



UNIVERSITATEA
1 DECEMBRIE 1918
DIN ALBA IULIA
1 Decembrie 1918
University of Alba Iulia



Call for Papers

International Conference

**Churches and political power during communism:
Individual biographies and institutional mechanisms**
(Alba Iulia, Romania, 21-23 September 2023)

“1 Decembrie 1918” University of Alba Iulia (Department of History, Archaeology and Museology) and The National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia have the honour to invite you to the International Conference* **“Churches and political power during communism. Individual biographies and institutional mechanisms”**, that will take place in Alba Iulia (Romania), 21-23 September 2023.

The establishment of communism in Eastern Europe found the Churches in fragile positions, following the traumatic experiences of the Second World War. The churches were challenged to coexist with autocratic or dictatorial regimes. Institutionally weakened by the attempts of the political power to limit their autonomy, the churches had to face the overthrow of the socio-political order caused by the Soviet-supported instauration of the communist regimes.

The Soviet model of communization of societies was adapted by the regimes loyal to Moscow also in terms of religious policy, which translated, in the case of the majority churches, into public and political marginalization, in exchange for limited autonomy. Thus, the religious policy of the regimes, which did not aim at the total elimination of religious life and, implicitly, of churches, included a set of practices and instruments, which involved institutional control, informational surveillance, and political repression. A special case was represented by the Greek-Catholic churches, which were abolished, and their clergy and bishops repressed.

The conference aims to address the complex issue of the relations of churches and religious cults with political power during the communist period, using the tools of interdisciplinary knowledge (historical, theological, political, sociological, anthropological, etc.). The main topics covered are the following:

- The religious policy of the communist regimes;
- The social-theological attitudes of the churches towards communism;
- Repression against churches: political and (anti)religious stakes;
- The institutional mechanisms of control and supervision over religious cults;
- The Churches' resistance and opposition to communism: theological motivations and political identities;
- The carceral and (post)carceral destinies of the clerics;
- The evolution of state-church relations throughout the communist period;
- The Churches and the fall of communist regimes in Europe;
- The new historiographical directions of the state-church relationship in the communist period;

Please send your proposals by **15th April 2023** (the title and an abstract of maximum 150 words) at dragos.ursu@uab.ro; Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by the **1st of May 2023**. Full papers are expected until the **1st of September 2023**, as the volume is due to be published by January 1, 2024. The articles will be published in a collective volume at an important publishing house or as a special issue of an Scopus/ ERIH Plus-indexed journal and will be evaluated in a peer-review system.

Rules of citation and text formatting will be announced after accepting the abstracts.

The conference languages are Romanian and English.

The organizers will provide accommodation fees and meals for the participants. Settling these expenses by the participants themselves is also welcome.

We look forward to your contributions. Please contact us for any additional information: Dragoş Ursu - dragos.ursu@uab.ro

* The conference is part of the post-doctoral research project "The post-detention destinies of clergy, former political prisoners, during the (re)calibration of state-church relations in the Ceauşescu regim" PN-III-P1-1.1-PD-2021-0597), financed by UEFISCDI (The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding) and implemented by the project team: **Cosmin Budeancă**, Ph.D. Habil. Researcher (project mentor) and **Dragoş Ursu**, Ph.D. (project director)