

„OVIDIUS” UNIVERSITY OF CONSTANȚA

DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

DOCTORAL FIELD: THEOLOGY

**THE YOUNG MEMBERS OF THE
„BURNING ALTAR” GROUP
RECORDED IN STATE SECURITATE
FILES**

ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

PhD COORDINATOR:

Pr. prof. univ. dr. Claudiu-Constantin COTAN

PhD STUDENT:

Pr. Andrei CIORNEA

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Key words: subversive activity, informative action, investigation, agent, anti-communist dissidence, trace, hesychasm, class struggle, mysticism, spiritual priests, resistance, Burning Altar, Securitate, final sentence, confinement space, student, youth, communist totalitarianism, hieromonk Daniil Sandu Tudor, George Văsii, Nicolae Rădulescu, Șerban Mironescu, Emanoil Mihăilescu, Dan-Grigore Pistol.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of our multi-, trans- and interdisciplinary scientific approach was to discover, recover and reconstruct the forms of resistance of former political prisoners - George Văsii, Șerban Mironescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, Emanoil Mihăilescu and Dan-Grigore Pistol - under the communist totalitarian regime, which required a scrutiny of the ways in which the young people included in the Burning Altar group appropriated the political, social, economic, religious and cultural circumstances during the period of communist Romania.

Therefore, the main objectives were the scientific investigation of these five particular cases and the identification of evidence related, on the one hand, to the mechanisms and methods of the oppressive context specific to the totalitarian regime in communist Romania and, on the other hand, to the forms of preserving dignity and Christian identity. The dissociation of the two discursive strategies presupposed the scrutiny of the variety of connotations, the assumption of the plurivocality encoded, especially, in the files of the former State Securitate, whose files were an integral part of our research, so that we could highlight how the same situation became a source of distinct meanings and interpretations for different people. At the same time, being aware of the risks of post-event analysis, we considered the temporal contextualisation, the (re)configuration of the social matrix, the political climate and the social conditions in which the life events of these five personalities took place, as well as the borderline situations they faced in their earthly existence.

Researching the biography of the five former political prisoners, following the dynamism of these young people towards the knowledge of God, which undoubtedly corresponds to more and more luminous facts, involved the identification of effective work tools, specific methods of data collection and processing.

Thus, in our effort to identify, discover and reconstruct as truthfully as possible the manifestations and evolution of the phenomena of resistance regarding the five young people, integrated by the former State Securitate into the Burning Altar group, we resorted to the method of case studies. Each case studied provided, in fact, a field of observation that later allowed both

the discovery of particular, special processes, as well as the highlighting of constants, recurring processes.

Three elements are found in the realisation of all the case studies included in this endeavor: a) general framework, b) data collection and processing and c) case analysis.

The general framework corresponds to the epistemological position of qualitative research, defined by complexity, by the search for meaning, by emphasising the intentions, motivations, expectations, beliefs, reasoning and values of the subjects. The requirements of validity - truth, justice and sincerity - proposed by J. Habermas¹ constituted fundamental concepts, without which, in our opinion, our research approach would not have had a solid scientific construction. The role of the context, in this comprehensive paradigm, aimed at the irreducible originality of the events, the emphasis being shifted from erroneous generalisations, lacking the richness of nuances, to the collection of subjective data, with the aim of increasing the significance of the results². Therefore, the attention in outlining the general framework was focused on the experience lived by the five protagonists under communist totalitarianism and on the perception they had of this experience.

Regarding the problem of selecting the information that is worth remembering, I considered, first, collecting and processing only those data that can clarify the subject of study, being strictly related to it, and, then, I used a matrix whose form was designed for the specific needs of the five cases under scrutiny, a matrix designed to allow a highlighting of the characteristics we set out to study³: the "unhealthy" origins (according to the files of the former State Securitate), the arrest, the investigation, the conviction, prison experience, socio-professional reintegration, forms of repression of the totalitarian communist regime, survival strategies. The angle from which I wanted to examine the researched situation was that of the paradigm of resistance through faith and the structuring of the presentation sought to make this phenomenon of preserving Christian identity despite the constraints of the oppressive system in communist Romania as understandable as possible. Within each chapter, two levels of understanding are actually distinguished. The first

¹ Pentru o tratare, pe larg, a paradigmei comprehensive, a se vedea J. Habermas, *Logique des sciences sociales et autres essais*, PUF, Paris, 1987, passim.

² Paradigma comprehensivă se opune paradigmei pozitivistă fiind o perspectivă care afirmă interdependența obiectului și a subiectului, fundamentele acestui discurs științific neluând în calcul obiectele exterioare independente de subiectul care le percepe, ci percepțiile, senzațiile, impresiile acestuia față de lumea exterioară. O descriere detaliată a epistemologiei metodelor calitative și a rolului contextului în paradigma comprehensivă a fost realizată de autorii J.P. Pourtois și H. Desmet în lucrarea de referință *Epistémologie et instrumentation en sciences humaines*, Pierre Mardaga, Bruxelles, 1988, passim.

³ Vezi Michael Huberman și Matthew B. Miles, *Analyses des données qualitatives*, trad. Catherine de Bracker și Vivian Lamongie, Éditions du renouveau pédagogique, Bruxelles, 1991, pp. 10-12.

level contains the description of the case, so that the reconstruction of the evolution of events can be made concrete. The second, however, represents a higher level of abstraction, the analysis and explanations included in it being intended to allow the connections between the presented events to be noticed.

As far as the third element present in our case studies concerns - case analysis - the strategy adopted in the present approach was connected to the inductive approach, and the purpose was to induce a theoretical model starting from the recurring phenomena, observed in the researched situations . As I have already shown, I resorted to the methodical organisation of the information by developing a matrix (*pattern matching*), which, according to the position of the American researchers Huberman and Miles⁴, can ensure sufficient precision for the analysis. The construction of the analysis grid was carried out gradually, as the investigative route allowed the grouping of the observed elements and, subsequently, bringing to light the conclusions.

The documentation, the bibliographic research focused, as it appears from the title of our doctoral thesis, the study, especially, of the primary sources. Deciphering documents that once served the special integrated services of the State Securitate, the repression services, requires great caution and, above all, an additional assurance that reality has been respected. Predictably, the materials compiled by the State Securitate people served their own purposes, and that is precisely why their credibility is rightly questionable. Another risk I considered was that of excluding ambiguities, of obscuring the reality that there is no exclusive connotation. Therefore, the researcher can only partially certify the accuracy of the information found in the Archive, and the analogy with the data obtained from other sources of information (specialised works that develop the theme of the communist regime in Romania, memorial literature, autobiographies and interviews of survivors, etc.) imperatively imposes.

By virtue of this logic, I sent to the only man who nowadays can reveal to us what the condemnation of the "Burning Altar" lot meant from his own experience - architect Nicolae Rădulescu - the invitation to interpret the pages from the files drawn up in his name or that of his good friends, George Văsii and Emanoil Mihăilescu. At the same time, thanks to the testimony given by Mr. Emanoil Mihăilescu, passed away on February 27th, 2019, the Christian confessor whom I also had the privilege of knowing, I was able to decipher the strategy of an undercover

⁴ Michael Huberman și Matthew B. Miles, *Analyses des données qualitatives*, trad. Catherine de Bracker și Vivian Lamongie, Éditions du renouveau pédagogique, Bruxelles, 1991, pp. 10-12.

anti-communist dissident. The simple comparison between the confessional expression of the confessors and the wooden language of the signatories of the files that compose the files drawn up by the State Securitate on behalf of the five subjects is likely to highlight both the insurmountable trials to which the young intellectual was subjected, as well as the rape of Christian identity and values according to imperatives of communist, materialist and atheistic ideology.

Also in the sphere of difficulties was the case of damaged documents, the decades away from the creation of the archive sheets. This phenomenon brought, predictably, the lack of damaged paper (sheets with erased letters or even illegible passages being frequent phenomena), as well as the problem of deciphering the handwriting of the State Securitate agents, often illegible and with numerous glaring errors, a consequence either of poor intellectual training or of disregarding the role of calligraphy. The above mentioned difficulties required, in most cases, a laborious study.

Therefore, five case studies are distinguished in the realisation of this work, each of which constitutes a separate chapter. As the American researcher Robert E. Stake demonstrated in his reference work "Case Study", "The case study does not represent a methodological choice, but a choice of the object of study"⁵, a way of knowledge that allows not only to decipher individual behaviors, but also of group actions, phenomena and even social processes, because we can "learn important things from almost any case. The learning potential is a different criterion from the character of the representativeness and sometimes it is superior"⁶.

Regarding the organisation of sub-chapters, they fix recurring processes, imposed by our thematic trajectory. Thus, the *unhealthy* origins, the conditions in which the arrest, investigation, conviction and detention of our subjects took place, as well as the relevant aspects of life behind bars, with all forms of economic and social coercion, but also with the manifestations of opposition to the inept tyranny of the communist regime. As I previously emphasised, the development of this matrix had the role of supporting the methodical organisation of information, grouping the observed elements, so as to facilitate the identification of recurring phenomena from a certain number of situations, distinguishing constants from particular cases.

The primary sources came mainly from the CNSAS Archive, and the documents that we considered in each case study were likely to create a sustainable bank of information, so as to allow

⁵ Robert E. Stake, *Case Study*, in N.K. Denzin și Y.S. Lincoln (coord.), *Handbook of Qualitative research*, Sage Pub., Thousand Oaks, 1994, cap. 14, p. 236.

⁶ Robert E. Stake, *Case Study*, in N.K. Denzin și Y.S. Lincoln (coord.), *Handbook of Qualitative research*, Sage Pub., Thousand Oaks, 1994, cap. 14, p. 243.

access to the significant characteristics (both on the circumstantial ones as well as the global ones) of real life events, individual life cycles, organisational and management processes, inter-human relations in the confinement spaces and beyond the bars of the totalitarian communist regime in Romania.

Thus, in the case of George Văsîi, we considered the following documents drawn up in his name: the 24-hour detention order⁷, the detention warrant with extensions⁸, the home search order⁹, the home search reports¹⁰, the receipt for receiving and handing over valuables¹¹, the seizure order¹², the seizure report¹³, the twelve interrogation reports (June 17th, June 28th, July 1st, July 2nd, July 3rd, July 7th, July 14th, July 16th, July 18th, July 25th, July 31st, August 9th, 1958)¹⁴, the minutes of the confrontation between Văsîi Gheorghe and Father Daniil Sandu Tudor (from July 22, 1958, time interval 9:30-11:30)¹⁵, the indictment order¹⁶, the medical certificate¹⁷, the minutes of the presentation of the material¹⁸, indictment conclusions¹⁹, the proof of acquaintance from October 29th²⁰, 1958, the pronouncements of October 29, 1958 (judgment given and read in the secret session of October 30th²¹, 1958), of November 6th²² and of November 8, 1958 (sentence given and read in the public session of the same date)²³, the forms of confiscation of assets²⁴, forms of

⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 176.

⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 177-179.

⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 180.

¹⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, ff. 181-189.

¹¹ ACNSAS, fond P dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 184 și vol. 9, f. 110.

¹² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 185 și vol. 9, ff. 96-97.

¹³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 186 și vol. 9, ff. 99-100.

¹⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, ff. 187-204; 206-234. The first interrogation report (June 17, 1958) and the one from July 7, 1958, are also found in the CNSAS Archive, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 8, ff. 177-180, ff. 184-185, while the interrogation reports from July 1 and July 3, 1958, are included in the CNSAS Archive, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 8, ff. 181-183. The interrogation report (on the subject of movable and immovable property owned), from July 18, 1958, is located in the ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 000202, vol. 9, f. 98.

¹⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 1, ff. 41-42.

¹⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 205.

¹⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 235.

¹⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 236.

¹⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.

²⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 170.

²¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214. See also the interrogation report drawn up in the name of the defendant George Văsîi during this public session from 29.10.1958 (ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 66-67).

²² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 215.

²³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 216 -230 și vol. 10, f. 240 (un extras din sentință).

²⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, vol. 9, ff. 101-109, 111-117.

appeal²⁵, forms of incarceration²⁶, the conclusions of the public meetings of January 12th²⁷, January 14th²⁸ and January 21st²⁹, 1959, the note regarding the filing of the control file in the archive³⁰, the penitentiary file³¹, the pardon decree³², files from the Network fund and SIE³³, as well as the annulment appeal file³⁴.

In the case study of Mr. Nicolae Rădulescu, I have resorted to the following files from the archive relating to his lordship: the 24-hour detention order³⁵, the arrest³⁶ warrant with extensions³⁷, the home search order³⁸, the home³⁹ and body⁴⁰ search reports, the seizure order⁴¹, the seizure report⁴², the six interrogation reports (July 31, August 12, August 17, August 18th, August 19th and August 30th, 1958)⁴³, the indictment order⁴⁴, the medical certificate⁴⁵, the material presentation report⁴⁶, conclusions of accusation⁴⁷, defense preparation forms (evidence⁴⁸), proof of acquaintance⁴⁹, judgments of October 29, 1958 (judgment given and read in the secret session

²⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 202, 256-.260.

²⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, ff. 299-310.

²⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 64.

²⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 65.

²⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 78, ff. 95-99.

³⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 10, ff. 284-288.

³¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 7, ff. 1-38.

³² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 397.

³³ ACNSAS, fond R, dosarul nr. 334356, ff. 1-71 și fond SIE, dosarul nr. 33375, ff. 1-13

³⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 11, ff. 1-109.

³⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 312.

³⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 313 și vol. 10, ff. 196-201.

³⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 139, f. 141.

³⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 314.

³⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 325-328 și vol. 10, ff. 202-203, 205.

⁴⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 315 și vol. 10, f. 204.

⁴¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 324 și vol. 10, f. 208.

⁴² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 325 și vol. 10, ff. 212-213.

⁴³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 322-339, 341-344 și vol. 10, f. 209 (the report drawn up based on the interrogation of August 30, 1958, regarding the possessed assets). See also the complete transcription of the reports prepared following the interrogation procedure in the ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, accompanied by a reading key provided by Mr. Nicolae Rădulescu, from the researcher's volume of Carmen Ciornea, *Chipul Rugului Aprins*, Ed. Eikon, București, 2015, pp. 60-98.

⁴⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 340.

⁴⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 33.

⁴⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 346.

⁴⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.

⁴⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 99.

⁴⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 191-192, 216- 230.

of October 30th, 1958)⁵⁰, of November 6th⁵¹ and of November 8, 1958 (sentence given and read in the public session from the same date)⁵², the forms of incarceration and confiscation⁵³, the forms of appeal⁵⁴, the reasons for appeal⁵⁵, the conclusions from the public meetings of January 12th⁵⁶, January 14th⁵⁷ and January 21st⁵⁸, 1959, the penitentiary file⁵⁹, the information file drawn up on behalf of his lordship (notes information regarding Mr. Nicolae Rădulescu, files regarding aspects of the detention, characterizations, statements, reports, investigation forms)⁶⁰, the pardon decree⁶¹, the annulment appeal file⁶².

Regarding the case of the son of Professor Alexandru Mironescu, the student (then) Șerban Mironescu, I recovered the following from the archives: the 24-hour detention order⁶³, the extended arrest warrant⁶⁴, the home search order⁶⁵, the home⁶⁶ and body⁶⁷ search report, the seizure order⁶⁸, the seizure report⁶⁹, the ten interrogation reports (June 14th, June 19th, June 20th, June 27th, July 2nd, July 4th, July 18th, July 24th, August 30th, 1958 and January 19th, 1959)⁷⁰, the report of the confrontation between Șerban Mironescu and Father Daniil (from July 22nd, 1958,

⁵⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214. See also the interrogation report drawn up in the name of the defendant Nicolae Rădulescu during this public session from 29.10.1958 (ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 69).

⁵¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 215.

⁵² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 216 -230 și vol. 10, f. 242 (an excerpt from the sentence).

⁵³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, ff. 317-322 și vol. 10, f. 195 (note regarding how the recording should be made), f. 207 (declaration of assets) ff. 210 –211 (addresses), f. 214 (power of attorney), ff. 215-221 (request-receipt-delivery reports, handover receipt, reports).

⁵⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 203, 266-271.

⁵⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 35.

⁵⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 64.

⁵⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 65.

⁵⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 78, ff. 95-99.

⁵⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 000202, vol. 7, ff. 39-85.

⁶⁰ ACNSAS, fond I, dosarul nr. 263904, ff. 1-52.

⁶¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 397.

⁶² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 11, ff. 1-109.

⁶³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 237 și vol. 10, f. 26.

⁶⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 238-240 și vol. 10, ff. 27-28.

⁶⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 241.

⁶⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 242.

⁶⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 10, f. 29.

⁶⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 243 și vol. 10, f. 30.

⁶⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 244 și vol. 10, f. 34.

⁷⁰ The first 9 interrogation report can be found in the Archive CNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 245-283; 285-313. The first interrogation report from June 27, 1958 are included in the CNSAS Archive, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 8, ff. 152-153. The interrogation report from January 19, 1959 is located in the Archive CNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 8, f. 155.

time interval 11.30-13.30)⁷¹, the indictment order⁷², the medical certificate⁷³, the report of the presentation of the material⁷⁴, the indictment conclusions of September 26th, 1958⁷⁵, forms of preparation of the defense (evidence⁷⁶), the indictment conclusions of October 29, 1958 (sentence given and read in the secret session of October 30, 1958)⁷⁷, of November 6th⁷⁸ and of November 8th, 1958 (sentence given and read in the public session of the same date)⁷⁹, the forms of appeal⁸⁰, the reasons for appeal⁸¹, the forms of incarceration and confiscation⁸², the conclusions from the public meetings of January 12th⁸³, January 14th⁸⁴ and January 21st⁸⁵, 1959, the prison file⁸⁶, the pardon decree⁸⁷, the information file drawn up in his name⁸⁸ and the file of the appeal for annulment⁸⁹.

There was also a lot of data collected, via the CNSAS Archive, regarding the young Emanoil Mihăilescu: the 24-hour detention order⁹⁰, the arrest warrant⁹¹, the search order⁹², the home⁹³ and body⁹⁴ search report, the seizure order⁹⁵, the four reports of interrogation (September 19th,

⁷¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 1, ff. 43-45.

⁷² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 284.

⁷³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 314.

⁷⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 315.

⁷⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.

⁷⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 103.

⁷⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214. See also the interrogation report drawn up in the name of the defendant Șerban Mironescu during this public session from 29.10.1958 (ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 68).

⁷⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 215.

⁷⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 216 -230 și vol. 10, f. 246 (an excerpt from the sentence).

⁸⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 201, 261-265.

⁸¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 32.

⁸² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 293-298 și și vol. 10, f. 25 (note regarding how the recording should be made Șerban Mironescu), declaration of assets (f. 31), addresses (f. 32-33), power of attorney (f. 36), request-receipt-delivery reports, (ff. 37-40), report (f. 41).

⁸³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 64.

⁸⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 65.

⁸⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 78, ff. 95-99.

⁸⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, ff. 220-272.

⁸⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 395.

⁸⁸ ACNSAS, fond I, dosarul nr. 416583, ff. 1-36.

⁸⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 11, ff. 1-109.

⁹⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 442 și vol. 9, f. 212.

⁹¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 443 și vol. 9, f. 213.

⁹² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 444.

⁹³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 445-446 și vol. 9, ff. 214-215.

⁹⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 9, f. 216.

⁹⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 447 și vol. 9, f. 220.

September 22nd and, again, September 22nd, September 24th)⁹⁶, the indictment order⁹⁷, the medical certificate⁹⁸, the report on the presentation of the material⁹⁹, the indictment conclusions¹⁰⁰, the order to separate the material from the criminal investigation file into a special case¹⁰¹, forms of defense preparation (evidence¹⁰²), proof of acquaintance from October 29, 1958¹⁰³, conclusions of accusation from October 29th, 1958 (sentence given and read in the secret meeting of October 30th, 1958)¹⁰⁴, from November 6th¹⁰⁵ and from November 8th, 1958 (judgment given and read in the public session from the same date)¹⁰⁶, appeal forms¹⁰⁷, reasons for appeal¹⁰⁸, memorandum submitted by Constantin Mihăilescu (father of the accused)¹⁰⁹, notes submitted for appeal¹¹⁰, forms of incarceration and confiscation¹¹¹, conclusions from the public meetings from January 12th¹¹², January 14th¹¹³ and January 21st¹¹⁴, 1959, the correspondence of Mr. Constantin Mihăilescu with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Negrea¹¹⁵, the forms of investigations on Mr. Constantin Mihăilescu¹¹⁶, the penitentiary file¹¹⁷, the files from the

⁹⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 448-458; 460-463. The last interrogation report, regarding the possessed assets, can be found in Archive CNSAS, vol. 9, f. 221. See also the complete transcription of the interrogation report accompanied by a reading key provided by Mr. Emanoil Mihăilescu in the Carmen Ciornea, *Chipul Rugului Aprins*, Editura Eikon, București, 2015, pp. 172-198.

⁹⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 459.

⁹⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 464.

⁹⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 465.

¹⁰⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.

¹⁰¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, f. 466.

¹⁰² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 98.

¹⁰³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 177-178 și vol. 10, f. 238.

¹⁰⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214. See also the interrogation report drawn up in the name of the defendant Emanoil Mihăilescu during this public session from 29. 10. 1958 (ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 74).

¹⁰⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 215.

¹⁰⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 216 -230 și vol. 10, f. 248 (an excerpt from the sentence).

¹⁰⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 208, 292-296.

¹⁰⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 58-61.

¹⁰⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 62-63.

¹¹⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, ff. 70-75.

¹¹¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, ff. 308-309, 311-312. și vol. 9, f. 211 (note on how to register the arrested), ff. 217-239 (confiscation minutes, declarations of wealth, power of attorney, affidavits and notes of incarceration).

¹¹² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 64.

¹¹³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 5, f. 65.

¹¹⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 78, ff. 95-99.

¹¹⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, f. 73.

¹¹⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, ff. 74-79.

¹¹⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, ff. 311-365.

informational network fund¹¹⁸, the annulment appeal file¹¹⁹.

In the case of Dan-Grigore Pistol, the unusual presence in the group, the man who kept a discreet presence even among the young people who composed the group "Burning Altar"¹²⁰, I researched in the Securitate files the following files drawn up in his lordship's name: the ordinance of 24-hour detention¹²¹, extended arrest warrant¹²², home search warrant¹²³, home and body search report¹²⁴, seizure warrant¹²⁵, seizure report¹²⁶, the seven interrogation reports (June 14th, June 18th, June 29th, July 4th, July 11th, September 1st, September 6th, 1958)¹²⁷, the indictment order¹²⁸, the medical certificate¹²⁹, the report of the presentation of the material¹³⁰, the report concluded on September 16th, 1958, which stated the refusal of the accused to sign the report of presentation of the material¹³¹, incriminating conclusions¹³², defense preparation forms (evidence¹³³, medical certificate¹³⁴, defense materials¹³⁵, written notes¹³⁶), the evidence of the acquaintance of October 29th, 1958¹³⁷, the indictments of October 29th, 1958 (judgment given and read in the secret session

¹¹⁸ ACNSAS, fond R, dosarul nr. 001069, vol 1-2.

¹¹⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 11, ff. 1-109.

¹²⁰ The research of archive materials proves, beyond doubt, the fact that Dan-Grigore Pistol was a man with serious ailments, who had already undergone a cranial operation (trepanation) and who had been in the doctors' records for many years (ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 70-71). Moreover, close friendships were not established between him and the rest of the young people in the group, he being the only member of this group of five young people who did not join or graduate from a higher education institution (Nicolae Rădulescu, George Văsiu and Emanoil Mihăilescu were students and later graduated from the Institute of Architecture and Șerban Mironescu graduated from Philology, Classical Languages section).

¹²¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 347 și vol. 10, f. 43.

¹²² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 348-350 și vol. 10, f. 44.

¹²³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 351.

¹²⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 352 și vol. 10, ff. 45-46.

¹²⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 353 și vol. 10, f. 47.

¹²⁶ A.C.N.S.A.S., fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 354 și vol. 10, ff. 53-54.

¹²⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, ff. 355-363; 365-371 și vol. 10, f. 48 (The interrogation report on the subject of movable and immovable property owned, from September first, 1958).

¹²⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 364.

¹²⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 372

¹³⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 373.

¹³¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol 2, f. 374.

¹³² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.

¹³³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 97.

¹³⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 106-108.

¹³⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, 109-110.

¹³⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 185 -187.

¹³⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 172.

of October 30th, 1958)¹³⁸, of November 6th¹³⁹ and of November 8th, 1958 (sentence given and read in the public session of the same date)¹⁴⁰, the forms of appeal¹⁴¹, the grounds for cancellation¹⁴², the memorandum submitted by Mrs. Elis Pistol (the mother of the young accused)¹⁴³, notes and evidence for the appeal¹⁴⁴, forms of incarceration and confiscation¹⁴⁵, the penitentiary file¹⁴⁶, the conclusions of the public hearings on January 12th¹⁴⁷, January 14th¹⁴⁸ and 21st January 1959¹⁴⁹, the supervisory appeal file filed by the general prosecutor of the R.P.R. regarding Dan-Grigore Pistol¹⁵⁰, report on the clarification of Dan-Grigore Pistol's situation¹⁵¹, the order to stop the criminal process¹⁵², investigation forms (tasks for agents, reports, information notes) on Dan-Grigore Pistol¹⁵³.

So, the previous exposition proves, we appreciate, not only the impressive number of tabs in which the aspects that our thesis proposed as an object of study are treated, or the way in which the primary sources ensured the creation of a bank of sustainable observations, but also the need to develop a matrix, according to which we selected and organised the data integrated in the present research effort.

I emphasise that most of the archival sources are unpublished and this is because, as a rule, the interest of the researchers who focused on the present theme mainly focused on the seniors¹⁵⁴

¹³⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214. See also the interrogation report drawn up in the name of the defendant Dan-Grigore Pistol during this public session from 29. 10. 1958 (A.C.N.S.A.S., fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 70).

¹³⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, f. 215.

¹⁴⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 216 -230 și vol. 10, f. 245.

¹⁴¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 4, ff. 205, 272-276.

¹⁴² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 37-39.

¹⁴³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 40.

¹⁴⁴ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 70-77.

¹⁴⁵ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 324-331 și vol. 10, f. 42 (note regarding privind framing of the accused), ff. 49-52 (addresses, reports related to the property owned) ff. 55-60 (the statement of assets of the accused, request-receipt-delivery reports, handover receipt, reports).

¹⁴⁶ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, ff. 83-130.

¹⁴⁷ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 64.

¹⁴⁸ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 65.

¹⁴⁹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, f. 78, ff. 95-99.

¹⁵⁰ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, 374-384.

¹⁵¹ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 388-390.

¹⁵² ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 5, ff. 385-387.

¹⁵³ ACNSAS, fond P, dosarul nr. 202, vol. 6, ff. 13-21.

¹⁵⁴ A selection of documents, reproduced in full, from the files that directly concern Father Arsenie Papacioc, were published by Arhimandritul Andrei Tudor, Mariana Conovici, Iuliana Conovici in volume *Am înțeles rostul meu...Părintele Arsenie Papacioc în dosarele Securității*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2014; fragments of the file „Teodorescu Alex[andru] și alții”, regarding Fr. Adrian Făgețeanu, appeared through the care of the

and the few steps in which the students of the batch "Teodorescu Alex[andru] and others" constituted the object of study, they cited only fragmentary certain documents, but also the fact that the analysis of the information provided by the Archive of the C.N.S.A.S. requires great caution, the researcher not being able to ignore the purpose of designing these documents (namely, that of putting into practice the communist ideology and the various repressive mechanisms of the former State Security), an aspect that imperatively calls for the consultation of several sources of information. Precisely for this reason, the testimony offered by Mr. Emanoil Mihăilescu, as well as the correspondence with Mr. Nicolae Rădulescu, who, in turn, agreed to clarify the aspects that I considered painful, reveal, in our opinion, their special relevance.

It should also be stated that we checked the information and the data provided by the published sources of information (memorialistic literature, document collections, correspondence, press articles), along with the explanations and theories from the specialised literature, illustrated aspect and through the bibliographic list, located in the final part of the work, where the works I have consulted are indicated.

The finality of the gradual regrouping of the information obtained by researching these five cases was the transition from data towards the formulation of a theory, towards identifying the lesson from the perspective of the Christian identity paradigm, because as the American researcher Robert E. Stake also appreciates, we can "learn important things starting from almost any case. The learning potential is a different criterion from the character of the representativeness and sometimes it is superior".¹⁵⁵

In fact, the case of the young people from the Burning Altar batch is also edifying from the perspective of how the communists, in the name of the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, violated the law, the country's Constitution and signed international conventions. This persecution of the Church in 1958, with the arrest of the priests, who had become models and enjoyed a great trust and appreciation of the parishioners, prepared the Decree 410 of the following year, which led

editor Andrei Dîrlău, *Părintele Adrian Făgețeanu și crucea „Rugului Aprins”*. *Omagiu la un secol de la nașterea sa*, Lumea Credenței Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012; a collection of documents from the file „Teodorescu Alex[andru] și alții” regarding Fr. Daniil Sandu Tudor as well as some members of the group were put into circulation by Ioana Diaconescu „*Rugul Aprins*”- *Studii și documente despre exterminare și supraviețuire*, Fundația Academia Civică Publishing House, Bucharest, 2018, and also by the historian George Enache, *Ortodoxie și putere politică în România contemporană*, Ed. Nemira, București, 2005.

¹⁵⁵ Robert E. Stake, *Case Study*, in N.K. Denzin și Y.S. Lincoln (coord.), *Handbook of Qualitative research*, Sage Pub., Thousand Oaks, 1994, cap. 14, p. 243.

to the closing of the monasteries and the humiliation of so many monks and nuns, whom the State evacuated from their cells to send them into production.

And yet, beyond all these worldly reasons, the Burning Altar, this reverberant eastern spiritual movement, left an indestructible mark on the history of the Romanian gulag, and the example of these chosen young people who sought the clarification of their purpose under the guidance of these great spiritualists, despite atheistic imperatives of the time, a source of deep, perpetual Christian reflection is preserved.

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