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SANDU TUDOR, THE CHRISTIAN STUDENT, BETWEEN ETHNOCENTRISM AND UNIVERSALISM (1927-1928)

Perspective,
opinion and
commentary

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Abstract

The present study is an overview of students' congresses organized in 1927 and 1928 by three organizations – the Y. M. C. A. (Young Men's Christian Association), the A. S. C. R. (the Christian Student Association, Romania) and the U. N. S. C. R. (Christian Students' National Union of Romania); it is a period marked by growing tensions among members of the U. N. S. C. R., the radicalization of the relationships among young people from various Christian national student movements, who will gradually discover irreconcilable incompatibilities. The sources of documentation are national archives and the press of those times. Alexandru Teodorescu (alias Sandu Tudor), the central figure of this paper, also fits in the picture of a generation engaged in the chase to discover the eschatological dimension of their time. The fractures between the two organizations stemming from ideas (the differences between the Christian dogmas promoted by the Y. M. C. A and the orthodox church) and social context (a distinct response to radicalized student movements) are also reflected in the evolution of Sandu Tudor's perception of the relationships among the A. S. A. C. R. U., the N. S. C. A. and the Y. M. C. A.

INTRODUCTION

The year 1927 also produced significant changes in the forces inside the U. N. S. C. R., where, politics gradually and steadily stretched its tentacles. Thus, at the initiative of a group of students from Bucharest, Ion Istrate, the former president of the Petru Maior Student Centre in Cluj and the former head of the fascist faction in the *Romanian Twinning Association*, sent written invitations to all former and current leaders of the student movement, the reason for the convocation being precisely to find solutions to reconciling the five current strands within the Union: “*The Call*” from Cluj; “*Archangel Michael*” from Iași; the trend supporting Cuza (“*Ligist-cuzist*”); the trend supporting the statute (“*The Ligist-statur*”) and *The Independent* from Bucharest.

On July 27, 1927, The Undersecretary of State for Home Affairs, Romulus P. Voinescu, sent no fewer than three *coded telegrams* to the prefect of Neamt County, the Head of the safety brigade of Piatra Neamt county, the head of the police of Piatra Neamt county (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f.132), Safety Inspector General of Iași, Vintilă Ionescu (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 133), prefects of counties and police, general safety inspectorates, special Safety Services and brigades, city and railway stations (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, File No. 133), 010767, vol.1, f. 134) informing them about the Student Congress that was to take place at Bistrita monastery on August 1-3, 1927.

The radicalization of the relationships among young people grouped in various Christian-national student movements, the increasing tensions among members of the U. N. S. C. R. enrolled in movements that gradually identified irreconcilable incompatibilities, was visible by simply reading the above-mentioned documents. The request of the undersecretary of State for Home Affairs to take the necessary measures to prevent any disturbances for the period 30 July - 5 August led, as expected, to an impressive mobilization of the police forces. The next day another *informative note* was sent: it referred to former U. N. S. C. R. leaders' possible contradictory views on political issues, more precisely, on the issue of The Crown. What was that about? The historical context could have sparked real clashes, given that against the background of the homage to the late King, several important voices from the political class supported the return of the former Crown prince to the throne, a position counterbalanced by those who cordially greeted the arrival of the new King. All leaders of the student movements were firm about a possible interference in this direction of the U. N. S. C. R. members and opposed any political interference (A.

C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 136).

As illustrated by the *informative note* drawn up by the Cabinet of the Undersecretary of state, signed by the Undersecretary of State, Gh. Tatarascu, and addressed to Prefect Cepelinschi of Piatra Neamt county, the number of congressional students was not unknown. In fact, the size of the necessary police forces, namely the number of policemen in disguise meant to infiltrate the ranks of young people so as not to raise any suspicions and cause disturbances was established according to this criterion. Also, this information was extremely valuable in order to establish the budget to cover accommodation and meals (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 137). As far as Transport Safety was concerned, a team of agents was set up to travel on all trains used by congressional students on the Galați-Tecuci route, and gendarmes and agents had been set up at all stations in their jurisdiction. Obviously, their free transportation by train was ensured (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 145). As we generally see, the instructions were for congressional students to be treated with solicitude. According to the archive the C. N. S. A. S. Congress was preceded by a meeting at a hotel in Piatra Neamt, scheduled on July 31, 1927. Why this meeting place had been chosen, who its initiators were, what its main purpose was and even what the agenda looked like were the questions that Inspector General Vintilă Ionescu gave in the July 29 *communiqué* (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 142). The visible hostility between A. C. Cuza and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu – the two political forces with a large number of followers among young people – was another topic that drew attention: “Mr Cuza is not going to participate, especially since, Corneliu Codreanu announced his arrival in Piatra Neamt. Mr. Cuza believes that students from Transylvania, who mostly enrolled in the National Party, will not support the decisions taken at the congress” (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 142).

So the context leading up to this Congress shows the concern of all parties. What is new this time is the position of the U. N. S. C. R. leaders, present at this meeting – C. Dănulescu, Iulian Sârbu, Tudose Popescu, Napoleon Cretu, Lorin Popescu, N. Dragoș, I. Georgescu, Usatiuc, Cront, Fl. Becescu, Dr. Lațcu, Stancu și C. Stan -who, for the first time, realized the danger of breaking up the U. N. S. C. R. Hence the attention and care they showed in the organization of the Congress (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 166). Initially, the Bistrita monastery had been chosen as venue for the congress but Iulian Sârbu, the president of the National Union of Christian

students, rejected this proposal as the proximity of the monastery to Piatra Neamt (6 Km) and the Lady village (2 Km) would have been a disadvantage in terms of preventing possible demonstrations, while the Neamt monastery was located 58 km from the city (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, ff. 169-177, 179).

The documents, via the C. N. S. A. S., hereby certify that on the evening of August 1, 1927, all the members of the National Union board, accompanied by a relatively small number of students – around 60 – from the university, arrived at the monastery of Neamț, in view of the reunion that was to take place the next day. The only notable absence from that day, reported by the security agents, was *that of Codreanu's group*.

The more traditional Service *Te-Deum*, which, as a rule, opened the meetings of Students' National Union, was replaced by a service in the memory of King Ferdinand, held at the Cathedral of Piatra Neamt on Sunday morning, July 31; it was followed by a session dedicated in remembrance of the late King. At the same time, on the way, the students, who had three coaches at disposal, visited the monasteries of Varatic and Agapia. Upon arrival at Neamt monastery, they were received not only by the abbot of the monastery, but also by Bishop Nicodemus Munteanu himself. The local authorities' solicitude was also confirmed by the presence of the prefect of the county of Leon, Pșepelinski as well as by their welcoming receipt: "The students arrived at the Monastery of Neamț, at 4 o'clock and they were received by the choir of Humulesti village, who sang "Our flag," which the students responded with "the Students' Anthem" (to A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 169-177, 179, 181, 183-197). Although the activities and talks of the four-day Congress started from the idea of identifying a common vision the congress did not occur without violent episodes even among the main actors – a student, whose name was State, was slapped by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu in plenary (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 166). During the Congress Codreanu did not miss the opportunity to ask the European Union to support the inclusion of students in his "Archangel Michael" legion, a legion which, he said, was to replace both the League (Cuza's L. A. N. C. representing "the thinking generation" and his League the "generation of action") and all nationalist organisations. The agenda (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 170) and the conclusions were pervaded by the same mirage of the enthusiastic struggle meant to change the world (A.C.N.S.A.S., fond Documentar, file no. 010767, vol.1, ff. 176-177). What were the main results of the congress? The idea of reconciliation and identification of a common

vision led to the approval of the establishment of the new national youth organization proposed by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. It must be said that 'U. N. S. C. R. members' also saw in it a key to solving the problem of party switching. At the same time, the 'chemarist' organization was disavowed. As for the other four organisations, students were free to participate with the amendment that the student organizations would not give students any support. As for political interference, the solution was as predictable as possible: A. C. Cuza's National-Christian Defense League. Of course, it was also specified here that student organizations did not engage in politics, but students, individually, were guided in this direction. The question of The Crown proved not to create any problems, so it was never discussed again. Moreover, the congressmen, aware, without any doubt, that the solutions could not ensure the expected long-term effects, concluded that a new Congress was needed in November.

The last day of the reunion, Thursday, the 4th of August, was marked by the same true religiosity that had opened the event: the students had Saint Nicodim Munteanu' and 'the abbot of the Monastery, Archimandrite Daniil's parental blessing, and then visited the Monasteries of Secu and Sihlea (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 153). As evident from the Report of the Deputy Inspector-General, D.C. Popescu, due to the preventive measures, which, as seen, brought together all the local authorities in Galati from 30 July to 5 August, 1927, the Students' National Congress was held in Bistrița Monastery in perfect order (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 167).

In conclusion, as outlined in the presentation above, young students were already grouped according to their political colour and their coveted target made the legionary option a predictable choice for many. 'U. N. S. C. R' students got caught up in this mirage of modernization, of renewal which, in fact, corresponded to the ecstatic pulses, adrenaline rush and the imperious need for clandestinity specific to youth. The daily insecurity and the unrest of the known world were compensated by euphoric states represented by marches, songs and sometimes even violent clashes with police forces.

In contrast, the Congress of the Federation of Christian Student Associations, held a few weeks later, in Bran, between August 28 and September 6, 1927, was severely (if not totally) neglected. Arguments? As shown in the secret police's reports (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 203v. -204, 207), the expenses for transportation and meals were supported by the 27 congressmen, with no state funding. The accommodation conditions proved unsuitable, the

young people being accommodated not in the hotel, as expected, but in the halls of a local school in Bran. As for the reception of 'A.S.C.R.' congressmen, the locals did not "welcome them at all, all the doors being closed" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 203v.). The opening of the Congress was officiated by the priest G. Babes, who was also the principal of the Bran school. The congress was attended by "20 congressmen and His Highness Princess Ileana, representatives from the Y. M. C. A. and several visitors from Bran" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 204). Professor Nae Ionescu, who arrived at the Congress together with Father Gala Galaction, gave the first lecture on tradition in religion "making comparisons between religions that are based on traditions" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 204). The low number of participants in the congress was also determined, as shown in the secret police's *report*, by financial reasons: "so, yesterday, when Priest Galaction arrived the two students who were waiting for him [...] complained that they were sleeping on straws laid down in one of the schools [...]; they regretted that the state did not support them at all; that was why only 27 people were able to pay for their expenses out of 60 participants as they had expected to come to the congress (A.C.N.S.A.S., fond Documentar, dosar nr. 010767, vol. 1, f. 207). The number of congressmen from other countries was extremely modest, only "two delegates from Czechoslovakia, namely: Joseph Balcar and student Lydiya Curcova" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 207).

As it has been pointed out non-political party affiliation was certified even in this manifest neglect of the event by local authorities, even by state security agents. It is appropriate to note that Princess Ileana made a discordant note, being the only official who was involved in the Congress. As for the agenda, the congress was held against an authentic academic background, clearly delineating itself from the above mentioned tensions in the U. N. S. C. R.; the theme of the lecture delivered by Nae Ionescu was an example in this respect: it provoked a lively debate among the participants to demonstrate that the intellectual and theological concerns were substantial.

The paper considers that Nae Ionescu did not choose the subject of his lecture randomly; his lecture focused on the tensions between the international Y. M. C. A. and the A. S. R. C. In fact (on the 29th of August, 1927), Nae Ionescu, starting from the example of proselytism practised by a certain professor in one of his orthodox seminaries wrote in his article "Sunday," about the same theme – the "risk of error" (Nae Ionescu in 1927). The attack became explicit with the publication of the article directly called "the Y. M.

C. A.", in which the editor of the newspaper, *the Word (Cuvantul)*, highlighted a series of violations, with a particular focus on the topic of proselytising and denigrating Romania especially outside its borders. All these acts added to the deep suspicion that the International Association would be an instrument used by the Jewish propaganda to discredit Romania (Nae Ionescu, 1927). What had happened? At the end of August *the Congress of the International Student Confederation* was held in Rome, where the Romanian delegation was condemned for a number of facts related to the dramatic situation of the Jewish population (Nae Ionescu, 1927); the tendentious source of information turned out to be the Y. M. C. A. itself. Moreover, in the same period in Switzerland another Congress took place where the English and American participants raised the problem of the pogroms in Romania and the Y. M. C. A. representatives had no reaction. Unfortunately, the lack of funds did not allow the participation of a Romanian delegation in the above-mentioned Congress; the debate on *the martyrdom of the Jewish population* did not have a counterargument which prejudiced the image of the Romanians.

As Nae Ionescu's article had concluded with an explicit request for a full explanation from the professors in the Y. M. C. A. committee the answer came two days later: "On the Y. M. C. A.", signed by I. D. Protopopescu; the note was published "in the spirit of objectivity" as the editor admitted (I. D. Protopopescu, was at that time the chairman of the Y. M. C. A. Committee, the Romanian branch). However, the article ended with the drastic analysis of Mr. I. D. Protopopescu's letter, which reflects Nae Ionescu's trenchant attitude and leaves no room for interpretation: "we have nothing to take back. We are waiting for precise evidence" (I. D. Protopopescu, 1927).

In defence of the actions supported by the Y. M. C. A., among other things, I. D. Protopopescu also invoked the fact that the Association, in its desire to fully nationalize itself, had formed and continued to train Romanian secretaries. Or, a former Secretary, trained by the Y. M. C. A., continued Nae Ionescu's polemic – none other than Sandu Tudor. He responded punctually to all the explanations brought by Professor I. D. Protopopescu, from the position of the man who was familiar with "the world of work, not only from the outside but also from the inside, basically, as I have taken part in the courses of the school which prepares the future national elements of the various countries in south-eastern Europe" (Sandu, Tudor, 1927).

The actions of I. D. Protopopescu, the chairman of the Committee of the Y. M. C. A. Association, the Romanian branch and the chairman of the Action Committee of the A. C. T. (The Christian Association of young people) showed that he was aware of the crisis. Thus, he addressed a letter to

the president of the National Union of Christian Students in Romania, an *avant la lettre plea in defence of A. C. T., the signatory of the text knowing that the issue of the Y. M. C. A. Association would be discussed* within the upcoming Congress in Oradea (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 54-55).

The general student congress held in Oradea between 4th -7th December (initially, the period of November 27-29 was agreed, but the unexpected death of the Prime Minister I. C. Brătianu changed the date of the Congress), was an unfortunate event (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 208-211, 282-284), which produced a number of other violent manifestations, with extensive reverberations both nationally and internationally. If in the previous U. N. S. C. R. Congress the tensions had been generated among the students by the collision for the sphere of influence of two decision makers: A. C. Cuza and C. Z. Codreanu, the appointment of Lorin Popescu as the president of the U. N. S. C. R. significantly tilted the scales in favour of the latter.

Moreover, the programme contained highly sensitive topics and a set of frustrations accumulated over the past few years ("Numerus Clausus"; "the colonosations around the frontier"; "the Treaty of Trianon, and the Jews who opted for Hungarian nationality"; "The Jews and communism"; "the Law of dead bodies"), which were worsened by a more recent detrimental promotion made by the Y. M. C. A. outside our frontiers (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 249). In this new context, realizing the importance of the large-scale dissemination of information, 'U.N.S.C.R.' members focused their attention on this matter. Thus, before the Congress the new president sent a note announcing the appearance of the official newspaper of the U. N. S. C. R. – "The Student word" – a weekly publication, edited by the Bucharest Student Centre (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 250). Also, before the event, the National Union of Christian students from Romania published a note on congressional conduct, emphasizing the respect for the order and discipline of the speakers (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 251).

The paper will not go into details about the events in Oradea: it will only report a series of unfortunate coincidences: thus, the 6th Congress of the Zionist movement in Romania was held in Bucharest and the opening of the event happened at the same time – November 4, 1927 – as the Christian Students' Congress in Oradea (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 216v. -217). Oradea was a Hungarian symbol city with a large Hungarian Jewish population, and the

revisionist manifestations were increasingly articulated in Hungary in those times. In addition, the changes of the power balance that took place both at the top of the political class through the unexpected death of Prime Minister I. C. Brătianu and in the U. N. S. C. R. through the replacement of President Iulian Sârbu should not be neglected.

Predictably, the first international reactions were from Hungary, Budapest, where on the 8th of December, 1927, in the Room of the industrialists, the issue of the excesses of the anti-Semitic pogroms of the students from Oradea were raised; they expressed, in their view, the failure of the Romanian government to ensure "the rights of minorities according to the treaty of peace," (with A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 243). The information was disseminated through the newspaper, "*Neues Wiener Journal*" – an important publication in the Austrian capital; in the capital city of Switzerland, the first prime minister Bethlen received a report drawn up by the interim president minister Voss (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 243).

Things did not get any better in our own country. On the 9th of December, 1927, at an afternoon meeting of the Senate of Romania, which was attended by four ministers, the Jewish senators, Elly Bercovici, and rabbi Jacob Niemirower, raised the issue about the disorders in Oradea, questioning the government and, in particular, the Minister of Internal affairs, I. G. Duca, who was asked if he had any knowledge of those facts. This was followed by questions about the measures envisaged to punish the offenders and, respectively, the compensation for victims. Another voice that supported and consolidated the above-mentioned claims was that of nationalist-peasant Romulus Boilă, who appreciated as legitimate the senators' point of view and accused Minister Gheorghe Tatarascu of failing to effectively manage the crisis situation, even of complicity: "he believes that Minister [Gheorghe] Tatarascu is either accomplice to what happened or is not worthy to occupy the position he holds given that he did not know what measures to take although he was informed of what was going to happen" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 221-222).

Meanwhile, the Israeli community organized in various capitals of the World protested against the violence in Oradea (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 273), but also against the Romanian government, which was accused of tolerant attitude towards such actions (A.C.N.S.A.S., fond Documentar, dosar nr. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 254, 256). The previous cases of acquittal of Justice (Nicolae Totu, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu), were used as evidence to label the mentality of the Romanian justice, which had

acquitted those who committed anti-Semitic acts. It goes without saying that in this key interpretation, the refusal of exemplary punishment of congressmen considered culpable was speculated as evidence of government interference in student movements (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 261). The unprecedented crisis generated chain reactions from all parties involved. Initially, the president of the U. N. S. C. R. sent *an official statement* distancing himself from the students who had committed theft and destruction, without desolidarizing from the actions of "outrage and vandalism of special trains carrying students" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 272) committed by the other congressmen; a month later (January 25, 1928), the note prepared by the General Council of the National Union of Christian students of Romania, following *a thorough analysis process* revealed a completely different perspective. Thus, the motivation of the request for the release of the arrested young people was supported, on the one hand, by the challenges posed by the Jews addressing the nationalist congressmen, and on the other hand by the complicity of the government, which had turned students into a mass of manoeuvre (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 312-314).

Therefore, the students' process was a matter of broad national and international interest (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 287v. - 291; 300-304), which shook society at all its levels. Nae Ionescu's *Word* (Cuvântul) became a Tribune for students; its lines repeatedly gave detailed descriptions of the way things unfolded in court – the speeches of the defendants, the pleas of the defenders, etc. (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 318), the letter written by the students who were imprisoned in a military prison in Cluj; the letter demanded the mobilization and solidarity of all students for the defence of their rights and in the fight against the abuses of the courts (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 315).

The imprisonment of the congressional students who had participated in the riots during and after the Student Congress in Oradea (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 2, f. 8), were decided only in March 1928 (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 68-70) and were doubled by the sanctions against the administrative bodies in charge of managing the student movements in Oradea. The disciplinary measures were generally limited to the dismissal from office of prefects, directors, inspectors, police subcommittees from Oradea, Cluj and Bihor, who had proved to be inefficient in terms of ensuring public order (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund,

file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 54). The interwar Christian student's condition cannot be understood outside the historical and social context as its imbalances and difficulties mirrored the increasingly clearer and deeper fractures between the ideals and realities of time. The fulfilment of the national dream – Great Romania –nurtured some of the deepest aspirations which, however, turned into disappointments as well. The test consisted in the personal ability to resist the pulses of time, to evade various forms of ideological or political influence, especially since in the university environment politics prevailed in relation to Christian student organizations.

As far as the analogy between the A.S.C.R. and the U.N.S.C.R. is concerned, the A.S.C.R. is limited to debates specific to the academic environment; its international congresses were reflections on theological, cultural and social issues that young students faced in the interwar period. 'A.S.C.R.' members found themselves at this crossroads; they defined themselves by distancing from politics, by refusing to turn into national tribunes that would promote the messages of various historical parties. However, despite the asperities of the reception through the prism of their contemporary society, this choice proved its clarity of meaning in time.

THE RUPTURE BETWEEN THE Y. M. C. A AND THE A. S. C. R. - CĂLDĂRUȘANI CONGRESS

The repeated conflicts between the A. C. S. R and the Y. M. C. A., accumulated and unsolved over time, made the rupture between the two Associations an incontrovertible reality. The poor communication led, as already shown, to extremely tense situations, noticeable even at the international level, the Y. M. C. A. often being interpreted as an organization that seriously damaged the image of the state and of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Irrefutable evidence was to be put on the table at the Congress. Thus, as early as December 1926, the National Union of Romanian Christian students received an address from the International Confederation of students, demanding details about the assassination of David Falik by student Nicolae Totu. When Nicolae Totu had been acquitted of all charges, the decision of the Y. M. C. A. in Geneva in 1927 to exclude Romanian students from the Confederation, did nothing but deepen the rift between the Christian student organizations. But for the energetic intervention of the Romanian delegate, Ion Georgescu, who made the English (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 96) to withdraw the proposal for exclusion, the subject would not have been removed from the agenda.

The Congress of Rome also revealed another administrative - financial problem: Romanian students were accused of preferential anti-Semitic treatment as Jewish students did not have access to the money allocated to the Y. M. C. A. for *The student relief work*. The Romanian delegates rejected the accusation with indignation and insolence: "the Romanian delegate defied the English students to produce proof of the help the Y.M.C.A. would give to students for the canteens and student dormitories in the country; Stevens justified part of the expenses he had made in the country and the funds that were sent to him but it was not known where the funds were allocated" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66).

Obviously, after this event, the Romanian students articulated increasingly virulent accusations based on the deficient (even false) information that the Y. M. C. A. had promoted about their activity. The above-mentioned facts led to the conclusion that petty interests were hidden under the guise of this student organization, which practised an intense and systematic advertising about its charitable purposes meant to attract investments. The Y. M. C. A. had even become susceptible to fraud, by illegally assuming important amounts of money that, although justified as aid, never reached the target destination but thickened the pockets of those in the management structures.

At the Annual Congress in Chiels-Switzerland, which overlapped with the International Congress in Rome, Romania was again the subject of a virulent attack, to which, however, the representative of the Y. M. C. A. in the country did not respond. However, under the given conditions, this silence accredited the slander (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66) as it was pointed out by Nae Ionescu in his article "The Y. M. C. A." (Nae Ionescu, 1927).

The enumeration of these events meant to support the thesis of disturbing the state order was supplemented by the fact that the Y. M. C. A. did not respect the state confession, but made Protestant propaganda (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64): "at the school of Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A. Society, which functioned at Băile Herculane the Protestant missionary programme was taught to those who attended classes, which promoted a great dose of Love in the humanitarian sense" (A.C.N.S.A.S., fond Documentar, dosar nr. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66).

In fact this tension was confirmed by the fact that as early as June 1927 the Y. M. C. A. had expelled A.S.C.R. members (Nae Ionescu, 1927) (who had his own headquarters in 15 Popa Rusu Street) and had withdrawn their subsidies, precisely because of the refusal of Romanian students to *denigrate orthodoxy* (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund,

file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64). Moreover, the secretaries – of whom Sandu Tudor was part – who reported irregularities and inconsistencies between the state confession and the association's projects to the Directorate were dismissed (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64). The split was also mirrored in the press of the time, where Nae Ionescu was the spearhead that put the irregularities of the Y. M. C. A. activity under a magnifying glass.

Princess Ileana's involvement in declaring the undesirability of the Y. M. C. A. (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64) is likely to suggest the amplitude of the conflict and the subsequent entropic reactions. The Securitate secret police's *report*, dated 28 April 1928, recorded: "before the last Congress in April however, the agenda included, apart from theological issues, a discussion on the position that the A. C. S. B. had taken against the Y. M. C. A. The A. C. S. B. put forward this issue because the current leadership of the Y. M. C. A. would not respect the state confession, that is, would not apply orthodoxy" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, ff. 78-80). The arrival in Bucharest of the delegates, D. Daves – the director of the central European branch of the Y. M. C. A. and Gustave Kullmann "who had found major irregularities in the Administration of the Association in the country (Romania) and that the statute was not applied by the principal, Mr F. E. Stevens" (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 79) proved that the committee in Geneva had been informed of the impending conflict.

In order to prevent the predictable rupture at the Congress of the Caldarushani monastery the Central Committee of the Y. M. C. A. resorted to offensive tactics, simultaneously convening another meeting, chaired by John Moht, the director of the Y. M. C. A., to which the church leaders of the Y. M. C. A. from the Balkan countries were invited. On this occasion, the church leaders were promptly asked to give their clear consent to their collaboration with the Y. M. C. A. While the Greek and Yugoslav prelates said they would work and maintain good relations with this World Organisation, and the Bulgarian delegates were reserved, Archbishop Tit Simeadrea remained adamant stating, beyond any equivocation, his delimitation from it on the grounds "that the intentions of the Y. M. C. A. were not clear. The Romanian church will not support the Y. M. C. A. On the contrary, it will aim to prevent the action of this association by setting up a new society, which will be open only to Romanians, will have a purely Romanian character and its purpose will be to combat the action of the Y. M. C. A." (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 81).

The debate caused by this crushing opposing stance was also won by the Romanian delegate, the director, Mr Moht, having to admit that the majority of the leaders of the Y. M. C. A. society were Protestants (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 81).

The Balkan Orthodox Congress held at Caldarushani Monastery opened on April 19, 1928 under the chairmanship of lawyer Paul Sterian, having the Archbishop Tit Simedrea, the second Vicar of the Patriarchate, its honorary president. Nae Ionescu and father Gala Galaction were among the Congress speakers. Sandu Tudor was part of the organizing committee of the event, and his wife, Vergi Sandu Tudor (aka Virginia Teodorescu), participated as representative of the A. C. F (Christian Association of Girls) (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38). The event lasted five days and brought together besides the leaders of the Y. M. C. A., D. A. Daves, G. I. Kullmann and Alexandru Nikitin (Secretary of the Balkan Committee), Yugoslav, Bulgarian, Russian, Czechoslovakian and Greek delegates (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38). The secret police's note in the report on this event is indubitable proof of the fact that the veil had fallen, all the actors involved being fully aware of the diversionary techniques of the co-participants: "note: this Congress is nothing more than a congress organized by the Y. M. C. A. which through its branches – *the Christian Student Associations – seeks to pursue its purpose and yet capture those who really love Orthodoxy and Union in the Balkans. The reasons will be seen in the last note*" (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38).

The conclusions of the Congress were drawn in an academic elegant note emphasised by the persuasive speech of the delegate of the Y. M. C. A., Gustav G., Kullman, a well known public speaker, a multilingual personality, who pleaded at least for a postponement of the rupture at this moment if a change was not possible: "the Congress ended with the declaration of the A.S. C. R., stating that it will not announce the breaking away from the Y. M. C. A., hoping for a comeback" (to A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 80).

However, in less than a month after the aforementioned Congress, E. Stevens and I. D. Protopopescu, the leaders of the Y. M. C. A., the Bucharest branch, submitted their resignations, following a request from the Y. M. C. A. in Geneva, and Tit Simedrea, Vicar of the Patriarchate was elected as president. The change assumed a new direction, with Archbishop Tit Simedrea proposing the nationalization of the association (and therefore the reshuffle of the committee, which allowed only Orthodox Christians) and the

breaking of any ties with the Y. M. C. A. (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 82).

A note drawn up by the Directorate of Police and General Safety, brigade I, on 28 august 1930, regarding the Congress in Bulgaria, highlights the dissociation of the congressmen according to their options regarding *tradition* versus *modernization*. Congressmen faithful to the old Christian tradition criticised Tit Simedrea's activity: "...he is said not to be familiar with the ins and outs of the Y. M. C. A., and encourages it in its destruction of the Christian orthodox faith. In this regard, letters will be sent from Bulgaria to the country" (A. C. N.S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 83). This quote has been chosen to illustrate that the collapse of trust in the Y. M. C. A. Society had rapidly expanded. The Bulgarian delegate's reserved attitude regarding the declaration of total adherence to the actions of the Y. M. C. A. turned into a vehement denial in a relatively short time (see the above mentioned meeting where the Central Committee of the Y. M. C. A. aimed to counterbalance the withdrawal of the Romanian branch).

The failure of the Y. M. C. A. is also explained by the national and international evolution of events. Outbursts in the political arena, heavily publicized by personalities, who found their voices and gradually began to realise their power evolved in the obsession with absolute control of the state on its people (the two leaders of opinion whose undeniable influence gave rise to two trends were Nae Ionescu, through the publication, *the Word*, and Nichifor Crainic, through *Gandirea* literary magazine).

The informative notes of the police inspectorates captured varied situations which showed an insatiable appetite to know everything and extremely numerous and sophisticated controlling strategies. In this context, the downward trajectory of the Y. M. C. A. is thus explained in terms of its credibility in the eyes of the government: "the Propaganda of the Anglo-Americans combined with the propaganda of the historical parties developed among the Romanian youth through a lot of channels where the association of Y. M. C. A. (Young Man's Christians Association), with headquarters in Bucharest, 8 Progress street, played an important role (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 18).

The international nature of the association, its connections to the *modern* world (mainly America and England) justifies the intense control and frequent reports of the Secret police which stated that the employees of the Association, the Y. M. C. A. were more inclined to serve the interests of the foreign states than Romania. The information provided by the Secret police focused on a range of diverse activities, from economic issues to private

lives of officials having various positions in the Y. M. C. A. (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 014758, vol.1, ff.7-8, f. 18, f. 23, F. 51, f. 65, passim). A thorough analysis of the roles and positions of the agents in this association revealed a state of increasing tension, which announced the subsequent cleavages (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol.1, f. 23). The year 1929 brought the great economic crisis, whose insinuation produced increasingly dramatic effects: unemployment and inflation reaching alarming rates in the period 1929-1933. After 1933, the drift propagated into huge waves and encompassed everything that came its way. During this period, the subordination relations of the Romanian Orthodox Church to the Romanian state became visible, the pauper state of the former forcing it to concessions. After 1930 the activities of the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. were banned separately in several states, the reason for their existence losing its sustainability. They were included in state organizations, first in Yugoslavia through Sokoli, in Italy through *Balilla*, in Germany through *Hitlerjugend* and later in Romania through *Straja*. Therefore, the breaking up of the A. S. C. R., the student movement, representative of interwar Romania, which developed and opposed the Y. M. C. A., overlapped the maturity process of the society at all levels.

SANDU TUDOR BETWEEN UNIVERSALISM AND ETHNOCENTRISM

Student Alexandru Teodorescu also fitted in the picture of a generation enrolled in the chase to discover the eschatological dimension of their time. The fractures between the two organizations, with its roots in ideas (where the differences between the Christian dogmas promoted by the Y. M. C. A. and the orthodox church became competitive) as well as in the social environment (responses to the radicalised student movements) were also reflected in the evolution of Alexandru Teodorescu's perceptions of the relationships between the A. S. A. C. R. U., the N. S. C. A. and the Y. M. C. A.. After three years as director of the Student Aid, Alexandru Teodorescu became in 1928, only for a few months, the Secretary of the University office, the University of Bucharest, the appointment being designed to strengthen and facilitate his work (A. C. N. S. A. S., criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 204). His voice would also be heard, during this period through *the A. S. C. R. Bulletin* – a publication that appeared in pitiful conditions, on lithographed paper (which often made it illegible), but which the members of the association aware perhaps of the role of the media word, did not spare any effort to edit. Various episodic acts,

conferences and meetings considered of widespread interest were thus publicised.

Predictably, the articles signed by Sandu Tudor fell within the same Christian theme, the aforementioned publication containing lectures on the tradition of akathists and hymns of the Orthodox Church. His friendship with Professor Grecu dated from this period; Professor Grecu worked in the manuscripts section of the Academy Library with a professor of byzantinology, Alexandru Elian. These friendships certified his passion for old Romanian manuscripts which he turned into effective means to penetrate the mysteries of old Romanian literature (letters and lexis).

As the themes of the lectures revealed, Sandu Tudor was still interested in the research of monasticism, Romanian Saints and medieval Orthodox monks, which allowed him to set up the spiritual history of our people, represented, in its deep core, especially by Romanian monasticism, aspects mentioned in *the Argument*. This is also the key to the correlation *universalism-ethnocentrism* of the A.S.C.R. member, publicist and religious poet Sandu Tudor, who refused the barren and repetitive conservatism; he supported the living and authentic tradition which he understood through his experience and was open to the universality of culture.

At the same time, as early as 1926, his writings also captured the obvious symptoms of the fractures of the political life touching all areas of life with their multiple, severe and insidious reverberations in the inter-war period: "if you look around you and from there further on across the country and overseas, you get the feeling that the whole mankind is in a confusing exodus, a huge wandering in the wilderness under the pressure of deadlines or sacrileges from bygone times. The road of life seems to be unfolding so strangely over a realm with cursed perspectives, especially after the war." (Sandu Tudor, 1926). He demanded an active involvement of the Church in everyday life. "In the land of those who sang" in times of awakening, of 'priests with the cross on their forehead' there are still many who do not cry, do not rush and do not ask for anything; there are many who work, suffer and are quiet living in the eternal Church of Christ" (Sandu Tudor, 1926).

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In Sandu Tudor's view, the clergy's participation in the current debates was imperative, as it could thus avoid any deviation, any tainted stance against the challenges that affected the development of the individual and of the community more and more: "we all share a mysterious feeling that makes us say that things are going wrong. Everyone, even the most benevolent, sees that the branches of the Fig Tree of our Orthodox Church have begun to dry out. Everybody cares for gardening it." (Sandu Tudor, 1926).

The A.S.C.R. member Sandu Tudor believes that the Romanian Orthodox Church, having a rich tradition, must distance from external international models and precisely cultivate the naturalness and humility of the action within our common existence where only the word can defuse any concrete tension: "we do not need the gardening of English parks. We don't need mending "here and there where it is essential". We don't need any reform. The church must work, speak and spread the Living Word from the high pulpit; it is The Life-giving word about which the Savior said, "Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear." The Orthodox Church, more than any other, treasures this truth: the life-giving Word, The Living Christ" (Sandu Tudor, 1926).

Therefore, Sandu Tudor's trenchant attitude towards religious proselytism was clear even before his dismissal from the Y. M. C. A. (which, in fact, occurred, as seen, following his protests against the mismatch between the spiritual activities of the world organization and the Orthodox tradition – the A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64) or the appearance of his article "following the Y. M. C. A.", September 27, 1927, whose content had triggered polemics on Orthodoxy: "have I not listened to the whole missionary programme at that school for Y. M. secretaries at Băile Herculane? Did we not see there, Turks and Persians, that is, declared Muslims, who, following the innocent patronage of the Y. M. C. A. society read the Gospels daily and uttered Protestant prayers, although they were not yet baptized? Why, if not for this pernicious and dishonest proselytism, was the activity of the Turkish subsidiaries of the Y. M. C. A. interrupted and banned by the country's government? Don't the Y. M. C. A. international congresses reveal the character of purely religious missionary of our society? Is it possible that the members of the

Helsingfors Committee didn't see anything?"(A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no " 010769, vol. 1, f. 45).

Sandu Tudor's interest in joining this Association (as well as that of his friends, Mircea Vulcănescu and Paul Sterian) was, undoubtedly, of a religious nature, dictated by his inner need to find answers to the great questions of his existence on the fertile ground of the orthodox spirituality, beyond the confusing upheaval of the interwar period. This was the source of his initial enthusiasm. This, however, did not make him accept the extremely tenacious manoeuvres of the Y. M. C. A. meant to attract young people to the so-called modernization of the orthodoxy, which were accompanied by Anglican offers (with a generous financial support) for the unification of the two churches. As seen, Sandu Tudor was one of those who did not accept this compromise and also denounced it publicly.

Therefore, the *A.S.C.R. member* Sandu Tudor (Alexandru Teodorescu) proved himself fully involved in the effort to recognize values of spiritual dimensions, in a world where secularization and the momentum of ecumenism had become a source of confusion. As expected, the dedicated journalist advocated the rediscovery of traditional Byzantine orthodoxy, in which *teaching* was not only the prerogative of the clergy, but of any believer, vehemently rejecting the turning of the church into a social-ethical institution. In fact, Sandu Tudor, as seen, was one of the notable voices of the A. S. C. R., where he embraced Professor Nae Ionescu's ideas, who had pulled the alarm about perceiving the Romanian Orthodox Church through the frameworks of the catholic *dogmas* or through the acts of the spiritual manifestation specific to the protestants.

ON THE TRAIL OF CHRISTIANITY AS MODUS VIVENDI INTEGRATOR

As warned from the Argument, the focus of the A. S. C. R. phenomenon can provide significant data for a much broader context because the influence of the organization was exercised throughout all eastern space. The project, as seen, failed, but the analogy between the route taken by the U. N. S. C. R. and the A. S. C. R. can reveal significant aspects.

So, to recap, what defined the two organisations? A significant difference was generated by the quantitative criterion: if the U. N. S. C. R. had tens of thousands of followers, the A. S. C. R. was much more modest, a few tens at the most (depending on the period) from 100 to 200 followers. Interestingly, if we consider the presence of women, the balance will tilt favourably, this time, towards the F. A. C. S. R. (according to the data of the 55 participants, 30 were female). How

can this be explained? One could speculate that there were reasons related both to the origins of the organization, in the sense that the Association had been set up by protestant missionaries. But, we have to point out that this was also a direct consequence of the noticeable differences in opinions. Why do we think so? A simple analysis of the programme of the F. A. C. S. R. conference shows that women's responsibilities were not limited to social-missionary activities, their competences being harnessed by cultural-educational spheres as well. Practically, women were involved in all the activities carried out in the A.S.C.R. congresses: coordination of religious clubs, meditation, or conferences -Miss Elined Prys, Florica Şuteu, Miclescu Lucia, Anina Rădulescu Pogoneanu, Eufemia Corcoveanu, Miss E. Boyd, Romanenko, Mărgărita Ioana Niculescu (A. C. N. S. A. S., the Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 27-30).

Further evidence of the more open vision of the F. A. S. S. R. members is the fact that the congregation included people of other nationalities (John Barrel, in 2015), as opposed to the 'UNSCR' for whom the ethnic origin and Christian orthodox religion was the *sine qua non* condition.

The congressional agenda also proves the clear differences between associations. In short, the 'A.S.C.R.' behaved atypically or, at least, did not follow the fashion of the time. While most of the students in the interwar period looked up at the *heroes* of the political class, whom they cultivated (hence the clear trajectory of their gestures, which foreshadowed their future political regimentation and indoctrination), the followers of the F.A.C.S.R. were interested in and spent their time on studies, debates and discussions on issues related to religion and philosophy, meetings, outings, common prayers etc. In other words, they refused to do politics and to be anti-Semitic (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no.010767, vol. 1, f. 16); their concern was to identify good practices of Christian life, which would integrate them into a sphere of universality. The 'A.S.C.R.' unique character consisted in the fact that in a secularized and secularizing era, in which militant nationalism led to a mechanization of social life, which left man no room and time for reflecting on his personal (inner) evolution, they stubbornly managed to explore their spiritual needs and existential crises typical of the *homo religeous*. All this lightness and relaxation which pervaded the activities of 'A.S.C.R.' congressmen, blatantly contrast with the sobriety and the stern tone of 'U.N.S.C.R. members. The differences also included the manner, respectively the reasons for the establishment of the two associations. While the A. S. C. R. had appeared as a result of the Y. M. C. A. action, as demonstrated previously, the U. N. S. C. R. had legitimized its appearance on December 10, 1922,

when a large student event took place in Bucharest, in which young people clearly expressed a series of claims. Therefore, the militant and radical character of the latter was announced by its very genesis. It cannot be neglected how the authorities related to the followers of the two associations. Thus, as shown, while the A. S. C. R. enjoyed the credibility of the senior University, political and government officials, the U. N. S. C. R. did not enjoy the same treatment for obvious reasons.

But what fundamentally distinguishes the two student organizations is, in our opinion, their option regarding political interference. Although both claimed their Christian dimension (certified from the title of the two associations), the way it was assimilated at the level of objectives and ideology, is a criterion of differentiation. A.S.C.R. activities were centred on rediscovering orthodoxy, on the good practices of Christian life, in a world increasingly unprepared for the challenges posed by interconfesionalism, scientism and secularization. In other words, the members of the A. S. C. R. aimed to find ways of solving the destructive effects of war on interwar students through Christian teachings (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 16).

The U. N. S. C. R.'s path led to another direction. Under these circumstances, the Christian element became more an ideological symbol than a substantial concern (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 57). On the other hand, the large number of members of the National Union represented a power that could not be ignored by the political class, animated by a fierce revanchist spirit, excessively fragmented, in which, moreover, the phenomenon of "party switching" was the order of the day.

If we add to this context the natural tendency of this age group to agree on some unitary principles, to study some doctrines and to act as one, surely their slipping into politics became a predictable path. The transformation of the National Union of Christian Students of Romania after the '30s into the medium for the training and performance of the young legionnaires (John Barrel, in 2015) was, somewhat, announced by the internal context and the special atmosphere of Great Romania, when starting with 1920, the revolt of the young against the old generations developed on a larger and larger scale.

CONCLUSIONS

Broadly speaking, the accomplishment of the Great Union, led first of all to the increase in the number of believers, and it brought about the rise of the Romanian Orthodox Church to the highest hierarchical level (Mircea Păcurariu, 1994). Thus, in February 1925, a law was passed by which the archbishop and metropolitan seat of Ungrovlahia,

as Primate of Romania, was elevated to the rank of patriarchal seat. Once the legislative framework was secured on November 1st, 1925, Miron Cristea became the first Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the investiture ceremony enjoying all the pomp and sobriety of such an event. In other words, the assistance provided not only by the Holy Synod, but also by the representatives of the State and the other religious cults in Romania and a large number of delegations from other Orthodox Churches, conveyed a message of cooperation between the State and the Church, united by ethical purposes and by legal and moral laws.

It should be noted, however, that the legislator favoured the superiority of the state over the Church, also called the system of church autonomy having to satisfy both the fair claims of the church and the normal rights arising from the sovereignty of the state.

In terms of the relations of student organizations to the Romanian Orthodox Church, those who were involved in the *upgrading work* were the very same people who laid the foundations of Patriarchy, the early pioneers engaged in the efforts to change: the Patriarch, Miron Cristea and the metropolitan Pimen. The historical context highlighted the universal vocation of the ecclesiastical institution, organically linked to the idea of transcendence of spirituality, hence the openness towards anyone who felt the need for spiritual ascent through faith. The Romanian Orthodox Church could not evade the efforts and projects of State Reformation, able to mobilize a disharmonious society in many of its segments, giving it the levers of values of the Orthodox Christian tradition.

On the other hand, internally, the relations between the state and the Church supported the interest of the former to use the trust Capital of the ecclesiastical institution, which, anyway, since Al. I. Cuza (more precisely since the adoption of *the law on secularization of monasteries* in December 1863, in the process of State transformation in the modern period of Romanian history), aware that its primacy had been irretrievably shaken and financially weakened, felt even more acutely the need to keep its identity and role intact. However, the challenge of the modern Romania was not an easy one and the Orthodox Church had assumed its changes of modernity in all of its forms, whereas in Romania like in many western European countries, the spirit of secularism was becoming more widely known.

Thus, the theological message gradually took more and more complex and heterogeneous forms: religious processions, prayers and public services of blessing for different events or events for young students. Similarly, anniversaries, commemorations of various personalities from the Romanian political, academic or cultural space were

patronized, as a rule, by the same spiritual spirit. Therefore, acceptance of collaboration with the World Y. M. C. A. Society should be understood in the context in which the Romanian Orthodox Church joined in the effort to provide young people with a clear view of religious beliefs, to help them distinguish between the destructive effects of hatred and aggressive militancy (familiar to a society emerging from a world conflagration), and the blessings of love and fraternity.

That does not mean that, as time revealed irreconcilable differences between the Y. M. C. A. ideology and the Orthodox Christian tradition, clerics and, obviously, theologian students involved in the movement did not temper their modernist momentum. In fact, after 1925, the openness to the values of universalism gave way to an increasingly clear awareness of the differences and, inevitably, those who had once received all these ideas with open arms, current and renewed organizations, meant to widely fraternize with people everywhere, turned into defenders of an increasingly prominent traditionalist attitude. Moreover, former supporters became the most vehement detractors of the Protestant organization, who, in their view, sought to alter the meanings of Orthodox Christian teachings, and use insidious ways to make followers from the ranks of Orthodox Christians. There are certainly many other issues and questions to elucidate. The path we followed helped us to clarify the following issues at least: the momentum of the renewal did not manifest itself only in Romania; therefore, it would be wrong to consider the subsequent fault a typical phenomenon. The differences were in rhythm, methods or solutions, which can lend some specificity.

After all, an equivalent of the development process that the interwar individual went through is the awareness of the unfavourable consequences of the attempts to modernize the state and the Romanian Orthodox Church, awareness objectified by a deepening of the Romanian spiritual space, in whose depths one had to look for the perennial values of world culture in the spirit of Orthodox traditions.

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- [4] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 136.
- [5] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 137.
- [6] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 145.

- [7] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 142.
- [8] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 142.
- [9] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 166 : " after the debates, the agenda of the Congress was permanently settled and the agenda of the Congress was to discuss 1) the liquidation of all misunderstandings among students, 2) the establishment of common views necessary for the movement, 3) the preparation of the new action programme and 4) the clarification of the relations between political and student nationalist organisations""
- [10] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, ff. 169-177, 179.
- [11] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 169-177, 179, 181, 183-197.
- [12] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 166 : " this morning during the meeting, Student State, from Iași, who had declared himself against Codreanu's dictatorship, was slapped by Codreanu, when he began to provide evidence that the Legion is a dangerous organization for the country".
- [13] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, F. 170 : " I. liquidation of all misunderstandings: a. personal matters / b. different trends in the movement such as: 1. Chemarea - Cluj; 2.Arhanghelul Mihail –Iași; 3. Ligist cuzist; 4.Ligist statuar; 5. Independent –București; II. Establishment of common views in the student movement; III. A new action plan; IV. Relations between political organizations and student organizations; V. The attitude of students towards major current problems".
- [14] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, ff. 176-177: "the meeting is over and then at 7pm the following motion was agreed upon: "current and former leaders of the student organisations gathered at the Holy Monastery of Neamț, on the days of the 1st -, 2nd -, 3rd -and 4th July 1927, in a perfect unity of views in relation to the idea of a national state that they will fight for, on the basis of a national christian anti-semitic doctrine, devised by professor A. C. Cuza, and wanting to set up an independent organisation, which will lead to solving the Jewish problem "".
- [15] A A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 153.
- [16] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol.1, f. 167.
- [17] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 203v.-204, 207.
- [18] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 203v.
- [19] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 204.
- [20] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 204.
- [21] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 207.
- [22] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 207.
- [23] Ionescu, Nae (1927), „Dumineca”, in: *Cuvântul*, 3rd year, no. 849, Monday, 29 August, p.1.
- [24] Ionescu, Nae (1927), „Y.M.C.A”, in *Cuvântul*, 3rd year, no. 866, Thursday, 15 September, p. 1.
- [25] Ionescu, Nae (1927), "Y. M. C. A", in *Cuvântul*, third year, no. 866, Thursday, 15 September, P. 1: "American and English students raise their voices against Romanians. What about the pogroms of Wallachia and the martyrdom of the Jewish population? General confusion. Confusion and mutiny. After all, everyone has the right to do what he wants in his own country, if laws permit. And if the facts defeat the law, every country has its justice system in charge of law enforcement. From an excess of camaraderie, the Romanian delegation offered to give clarifications. But other nations opposed: French, Italian, Czechoslovakian, Polish. Interference and control seemed indiscreet and misplaced. But finally! It's about pogroms and all sorts of horror. How do you know? Pogroms? Who do you have the information from? - From Y. M. C. A""
- [26] Protopopescu, I. D. (1927), "on the matter of Y. M. C. A.", in: *Cuvântul*, third year, no. 868, Saturday, 17 September 1927, p. 3 or A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, f. 44.
- [27] Tudor, Sandu (1927), "a result at Y. M. C. A", in: *Cuvântul*, third year, no. 878, Tuesday 27 September 1927, p. 2 or A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, f. 45.
- [28] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 54-55.
- [29] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 208-211, 282-284.
- [30] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 249.
- [31] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 250.
- [32] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 251.
- [33] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 216v.-217.
- [34] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 243.
- [35] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 243.

- [36] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 221-222.
- [37] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 273.
- [38] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 254, 256.
- [39] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 261.
- [40] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 272.
- [41] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 312-314.
- [42] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 287v.- 291; 300-304.
- [43] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 318.
- [44] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 315.
- [45] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 2, f. 8.
- [46] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 68-70.
- [47] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 54.
- [48] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 96 : " for then they should also have been excluded for cruel treatment applied to Indians in London,- an incident raised by Romanian students and which calmed the English."
- [49] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66.
- [50] Ionescu, Nae (1927), "Y. M. C. A", in: *Cuvântul*, third year, no. 866, Thursday, September 15, 1927, P. 1.
- [51] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66.
- [52] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64.
- [53] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 66.
- [54] Ionescu, Nae (1927), "Y. M. C. A.", in: *Cuvântul*, third year, no. 866, Thursday, September 15, 1927, P. 1: "for some time, the Romanian students who had been attracted in the Association by religious interests had withdrawn from inner needs that drove them towards Orthodoxy. They joined other organizations. The Y. M. C. A. had only given them shelter in the basement of a house on Salciilor street. Until last spring, when we were evacuated. The director needed the basement and the students didn't prove much understanding for his actions, given that they were or wanted to become Orthodox".
- [55] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64: "it is mentioned that the A. S. C. R. until 1927 had its headquarters in the very place where the offices of the Y. M. C. A. were located and as soon as they did not listen to the Y. M. C. A. which denigrated orthodoxy, not only did the Y. M. C. A. withdraw its monthly subsidies, but the A. S. C. R. members were also evicted from that place."
- [56] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64 : " what supports the accusations against the Y. M. C. A., is that lately **a number of secretaries who as soon as they informed the direction of certain issues which were against orthodoxy were fired. Among them are the names of Secretaries Virgil Popescu, P [aul] Sterian and Sandu Tudor.** Lately, as a protest against the activity of the society's Directorate one of the members of the action committee submitted his resignation for the same reasons. The member resigning is the colonel Virgil Badulescu, from the National Institute of Physical Education, who as an officer cannot express directly what he thinks about this organization," [printed. C. C.].
- [57] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64: "it should be noted that the Y. W. C. A. association will intervene under the High chairmanship of A. S. R. Princess Ileana, whose committee of ladies will insist on this matter, that is to abolish the Y. M. C. A. Society, which is an undesirable society.."
- [58] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, ff. 78-80.
- [59] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 79.
- [60] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 81.
- [61] A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, F. 81: " in order to prove that the Y. M. C. A. is not an Orthodox society father Simeadrea asked Director Moht several questions; Mr Moht ended up by acknowledging that most of the leaders of the Y. M. C. A. were Protestants."
- [62] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38.
- [63] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38.
- [64] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, ff. 30-38.
- [65] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 80.
- [66] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 82.
- [67] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 83.
- [68] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol.1, f. 18.
- [69] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol.1, ff.7-8, f. 18, f. 23, f. 51, f. 65, *passim*.

- [70] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol.1, f. 23.
- [71] A. C. N. S. A. S., Criminal Background, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 204: "in 1928, the University of Bucharest, as a result of my work, appointed me Secretary of the University office to work more intensively on student aid work".
- [72] Tudor, Sandu (1926), "towards a revival of orthodoxy", in the *Christian Idea*, published by the Federation of Christian Associations of Romania, June 1926, pp. 1-3.
- [73] Tudor, Sandu (1926), "towards a revival of orthodoxy", in the *Christian Idea*, published by the Federation of Christian Associations of Romania, June 1926, p. 1.
- [74] Tudor, Sandu (1926), "towards a revival of orthodoxy", in the *Christian Idea*, published by the Federation of Christian Associations of Romania, June 1926, p. 2
- [75] Tudor, Sandu (1926), "towards a revival of orthodoxy", in the *Christian Idea*, published by the Federation of Christian Associations of Romania, June 1926, p. 2.
- [76] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 014758, vol. 1, f. 64.
- [77] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010769, vol. 1, f. 45.
- [78] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, ff. 27-30.
- [79] Cask, Ionuț (2015), *Mircea Vulcănescu. A microhistory of the Romanian interwar*, Ed. Eikon, Bucharest, pp.104-105. IKE, the Cluj branch, was composed of Protestant Hungarian students.
- [80] *The Note* drawn up by a secret police agent surprised the mismatch between the spirit of the age, and the manner in which the organization had held its annual meeting in Bistrita-Nasaud county: " this congress was announced at the end of July, and, **although the members of the association are Christian, hence anti-semit, however, their propaganda is based on living together and not violence**, some members of the centres and students understood". (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no.010767, vol. 1, f. 16) [subl. C. C.]. We think that, at the time, the overlapping meanings of the two terms – *christian and anti-semitic* – was not just an interpretation given by the secret police, but, rather, a general effect of the reception of the terms.
- [81] The content of the *letter*, (dated 29.08.1924), signed by the secretary, Mircea Vulcănescu, addressing the Minister of the Interior stated that: "the Federation of Christian Students in Romania, founded in 1923 through the transformation of the old Association of Christian Students in Romania, founded in 1921, under the auspices of the Associations of the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. will hold its 4th Annual Congress with the participation of affiliated associations (from Iasi, Cluj and Bucharest) - in Năsăud, in Transylvania, between 1-20 September 1924; the Federation asks to authorize the Congress at the indicated place and date **knowing the way you appreciated our congresses in previous years, the high activity and goals that the Federation pursues on the religious and moral ground**. We remain deeply grateful to you. The authorization of the Ministry of Public Instruction was obtained by the address Honor. Ministry (...) 1924. Please receive our special esteem " (A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no. 010767, vol. 1, f. 16).
- [82] The General Inspectorate of the police Iași informed the general director through the *informative note* of 24. 11. 1926, that " on the evening of 22 cur [ent] Christian students' meeting took place in our town, when **the new principles on the national cause were discussed** and two proposals related to the relations between the LANC organisation the student centres were made."(A. C. N. S. A. S., Documentary Fund, file no " 010767, vol. 1, f. 57) [subl.C. C.].
- [83] The U. N. S. C. R. was the subject of several specialized studies, such as: Ionuț Cask, *Mircea Vulcănescu. A microhistory of the Romanian interwar*, Ed. Eikon, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 46-164; Roland Clark, *Holy Legionnaire youth. Fascist activism in interwar Romania*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2015; Armin Heinen, *Legion Archangel Michael*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucharest, 2006; Dragoș Sdrobiș, *The boundaries of meritocracy in an agrarian society. Intellectual unemployment and political radicalization of youth in interwar Romania*, Ed. Polirom, Iasi, 2015.
- [84] The theme cannot be overlooked and, without entering this complex problem, we must point out that the number of believers of the Romanian Orthodox Church exceeded 14 million, which placed it immediately after the Russian Orthodox Church. In this context, it is not surprising that the project of establishing the Romanian Patriarchate was supported by prominent personalities from the political and cultural sphere, such as: I. C. Brătianu, professors Nicolae Iorga and Simion Mehedinti, ministers Constantin Argetoianu, Dr. C. Angelescu, Al. Lapadatu, etc.a. (For a broad treatment of the subject see PR. Prof. Dr. Mircea Pacurariu, *History of the Romanian Orthodox Church*, E. I. B. M. B. O. R., Bucharest, 1994, pp. 131-141).