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DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
DOCTORAL FIELD: PHILOLOGY

PhD THESIS ABSTRACT

**THE JOURNAL *FLOAREA DE FOC*
(*FIRE FLOWER*): EDITORIAL DIRECTION AND
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INDEX**

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CONSTANȚA
2022

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Key words: *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)*, interwar publication, religious discourse, cultural models, sowerism, Poporanism, thoughtism, livingism, ideological systems, literary life, journals, press, editorial direction, bibliographic index, sowingism, thinkingism, spiritualism, experience, livingism, generation, traditionalism, autochthonism, modernism, universalism, ethnocentrism, Christian student associations, orthodoxy, confessionism, interconfessionism, integral nationalism, integral Christianity.

1. Motivational Preamble

The present work aims to address a topic of wide interest not only for researchers in the field of philology, but also for historians, theologians, sociologists or anthropologists, completing the fascinating, frenetic, hectic and at the same time controversial picture of the Romanian interwar journalism, as it is configured through the research so far.

The Fire Flower (Floarea de Foc) appeared in the interwar Bucharest, between 1932 and 1936, it being known that during this interval the publication experienced significant interruptions in its periodicity (in the period 1934-1935 no issue appeared), an aspect also elucidated by the bibliographic note of the journal included in this work. None of the collections of the big libraries have all the issues of the publication *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)*, an aspect that required the corroboration of the sources, besides the many decades away from the printing of the journal also brought the drawback of damage to the paper, which significantly hampered the pace of research.

The director of the publication, Sandu Tudor, the author of a vast work that portrays him in heterogeneous roles - mystical poet, neo-hymnographer, prolific journalist, remarkable theologian and man of culture - ascended his soul to the heavens from Aiudului prison, in the night from 16 to 17 November 1962, as Daniil the High Priest. The profile of the monk Daniil Sandu Tudor was the subject of my doctoral thesis in the theological field - Father Daniil Sandu Tudor - a microhistory of the Orthodox Romanian Church (ORC) (BOR) resistance under

communist totalitarianism¹ - and of numerous studies² and volumes published to date³.

This is why I stopped at this topic: from the need to clarify the multiple controversies related to the image of the journalist Sandu Tudor, controversies in which the defamatory labels “blackmailer”, “dandy”, “opportunist” arouse passions and acid polemics. In order to fulfill the purpose of the present study, we published the complete collection of articles from Sandu Tudor’s *The Fire Flower*⁴, a work through which, we appreciate, the plurivalent personality of the one who founded the Burning Altar - a symbiosis between worship and culture, a way to preserve humanity in the context of an increasingly mutilating communist totalitarianism.

1.1. The Research Objectives

What I planned to achieve through this study was, first, to analyse to what extent the texts published by Sandu Tudor in his first journal, *The Fire Flower* (Floarea de Foc), verify his stature as a trained theologian and writer and, implicitly, to discover if a political affiliation, an ideological direction, be it right-wing or left-wing, is reflected through the programs owed to the head of the publication. The second part of the work represents the most consistent part, by creating the bibliographic index. The proposed theme presupposed, above all, a descriptive analysis, an

¹ See Carmen CIORNEA, *Priest Daniil Sandu Tudor – a microhistory of the resistance during the communist totalitarianism*, AB-ART Publishing House, Budapest, 2020.

² From which we mention Carmen CIORNEA, “«Rugul Aprins» («The Burning Altar») Association between legality and legitimacy”, in *Cross-Cultural Management Journal*, nr.1, 2020, pp. 31-39; Idem, “Monk Agaton (Sandu Tudor) and the desires of the Christian mission”, *Network Intelligence*, volume VIII, Issue 15, 2020, pp. 35-43; Idem, “The investigation and the trial of the Monk Agaton (Sandu Tudor). The paradoxical twin situation victim-executioner”, *SEA–Practical Application of Science*, volume VIII, 2020, Issue 22, pp. 91-105; Idem, “From Monk Agaton to Hieroschemamonk Daniil. The clandestine stage of «Rugul Aprins» («The Burning Altar»)”, in *SEA–Practical Application of Science*, Volume VII, Issue 21, 2019, pp. 293-302; Idem, “The First Arrest of Monk Agaton (Sandu Tudor). Jilava, Poarta Albă, The edge – human avatars in the prison”, in *SEA–Practical Application of Science*, Volume VII, Issue 21, 2019, pp. 285-292; Idem, “The arrest and the investigation of the group «Rugul Aprins» («The Burning Altar»)”, in *Law, Society & Organisations*, Volume V, Issue 8, 2019, pp. 49-57; Idem, “The trial of the group «Rugul Aprins» («The Burning Altar»)”, in *Law, Society & Organisations*, Volume V, Issue 8, 2020, pp. 33-42; Idem, “Paradoxical reception of Sandu Tudor’s works during The Second World War”, in *Intercultural Management*, Volume XIX, nr. 39, 2017, pp.175-188; Idem, “Sandu Tudor, the mentor and the catalyst of spiritual movement from Antim. The evolution of association «Burning Altar»“, in *Intercultural Management*, nr. 37, 2016, pp. 415-420.

³ See Carmen CIORNEA, *Hieroschemamonk Daniil Sandu Tudor –the mystical poet*, Eikon Publishing house, Bucharest, 2021; Idem, “Be not warmy!” *Sandu Tudor and the establishment of The Burning Altar* (1940-1952) („Să nu fiți căldicei!” *Sandu Tudor și întemeierea Rugului Aprins* (1940-1952), preface by Marius Oprea, PhD, foreword by Priest Nicolae Bordașiu, Eikon Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018; Idem, *Sandu Tudor and the Christian student associations in România during World War II* (*Sandu Tudor și asociațiile studențești creștine din România interbelică*), foreword Nicușor Nacu PhD, Eikon Publishing House, Bucharest, 2017; Idem, *The Sight of The Burning Altar* (*Chipul Rugului Aprins*), foreword by Marius Vasileanu, Eikon Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015.

⁴ See Sandu TUDOR, „*Floarea din foc*” 1932-1936, Eikon Publishing House, Bucharest, 2022, volum în which the text selection and editing, together with the foreword, note to the editor and the name index belong to the undersigned.

inventory of the large number and, implicitly, of the heterogeneous topics addressed by the editors and collaborators of the publication that constitutes our object of study, as well as an examination of the evolutionary lines that can be observed in its editorial direction, with possible changes of attitude or, on the contrary, with the reaffirmation over time of some initial principles and objectives.

Therefore, this work can also be seen as a deepening of previous research efforts in which I tried to highlight the monumental personality of the cleric Daniil Sandu Tudor. This time, however, the elucidation effort was focused on the significant aspects of the training stage of the journalist Sandu Tudor, the director of the interwar publications *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* and *The Faith (Credința)*. It is impressive that even now - surely, as the director of a publication - he managed to bring together the intellectuals who left an indelible mark on the interwar Romanian culture, the representative figures of the young spiritualist generation.

1.2. Research issues

The main question is whether *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal managed to evade the ideological imperatives of the time and preserve its editorial direction, belonging to no political doctrine. Obviously, many other aspects depend on solving this problem. How did the publication *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* evolve during the years 1932-1936? How was the editorial activity planned and organised by the head of the journal, Sandu Tudor? What were the principles of editorial coordination? What place did the *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* occupy in the context of interwar publications? What were the favorite themes disseminated in the public space? Then, the scrutiny of the editorial direction requires the restoration of the route traveled by the journalist Sandu Tudor, an approach which, in turn, raises other questions related to the circumstances of his socio-cultural and spiritual formation, to the cultural and historical contexts, to the friendships he created with those whose texts he now publishes in his journal, etc.

It should be pointed out from the beginning that the solutions of our study do not pretend to be exhaustive. Moreover, in order to prevent possible ambiguities, I have opened each chapter of this work with the working hypotheses.

1.3. The Difficulty

Bringing to the light of print the publicist creation hidden by the ranks of the publication

The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc) represented the overcoming of multiple, often discouraging difficulties.

The first stage of the present research, the “administrative” phase, mandatory for any scientific endeavor, naturally involved a global inventory of acquisitions, which resulted in the corroboration of no less than four sources - the collections of the Academy Library, the Central Library “Carol I” University Bucharest, Central University Library “Lucian Blaga” Cluj-Napoca and, respectively, the CNSAS Archive (National Council for the Study of Security Archives) and this because none of the collections of the big libraries has all the issues of the publication *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)*. More precisely, in the Library of the Academy I found the following numbers: 1-11 from the first year (1932); 1-3 from year II (1933) and 1-11, 16-22 from year III (1936) of the publication *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)*. The “Carol I” Central University Library has in its collections the issues of January 6, 13, 23 and 30, 1932; 6, 13, 20 and 27 February 1932; 6, 12, 19 and 26 March 1932; March 25 and April 30, 1933, and those of January 25, 1936, respectively; 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 February 1936; March 15, 1936, April 4, 1936, May 28, 1936, June 4 and 11, 1936 from the periodical *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)*. The collections of the Central University Library “Lucian Blaga” Cluj-Napoca include numbers 1-8 and 10 from the first year (1932), 1-3 from the second year (1933) and 3-22 from the third year (1936). In the CNSAS Archive (National Council for the Study of Security Archives), in file 013495, vol. 2, Criminal fund, numbers 4 (f. 81), 5 (f. 83), 6 (f. 103) and 12 (f. 87) from the first year (1932) of the publication that placed Sandu Tudor for the first time in the position of director of a newspaper. Implicitly, identifying these sources meant consulting many other library catalogs, archives, etc. and the reduced schedule (at times, even suspended) of the above-mentioned institutions during the pandemic was included in the same range of burdensome, dragging elements. On top of all this, I add the decades away from the appearance of the journal which, predictably, also brought the drawback of paper damage, which are frequent phenomena (pages with worn edges, missing pages, illegible letters or even erased passages,) and here, therefore, the faithful reproduction of the text imposed, in most cases, a laborious study.

We add here the cautious interpretation of the archival resources, the documents drawn up by the specialised bodies of the Police and General Security Directorate, the *dignified forerunners* of the Security, providing, more than once, a contorted reality. The reason? The contents cannot be interpreted outside the interests of the political police. The purpose of drawing up the various

notes, papers, reports, etc., which today we find in the ACNSAS files, was to obtain, analyse and synthesise information of a political and personal nature in order to identify potential adversaries and, consequently, to adopt countermeasures.

1.4. The Contemporaneous Aspect of the Research Topic

Following in the footsteps of those who chose to make the ultimate sacrifice in order not to abdicate their work on earth in the name of Christ and the nation⁵ remains a route at the end of which Christian, national and ethical values are renewed, their example saving us from all the personal and social ills of the time.

Indeed, Sandu Tudor, the future Hieroschimonah Daniil, occasions just such a trajectory and the major purpose of the present thesis consists in proving the thinking and theological vocation of the young journalist in training and, then, of the journal director, who, thus, had the chance to impose an editorial direction in the extremely diversified and polemical ensemble of the interwar Romanian press. Expected results automatically assume the achievement of objectives and the elucidation of answers to research questions.

1.5. The originality of the present work

The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc) journal, in its entirety, was not the research object of any other study, the main cause being, we appreciate, the fact that none of the collections of the big libraries offered the possibility of consulting all the issues of the publication. Therefore, the major contribution of our research resides in bringing to the fore a quasi-unknown magazine, although in its lines the texts of the cultural elites of interwar Romania are hidden, as well as in the approach of library research methods and techniques, which allowed the organisation of the content of the publication by subjects and authors.

Completing the data about the journal with new sources found in the Archive of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives, the Central National Historical Archives and the Archive of the Library of the Romanian Academy equally ensures the originality of the present thesis.

⁵ It should be mentioned here that Father Daniil Sandu Tudor has been in the attention of the Commission for Canonisation of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church for a long time, being included in the martyrology of 2007. See ***, *Martyrs for Christ, from Romania, during the communist regime*, EIBMBOR, Bucharest, 2007, pp. 158-167 (the article about Daniil Sandu Tudor is signed by the historian George Enache).

2. The methodological frame of the research

For the first chapter of the work, I considered necessary the microhistory method, a method that offered the possibility of focusing not only on the subject (the young journalist Sandu Tudor) and the heterogeneous contexts of his formation in the period 1919-1932, but also on the vision that the journalist had of all these circumstances of his earthly becoming.

In the second chapter of our thesis we resorted to the comparative method. We applied the requirement of synchronic and diachronic comparability to *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal in order to identify the place it occupied within the Romanian interwar publications, the evolution in the period 1932-1936, the editorial coordination, the preferred themes, the governing principles of the director and the magazine's collaborators (the share holding it the representatives of the young spiritualist generation), the reflection of the literary, theological, cultural, national, political aspects of the time.

In the second part of the work, composed of the last two chapters, I approached the bibliographic research method. Thus, the complex content of the articles of *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal was grouped into thirteen specialties, fiction literature being the priority, as well as texts with theological themes, subjects that constitute the basis of the present publication. In the rest, the ranking of the materials was done according to the universal decimal classification.

We appreciate that by using these work tools, specific to librarianship, the concerns of the journal and its collaborators are clarified. The systematisation of the articles of the *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal by subject and author according to content, supports scientific research, facilitating the access of those who intend to rigorously study the publications of the great personalities of the Romanian interwar period, grouped around the publication, or all the materials which would deal with one of the heterogeneous problems of literature, theology, visual arts, theater, music, ideology, cultural, religious, social, political life, etc. from the contents of the publication.

We cannot help but stop in order to notice the dilemmatic situation of any researcher who assumes the role of investigating an issue related to the Romanian interwar period. Most likely, our attempt to find possible answers to the working hypotheses, included in the present study, will raise suspicions, considering the strong polemics, the passions that the debate on this topic still arouses. Therefore, the method and means of work add to the presumption of impartiality⁶,

⁶ An ample presentation of the presumptions from which an author can be claimed in the treatment of the thorny

dissociation, the red thread of our entire research effort. That the interpretation of information forces the formulation of personal opinions is beyond any doubt, however, we emphasise with this presumption our situation in *research* and not in the polemics of the current cultural landscape. The present study considers itself being an analysis in which processes of intention will not be operated and arguments will not be procured for any identity idiosyncrasies, an analysis in which the preeminence of honesty and intellectual responsibility will be kept as a fundamental principle.

3. The synthetic presentation of the main parts of the doctoral thesis

The two parts of the doctoral thesis consist of two chapters each.

Mapping the editorial direction of the *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* publication, in our opinion, could not be done without deciphering the cultural and historical contexts in which the future director (Sandu Tudor) was formed alongside those young collaborators of the magazine who were constant presences in all the circumstances that they marked his development at this stage (1919-1932).

In this first chapter, we followed the involvement of these young publicists in the great debates of interwar Romania related to the necessity of religious revival, of the knowledge and application of Christian principles in all manifestations of life, and we explored the offering of possible answers to the following working hypotheses: Orthodoxy was brought into the public space as a result of the activity (in the broad sense of the term) of Nichifor Crainic, Nae Ionescu and their disciples? How were their cultural, personal and socio-professional trajectories influenced by these masters? Was there a resistance to the European spirit in the publicity and actions of these young people? Were they refractory to the echoes of modernisation, of Romania's connection to civilised Europe, instead supporting the building of an own model based on the national specifics? Was their public discourse also aimed at ideological, ideologising and discriminatory valorisation? Was there a unified perception of the concepts of Christianity,

problematic of Romanian interwar history can also be found in "An (impossible) preface", the foreword of the volume *The Romanian Paradox*, the nature of the presumptions being correlated with the idea of perceiving some interwar multiple realities: "The usual division of the period between <<traditionalists>> and <<modernists>>, unanimously accepted from Eugen Lovinescu to Zigu Ornea, or between democrats and the extreme right, underlying the books of Ornea, Volovici, and others, are two cuttings, among others possible, which cannot capture the wholeness of the period, nor provide its global vision. The actions and texts of this period show norms and points of view so fundamentally different that they can hardly be related to a common historical referent. Although they were registered in the same time and space, they do not seem to refer to the same political and cultural referent, but to several different <<Romanias>>". (Sorin ALEXANDRESCU, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17).

Orthodoxy, nationalism, violence, extremism, anti-Semitism in interwar Romania between 1919-1932? Were the actions of the actors targeted by the present research effort an integral part of an Orthodox ethno-nationalist project in which the Romanian Orthodox Church played an active role?

As our analysis involved the deciphering of a cultural context from which we are at a considerable distance in time, this attracted a series of advantages, but inevitably also certain shortcomings.

First, we emphasize the advantage of looking at a cultural phenomenon *from the outside*, not being directly involved in the events that make it up, ensuring a perspective, if not neutral, at least detached, uncontaminated by the dose of subjectivism inherent in experiencing those events as such. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility of perceiving not only cognitively, but also emotionally the events integrated into the existential paths of these young Christian journalists whose spiritual evolution we put under the magnifying glass. On the contrary, we can experience both the past and the future of those events, in the sense that, unlike their protagonists, we have the great privilege of knowing the denouement, the end of their spiritual itinerary. However, this addition, brought by the post-event perception, is not without pitfalls. A first danger is prejudices, idiosyncrasies, negative stereotypes vs. positives associated with the respective characters and events, stereotypes articulated on the reading of the various hermeneutic packages through which historians, literary critics, anthropologists, philosophers, sociologists, political scientists, etc. have filtered and disseminated them in the public space over time.

So, in order to avoid the danger of transforming our research approach into a demonstration of some conclusions already expressed, respectively into a (re)circulation of the assessments of some important personalities, whose positions on the edge of this fragment of Romanian cultural history are notoriety, we started the investigation from primary sources. In order to recover the perception of the actors directly involved on the events, as well as on the inner springs that determined their actions, we took into account the articles published by them at the time, the memorial notes and the correspondence. Regarding the perception of those around them towards the attitudes, facts and consequences of the involvement of these young people in the great debates on the topic of Orthodoxy in Romania in the years 1920-1932, I resorted, mainly, to examining the collections from the Archives of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives or from The Central National Historical Archives (institutions in which I am an accredited researcher), with an emphasis on those documents that until now have not been the subject of

study, as well as filtering echoes from periodicals of the time.

As I pointed out in the introduction, the analysis of files from the aforementioned Archives requires a special hermeneutic. We cannot ignore the purpose of the document, which is to incriminate, to compromise the objective. Hence the importance of corroborating them with other sources, comparative analysis being an effective way to recover, at least in part, the real pulse of events.

Moreover, the major time gap does not only bring advantages. The greater the distance between the moment of experience and that of evocation/interpretation, the more legitimate is the questioning of the quality of information? Then, each period has its own cultural, religious, economic, national, state, ethnic values, etc. symbols. Obviously, there is a significant difference between the perception of reality from the perspective of the young Romanian Christian of the 21st century and that of the young Christian from interwar Romania. That is precisely why a synchronous perspective is imposed on the event context, a focus from the exclusive angle of that historiographical context, a perspective that allows the research of the respective events without contaminating them with our ideas, with our theoretical models, circumscribed by the current culture⁷.

In the second chapter of the doctoral thesis I focused on the editorial direction of the first publication that seated Sandu Tudor at the table of newspaper directors. As I stated in the introduction, the motivation to thoroughly study *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal was not only objective, pragmatic, but also subjective. Sandu Tudor, the director of the publication that is the subject of this thesis, has been the epicenter of our scientific work for more than a decade. Therefore, the creation of the work is part of a, we believe, natural evolution of deepening a research problem, aimed at discovering those hidden, undeciphered (yet) folds of this monumental personality, who deserves recognition not only in ROC (BOR) history, but also in the history of Romanian literature and civilisation.

Of course, the working tools specific to librarianship, which we used in the second part of our work (the last two chapters), when we compiled the bibliographic and alphabetical index of the publication, provided accurate data regarding the themes addressed by all those which have

⁷ For a comprehensive presentation of the opposition between the concepts of “historiographical contextualism” and “textualism”, see Sorin ALEXANDRESCU, *The Romanian Paradox*, Univers Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998, pp. 11-12.

texts published in the pages of the magazine led by Sandu Tudor, but what we proposed to put under the microscope in this second chapter was, first, the location of the *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal in the agora of interwar journalism and, subsequently, the clarification of the coordinating principles editorials, as they appear in the program article. A special place is occupied by the subchapter “*The Faith Newspaper* vs. *The Criterion Group* (Ziarul *Credința* vs. The *Criterion Group*). A high-profile scandal and a formidable blackmailer” in which I addressed an issue that still arouses divergent points of view and resentment: the scandal started by Zaharia Stancu, who published a defamatory article in the pages of the newspaper *The Faith (Credința)*, whose director was also Sandu Tudor, article addressed to prominent members of the *Criterion Group*.

In order to recover the way in which the editorial activity of the publication was received at the time, again, I resorted to the analogy between the archival resources⁸ and the articles in the press of the time that reflected this theme. In fact, the critical point we are aiming at - whether or not *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal was tributary to any political ideology - required, we appreciate, the consultation of these primary sources.

In the third chapter of the thesis I organized magazine articles according to content - a work that involved overcoming some significant obstacles. Going over the aspects related to the difficulty of deciphering a text printed on a paper damaged by the decades that passed between printing and the moment of reading, the establishment of a table of contents, the thematic systematisation of the extremely diverse subjects that the journalists who chose to- and means the name in the contents of *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal (the subject of our study), even through the work tools specific to librarianship, presupposed a thorough study.

In addition to the articles of a fictional and theological nature, the basic topics of the journal, we have identified 11 other specialties, as follows:

1. Romanian literature. Texts and literary criticism
2. Non-native literature. Texts and literary criticism
3. Theorising on religion. The Romanian Orthodox Church facing the challenges of interwar Romania. The mission of the interwar generation
4. Philosophy

⁸ An important role in this approach was played by the information integrated in the file tabs in the CNSAS Archive, Penal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, *passim*.

5. Culture. Science in general
6. Arts
7. Ethics
8. Sociology
9. Policy
10. Education. Teaching
11. History
12. Iconography
13. Editorials

Regarding the work technique, the material hierarchy was made according to the universal decimal classification.

Within each chapter, the articles were systematised chronologically: year, issue, month. The name and surname of the author, the title of the article, the year of the journal, the calendar year, the number and the pagination were mentioned.

In case the information was too laconic, some clarifications were made and were enclosed in square brackets.

The alphabetical index in the final chapter of the work completes and facilitates the consultation of the journal, which assumes the collection of all articles signed by an author in the publication's body. The following references were made: the Roman numeral of the chapter by topic, the order number of each subchapter, the year of publication and the journal number.

I sought, in this way, to highlight the direction of the journal and the concerns of its contributors.

CONCLUSIONS

The moment of the appearance of the *The Fire Flower (Floarea de foc)* journal was set against the background of a decrease in interest in Orthodoxy and the Patristic Tradition in the minds of young people, the period 1930-1932 being recovered in the consciousness of Mircea Vulcănescu - *the spiritus rectus* of the new generation - as an "unspiritual moment". The accelerated pace of the interwar society's transformations, the effervescence of the cultural space corroborated, however, with the turmoil of the political class and multiple ideological pressures, determined a sinusoidal evolution of the press, so that although 1931-1935 represented an

unprecedented peak in terms of the number of periodicals, as quickly as they appeared, they disappeared from the publishing scene. The struggle for survival leads them to adopt heterogeneous strategies: merging with more solid ones, asking for space in the pages of another publication. And *The Fire Flower* (*Floarea de foc*) journal, by the way, resorted to such a strategy, so that in the last year of its appearance (1936), no less than eight issues appeared with the title of “Sunday literary supplement of the newspaper «The Faith» (“Credința”)” (numbers 8-15). It is equally true that most of them slipped into politics, a necessary strategy in order to stay in the publishing arena, even if the deontological price was high: the respective political parties, in fact, taking control over the contents of the publication.

The problem of the regimentation of Sandu Tudor or his generation colleagues in any political ideology in 1932 was excluded. At this stage of their development, the disease of politics was the occasion, rather, the subject of delimitations, young people vehemently rejecting the subordination of the religious to the political and publicly sanctioning (see the exit of Sandu Tudor from among the collaborators of *The Reasoning* (*Gândirea*) journal) any slippage of this nature.

There is no doubt that the editorial direction was inscribed on the neo-traditionalist trajectory that the directors of conscience, Nae Ionescu and Nichifor Crainic, had built, but it must be received in the much wider context of the universal concern of man for the feeling of the supra-nationally holiness (with its Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox ways). The training of those recognised as *Orthodoxist reasoners* - Sandu Tudor, Mircea Vulcănescu, Paul Sterian, Petru Manoliu - the heavy core of *The Fire Flower* editorial office, cannot be reduced only to the school at *The Reasoning* (*Gândirea*) journal and *The Word* (*Cuvântul*) newspaper. The religious revival was a world-wide phenomenon (I showed in the first chapter the fulminant development that the YMCA or YWCA organizations experienced worldwide in the interwar period). Therefore, the theological erudition of Sandu Tudor, Mircea Vulcănescu or Paul Sterian, for example, was supplemented by the contact of young students within the Congresses of the Universal Federation of Christian Student Associations or of the Federation of Christian Student Associations from Romania with delegations abroad, contacts which provided them with the clarification of the ways of renewing the spiritual face of the world. The searches of young Christian students found answers in two ways. The first way was from the West (I have shown that the YMCA and the YWCA were associations of Protestant origin): Protestant missionary, Anglo-Saxon, as well as anti-modern French Catholics, grouped in *Action française*. The second, eastern way, was opened to them

through the meeting of Russian Orthodox Christian theologians and philosophers, self-exiled because of Bolshevism in the capital of France, professors of the Saint-Serge Orthodox Theological Institute. In the case of the director Sandu Tudor, the hesychism towards which he had been building internally since then, had been revealed to him through the Atonite monks.

Therefore, the young Orthodox who understood spirituality as a confessional life, were connected to the world-wide debates on religious themes, debates that will constitute the favorite themes of the journal founded by their joint effort and led by Sandu Tudor – *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc)*.

As for the particular path followed by Sandu Tudor up to this moment of taking the helm of *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc)*. (he was also a naval officer), he was, in turn, an active member of the ASCB, the FASCR and the FUSCR , respectively, of the young interwar generation and up to this moment (January 6, 1932 – the date of the first issue of his publication) he had gained his reputation as a titular publicist, mystical poet, neo-hymnographer and orthodox prose writer. From his prolific activity emerges the profile of a creator for whom the forms of cultural life acquire value only to the extent that they are constituted in stages, means of spiritualisation, rejecting involvement in the cultural agora under the sign of the values of positivism, scientism, atheistic rationalism, aestheticism or urbanism that exclude religion. Rediscovering the spirituality of the young generation was understood by our journal director by its supernatural face, by the transcendent character that transpires from the soul life of the spiritual man. Hence the dynamics of Sandu Tudor, in the cultural realm of the Romanian interwar period, with a predilection directed towards the environments where the values of spiritual life were cultivated, towards the guides who could illuminate the path of the right faith (his closeness to Father Gala Galation and, above all, to Metropolitan Tit Simedrea was notorious, the latter being speculated by the General Security people, as I have shown). In fact, if we were to identify the specific face, the distinctive note of Sandu Tudor, it would, in our opinion, be his fierce inner struggle to access an improved spiritual life, deepened through hesychia, through the ascetic practice of heart prayer, on who had known her since 1929 from the Atonite monks, when through the intercession of Metropolitan Titus Simedrea, he had obtained a scholarship to go to the Holy Mount Athos. The fascination that this monastic world exerted for the one who, now, was fulfilling a project that he had for many years - that of founding his own journal - announced the position of Hieromonk Daniil, a model of resistance through faith and culture, who did not abandon his identity his *de homo religiosus* in

the face of the atheistic communist tyranny of the years to come, the supreme sacrifice seeming to him the lesser price.

This is how we explain the salvation of his eclectic publication, despite the coverage of extremely diverse themes (see the table of contents), spirituality, orthodoxy, autochthonism and universalism, mysticism, experientialism, metaphysical appetite remain the guidelines of *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc) journal* until the last issue (the last page of the journal includes the in-depth article of the director in which he had carried out an investigation on the topic of the generation, a debate updated by the polemic between Zaharia Stancu and Mircea Eliade, the first of them formulating the characterisation that caused an uproar in the period, published in the pages of our journal, “the generation in the dust”).

The young director Sandu Tudor managed to bring together the intellectuals who left an indelible mark on Romanian interwar culture, the representative figures of the young spiritualist generation. No less than 158 authors, Romanian and foreign writers, have published texts in the lines of its publication. In the pages of *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc) journal*, we find, in addition to the prominent personalities of the national and international cultural space, also writers at the beginning of their journey, almost unknown, to whom the generous director gave his trust, and his work did not remain without traces, many of them confirming, in the years to come, their authentic value. Sandu Tudor thus ensured the transfer of the values of their effervescent spiritual generation to the generations that were trying to break through the narrows of the cultural space of interwar Romania.

Therefore, following the synthesis of the data provided both by creating the bibliographic index and by researching the preferred themes, the principles of editorial coordination and, respectively, the situation in the context of interwar journalism, we conclude that *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc) journal*, despite the disconcerting political context of interwar Romania, was not the propaganda organ of any political party of the time. Even if, sporadically, certain collaborators of the journal produced materials that illustrated a specific political ideology, it is undeniable that the core was held by topics from the cultural and spiritual space, a direction imposed, especially, by the director of the journal that constituted the object of the present research effort – *The Fire flower (Floarea de foc)*.

Indeed, to manage to defy the flatening influences of the socio-political context (with obvious ideological accents), to manage to preserve the thematic content of your publication

directed with predilection towards subjects drawn from Romanian and universal cultural life, to manage to evaluate in a correct manner the path of keeping in simplicity, which the dimension of Tradition indicated, to act under the imperatives of a consciousness centered in the mystery of God's creation in order to constitute a platform of cultural-artistic expression at the highest level - all are temptations through which the moral stature is verified, spiritual, intellectual and professional of press man, Sandu Tudor.

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