

MINUNATA VIZITĂ A SFÂNTULUI CUVIOS ANTIPA DE LA CALAPODEȘTI ÎN PALATUL ȚARULUI ALEXANDRU AL II-LEA AL RUSIEI (1855-1881)

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Abstract

Hieromonk Antipas lived in Russia during the time of a very liberal-minded monarch, witnessing not only the reforms but also the changes brought about by these reforms of Tsar Alexander II, and in many of his letters he recounts all the trials and tribulations that Russian society was going through during this tsar's time, with the objectivity and sincerity of a foreign monk, free from petty interests.

The meeting of Father Antipas with the imperial family of Monarch Alexander II has the gift of putting before our eyes two sets of opposing values: those of this passing world: material wealth, the struggle for supremacy and the desire for domination, which bring much suffering and unhappiness, and the values of the world to come: simplicity, humility, the lack of love of possessions, love of God and love of neighbour, whose reward is the acquisition of God's grace and eternal life.

In this article we can observe the parallelism and the encounter between an Orthodox Christian monarch of the time, who had received a good education as a child, was fluent in many international languages, had a liberal and reformist mindset, desired the good and prosperity of his subjects, but was misunderstood and criticised by many, who even made attempts on his life, and was assassinated in a violent manner, and an Orthodox Christian monk, who came from a foreign country, who did not speak Russian, who had a simple upbringing but lived an exemplary life, who was a gentle and virtuous person, who managed to make himself loved and honoured by the faithful who knew him, thanks to the trust and grace he conveyed, and who was canonised only 24 years after his death, thus fulfilling the hymn once again: "Happy is the life of hermits, of those who are filled with divine longing!"

Keywords: monarch, monk, Tsar, Antipas, grace, reform, Russia

Introducere

Nevoia stringentă de fonduri bănești a mănăstirilor din teritoriile aflate sub stăpânire otomană, precum Grecia, Bulgaria, Țările Române sau Țara Sfântă, îi determina pe monahi să întreprindă călătoriile în Rusia, cu scopul de a strânge milostenie de la credincioși, având în