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DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
FIELD OF DOCTORAL STUDIES: THEOLOGY

**PRIEST DANIIL SANDU TUDOR – A MICROHISTORY OF THE
RESISTANCE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT OF THE ROMANIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH DURING THE COMUNIST TOTALITARIANISM**

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CONSTANȚA, 2015

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Keywords: micro history, resistance, martyr, totalitarianism, The Burning Stake, Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor, The Romanian Orthodox Church

PRIEST DANIIL SANDU TUDOR – A MICROHISTORY OF THE RESISTANCE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH DURING THE COMUNIST TOTALITARIANISM

Research and discovery of martyrs' life is a Christian duty, as on their shoulders stands the Church's history, the history of our salvation. The context of the contemporary society, globalized and globalizing¹ provoked increasingly more debate caused by this issue and more and more competent voices approved, laical or clerical, claim that the Church will have to reassess its position regarding the canonization of the martyrs in communist prisons, in order to achieve the salvation, healing and preservation of the entire nation in Christ: *"The Church cannot be thought, lived or honoured without martyrs"*².

Romanian totalitarianism with all its manifestations of political extremism could not exist without generating resistance from the people³. We know that communist regimes, and so one imposed in Romania, refused obstinately integration of religion in the ideological program,

¹ See, for this meaning, Archdeacon Prof.. Ioan I. ICĂ Jr., PhD, „Globalisation – mutations and challenges”, in *The Church in mission*, EIBMBOR, București, 2005, pp. 686-687.

² Prof. Ilie BĂDESCU, PhD, lect. Andreea BĂNDOIU, PhD., prof. Pavel CHIRILĂ, PhD *Principles of the martirological research*, Ed. Christiana, București, 2010, p. 8.

³ See George ENACHE, Adrian Nicolae PETCU, „Romanian Orthodox Church and the Security. Reading notes”, in vol. *Totalitarianism and resistance, terror and repression in Romania during the communist period*, coord. Lecturer, prof. univ. Gheorghe Onișoru, PhD edited by the National Council for Study of the Security Archives, Bucharest, 2001; Constantin VOICESCU, „People of Church during the anticommunist period from the Romanian woods and forests”, in *The Sighet Annals*, 2nd vol.: *The instauration of the communism between resistance and oppression*, 1995, pp. 279-294; Mihai TIMARU, „Anticommunism resistance fight in Vrancea mountains”, in *The Sighet Annals* vol. 2, pp. 327-333; †Bartolomeu Valeriu ANANIA, „One of the forms of exile; from the forms of the exile. The position of a fugitive”, in *Ibidem*, pp. 402-405; Mihai CAITAR, „The Resistance and the churchmen's struggle in Romanian exile in Western Europe Orthodox clergymen in communist prisons or how can undergo a majority in *Sighet Annals*, vol. 7, *Years 1949-1953. The Mechanisms of the terror*, 1999, pp. 92-94; Iustin MARCHIȘ, „Saint Mary Celebration's Eve in 1952 for the Orthodox priests”, in *Ibidem*, pp. 95-98; Liviu MĂRGINEANU, „The arrest and liquidation of anti groups around the priest Dumitru Matei”, in *Ibidem*, pp. 380-386; Cristian VASILE, „Communist authorities and Orthodox monasteries issue in 1950”, in *Sighet Annals*, vol. 8: *Years 1954-1960. Fluxes and refluxes of the stalinism*, Civic Academy Foundation, 2000, pp. 179-189; Eugen TOMA, « An unforgettable moment of the atheist terror: The conviction of the "Burning Stake" group », in *Ibidem*, pp. 364-368.

as part of their vision in society⁴. The communist state condemned to death or taken prisoner, many Romanian thinkers, writers, artists, clergy or laity, imprisoned whole families (mothers, wives, children), applied the prohibition to publish or forced them to adopt the communist ideology⁵.

The Opportunity to research the totalitarian communist regime is intertwined with the Christian duty to identify and honour those who have sacrificed in the name of God and his people, to promote the Christian moral values in their life and in public life⁶. In this situation the interest from researchers arises, not only theologians or historians, the research theme requiring a multidisciplinary research, based on **the integrating dialogue religion - science - art**.

In other words, this research aims to achieve a **microhistory⁷ of the resistance movement of the Romanian Orthodox Church** both in the interwar period and especially

⁴ See the published materials as civics initiatives, such as *Sighet Memorial*, The National Institut for the study of Totalitarianism: ***, *The Emprisoned Church 1944-1989*, The National Institut for the study of Totalitarianism, Bucharest, 1998, also the English edition, Bucharest, 1999; or in particular: Gheorghe DRĂGULIN, „The victims of The victims of the revolution and of the communist prisons in contemporary hagiographic attention, in „ROC”, year CIX (1991), no. 1-3, pp. 91-98; *Idem*, „Imprisoned lives and churches, „ROC”, year CX (1992), no. 1-3, pp. 57-58; Nicolae HURJUI, „Romanian Orthodox: Romanians, victims of the communist prisons”, in „ROC”, year CIX (1991), no. 10-12, p. 123-134; Vasile VASILACHI, „The Burning Stake. The literary- cultural club from Antim Monastery in Bucharest and”, in „*The Faith Calendar*” (The Faith), Detroit, 1992, pp. 66-71; Nicolae GREBENEA, „Meeting with distinguished Archimandrite Ilie Cleopa”, in „*The Romanian Telegraph*”, year 140, 1992, no. 25-26, 1st of July, p. 3; Gheorghe POPESCU-VÎLCEA, *Cuvinte din temniță*, EIBMBOR, Bucharest, 1993; Mircea PĂCURARIU, *The History of the Romanian Orthodox Church*; Știința, Chișinău, 1994; Mihai RĂDULESCU, *The burning stake. The Orthodoxy in the communist claws*, Ed. Ramida, Bucharest, 1993; *Idem*, *The Romanian Orthodox Church's Martyrdom Martiriul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, Ed. Ramida, Bucharest, 1994; ***, *Confesors from behind the bars. Churchmen in communist jails*, Arhiepiscopiei, Feleacului și Clujului, Vadului Publishing House Cluj, 1996; †Irineu SLĂTINEANUL, Mihai RĂDULESCU, *Priests in chains*, Ed. Ramida, Bucharest, 1997; *Idem*, „*The Burning Stake*” from Antim Monastery to Aiud, Ed. Ramida, București, 1998; Dumitru STĂNILOAIE, „*The persecution of the Romanian Orthodox Church under the comunism*”, in „*The announcer of Romanian Orthodox*”, year I (1990), no. 3, pp. 1-3; *Idem*, „Témoignage. La persécution de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine sous le régime communiste”, în „*Nouvelles de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine*”, an XX (1990), pp. 8-11; Vasile MANEA, *Preoți Orthodox Priests in the communist prison*, 2000; see also the second edition, revised and improved, Patmos Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2001; Ionel ENE, Silviu Mihai IVAN, *Sacrifice in the pastoral space*, DM Press, Publishing House, Focșani, 2001.

⁵ See, for this meaning „National Archives of Romania (Camelia MORARU, Laura NEAGU, Constantin MORARU, Constantin NEAGU, Claudiu DINCĂ, George MOCANU), *The minutes of the meetings of The Political committee and the Secretary of the Popular Labour Party*, vol. I (1948), vol. III, 1950-1951, Bucharest, 2002-2004 (Introductive lesson, prof. Ioan Scurtu) *The historical bibliography of Romania*, Academiei Române Publishing House, Bucharest, 1989 and other books and resources in digital format which we will mention along the Presentation.

⁶ Pr. Mircea Cristian PRICOP, PhD, *Orthodoxy, ethnicity, European identity*, Arhiepiscopiei Tomisului, Publishing House Constanța, 2012, pp. 150-151.

⁷ See the first and most significant studies of microhistory: Carlo GINZBURG, *The cheese and the worms. The Universe of a miller in the 16th century*, Nemira Publishing House, Bucharest, 1992 și Emmanuel Le Roy LADURIE, *Montaillou, occitan village from 1294 to 1324*, 2 volumes, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1992. In contemporary historiography, micro history plays a very important role, being one of the most important

under totalitarian Romanian Communist regime up to 1962⁸ by exploring a single subject research: Sandu Tudor, Alexandru Teodorescu's literary pseudonym, who was a clergyman, writer, journalist, known as the *Monk Agathon*⁹ from Antim Monastery or *the Hieroschemamonk Daniil* from Rarău Monastery¹⁰. Micro history method causes us to worry about rebuilding Priest Sandu Tudor's ideas and opinions on the Romanian Orthodox Church, faith and nation, the monk who paid the ultimate sacrifice for *his pride*, which is a pretext to subject the entire argumentative and scientific research to the principles of martyrological research¹¹.

The argument and research objectives:

Motivation to investigate this issue has considered several aspects: subjective, objective and pragmatic.

Firstly, the research has focused on a theme that has generated many controversies over the time, a phenomenon that is in the public debate, and its results can be used to take a public stand, which can be reported to the canonization of the martyrs of the Romanian communist prisons¹².

Secondly, micro history is a new method of reconstructing the historical past, "*a history from below*", a border area involved in the fertile interdisciplinary dialogue, an enterprise devoted to the viewpoint of people in the past. Unlike the traditional history, mainly eventful, micro history is less concerned on the story of the events but more on the analysis of the structures, and the watchword is **multidisciplinary nature**.

innovations introduced by the Annales School. Through it, the historian departs not only by the political, event-history, but also economic and social, taking their ordinary individuals to analyze aspects of daily life of past ages.

⁸ On November 17, 1962, Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor died in Aiud, on the death certificate being written the diagnosis of "brain haemorrhage". It is not known to this day where he was buried.

⁹ On September 3rd, 1948, brother Alexander (Sandu Tudor) receives tonsure from Firmilian Eminence, Archbishop of Craiova, changing its name to the Agaton.

¹⁰ In 1953 he received the Great Schema and name of Daniil from priest Ilie Cleopa. In 1954 he withdraws at Rarău Hermitage.

¹¹ The most important data on the research were selected from *The principles of martyrology research* by Prof. Ilie Badescu, PhD, lect. Andreea Bandoiu, PhD, prof. Paul Cyril, PhD, Christiana Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, Adrian Nicolae Petcu, "How Priest Daniil died" in "Rost" year I, No. 6, 2003 *Autobiographical memory* by Pr. Daniil Sandu Tudor, then some documents in the archives CNSAS, some of them taken from † Antonie PLĂMĂDEALĂ in his book *The Burning Stake*, Archdiocese of Sibiu Publishing House, Sibiu, 2002. Other books and sources that will be mentioned throughout the presentation were read.

¹² Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor is in Martyrology since 2007 and it is a long time in the attention of the Commission for Canonization of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church. See, in this respect, *Martyrs for Christ, in Romania during the communist regime*, Biblical and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, pp. 158-167 (Article worshiped Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor and has the signature of historian George Enache).

Thus, this method allows various bits of the communist oppressive universe from a different perspective, because the focus will highlight layers of everyday life, contexts and particular situations that escape, inherently, to classical history, because of linear approach, generalization and synthesizing. The research aims to highlight items that are not so obvious and known and to test whether these Communist years' microhistory (the history of the layers that are under the narrative veil offered by the plain history) can give an enriched, nuanced, inspiring of new research directions, and sometimes even subversive to the picture of the Romanian totalitarianism that we have so far.

The purpose of our scientific interdisciplinary approach - theological, historical and literary - has been *to identify, restore and discover* forms of resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the interwar period and under Communist totalitarianism by using the microhistory method, which involved focusing on how Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor adapted sociopolitical, economic, cultural and religious contexts which were crossed over his life.

The objectives of the research:

1. identification of evidence regarding Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor's configuration as a paradigm of resistance by faith and culture, to create a bridge with forms of resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church in those days;
2. Theologically-literary analyze of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor's liturgical creation - mystic poet (neohymnologist) of the Romanian Orthodox Church;
3. discovery of the evidence which justify the diagnosis of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor's martyrdom (using martyrology specific research tools).

Besides the punctual objectives, we added some research hypotheses. Related to the theme of transformations within the Church under totalitarianism, we advanced the hypothesis that *the so-called subordination of the Romanian Orthodox Church was rather a perverse effect of strategies of the totalitarian state to discredit / compromise the clergy*, than an acceptance of "recovery" and cooperation. As for the theme of "The Burning Stake", the investigated hypothesis was *whether Security strategy led to disruption of the cultural capital of the Association and diminished its members' moral-Christian value*. In the theological and literary analyze of Sandu Tudor's texts it was checked the assumption that *aesthetic value can be*

subordinated to the mystical ascent. At the same time, we have considered throughout this scientific research the research hypothesis of *validation / nonvalidation of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor's*

The difficulty we encountered was a methodological one and it lies in the selection and systematization of materials, because data about the personalities' facts, thoughts, beliefs under study, provided both by written and oral sources, are often received through filters and intermediaries who distorts them. Thus, on the one hand, the archives of special and repression services, subordinated to the goal of the communist ideology falsify the truth¹³; on the other hand, the testimonies were made by individuals more or less tied to the dominant culture¹⁴.

The Research Methods: We consider important to note at this point of the analysis we did to Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor, that the subject, certainly, should not be seen independently and out of context. The purpose of the microhistory research is to extract general conclusions based on local information. Unlike the usual history, **microhistory requires a three-dimensional arrangement of the subject** of research. So, we have considered **the subject, the context** in which he is, but also **the view on context** of the subject himself and it appears from its strategy of adaptation. Similarly, we highlighted historical contexts, social, cultural and religious where the subject of this thesis lived, in this case, the change of the relations between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the State, both in the interwar period and under communist totalitarianism. So the proposed objective imposes a thorough investigation of the various environments in which the journalist, the writer, the member of the Romanian Christian Students Association (R.C.S.A.) , Monk Sandu Tudor developed, a perspective through which our subject reflected on these environments, and the strategy he used to adapt, integrate or oppose the aforementioned contexts.

¹³ It is enough to mention here the phenomenon of re-education, which included the following three stages: the first - *external unmasking* - when all the victims of the experiment were initially passed through an interrogation, during which physical torture was aimed at providing intimate details of one's personal life. In most cases, prisoners, from the intention to avoid torture, *admitted* imaginary sins. The second phase - *internal unmasking* - aimed to disclose the names of those who behaved less brutal or somehow indulgent towards them in detention. The third phase - *public moral unmasking* - consisted in public humiliation when prisoners were forced to denounce all beliefs, ideas and personal values. Target prisoners were mostly Christians who were dressed as Jesus and the others were forced to insult and bring insults to religious symbols and sacred texts. Prisoners were forced to accept the fact that they came from families with all kinds of criminal traits, grotesque and forced to write false autobiographies, comprising different grades of perverse behavior.

¹⁴ See, in this sense, *The autobiographical memory* of Priest Daniil which was addressed to the Minister of Religious Affairs in order to ordination. The author was aware that in order the priesthood file to be approved, his autobiography had to please the communist authorities, hence the presentation of the facts particular note, designed to win the sympathy of the decision makers.

We added to the perspective of micro history, which is generous and experimental, conceptual questioning in martyrology and literature. Moreover, the recovery of the subjective dimension of lived history corresponds to the "civilization of sacrifice"¹⁵ of totalitarianism.

The main **method** by which we exploited this theoretical perspective was that of **documentation, bibliographical research** and consisted mainly in the research of special service and repression archive documents (Safety, Special Intelligence Service - SSI, Security, Gendarmerie) in conjunction with another kind of informative documents from the work published about the communist regime in Romania to confessing literature.

Another method was the **comparative one**, because the study of memoirs and testimonies for those who suffered the rigors of communist prisons requires it urgently. Moreover, historical and theological researchers agreed unanimously that the empirical part of the research is essential for understanding the phenomenon and to develop theoretical analysis viable on the subject: *"Even if the testimony of oral history is a subjective source in some cases, has greater credibility than the material from the Security and often fills in a documentary gap"*¹⁶. Often these materials mix truth with falsehood bodies and the researcher can only partially validate data accuracy. Confronting data collected from diverse sources allows a check and facilitates research in all this thicket of documents. For this reason we intend to take over in this study only information that we seem to be credible and verifiable.

The Quantitative Method allowed data analysis statistically, these corresponding to the need to give new meanings to this research, by the depth of the focused aspects and conclusions resulted after reading a large number of documents and texts.

A "raw material" for the research was the manuscripts and published books by the main members of the "The Burning Stake" and the literature that reflected the cultural activity of the Association: literary histories, dictionaries, philosophy, aesthetic theory, literary criticism and periodicals.

We note that we operated a subjective selection of texts of "The Burning Stake" members, subject to the same rigors of time, the epicenter being represented by those of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor, whose analysis has been made comparatively and synthetically, from the

¹⁵ Răzvan Codrescu Looking for the lost legion, Christiana Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, p. 55.

¹⁶ Cristian Vasile, *Romanian Orthodox Church in the first communist decade*, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 10.

theologically literary, depending on themes, motifs, concepts, core elements found in various works.

Topicality and significance of the study: In a very poor transition contemporary society, research theme of those who died in the name of Christ and the nation is currently pressing. Therefore, the emblematic personalities must be brought to the surface because of their example to refresh our Christian moral values, which have the same constant actuality.

The interest in the study of Romanian totalitarianism and its consequences occurred soon after 1989 and in recent decades we have witnessed an avalanche of works of historical, political, social, religion character, all aiming to uncover the oppressive regime. For twenty years, the contemporary history of the Romanian Orthodox Church has prompted a period of intense searches, denudation of various research experiences. Of course, this range is not enough for a rigorous selection, the history will be the one to determine exactly the viability of nonfiction works. Our contribution is to sort those which I considered most interesting in terms of authenticity and objectivity virtues they emit.

Totalitarianism is perhaps the most important, and the most recent event that marked the evolution of twentieth century literature. The best solution that circulated is to solve this issue with a multidisciplinary treatment. Regarding the relationship religion - science - literature, beyond the existing theories of separation, friendship and cooperation, the vision of the theologians-writers is inclusive in terms of Christian Science, the topic of the research being God's truth. Religion, science, art must be made in their autonomy, but only together can have solutions¹⁷.

Micro history and "*history of many, the humble*" as the Belgian historian Carlo Ginzburg appreciated, is only one aspect, not negligible, of the history of the high and thereby the daily behavior of any individual and the sensitivity of a community can be revealing for understanding historical events or phenomena. This objective can be achieved only by returning to the primary document, that in the archive. History implies knowledge by traces, through documents and evidence. The need for confrontation of different types of sources is more necessary as "*victims of the totalitarian regime often prove the unique speech storing, a radical alternative to the lies*

¹⁷ We only mention a few references: Toader NICOARĂ *Clio in the third horizon millennium. Explorations in contemporary historiography*, Accent Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca 2002; Paul RICOEUR, *History and truth*, Anastasia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996; Paul VEYNE, *How to write history*, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999.

of an established society"¹⁸ even if the speech is filtered through the experiences of the person who manufactures it.

Concern to human condition (*concern to human condition*) is also a good opportunity for theologian, historian and linguists researchers to carry out studies referring to the consequences of the setting of a totalitarian regime. The historian, theologian and philologist go to people from the past with their own human experience. What the historian, the theologian and the literary specialist want to give back through the net of the causal reasons is exactly what other people lived. That past we went far away from is the human past. At the temporal distance that specific distance is added, which depends on the fact that the other is a different man. Therefore, inexhaustible human nature of the past itself is one that requires a full understanding. The ultimate reality of human experience in the past tends to recover in a more articulated reconstruction in more differentiated analytical summaries.

Micro history tends to privilege the abandoned category of the traditional historiography and settling on the documents from the dusty archives and the testimony of those who were sacrificed for love of God and country, analysed from new methodological perspective, is a Christian duty in line with contemporary trends of historiography.

"The Burning Stake" - whose initiator and animator was, beyond any doubt, Sandu Tudor - the clerical movement that managed to create a true symbiosis between religion and culture, even under the brutal gaze of the communist totalitarianism, lately provoked many theological debates with historical and literary specific. The relations between the Romanian Orthodox Church and State under the totalitarian communist regime, the clergy resistance, the persecution brought against members of the Association "The Burning Stake", the need to start a project of canonization of those who died witnessing to Christ¹⁹, the aesthetic value of the texts written by the writers within "The Burning Stake", are all issues publicly discussed. Unfortunately, after 1990, the reception of life and / or work of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor has aroused much controversy and many of them have had as sources regrettable inaccuracies (albeit most of pseudo-information to which we refer are related to the laic posture of the subject of the research).

¹⁸ Răzvan CODRESCU, *The Right advice book. A Christian perspective on politics*, Christiana Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 12.

¹⁹ See deacon. prof. Ioan I. ICĂ Jr., PhD, "Daniil Sandu Tudor-poet, hermit, neohymnograf and martyr" in the *"Theological Magazine"* year I, no. 2, 1991

Therefore, this micro history must be seen as an important contribution to understanding this model-personality, the spokesman of a sacrificed generation, sons of the Romanian Orthodox Church, who held the true faith, even if it meant the ultimate sacrifice. Moreover, Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor is in the martyrology from 2007²⁰ and for a long time he is in the attention of the Canonization Commission of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Therefore, the major achievements of this study could be a response to problems associated with public awareness of communist totalitarianism in a controversial case, which is still under debate in Romania.

The problem of martyrs is particularly important for the whole Church for without bodily presence of the martyrs, cannot celebrate the Mass, their blood being, moreover, the seed of more than 2,000 years of Christian history. In today's society the problem of canonization of the martyrs is a source of some contradictions, generating a dispute of ideas. This was a starting point in achieving this scientific approach, because only in this way things can be explained - if there is a rivalry and a total sincerity in presenting the truth, both historically and theologically.

The originality of the theme: The contribution of scientific research in this approach lies in treating these directions from the micro history perspective that can reveal contexts, ideas and nuances we neglected until now. Micro history is a microscopic method which investigates socio-political and cultural contexts and identities developments, such as monk, writer²¹, journalist²², prisoner of the communist state²³. All these things will be interpreted from a martyrology perspective, meaning that our research will monitor how Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor

²⁰ ***, *Martyrs for Christ, in Romania during the communist regime*, Biblical Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, pp. 158-167 (article about Daniil Sandu Tudor is signed by the historian George Enache).

²¹ We only mention two significant writings of the biblical creation of the poet-monk: *The Akatist of Our Allpious Father St. Demetrius The New, Keeper of oxen in Basarabov*. However, Father Adrian Făgețeanu claimed that Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor initiated translations of books from Greek Priests. See, in this regard, ACNSAS, Insightful background, file no. 211 015, vol. 3, ff. 61-62.

²² Sandu Tudor was known in his culture first by publishing his polemical and often caustic, especially on issues related to political ideologies and unchristian views. He worked at *Literary movement, Literary and artistic word, Literary talks, The Contemporan, Times rhythm, The Christian idea, Thinking*. In 1932 he founded the journal *The Fire Flower* then, in 1933, publishes the daily *Faith*. Renunciation of the worldly meant an abandonment of journalistic activity.

²³ Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor was arrested first, between 1950-1952, at Jilava Penitentiary, because in the second arrest, with the famous group of 15 people, which was given the name - group "*Alex Teodorescu and others*" - to find his death in Aiud Penitentiary (sentence was 25 years' *hard imprisonment* for "*conspiracy against the social order*") on the date of November 17th, 1962.

has adapted his monastic status, his theological vocation and his mystical ideals to the politico-social, economic, cultural and religious contexts, which he crossed in his earthly life.

At the same time, from the need to bring other evidence of struggle against the Romanian Orthodox Church and the policy of compromise of the Church in general, we have connected memoirs with official documents (see CNSAS) - from which we selected, especially unpublished texts. Putting the two perspectives in the mirror was meant to guard against slippage in *logic* of Security communist investigators. So, the interviews with the few survivors of the Burning Stake (Nicolae Radulescu, Emanoil Mihailescu, Priest Nicholas Bordașiu) were likely not only to complete the picture of resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church under Communist totalitarianism but to submit the documents of the Security to a process of demystification, which in our view, they are best placed to carry it out.

Equally, completing of Sandu Tudor's biography was favored us by the original documents that we found in CNSAS archive and by the happy discovery of some witnesses who knew him directly, and who supported our efforts to bring important documents in the public space for development of the research on this topic. Autobiography of Mr. Emanoil Mihailescu, the farewell letter to his wife, Virginia Teodorescu (born Gheorghiu) written by Sandu Tudor, the analyze of the records of minutes of questioning of the ex-convicts in the group "*Teodorescu Alex. and others*" - Nicolae Radulescu and Emanoil Mihailescu, - testimony of Priest Nicholas Bordașiu who, in his interview, reveals what the prayer of the heart received from Father Ivan Kulîghin meant are all evidence of the beneficence of these men, disciples of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor. These people answered on our request and were involved in the lucid effort to reconstruct the historical truth, shaking off (as much as possible) of bias²⁴.

The bibliography has been presented in the last part of the paper. **Short framework of the paper:** From editing reasons, the paper, which is entitled *Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor - a microhistory of the resistance underground movement of The Romanian Orthodox Church during the comunist totalitarianism*, is structured in two parts.

In the **first part**, called *Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor - a paradigm of resistance by faith and culture*, we aim to achieve a micro history of the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church, by putting under scrutiny of the conditions in which they place various transformations, spiritual or cultural, the subject of our research.

²⁴ See Carmen CIORNEA, *The Face of the Burning Stake* Eikon Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015.

If the **first chapter** aims to fix some methodological benchmarks useful for the proposed scientific approach – the necessity of its presence having as a foundation the fact that micro history is an area still in the experimental stage – the following three chapters are designed to demonstrate that a micro history of the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church (during interwar period or totalitarian communist period), made by researching the contexts in which Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor lived, is useful to revise the main explanatory models - either historical or theological – through which these historical periods were analyzed.

The second chapter puts under scrutiny the writer, publicist, member of the Romanian Christian Students Association, director of publications Sandu Tudor, the development environments circumscribed to the fertile Romanian interwar period, and his vision towards those contexts which marked his cultural and spiritual development. For reasons of circumscribing the exact theme, we avoided detailed presentation of some current of ideas (economic, political, social or religious) that occurred in the interwar Romanian period, focusing on those which marked the development of the subject of the research in order to outline a paradigm in which the individual element is, thanks to some key features such as autonomy and openness to otherness, a centre from where changing community starts. Thus, the last chapter, with conclusive value, is designed as a corollary to the entire scientific scaffold previously exposed, which aims at highlighting the various forms of Sandu Tudor's involvement in debates and events of the Romanian Orthodox Church during the interwar period.

Chapters three and four offer the occasion of the reconstruction of Tudor Sandu's ideas and images about the Church, faith and nation in the context of communist totalitarianism. The deep metamorphosis are enciphered, though, by the many names, because the one who was born Alexandru Teodorescu and he made himself known on the public stage under the pseudonym Sandu Tudor becomes now *Monk Agathon* and subsequently *Priest Daniil from Rarău*²⁵. The journey of the unflinching monk who obstinately refuse compromises (especially when they bring prejudice to the orthodox doctrine) will be brutally disrupted, Priest Daniil going to pay, ultimately, with the ultimate sacrifice for his audacity. Closed because he was the initiator and

²⁵ Information about the steps taken in the monastic order is found in *The autobiographical memory* which is quoted above. Thus, in 1948, brother Alexander (Sandu Tudor) from Antim Monastery becomes monk Agaton; in 1949 he officially entered the Craiova Metropolitan and in 1950 to be ordained a priest (Hieromonk) due Crasna-Gorj Monastery (Archdiocese of Craiova), where is called the abbot. In 1952 he went to Neamț, Sihla, Slatina and Hermits Monasteries, where he received from Priest Ilie Cleopa the name Daniil and he received the Great Schema. In 1954 is the abbot of the Rarău Church.

animator of one of the spiritual movement, whose significance for the Romanian Orthodox Christian spirituality is widely recognized²⁶, he dies on November 17, 1962. Even the logic of Security betrays the importance and recognizing of this martyr of Christ, an eloquent proof being, in our opinion, that the group of 16 arrested (whose main *sin* was belonging to the "Burning Stake", translated into the Security language as a *subversive, hostile* group comprised of members suffering from the *mystical legionary disease*) bears his name – "*Alex Teodorescu and others*". That is why the last sections of these two chapters is a pretext to subordinate the entire argumentative and scientific approach to the principles of the martyrology research²⁷.

The second part of this thesis, Literary liturgical creation of Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor - mystical poet (neo hymnologist) of The Romanian Orthodox Church shifts the focus on the poetic dimension of the subject of our research, specifically on identifying private notes of his akatist-hymns - by applying a hermeneutics theory from the perspective of iconic anthropology structure. **The fact that akatist-hymns were accepted by the Romanian Orthodox Church in her liturgical corpus and are thus enjoying the status of sacredness, specific religious texts, requires the identification of appropriate arrangements for the reception of such creations.** Thus, the first chapter will establish the theoretical particular benchmarks needed for this particular hermeneutic approach and in the second chapter we can identify the Tudorian religious imaginary as it configures in Sandu Tudor's worship poetry – akatist-hymns.

To detect significant, central ideas, regarding the reflection of certain mystical images in Tudorian poetical work, our research will consider the structural-analytical method designed to identify images by reference to the archetype, the constitutive chronotop. In other words, we seek to consolidate, to agglutinate the religious images in his liturgical compositions - akatist- hymns - to symbols, which we decode not only with an aesthetic key, but especially

²⁶ † Antonie PLĂMĂDEALĂ, *The Burning Stake*, Archdiocese of Sibiu Publishing House, Sibiu, 2002, p. 9: "What will I do now, there will be only a first attempt to outline what could become someday, establishing more systematically, a third important moment in the history of Romanian spirituality. He will come after the moment Paisie Velicovschi, contemporary of Abbot Vasile from Poiana Mărului and after Calinic moment at Cernica, of course, being twinned with the Elder of Cernica, all known hesychasts, spiritual fathers with high level of spirituality in the history of our Church. "

²⁷ The most important data on the martyrology research were selected from The principles of the martyrology research by Prof. Ilie Badescu, PhD, lect. Andreea Bandoiu, PhD prof. Paul Cyril, PhD, Christiana Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010 then the CNSAS archive documents. Other books and sources, were read and will be mentioned during the presentation.

with a theological one. " *The Akatist of Our Allpious Father St. Demetrius The New, Keeper of oxen in Basarabov* " denotes the power exerted by the archetype on the literature, the impact of Christianity on the creative imagination. Probing the depths of the Tudorian imaginary, in the direction of Church tradition and the Christian vision, leads, on the one hand, to the identification (or even glimpse) of any strand hidden link between the word of Scripture, the Church's doctrine and moral life of the Christian, and, on the other hand obliges to reveal some new elements which can explain the development of private own way they are what we might call the original iconography of Sandu Tudor's imaginary.

In this regard, even since the stage of guessing and assumptions, the analysis of this type of text compels the reader (who is invited to coparticipation to *accomplish* the message) to climb and settle in the awareness area, the area of approved prospecting. The permanent need to give current size to the following of Christ (which translates into the dialectic of the typology in the relationship *type-antitype*) is explained by the feeling of unfulfillment that threaten at every step the circumstantial balance of the human existence. The purpose of the sacred text requires intertextuality, overlapping of the meanings literally, allegorically, morally, anagogically, resumption of dialogue between man and God (whose medium of communication is particularly the Revelation) because only so the deeper meanings are revealed to him.

That is why we believe that reading " *The Akatist of Our Allpious Father St. Demetrius The New, Keeper of oxen in Basarabov* " - the first and only akatist-hymn the author conceived from a laic posture - has the gift of bringing the mystical thrill in our hearts, to reveal it to us, contributing to the activation of the transfiguring dynamism of faith.

Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor monumental work is supported by at least three reasons: first, because it realizes a liturgical experience of Scripture; secondly, because it leverages traditional methods of hermeneutics; Finally, because some of his creations (we refer to his norm - texts – the akatist-hymns) were accepted by the Romanian Orthodox Church in its liturgical corpus, thereby enjoying the status of sacredness of specific religious texts.

" *Akatist-Hymn at Mother of God's Burning Stake* " shows how deeply the monk poet was marked by the spiritual model of the Mother of God, the human being who brought God down to earth by her humility and purity. Daughter of God, Mother of the Son and Fiancee of the Holy Spirit is a measure of perfect obedience which canceled the disobedience of the first woman - Eve.

Going on in interpreting of the Tudorian imaginary, towards patristic literature and Christian vision we discover a creator who struggles to reconfigure the Word from word through the communication means that is by excellence offered by the Revelation, the model being the Mother of God, the axis of the whole *Akatist-Hymn* around which all ideas and images levitate in an apotheosis, holy praise of the One Who Gave Birth to God. The admirable zeal with which the author himself understood to lean on each word, his febrile search for poetic perfection and for spiritual depth is proved by the long creative process, "*Akatist-Hymn at Mother of God's Burning Stake*" being done during more than a decade. The word, soul expression, shows the relationship between image and full units, between faces that communicate with each other. Poetic identity is based at prereflexive, preanalytical level, into the pure act of self utterance of the being. Aurora Status of the poetic utterance indicates to the initial state of being in the theological sense. In the hymns-akatist of the poet, the act of literary creation is at the service of the *discovery* of the transcendent, toward which incessantly strives, but also of the unsuspected inner sides of the heart in which God is present.

Religious imagery is designed as a journey of deification of the being, which crosses countless spheres to reach symbolic Tabor Mountain that housed **the epiphany of light**. The state of contemplation is regarded as the state in which man comes to know his own weaknesses, but at the same time to filter through **the light of God**. Time dissociates in **anabasic time**, during which being tends toward absolute, and **catabasic**, turning inward toward the center of the heart.

The leitmotif "*Rejoice, hatching Bride of endless prayer*" underlines synthetically both the truth that the prayer of the Holy Mother is a form of annihilation of the space-time limits, the only way of union with God and that the *Akatist-Hymn* is especially a state of prayer, a message that does not want to be understood but mostly lived. This type of text proposes a different size to the reader, the typological reading forcing him to live up, in turn, to experience the prayer into his own being.

The Virgin Mary is, by her very divine nature, light, a supernatural light, being able to pass through various metamorphoses in order to mediate the communication between the human race with the divine world. Finally, non-space and non time where **the fire of God** has His abode is turned into a metaphor through the *Burning Stake*, the Stake that is burning and is not consuming itself, the Stake that poet-monk struggled, giving us a paradigm of resistance through

faith and culture, life and his work being likely to cipher the trajectory of a *homo religious* of the most authentic case.

We believe as fully entitled the Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală's appreciation, expressed in his "The Burning Stake", where Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor remains a model on which necessarily we have to stop and join the belief that all the people who knew him directly or mediated must confess, because things must not remain unknown, he is a hero whose canonization is legitimate²⁸.

Therefore, **the expected idea of the research** is shown not only by the nature of theological-historical type but also by the literary kind. The theoretical perspective in this work is related both to the recent theories in micro history and the use of the concepts in martyrology, theology and literature. Thus, Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor is the *subject* of the research and also a *pretext* to extend its wider context, as a *witness*, *observer* and *protagonist* of the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the interwar period and under communist totalitarianism.

However, we hope that the results of the research will be useful to those who will carry out studies on the issue of martyrdom in communist prisons, so they will be for the people's benefit and also for the theologian, historians and literary researchers and general public to understand the need for collaboration with them in order to verify the diagnosis of martyrdom.

²⁸†Antonie PLĂMĂDEALĂ, *Rugul Aprins*, ediția electronică, Ed. Arhiepiscopiei Sibiului, Sibiu, 2002, p. 48

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