

## **CostacheForms of address in Antim Ivireanu's sermons: preacher-audience interaction in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia**

Ioana Costache (University of Bucharest , University of Oxford)

A Romanian bishop of Georgian origin, Antim Ivireanul (c. 1650 – 1716) was an accomplished woodcutter, painter, illuminator, embroiderer and orator. Between 1708 and 1716 he was the Metropolitan Bishop of Ungro-Wallachia (the approximate equivalent of today's southern Romania); apart from his activity as a translator and printer, he is best known for a collection of 35 homilies delivered in Romanian, as opposed to the current conventions of the time, which imposed either Slavonic or Greek as the language of religious service. Another radical change made by the metropolitan is the engaging, highly personalised style of his sermons, differing greatly from that of the collections of standard, rather abstract sermons (*cazanii*, from Slavonic *nakazanije*, i.e. 'teachings') available at the time for Sunday reading in church. In particular, the passages where the audience is being addressed directly afford a unique insight into such aspects as the membership, background and reactions of the audience, on the one hand, and the intricate politics of the time, both clerical and secular, on the other hand.

Two are the main types of contexts where direct address is prominent: the initial *excusatio propter infirmitatem*, or excuse of inadequacy, a classical topos, whereby Antim asks the learned audience to make allowance for his intellectual and rhetorical shortcomings, and the various injunctions and rhetorical questions in the body of the sermon. The latter, in particular, apart from providing clues as to the interaction of this particular community of practice, turn Antim's sermons into diatribes. This was unusual as the time, as comparison with a standard *nakazanije* will endeavour to show.

Antim was familiar with patristic preaching; his main sources were John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Ephrem the Syrian, Gregory Nazianzus, Basil the Great. While it cannot be claimed that he was an innovator of the homiletic genre by comparison with these fathers, he certainly reformed it as far as the pre-modern Romanian church is concerned, by involving the audience and referring to social and political issues of the day. The paper investigates the corpus of 35 homilies and focuses on forms of direct address, with a view to answering questions such as: who was in the audience? What education is the audience presumed to have had? What were their reactions? Were they expected to intervene? What were the conventions that regulated this particular type of communicative situation? The topic, format and methodology of the paper are loosely based on the contributions to *Preacher and Audience. Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics. A New History of the Sermon (1)*, by Mary B. Cunningham and Pauline Allen (eds.), Brill 1998.