAI" UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY  
DOCTORAL SCHOOL "ISIDOR TODORAN"**

**THESIS SUMMARY  
"THE ORIGINALITY OF THE SERMONS  
OF PROFESSOR PRIEST ANDREI BUZDUG"**

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**THESIS ABSTRACT:**  
**"ORIGINALITY OF THE SERMONS OF FATHER**  
**PROFESSOR ANDREI BUZDUG"**

**Keywords:** Fr. Professor Andrei Buzdug, exceptional preacher, originality, religious education, school textbooks, didactic activity, unusual sermons, exceptional liturgist, homiletical ministry.

**ABSTRACT:**

The reason behind the choice of this thesis was to try to bring to light the life, personality, but especially the homiletical work of a professor who dedicated his entire life and ministry to preaching the Gospel message. Doing a careful research of the personalities who tried to lay the foundations of an Orthodox Theological Institute in Cluj, I realized that Father Professor Andrei Buzdug was not given enough attention, which is why I started this research, which is materialized after five years of study, noting that throughout this journey I was supported by the coordination of Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Vasile Gordon.

The work falls in the area of practical sciences within the discipline of Homiletics and is structured in five large chapters, comprising a total of 192 pages of text, 144 bibliographical titles and 300 footnotes, followed by appendices, through which I have tried to bring to light the pilgrim life of Father Professor Andrei Buzdug and at the same time to highlight his homiletical work. Specifically, I started from a precarious bibliography, but I tried to capitalize on each study dedicated to Father Professor Andrei Buzdug in order to realize a thesis that will highlight his academic prestige, but also his personal contribution to the didactic-homiletic field in Cluj.

From a practical point of view I will present a collection of more than 160 sermons dedicated to Sundays, the Feast of the Kingdom, but especially to occasional sermons. In the segment dedicated to the homiletical, catechetical and pedagogical dimension, I started from a fundamental thesis: in a very short period of time, Fr. Andrei Buzdug succeeded in providing the clergy with a very rich homiletical work, with the help of which the clergy succeeded in revitalizing the preaching of the Gospel in a period of social, economic, cultural and spiritual turmoil.

The objectives of the thesis include the following:

1. A brief presentation of the beginnings of Clujean University education, in particular the founding of the Orthodox Theological Institute, and the composition of the faculty;

2. Presentation of the life and work of Fr. Professor Andrei Buzdug;
3. Presentation of a collection of over 160 sermons;
4. Presentation of stylistic elements through which the work of Fr. Andrei Buzdug presents certain elements of originality;
5. Short stylistic analysis of a number of 8 sermons in order to notice some particularities through which the sermon of the first half of the 20th century was reinvigorated;
6. The reception of his work;

In the content of the five chapters I wanted to include as many details as possible about the work that the young professor Andrei Buzdug managed to do, both from the perspective of religious education, but also as a professor of the Theological Institute, being recognized by his colleagues and not only, as an exceptional preacher, renowned teacher and priest whose motto was based on the cultivation of virtues and their implementation in practice through hard work.

In order to better understand the historical context in which Fr. Andrei Buzdug worked, it was necessary to talk about the Orthodox Church in Transylvania from a pastoral and missionary point of view, and in the first chapter I will briefly present the beginnings of university education in Cluj, but especially the efforts of Bishop Nicolae Ivan to establish a Theological Institute to meet the needs of the first half of the twentieth century. Shortly after the act of the Great Union, Cluj managed to have a Theological Institute which became the training and development environment of Father Andrei Buzdug both as an author of religious textbooks, being among the first authors, and as a renowned teacher teaching practical subjects (homiletics, catechetics and liturgy). Two other points that I have dealt with in the first chapter present the academic environment of Chernivtsi, as the environment of formation of Fr. Andrei Buzdug, being the last doctor in theology promoted until after the Second World War, and the situation of the episcopal sees in Transylvania. The end of the first chapter is dedicated to the evocation of some important personalities who, through their work and activity as hierarchs and book-lovers, have marked the pastoral-missionary work in Sibiu, Oradea and Arad, as well as some important names who have dedicated their entire ministry to practical disciplines in order to preach the Gospel from the pulpit and the pulpit.

The second chapter is dedicated to the biographical elements of Fr. Andrei Buzdug, where I will bring some clarifications about his birthplace, but especially some

clarifications about the exact dates that over time have been erroneously propagated in some studies. The clarifications are related to the date of birth, the beginning of the teaching activity, marriage, the year of ordination, the year of obtaining priestly distinctions and the period when the father began his teaching activity. Another section of the second chapter is dedicated to Father Andrei Buzdug's inclination towards religious education, immediately after completing his studies abroad he began his teaching activity in Bistrița, and shortly afterwards, under the careful obedience of Bishop Nicolae Ivan, he composed the first religious textbooks for the primary cycle, textbooks that were desired even in other dioceses. The concern for religious education was not one that Father Andrei Buzdug put in second place although he became a university professor, so that before passing to the eternal, appears the work "Religious Education Today and Us" where the father told us that the basis of the formation of the Romanian people was the Christian religion and that the Church has a duty to revive religious culture.

The third chapter is centered on the homiletical, catechetical and pedagogical work of Father Andrei Buzdug, studies, conferences, sermon books, religious manuals, but also a series of exhortations that are found in the content of his sermons, His word was wanted by the faithful to whom he spoke every Sunday, but also by the students whom he taught how to speak from the pulpit, but especially how to love, and thus through his activities he received the name of philanthropist and generous liturgist. The themes of the conferences he gave were and are still topical today, here are just a few examples: "The True Way, Against Alcohol, On Our Country and Our Nation, Jesus Christ and the Shepherds of Souls, The Role of Preaching, The Use of the Book, Who Has a Book Has a Share, From the Sorrows of the Priesthood, Pastoral Problems", as well as a number of "Bible seminars", where students were assigned to preach in different schools. Then the appearance of four volumes of sermons in only 5 years (1933-1938), totaling 166 sermons, shows us that the effort was not a small one, since the technical means of the inter-war period were not as modern as those of today. In the final part we wanted to evoke some of the virtues that Father Andrei Buzdug wanted to cultivate in the daily life of the faithful, offering them as remedies in the fight against sins, if they were to be committed. From the content of the sermons we will notice that Fr. Andrei Buzdug never condemned man fallen into sin, but sin as a tool of the devil, seeking remedies for each individual suffering.

The fourth chapter contains the presentation of some stylistic elements that we will find in the content of Father Andrei Buzdug's sermons. With the help of these elements we will be able to emphasize the style of the sermons, the elements common to the homiletic style, to the oral ecclesiastical style and especially to the written style in the form of which more than 160 printed sermons appear. I will try to point out some elements of originality through which Fr. Andrei wanted to revitalize the sermon by using topical themes, but above all by using a language accessible to the common man. The most difficult thing in the composition of a sermon is to preserve a note of originality, of course we will refer to Holy Scripture as the first source of the sermon, then we will keep the line of the fathers who were concerned with a correct interpretation and interpretation of Scripture. In some sermons are included teachings that give a particular specificity to the sermon, they come from the ancient world, the pagan world, secular culture or universal history, and the knowledge of foreign languages give color and originality to the sermon, Father Andrei was a connoisseur of Hungarian and German. With regard to style, we have turned to the most recent works in order to outline as clear a definition as possible of style, especially the oral and written ecclesiastical style. Therefore, I pointed out a number of elements related to style, since in order to analyze some sermons from a stylistic perspective, it was necessary to describe those related to the homiletic style, especially the religious style (often called "ecclesiastical"), as well as the distinction between oral and written style, the latter being developed by the Church Fathers after the oral one.

Chapter five of the thesis comprises the most important part of the thesis, as I sought to illustrate how the homiletical work of Fr. Andrei Buzdug was received. Thus, I will refer to the studies and evocations in the periodicals of the time, as well as a reactualization of them in the studies of some current professors of the Cluj academic environment. I have presented a number of 16 sermons, eight of which have been subjected to a stylistic analysis in order to notice the elements of originality, predominant themes, as well as the authentic manner, language, and style with which the biblical message is conveyed. After analyzing each sermon in turn, we will observe that the preacher applied biblical truth in his personal life, knew his audience, prepared his sermons with a simple but accessible message, avoided clichés, constantly sought to reinvigorate the message, daring in some of his sermons to become vulnerable by tackling novel themes. In the final part of chapter five, I wanted to present some sermons that are unusual in their content, theme or the occasion on

which they were delivered, with the help of which we can paint a picture of church life in the inter-war period. The importance of Father Andrei Buzdug's sermons is also revealed by the fact that some of them have been reprinted, and in the form of four separate volumes dedicated to Sundays throughout the year, church feasts, but also occasional sermons, they represented the homiletic support for many young priests, who were inspired by the content of these sermons in order to compose their sermons. Through this research, I have tried to illustrate the life and activity of a worthy servant of the cathedra and the altar, as a natural gesture of gratitude for all the efforts he has made in the preaching field, being totally dedicated to the service of the Orthodox Church. The month of February of this year marked 86 years since he passed away, in full vigor of service. The present work, dedicated to Father Andrei Buzdug, presents the importance of maintaining a living dialogue with the past, in order to discover the guiding lights, to honor their memory, but also to capitalize on the academic contribution of a missionary par excellence.

The final conclusions are as follows:

- The young Andrei Buzdug dedicated his entire life to religious education and distinguished himself by composing religious textbooks and by numerous interventions to promote the importance of religion in schools;
- After graduating from the Faculty of Theology in Chernivtsi, he began his teaching activity full of zeal and in full obedience to Bishop Nicholas Ivan;
- He was one of the young people who wanted the Great Union, even being present as one of the prominent representatives of the Năsăudean county;
- He campaigned for the re-establishment of the Diocese of Vadului Feleacului and Cluj;
- He held the position of dean of the new Theological Institute in Cluj, where he devoted all his resources to the organization of a university system that would correspond in all ways to the requirements of the standards of the time;
- He turned out to be a man for whom obedience was a virtue, in this sense his collaboration with Bishop Nicolae Ivan was one that brought fruit to the Eparchy;
- He was involved in many activities that we can call pastoral-missionary and philanthropic, being one of the pillars who made efforts to support charitable associations, but also to establish a monastery of nuns (St. Elizabeth's Monastery);
- His homilies contain more than 166 sermons, printed in four volumes, of great use to this day;



- It was he who dedicated his whole life to religious education, offering a Catechetical Guide by which he wanted young people to know Christ;