

# FROM MONK AGATON TO HIEROSCHEMAMONK DANIIL.THE CLANDESTINE STAGE OF „RUGUL APRINS” („THE BURNING BUSH”)

Review  
Article

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Sandu Tudor;  
Alexandru Teodorescu;  
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## JEL Classification

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## Abstract

After 1990, „Rugul Aprins” (“The Burning Bush”) constituted a research topic that aroused the interest of theologians, historians and people of letters in the Romanian cultural space. The topic is very broad, but in this study we will only follow the configuration of the open warrior destiny of Father Daniil (Sandu Tudor), this ‘homo religiosus’, who, defying the „culture” of the totalitarian communist state, remained on the coordinates of a ‘modus vivendi’ subordinated to a transcendental order. We also emphasize that the purpose of focusing on Father Daniil Sandu Tudor is, in general, the reconstruction of the complete picture of the totalitarian communist society’s dynamics and, in particular, of the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church under the atheist persecution. The sections of the present research approach were, in large part, constituted as an updated radiography of the realities of those times from the perspective of confessors Nicolae Rădulescu and Emanoil Mihăilescu. We believe that the analogy between the two angles of remembrance, mediated by the former students who composed the group „Teodorescu Alexandru and others” represents an efficient technique of reconstructing the historical truth.

## INTRODUCTION

Being released from the „Culmea” Penitentiary on February 9, 1952 (Gheorghe Vasilescu, 1999), the Hieromonk Agaton, with the help of the monk Antonie Plămădeală, enrolled at the **Sihăstria Neamț monastery**, where he became a **hieroschemamonk with the name of Daniil**. On September 10, 1952, Father Daniil will ask the Metropolitan Firmilian for a canonical exit from the Diocese of Oltenia, given his move to the Metropolitanate of Moldova. From the Sihla Hermitage, located above the Sihăstria Hermitage, thanks to the support of the igumen Ilie Cleopa and of the young monk Leonida Plămădeală, he was **appointed as the abbot of the Rarău hermitage** by the Metropolitan Sebastian Rusan of Moldova on **November 15, 1953**, (†Antonie Plămădeală, 2002). After 1956, Hieromonk Adrian Făgețeanu lived together with Father Daniil Sandu Tudor. During all this time he did not interrupt the relations with his old friends from Rugul Aprins (The Burning Bush), from Bucharest, his visits – either to the professor Alexandru Mironescu, or to the architect Constantin Joja or to the Plumbuita monastery (where the father Sofian Boghiu was the igumen) – acquiring a regular character, especially after 1953. Of course, the meetings between clergy, intellectuals and students, occasioned by the descent of Father Daniil, were considered (in the context of the „obsessed decade”) as *clandestine meetings* and, later, would result in heavy convictions for the participants. Starting from September 27, 1956, Securitea (Security) began the spinning action on the Hieroschemamonk Daniil, infiltrating informants at the Rarău Hermitage and intercepting his correspondence. Two theses had to be proved: the first one was that the subject was responsible for establishing a philosophical-mystical circle, reactionary to the Marxist-Leninist communist doctrine and the second one was that this activity of the intellectuals around Father Daniil was of a legionary origin.

### BIOGRAPHICAL BENCHMARKS: FROM MONK AGATON TO HIEROSCHEMAMONK DANIIL

The question arises: how did Father Daniil, who had known the drama of the communist Russia for many years and had experienced the abuses of the Romanian concentration universe (hunger, misery, crimes etc.), continue to assume this *spiritual audacity*, meant to keep alive the flame of hope and

especially of faith in the souls of the young people? Unconsciousness? Courage?

We believe that it is rather an acute sense of duty to the country and to the Church that were experiencing dramatic moments. In a space and time that were under the sign of terror, of class struggle, of the abuses of the new political class and of the wooden language, the proliferation of double thinking and the distortion of the characters of young people were imminent risks. In this gloomy atmosphere, the children and young people in training were forced to fit the canvas of „*proud pioneers*” or UTM-ists. The word „*dignity*” had become obsolete and could no longer find its place in current speech. And yet, even under these conditions, there were people who took the risk and went out into the arena. Among these few non-conformists will be Father Daniil from Rarău who, predictably, will pay the defiance of the imperatives of history with his own life.

### THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

As it is well known, the Russian occupation was making a rapid progress in controlling everything. The situation rapidly worsened and from 1947 massive arrests began. In fact, the country was run by a group of Russian advisers who started plundering the country, starting the great betrayals and abuses (A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 014150, *passim*). After December 30, 1947 – the date when King Mihai's forced abdication took place – the atmosphere became darker, more pressing, more uncertain with each day. The parties were abolished and the dignitaries of the old regime gradually thickened the ranks of the prisoners and the people, without distinction, lost their courage to speak freely, to express what they thought. The prisons became inadequate and so the labour camps appeared. The new political class, of poor quality, incompetent and elusive in front of the great friend from the East, was filled with the opportunists who were looking to build a bright future for themselves, with the party card in their pocket and with Stalin – “the best and beloved friend of the Romanian people”, “the greatest scientist of the epoch” (Scânteia (The spark), An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM, 1953) – in the soul.

The old interwar world slowly disappeared in the gulag of communist prisons, in order to make room for another one, governed by the idea of immediate profit. The resistance in the mountains of the intrepid Romanians – among which were also some monks and priests – (†Andrei Andreicuț, 2005), who turned their helpless eyes to the Anglo-American allies, with the support of which they hoped that the diabolical and oppressive communist

structure would be overturned, was becoming increasingly weak, as people came to understand that of the rule Russians was a fulfilled fact. The class struggle was the engine of the new society. The description of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej regarding what March 6, 1945 meant, when the political power in Romania was taken over by the government of Petru Groza, is significant in this sense (Scânteia, An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM, 1953): "In the fierce fight against the forces of the bourgeois revolution, led and supported by the American-English imperialists, our people, under the leadership of the communist party, managed to overcome the capitalist sabotage, to hamper the maneuvers of the representatives of the bourgeoisie in the government, who were to impose the enslaving "Marshall plan" in Romania. The communist party raised the popular masses to fight for the tasks of the second stage of the democratic-popular revolution... The proclamation of the Republic marked the victory of the working class and of its main ally – the working peasantry – over the exploiting classes, the completion of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and turning to the realization the tasks of the socialist revolution" (Scânteia, An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM, 1953).

Starting in 1948, the first wave of arrests took place, which swallowed up the entire cultural and political elite. Why did it start with them? Because, as we have shown, the demolition and the burial of the old bourgeois- landowners society was the main objective of the new regime, which placed a band of actual impostors and traitors of the country's interests on the key positions. Nationalizations, stabilizations, abuses, class hatred, violent acts committed by the new class of unlettered, vulgar and resentful activists, preoccupied with destroying all that meant tradition and culture – all these had become a current reality. The horrors followed one another. The party, through its armed arm – Securitate – aimed at isolating individuals, inoculating fear and terror that would make them obedient, devoid of personality. There was a gloomy and oppressive atmosphere of uncertainty of tomorrow. The dimensions of queues for everything – food, clothing and other goods that were sold on the card, being rationalized, had become a measure of the hunger and misery that the human being was subjected to. The **class struggle** was translated even into the distribution of the type of card, so that the ration of bread, oil or sugar was higher for the workers than for the intellectuals. The war against the bourgeoisie or the boyars continued through the evacuation from their own homes, which would be inhabited by the party activists. The new political class imposed its hegemony everywhere, through abuse and brutality.

Within this gloomy image, the widespread suspicion had become the dominant note of human relations. The communist regime and nomenclature were haunted by doubts and permanently suspected. They saw anti-state plots, sabotages, lies everywhere. Under these conditions, normality was replaced by terror and delusion, the main means by which the popular masses were managed. You could hardly find a middle class family that did not have at least one convicted member, the "unhealthy" origin being a sufficient reason to send many people behind bars. The omnipresence and omnipotence of the Securitate had become an undeniable reality. The leaders of the Romanian communist party had ejected friendship, honesty and kindness from the field of values. In order to preserve the positions and privileges that flowed from here, those in the state administration did not hold back on anything. The Securitate's obsession with keeping everything under control had reached the stage where even those in the Central Committee were suspected. Basically, its usefulness was largely justified by the "art" of directing conspiracies, fabricated organizations, enemies of the regime sold to imperialism.

The alteration of education made itself felt by replacing the true teachers, who did not align with the specific atmosphere of those times, with people of doubtful culture, perfectly anchored to the totalitarian communist ideology. The censorship made serious mutilations and purifications among the writers, which led to the quality of the textbooks under any criticism (particularly, for the disciplines of national history and Romanian literature) (Carmen Ciornea, 2015).

The economic sector was on the same downward path, the summer of 1946 also bringing the Great Hunger of Moldova (Ion Țurcanu, 1998). Indeed, the starvation was a means of political constraint that the RPR's elite had organized, thought and coordinated, according to the Soviet model, serving them to manipulate a group of individuals or even communities (peoples, populations, etc.). The Great Hunger of Moldova of 1946-1947 and the starvation policy to which the political prisoners were subjected in Romania are known in the Romanian space.

The case of Father Daniil Sandu Tudor must be understood in this context, when the country had undergone dramatic transformations on multiple levels – political, cultural and economic –, the transformations that questioned even the fundamental values of humanity.

## WAYS AND MEANS OF THE RESISTANCE OF ORTHODOX CLERGY, SECULAR INTELLECTUALS AND STUDENTS REMAINED IN „RUGUL APRINS”

In this context, as the people became more and more feared because the communist atheist offensive against the Church slowly began to have visible contour, Father Daniil Sandu Tudor continued his mission of bringing together secular intellectuals and clergy, credibly pleading (hence the popularity) for a doctrine other than the accepted one (communist ideology). In fact, this was also the purpose of the Rugul Aprins of Antim: to save a generation from deadly atheist offensive! This was the essence of the fight against communism, not the desire to organize anti-state conspiracies, animated by mystical-legionary ideals, as the members of the Securitatea would emphasize.

The portrait of Fr. Daniil reconstituted by the confessors Nicolae Rădulescu and Emanoil Mihăilescu, the only survivors of the group of the Rugul Aprins, as the communist securists thought in 1958, is that of an absolute mentor: “For me – Mr. Nicolae Rădulescu was saying – Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, to whom I was unreservedly attached, was the absolute spiritual master, the authority to which I feel close even now. He was a holder of the “mysterious science, of the good mastery of spiritual advancement” which, with “the power of the Name of light”, passes the man from death to life, with the deified nature, of which he speaks in the “Akathist of the “Buring Bush” of the Virgin Mary”” (Carmen Ciornea, 2015).

It is important to point out that these searches did not represent sporadic manifestations during those years, because many people began to attend the priestly monks, the Vladimirești Monastery being an edifying example, where the abbess Veronica and the Father confessor, Ioan Iovan, attracted a lot of pilgrims (George Enache, 2009). Of course, this could not be tolerated by the communist authorities, so that in 1955 Vladimirești Monastery was closed with the pretext of “legionary conspiracy” (George Enache, 2009).

We believe that two aspects are worth noting in relation to the Vladimirești case. The first one is that the communist authorities understood the threat of the monasticism’s popularity as a whole and, from this moment, the anti-religious doctrine of the communist state and of the Communist Party would become as open as possible, with the Securitatea triggering a real persecution on the Romanian Orthodox Church (George Enache, 2009).

The second aspect to keep in mind is that the monks who responded to the request of Patriarch Justinian to find a way of conciliation between the

inhabitants of Vladimirești Monastery and the communist authorities – Fathers Daniil Sandu Tudor, Arsenie Papacioc, Ilie Cleopa or Roman Braga – would enter the Securitatea’s sight, being suspected of complicity with the Vladimirești (George Enache, 2009).

The latter’s surveillance led to a larger action targeting the monasteries of Slatina and Rarău (the monasteries of the respective monks’ origin), which, in their turn, were visited by an impressive number of believers (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 46-49). Of course, these were also considered by the authorities as centers of legionary activity. In this way, the agent “Costică Nițescu” was infiltrated at the Slatina monastery and at Rarău since August 1955, and the information provided by him determined, in the autumn of the same year, the opening of the informative action against the clerics: Daniil Sandu Tudor, Roman Braga, Benedict Ghiuș, Stăniloae Dumitru, Felix Dubneac, Sofian Boghiu and the laity: Mironescu Alexandru, Văsii George, Pistol Grigore Dan, Rădulescu Nicolae (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 2-13). Following the data obtained, through **Order no. 107 of February 10, 1956**, the Securitatea opened **a verification file on both monasteries, an informative action carried out by two Regional Directorates, Iași and Suceava** (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 1-2). The numerous *Informative notes* gathered following the triggering of this action demonstrate the wide dimension of this action, which guided an impressive number of informants, carefully trained by the Securitatea (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 2-3, *passim*) and also led to the arrests of Father Antonie Plămădeală on April 14, 1954 (Mihai Plămădeală, 2011) and Father Roman Braga on May 31, 1948 (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 193-194).

The information gathered by the Securitatea indicated that there was „**a legionary channel on the Slatina-Sihăstria-Rarău line**”, led by the hieroschemamonk Daniil Sandu Tudor: „In the discussions with the deacon Roman Braga from the Iași Metropolitanate, who was at the Slatina Monastery, he stated, among other things: „in monasteries, we are at the forefront of the struggle. Two monastic armies started: a) the power on the Slatina-Sihăstria-Rarău line and b) the power started from Vladimirești by the priest Ioan. The monks will be purified and we will move towards an active-combative monasticism”. Further, Roman Braga showed that it is necessary to gather in the monastery the intellectual people who can actively fight, and that „many intellectuals are beginning to think about monasticism” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, f. 295 ).

On April 24, 1958, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Alexandru Drăghici, approved a „report on proposals related to the arrest and investigation of 11 citizens of the group action”. After a plan „for the operation of detaining and searching the elements from the Slatina monastery” was drafted on June 13, 1958, and a detailed plan for the location of 76 militiamen (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, 35) on the night of June 13 to 14, 1958, Father Daniil Sandu Tudor was arrested along with other persons who will form the group „Teodorescu Alexandru and others”.

Indeed, according to the testimonies of the two survivors – Nicolae Rădulescu and Emanoil Mihăilescu – they, along with Șerban Mironescu and George Văsiu (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, f. 12), had been at both the Slatina Monastery and at the Rarău Hermitage, where they were integrated into the life of the community and were initiated by Father Daniil in the problem of prayer in general, and of the Jesus’ prayer and its practice in particular (Carmen Ciornea, 2015). The sporadic descents of the Father Daniil from the Rarăului mountains were causing meetings, usually held in the house of Professor Alexandru Mironescu (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 2214, vol. 3, f. 144), and attended by students from several faculties, announced through George Văsiu, which were eager, as Mr. Emanoil Mihăilescu confesses, to free themselves from misery, fear, terror and suspicion. The discussions retained their mystical character, with Father Daniil particularly following the initiation of the participants in the prayer of Jesus, the “the prayer of the heart” received from Athos and through Ivan Kulighin, the mystical topics being supplemented by the cultural-literary ones, when the *elders* – Vasile Voiculescu, Alexandru Mironescu et al. – were presenting their works (Carmen Ciornea, 2015).

Also, Father Daniil recommended a few confessor priests to advise with: Archimandrite Benedict Ghiuș, Father Sofian Boghiu, the abbot of the Plumbuita Monastery (Carmen Ciornea, 2015).

Yet, all meetings with these fathers confessors were carefully monitored by the Securitatea. According to the information from the archives, on January 16, 1957, a verification file (with the number 1985) was opened on Father Benedict Ghiuș (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 10-11) „ following the warnings made by the agent „Zamfir Pană” on December 19, 1956”. The data collected by the Securitatea during five months of follow-up led them to the decision to change the individual verification file into one of the group, because: „Archimandrite Ghiuș Benedict, together with Sandu Tudor, formed in Bucharest a hostile group of students from the Institute of Architecture, a group that holds secret

meetings in the house of Prof. Mironescu Alex. A verification file was opened on Benedict Ghiuș and the others, managing to confirm the initial materials during the verification. The topics discussed at these secret meetings have a nationalist chauvinistic character, full of urges to resistance against our regime” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 002214, vol. 1, f. 1).

The close supervision of the meetings between Father Ghiuș and the students also appears in the archive document of the *Ordinance of Indictment* of July 3, 1958, in which the criminal security investigator, Lt. Major Blidaru Gheorghe, ascertains the following: „Ghiuș Vasile Benedict, born on October 21, 1904, in Pufești commune, Adjud District, Reg. Bacău, the son of Constantin and Elena, PhD in Theology, professor at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest, with the last residence in Bucharest, Patriarchiei street no. 7. [...] In 1946 Ghiuș Vasile Benedict, together with the former journalist Teodorescu Alexandru (Sandu Tudor), which later became a monk and the abbot of the Rarău Hermitage, and others, set up a mystical hostile group called „Rugul Aprins”, organizing a series of meetings at the Antim monastery in Bucharest, within which, in addition to mystical-religious issues, they also discussed a series of political-hostile issues regarding the popular democratic regime in the RPR. In April 1948, they were forbidden to hold such meetings at the Antim monastery, but the aforementioned continued to maintain ties with each other, and during 1955 they resumed their subversive activity within the so-called „Rugul Aprins” association, forming a clandestine group consisting of elements recruited especially from students, with whom they organized and held subversive meetings, at different addresses and monasteries in Bucharest” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, file no. 000202, vol. 1, f. 219).

Likewise, the meetings of Father Sofian Boghiu with the students were permanently followed, the criminal security investigator, Lt. Major Preda Dumitru, stating in the *Ordinance of Indictment* of July 30, 1958, the following: „Boghiu Serghie Sofian, born on October 7, 1912, in the USSR, the son of Ion and Alexandra, a priest-monk by profession, with his last residence in Bucharest, Matei Basarab street, no. 58. [...] Starting in the winter of 1957-1958, the monk Boghiu Serghie Sofian began to deal with the mystical-religious education of a group of students, with whom he held clandestine meetings in his cell within the church of Plumbuita. Under the mask of religion, he was preparing them how to act against the democratic regime. Also during this period, Boghiu Serghie Sofian participated in several clandestine meetings held at Mironescu Alexandru’s house, where different subversive materials were studied”

(A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal Fund, file no. 000202, vol. 1, f. 336).

On November 2, 1957, a „Measure Plan” was signed by the Lieutenant I. Botofei on behalf of the Ministry, Division III, by Captain Cernichevici on behalf of the Iasi Region and by Major Lieutenant S. Waxman on behalf of the Suceava Region, including clear objectives: „through the investigation we aim to document the action with evidence on the activity that is carried out at the Rarău hermitage, the Slatina monastery, etc., as he has passed through these monasteries and is aware of the activity of the followed elements, such as Sandu Tudor, Papacioc Anghel, Stoianovici Ioan, Roman Braga and others” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 46-49). The 12-page report “on proposals related to the arrest and investigation of 11 citizens from the group action Sandu Tudor, Roman Braga and Benedict Ghiuș” of April 24, 1958, signed by the head of Serv. 2 of the Independent service, Major of Security Borșan D-tru; the Head of Service IV, Major of Security Sican Dumitru and approved by the Head of the Independent Serv. Lt. Col. of Security Em. Rusu and the Head of the Third Directorate, Lt. Col. of Security N. Budișteanu, and by the Minister of Internal Affairs Alexandru Drăghici, established the following data related to the practical activity of Sandu Tudor: „In Bucharest, Sandu Tudor is also reported to have many connections among the legionary priests, such as: Benedict Ghiuș, Anania Vartolomeu, Tit Simedrea, Sofian Boghiu, Felix Dubneac and the Professor Mironescu Alexandru, all followed by the Service IV within a group informative action. Through them, the aforementioned recruited a group of students from Bucharest, giving them a legionary mystical education, both on the occasion of meetings at the house of Mironescu Alexandru, when they move to Bucharest, or at the Rarău hermitage, where they are invited to spend their vacation” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 2-13).

### INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS

This is how eight of the monks and the priests related to the Rugul Aprins were arrested under the most fanciful accusations, made up by the imagination of the Securitatea, which guarded the society from this „disease” of the legionary mysticism. The five young students arrested were rather a pretext for the aggravation and the arrest of the elderly, a justification for their sentencing to heavy punishments, given that one of the main charges was that they gave young people mystical-legionary education. The „spiritual audacity” represented what Father Daniil Sandu Tudor really educated them, as most of his disciples refer to the

urge: „Well, God does not want you to be lukewarm, mind you!” (Carmen Ciornea, 2015). This audacity was not allowed by the games of history and the protagonists, as such, would be exemplarily punished without distinction.

Three decades after the fall of the regime there are still voices, especially from certain environments of confessional or intellectual secession, sometimes even from the height of some officials, who claim that the resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church during the communist period would not have been an authentic resistance, that its representatives would have done nothing, would have stayed and swallowed, or even worse, played a significant role among the Securitatea’s collaborators etc. And things don’t stop there! The figures that indelibly imprinted the Romanian culture, people who not only had something to say, but also made very much for the history of this country and who got in the prisons of the aggressive, atheist, agonizing communist regime, are still soiled, denigrated by taking the sentences issued in the past by various political tribunals, tailored according to the Bolshevik logic and image. What would have happened if Father Adrian Făgețeanu had not submitted to the General Prosecutor’s Office the „Appeal for annulment”, after which the *Annulment decision* was pronounced in a *Public hearing* on April 8, 1996? Based on Law 217/2015, the so-called anti-legionary law, which sets „the prohibition of the organizations, symbols and facts of a fascist, legionary, racist or xenophobic character and of the cult of persons that are guilty of committing genocide crimes against humanity and war crimes”, we could not have commemorated those whom the Security had reunited in the group of the „Rugul aprins” because they had been accused, almost entirely, of „the crime of conspiracy against the social order and for the crime of intense activity against the working class and the revolutionary movement”. Although, the simple enumeration of the ecclesiastical figures thrown behind bars by the Securitatea in 1958 is likely to clarify their overwhelming importance in the becoming of the Romanian spirituality: Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, Father Benedict Ghiuș, Father Dumitru Stăniloae, Father Roman Braga, Father Arsenie Papacioc, Father Adrian Făgețeanu, Father Sofian Boghiu, Father Felix Dubneac. If we add the name of the Professor Alexandru Mironescu, of the doctors Gheorghe Dabija and Vasile Voiculescu – the laymen who completed the aforementioned group – we would understand why this spiritual movement remains in our consciousness as a symbiosis between cult and culture, since even the people of the Securitatea recognized its specific, unmistakable configuration.

It is known that the label of „legionary” was meant to justify the amount of the punishment, so that

many, especially the church faces, came to be framed in this category completely unjustified, as was the case of most of the members of the „Rugul aprins” group. However, this connection between our clerical and secular elites in prisons and the legionary movement was kept in cloudy waters, still representing a very sensible and important problem that must be treated serenely, removing the ideological ballast. If we do not succeed in depoliticizing this analysis, we would practically keep those people in prison, because of the anguishes we would carry and give from one to the other.

We cannot stop to evaluate this strategy of intimidation as a continuation of the communist regime’s policy, a regime that knew that in order to distort a people, you had to start by decimating the outbreaks of the establishment of the solidarity, identity and consciousness of a community, by the elimination of its prominent personalities, of the examples of moral resistance. And the martyrs, par excellence, are symbols of moral resistance.

To enter in the public space labels such as „war criminal”, sentences elaborated by the most criminal political regime that has ever ruled Romania, is not a minor thing. It’s an aberration! The danger is all the greater as, unfortunately, this systematic soiling of our values only promotes and deepens this poison of the neo-Marxism that floods the minds of young people who have failed to study the history of their own people. Not to mention the many editorial occurrences by which one tries hard to impose a variant of interpretation of the history that is not ours, of the Romanians, but is simply imposed from outside, corresponding to the traditional line of Bolshevik type. However, honoring and respecting the personalities of a people already belongs to a sacrosanct area. Each people should respect this truth and, consequently, focus its creative power on promoting its own values, dropping out hidden ideological agendas and deconstructivist theories.

## NOTES

- [1] Vasilescu, Gheorghe (1999). Cuvânt înainte [Foreword]. In Tudor, Ieroschimonahul Daniil Sandu, *Taina Rugului Aprins. Scrieri și documente inedite* [The mystery of the Rugul Aprins. Unpublished writings and documents]. Bucharest: Ed. Anastasia, p. 15.
- [2] Plămădeală, †Antonie (2002). *Rugul Aprins* [The Burning Bush]. Sibiu: Ed. Archiepiscopiei Sibiului, electronic edition, pp. 43-45. Appointing as an igumen at the Rarău hermitage is called by the Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală “my first diplomatic victory”, because he managed to convey to the exarch Bucșu the message that Sandu Tudor was approved by the Metropolitan and vice versa: “We decided to take Sandu Tudor from Sihla, where the conditions were quite difficult. He had only two small rooms that were almost unheated. The stove wasn’t working very well. No one cared to feed him. He used to live like a hermit up there, above the Sihăstria hermitage, at a small wooden church. So I decided to help him move, not to Slatina, which was not possible, because we would have put him in front of a shotgun, but I decided with Father Cleopa to take him to the Rarău Hermitage. What happened? In order to take him to the Rarău Hermitage, we needed the approval of the Metropolitan Sebastian who was the Metropolitan of Moldova and Suceava at that time. But the Metropolitan Sebastian knew Sandu Tudor very well, since the time when he was the feared journalist Sandu Tudor in Bucharest, and ran the magazine “Floarea de foc” (“Fire flower”), which was also his property, and the magazine “Credința” (“Faith”) and where he was very combative [.. .] I went again to the metropolitan and said: “Look, I have the proposal of the exarch, who agrees to accept him”. The Metropolitan said: “That’s Bucșu’s own business, if he thinks he can get involved with such a man, that’s your own business””.
- [3] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 014150, *passim*.
- [4] See “Great and immortal leader and parent” in “*Scânteia, An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM*”, year XXII, no. 2603, Monday, March 9, 1953.
- [5] Andreicuț, †Andrei (2005). *Mărturisitori pentru Hristos* [Confessors for Christ], vol. I. Alba Iulia: Reîntregirea, p. 55.
- [6] “*Scânteia, An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM*” (1953), year XXII, no. 2600, Friday, March 6, 1953. Although Peter Groza had his own political formation – the Front of the Ploughmen – in fact, the establishment of the Groza government meant the coming of communists to power. The content of the anniversary article “March 6, 1945 - a significant stage in the struggle for popular democracy”, which appeared 8 years later, makes an explicit reference to the Soviet involvement, specifying that the triumph was due to the Soviet armed forces: “*Breaking eight years ago the plot meant to lead to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship and to transform Romania into a base of anti-Soviet aggression, – imposing by mass struggle the establishment of a democratic government, our people gave a powerful blow to the war plans of the American Hitlerists. The great victories gained by the working people of our country in the years that passed since March 6, 1945, were possible due to the fraternal help of the great Soviet people, due to the immense help given by the best friend of the Romanian people, I. V. Stalin*” [subl. C.C.].
- [7] “March 6, 1945 – a significant stage in the struggle for popular democracy” in “*Scânteia, An organ of the Central Committee of the PRM*” (1953), year XXII, no. 2600, Friday, March 6, 1953
- [8] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins* [The Image of the Rugul Aprins]. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, pp. 107-117.
- [9] For a broad treatment of the subject see Țurcanu, Ion (1998). *Foamea din Basarabia în anii 1946-1947* [The famine in Bessarabia in 1946-1947]. Chișinău: Universitas.
- [10] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins* [The Image of the Rugul Aprins]. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, p. 54.
- [11] Enache, George and Petcu, Adrian Nicolae (2009). *Monahismul ortodox și puterea comunistă în România anilor ’50* [The Orthodox Monasticism and the Communist Power in Romania in the 1950s]. Galați: Partener, p. 63.
- [12] Enache, George and Petcu, Adrian Nicolae (2009). *Monahismul ortodox și puterea comunistă în România anilor ’50* [The Orthodox Monasticism and the Communist Power in Romania in the 1950s]. Galați: Partener, pp. 38-39.
- [13] Enache, George and Petcu, Adrian Nicolae (2009). *Patriarhul Iustinian și Biserica ortodoxă română în anii 1948-1964* [Patriarch Iustinian and the Romanian Orthodox Church in 1948-1964]. Galați: Partener, p. 228.
- [14] Enache, George and Petcu, Adrian Nicolae (2009). *Monahismul ortodox și puterea comunistă în România anilor ’50* [The Orthodox Monasticism and the Communist Power in Romania in the 1950s]. Galați: Partener, pp. 67-68.



- [15] See A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 46-49, where there is a „Measures Plan”, of November 2, 1957. Three objectives were established in the Suceava region: infiltration of the agent „Laurențiu Emil” at the Slatina Monastery in order to supervise the activity „carried out by Anghel Papacioc and the other elements from the monastery”; investigation of two monks aiming a possible recruitment till 15. XII. 1957, because „there are no agents within the Rarău Hermitage, Suceava region” and „these elements are close to the abbot Sandu Tudor, who brought them to the hermitage, and enjoy his confidence” and **point 3: „The said Făgețeanu Adrian is known for his remarkable legionary activity, and during the legionary government he held the position of the head of security in the police of Fălticeni. On this position he committed some mistreatment. In 1947, while being at the Faculty of Theology of Suceava, he carried out a legionary activity together with Căraușu Adrian and Grigoraș Suceveanu, who both held the position of the head of FDC at the faculty. The aforementioned, when graduating from the faculty, gave activity instructions to the legionaries who were in different positions. For being a head of security in the police he was tried and sentenced to 8 years of prison and was released due to the Decree of 1955. The qualification of the punishment was „crimes against humanity”. After his release, Făgețeanu Adrian visits the Rarău hermitage and the Slatina monastery, at several occasions, contacting Anghel Papacioc, Leonida Plămădeală from the Slatina monastery and Sandu Tudor from the Rarău hermitage. The fact that he knows about the activity from the Rarău hermitage is shown by the monk Paulin Leca through the statements made, that Făgețeanu Adrian had legionary connections with the „brother” Ioan Stoianovici and with others whom Leca Paulin does not know. Paulin Leca also told the agent „Rareș” that Făgețeanu Adrian, although released from prison, did not give up the legionary activity and continues to carry out this activity with Stoianovici Ioan. [...] **Through the investigation we aim to document the action with evidence on the activity that is carried out at the Rarău hermitage, the Slatina monastery, etc., as he has passed through these monasteries and is aware of the activity of the followed elements, such as Sandu Tudor, Papacioc Anghel, Stoianovici Ioan, Roman Braga and others”** [Subl. C.C.].**
- [16] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 2-13.
- [17] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 1-2.
- [18] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 2-3, *passim*.
- [19] Plămădeală, Mihai and Petcu, Adrian Nicolae (2011). *Mitropolitul Antonie Plămădeală. Detalii biografice* [*Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală. Biographical details*]. Sibiu: Ed. Andreiana, pp. 74-78.
- [20] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 193-194.
- [21] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, f. 295.
- [22] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, f. 35.
- [23] The position of the leader of the student group had been established to Văsii Gheorghe long time ago, as stated in the *Report* „on proposals related to the arrest and investigation of 11 citizens from the group action Sandu Tudor, Roman Braga and Benedict Ghiuș”, where, when motivating his arrest, we find the following stipulated: „8) VĂȘII GHEORGHE born on July 23, 1935, student at the Faculty of Architecture, domiciled in Bucharest, Levănțicăi street, no. 8. The aforementioned is part of the group of students recruited by SANDU TUDOR and MIRONESCU ALEXANDRU and is considered as the leader of this group. His parents, under the influence of SANDU TUDOR, sold their houses in Bucharest and went to the monastery. After graduating from the university (he has one more year) VĂȘII GHEORGHE intends to become a monk” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, f. 12) [subl. C.C.].
- [24] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins* [*The Image of the Rugul Aprins*]. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, pp. 119-124.
- [25] From the *Note* 341/25 of March 1958, it appears that, in order to streamline the supervision of Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, the Securitate installed at the house of Prof. Mironescu Alexandru a technical listening device: „Since the coming of the monk Sandu Tudor was expected by the followed as an opportunity to gather, and these changes that occurred in the invitation of the agent to participate seemed suspicious, the „T” Service was asked to follow more carefully the discussions that take place in the house of Prof. Mironescu Alex., in order to establish their concerns and what they decide when the agent is not present. Also for this, an approval for the operative supervision of the monk Sandu Tudor (Daniil) was obtained, in order to establish the elements with which he will be connected while staying in Bucharest” (ACNSAS informative fund, file no. 2214, vol. 3 144).
- [26] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins* [*The Image of the Rugul Aprins*]. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, p. 126.
- [27] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins* [*The Image of the Rugul Aprins*]. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, p. 125.
- [28] Father Benedict Ghiuș was born on October 21, 1904, in the village of Domnești, Pufești commune, in Vrancea county. Between 1919-1926, he attended the courses of the Theological Seminary in Galați. After the brilliant completion of theological studies at the Faculties of Theology in Chisinau and Bucharest, Father Benedict was proposed for a scholarship at the Faculty of Theology in Strasbourg. The studies in

France were rewarded with the title of doctor of theology, Benedict Ghiuș thus becoming one of the best trained theologians in Romania at that time. Unfortunately, the lack of confidence of the Communist rulers in the person of Archimandrite Benedict led to a permanent persecution and made it impossible to appoint him on a function correspondent to his training. He was arrested in 1958 in the group „*Teodorescu Alex. and others*”, recognized as one of the central figures of this spiritual group: „He is a legionary from 1937. During the legionary rule he was proposed to be part of the patriarchal lieutenantcy, in order to be promoted as patriarch. In 1947, together with Sandu Tudor and others, he re-established the basis of the hostile mystical group „*Rugul Aprins al Maicii Domnului*” („The Burning Bush of the Virgin Mary”) and, within this group, led a feverish activity of rapprochement with the Catholics, in order to create a common anti-communist platform. In 1948 they were forbidden to hold any meetings at the Antim monastery. Benedict Ghiuș is part of the Sandu Tudor group and participates in all their meetings. **Benedict Ghiuș was closely engaged in the mystical nationalistic training of the students from the group organized by Sandu Tudor. The head of the group of students, the said Văsii George, acted in his activity according to the directives given by Benedict Ghiuș until March of the current year [1958], when the group passed under the guidance of the monk Sofian Boghiu from the Plumbuita Monastery. He spreads hostile mystical material, multiplied on a machine, among the members of the group. (we have photocopies)**” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 10-11) He expiated his punishment at Aiud and Salcia. Being released in 1964, he returned to the position of minister and confessor priest at the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest. In 1974 he retired and moved to the Cernica monastery, where he continued his service as a confessor. He died on June 12, 1990, at the Cernica Monastery. See Pr. Petroniu Tănase (2003). *Icoane smerite din Sfânta Ortodoxie românească [Humble Icons from the Saint Romanian Orthodoxy]*. Bucharest: Ed. Bizantină, pp. 41-45.

[29] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 002214, vol. 1, f. 1.

[30] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 1, f. 219.

[31] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 1, f. 336.

[32] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 1, ff. 46-49.

[33] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 211015, vol. 3, ff. 2-13.

[34] Ciornea, Carmen (2015). *Chipul Rugului Aprins [The Image of the Rugul Aprins]*. Bucharest: Ed. Eikon, p. 132.