

The Controversies of a Dramatic Biography. Bartolomeu Anania's Mission to America in the Context of the Recalibration of State-Church Relations under Ceaușescu

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Abstract:

The study aims to address a sensitive issue in the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church during the Communist period, namely its relations with Orthodox communities in the West, in the context of the recalibration of relations between the State and the Church under Nicolae Ceaușescu. The pretext for this analysis is Bartholomew Anania's 11 years of activity in America within the Orthodox diocese canonically dependent on the Romanian Patriarchate. Bartolomeu Anania, a cleric with an anti-Communist political past, spent six years in Communist prisons. Only a year after his release in 1965, he was sent to America, a fact that was likely to arouse suspicion in the eyes of his contemporaries, since such a departure was not possible without the consent of the regime in general and the political police in particular. In addition to the favourable political context, in which the Ceaușescu regime was opening up to the West in an attempt to move away from the tutelage of Moscow, Bartolomeu Anania's departure was made possible by the common interest of the state, who wanted to create instruments of Romanian knowledge and influence in the West, and the Church, who wanted to strengthen the canonical structures dependent on the Romanian Patriarchate.

Keywords: *American Orthodoxy, Cultural collaboration, Valerian Trifa, Anti-Communist exile*