

Carmen CIORNEA  
Faculty de Theology – „Ovidius” University

# THE TRIAL OF THE GROUP OF “RUGUL APRINS” (“THE BURNING BUSH”)

**K**eywords  
Sandu Tudor;  
Alexandru Teodorescu;  
Monk Agaton;  
Hieroschemamonk Daniil Sandu Tudor;  
The Burning Bush

---

## Abstract

The trial of the group „Teodorescu Alex. and others”, being so tragic in terms of consequences, keeps alive only one person out of 16: Rădulescu Nicolae, Emanoil Mihăilescu passing to the eternal life on February 27, 2019. From the desire to bring more light into the investigation of the becoming of Father Daniil Sandu Tudor during the latter part of his life, in 2015, I asked for the support of these last survivors – Nicolae Rădulescu, Emanoil Mihăilescu – true disciples, who sacredly preserved the relief of the flames of the Rugul Aprins (The Burning Bush) in their hearts. In fact, these people are, in our opinion, the most able to recover the course of the Rugul Aprins, since they paid with their own freedom for belonging to this „spiritual group”, notwithstanding the tendencies of the time which they were given to go through in this earthly life. The same reason, of the objective restoration of the investigation and the trial of the group of Rugul Aprins, led to the consultation of the archives of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives (A.C.N.S.A.S.), from which we selected a series of documents regarding the topic of this research. This time, the exercise of demistification of certain interrogation minutes, accusation ordinances etc. was realized by these two protagonists of those – Emanoil Mihăilescu, Nicolae Rădulescu – who engaged in this lucid effort of reconstructing the historical truth, escaping (as much as possible) the subjectivism.

**JEL Classification:** I20, K49, Z12

---

## INTRODUCTION

The group of Rugul Aprins (The Burning Bush) that was sued in 1958, under the name of „Teodorescu Alex. and others” – a construction of the Securitatea (Security) designed around Father Daniil Sandu Tudor that had its degree of arbitrariness – was considered „a subversive organization where several sessions of a conspiratorial nature were held, attracting a series of reactionary elements from among the students, inciting them to counter-revolutionary actions against the democratic state order of the RPR” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216). The presence of Fathers Adrian Făgețeanu, Roman Braga and Arsenie Papacioc, which had a background in terms of legionary activity, served the intention of the Securitatea to give a legionary colour to the activity of the respective group.

**The trial began on October 29, 1958.** The public, who had been admitted before the trial began, was forced to leave the room. The military prosecutor asked the Court to declare the hearing secret, because the public debates could have affected the state’s security and public morality. Thus, **the trial took place behind closed doors**, with the assistance being provided only by the investigators, some security agents and the defense lawyers: „Taking the floor, the military prosecutor asks the court to declare the hearing secret, because the public debates could affect the state’s security and public morality. Secretly deliberating on the request of the military prosecutor and seeing that, due to the nature of the facts, the publicity of the debates could reach the security of the state, the public order and morality, the Court declares the hearing secret, according to art. 291 pen. pr. and orders the public to leave the courtroom” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 210).

### THE TRIAL OF THE GROUP OF RUGUL APRINS („THE BURNING BUSH”)

Then, the president, lieutenant-colonel of justice Hirsch Emil, established the identity of the **16 accused** (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol.2, f. 189): **8 clerics** – **Alexandru Teodorescu (Father Daniil Sandu Tudor)**, 62 years old, the igumen of the Rarău Hermitage; **Benedict Ghiuș**, 54 years old, archimandrite at the Patriarchy; **Adrian Făgețeanu**, 46 years old, monk at the Rarău Hermitage; **Roman Braga**, 36 years old, monk priest at the Metropolitanate of Iași; **Sofian Boghiu**, 46 years old, painter, the igumen of the Plumbuita Monastery; **Felix Dubneac**, 46 years

old, painter, monk at the Plumbuita Monastery; **Arsenie Papacioc**, 44 years old, monk priest at the Slatina Monastery; **Dumitru Stăniloae**, 55 years old, priest, Doctor of Theology, doctor professor at the Theological Institute of Bucharest –, **3 laymen** – professor Alexandru Mironescu, 56 years old; doctors Vasile Voiculescu (74 years old, writer) (Marius Oprea, 2008) and Gheorghe Dabija, 43 years old and **5 young men** – Șerban Mironescu, 23 years old, student at the Faculty of Philology (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 416583, f. 33); students at the Institute of Architecture: George Văsii (year 5, 23 years old); Nicolae Rădulescu (year 5, 23 years old), Emanoil Mihăilescu (year 4, 23 years old) (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 465) and the clerk Dan Grigore Pistol, 28 years old (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, ff. 70-71). The latter was less known by the rest of the group, the confessors Nicolae Rădulescu and Emanoil Mihăilescu referring, as far as he was concerned, only to the obvious signs of illness, the data also confirmed by the Archive documents (A.C.N.S.A.S., Fond informativa, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f.1, f. 3).

The study of the archival materials provides the following data regarding Grigore-Dan Pistol: he was arrested on 29.VII.1958, while he was a registrar at the Patriarchy of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and convicted by the sentence no. 125 / 18.XI.1958 to 5 years of civic degradation and confiscation of the property for favoring the crime of conspiracy against the social order. The sentence remained final by Decision no. 42 / 21.I. 1962 of the Supreme Court – the Military College, his appeal being dismissed. Considering both decisions ungrounded and unlawful, the Prosecutor General declared an appeal for surveillance on 7.V.1962, requesting the cancellation of the decisions and his acquittal of any penalty. He was released on 29.V.1962, executing 3 years and 9 months of the sentence (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, *passim*). The Archive document of January 19, 1959, starting with the sheets 70-71 of volume 5, Criminal fund, file no. 000202, “The group Teodorescu Alex. and others” from the ACNSAS, certifies that Grigore Dan Pistol was a man mentioned in the records of doctors for several years: „From the annexed certificates, it turns out that the appellant had intermittent crises that determined his hospitalization to the Central Mental Illness Hospital, and between these crises, he had intervals of apparent healing. The appearance of healing is so evident during these intervals that even a specialist in mental illness could believe on November 23, 1948, that he is completely healthy, so that two months later on 26.01.1949, it was found that „the disease evolves”, and in 1951 he

presents, again, at least 3 crises, interrupted by 3 apparent healing intervals. This explains the appearance as mental health that misled the background courts. It is to be noted that the family did not request medical certificates for all periods of crisis and that it did not keep all the certificates. The family only requested certificates when they needed to postpone the exams and only kept some of them, by chance. The fact that Pistol was ill also results from the statements, both during investigations and the hearing, of all the co-defendants who came in contact with him, namely:

- 1) Alex. Teodorescu who shows that Pistol represents a pathological case.
- 2) Vasii, Mironescu Șerban and Rădulescu, who present him as unbalanced.

However, since all this evidence could not give us a clear picture of the appellant's mental state, we asked for a medical examination at the Central Mental Illness Hospital, to be questioned Dr. Sebastian Constantinescu from the Central Hospital, who treated him at his private office until his arrest, and to request the observation sheets from the Central Hospital, both for the periods in which he was hospitalized and for the time when he had a cranial operation (trepanation) consisting of detachment of a part the skull. This operation left visible traces and the contour of the part of the skull which was detached could be observed with the eye and with a touch" (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, ff. 70-71).

Grigore-Dan Pistol was followed by the Securitate, opening a file on the issue of „various subversive organizations”, during the period 1963-1969. The reasons for removal from the case file were: „ill of TBC and mentally ill, a fact for which he was retired” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, *passim*).

According to the address of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Argeș County Inspectorate, Service II, to the Bucharest Municipality Inspectorate of Security, of 6.01.1976: „PISTOL GRIGORE-DAN, the son of Stan and Elisabeta, born on 1.12.1930 in Bucharest, [...] worked on your field of activity during the following periods: 15.11.1957-31.05.1958 as the head of a section at the Romanian Patriarchy Bucharest Administration; 14.08.1962-27.09.1962 as an insurance agent at ADAS – 1 Mai Bucharest inspectorate; 4.12.1962-19.03.1964 as a chemical operator at the „Danubiana” Tire Factory on Olteniței Road no. 181; 20.03.1964-1.08.1968 as control and main computer reader at the Bucharest Electric Power Distribution Company (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f. 27).

In the summer of 1968 he retired because of illness. He leaved the parental house in Bucharest and settled in Pitești Municipality, Argeș County. The *Investigation Report* no. 00503 of 27.01.1976 stipulates the following: „During the period of

1969 – 1.10.1972 the investigated supplanted as an unqualified teacher at the 8-year-old general school of Cârpeniș, Ceparî commune, Argeș county, teaching French language and Music, during which time on the cultural line he also held the position of the Director of Cultural House in the village of Cârpeniș, Ceparî commune, Argeș county” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f. 23). The last job is of an operator at the Cianuril II Plant at the Petrochemical Combine of Pitești, where he lives at the youth hostel with another person in the room. Unmarried, seriously ill – there is the evidence of frequent hospitalization at the neuropsychiatry hospital in Pitești – insisted for a long time on obtaining a studio apartment, submitting to the management of the Combine a file with the justificatory documents, which was refused. He died in 1983, his death certificate being registered at the People's Council of Vedea, Argeș County (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f.1, f. 3).

Șerban Mironescu was a personality that managed to impress by his qualities even the informants who dealt with his verification: „As for Șerban Mironescu, I must show that he is a fair and honest man. He has beautiful moral qualities, good professional training, with much knowledge in various fields of activity, but he is a particularly fine connoisseur of classical culture and philosophy, knowing many foreign languages, including English, French, German, Greek and Latin to perfection, and those in the Library were even asking for him regarding books written in Swedish, Finnish or Danish. It can be said that he has a predisposed conformity to the acquisition of foreign languages. One day, I saw him buying a Hebrew-French dictionary from Pagu Armand, paying 300 lei for it. Șerban Mironescu was a good student in high school and at the faculty, following the classical languages at the University. The incident led to his arrest, and more due to his father, Alexandru Mironescu, he spent much time in prison, being considered a reactionary element. Șerban Mironescu, if it can be said that way, carried the guilt for his father, and if he has to carry it, of course he will, but he often asks himself, until when. This situation has often led him into painful situations. He came to the Academy Library when Prof. Șerban Cioculescu was the general manager, being assigned to work at the Serv. of the Classification of books. It seems that at his employment, especially when checking the personnel file, a good word was put by Croicu, who was responsible for the Academy from the CC of the PCR. In his job, he quickly became appreciated for his ability to work, many people considering that at the retirement of the former head of service, he would get to take his place, an opinion expressed at that time by the directors Alexandru Ionașcu and Niolae Burghelea. But the things

didn't happen that way. Being afraid that such a promotion could be further verified and that it would arouse the envy of many colleagues, who would make complaints everywhere, Ș.M. [Șerban Mironescu] considered that it would be better to transfer. He transferred with the same salary as a documentarian at the Institute of Art History, where he worked quite well, being appreciated by Răzvan Theodorescu and Remus Niculescu. However, at the first restructuring that took place, he was transferred to the Documentation Center of the Academy of Social and Political Sciences, where he is still working" (A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 416583, f. 33).

The haste with which the file of the accused Emanoil Mihăilescu (the last arrested of the group) was drawn up is also certified by the fact that during one day, September 22, 1958, he would be subjected to two interrogations, he would be informed about the content of the *Ordinance of indictment* and would be asked to sign minutes, an additional measure, by which the criminal investigator assures his *Conclusions of accusation* (despite the thin file), in which the following is stipulated: „[...] I called the accused, informing him that he has the right to be aware of all the criminal proceedings from the file, showing him the legal qualification of the committed acts. After I made the file available to him and he became aware of its entire content, I asked the accused whether he has to make new requests for completing the criminal investigation or if he wants to make new statements, and he declared the following: „My name is Mihăilescu Emanoil, [...] and, knowing all the criminal prosecution material from the file and the legal qualification of the facts, I declare that I keep the declarations that I have made, I do not make new requests, nor do I have new declarations, nor evidence with witnesses in my defense” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 465).

After the secretary read the accusations (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495) and the other parts of the file, the president proceeded to the interrogation of each defendant. Regarding the hearing of the witnesses of the accusation, it was ordered that to be continued the next day, on October 30, 1958. But this was not possible in the case of defense. Although all the lawyers asked the Court to admit the evidence with witnesses which would prove the behavior of the accused until the moment of arrest, the military prosecutor appreciated the evidence requested by the defense as inconclusive, generating a useless delay in the trial and asked their hearing to be denied, which was approved by the Court (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 211).

Then, the military prosecutor took the floor, and showed the Court that all the members of the group

meet the constituent elements of the crime of high treason (George Enache, 2004) and that the facts were fully proved in the *Conclusions of accusation*, where they were accused of „crime of conspiracy against the social order” according to the art. 209 pt. 1 CP, for which he asked the Court to sentence them, „because the organization is of a fascist nature and aimed at changing the social order existing in the state” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216).

The **ex-officio lawyers** who „defended” Father Daniil Sandu Tudor and Father Alexandru Făgețeanu, also accused of „crime of intense activity against the working class” (see Sandu Tudor's interwar publication), confined themselves to declaring that **they have no objection to make and that the Court should assess the punishment for the acts committed**. Regarding the „hostile discussions”, the lawyers specified that they do not meet the constituent elements for art. 209 point 1 CP, but for art. 209 pt. 2, letter b), that is, not for the *organization* but for the *agitation* (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214): „For the defendant Nicolae Rădulescu, the defender shows that Teodorescu Alexandru sought to imprint him the idea that God is the basis of it, so an idealistic basis, on which the orthodox religion officially practiced in the state is based. That the discussions held by him, of a hostile nature, **cannot bring together the constituent elements of the crime of conspiracy against the social order, but of the delict of public agitation**, p.p. by the art. 209 pt. 2 let. a CP. The act of the defendant is to be framed in this qualification, taking into account his favorable antecedents and his youth” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 213).

This point of view was also supported by the other defense lawyers, trying to circumstantiate and reduce the seriousness of the criminal acts.

Finally, the military prosecutor declared, regarding the changes of qualification, that he maintains his conclusions.

In the last word, Father Daniil Sandu Tudor said that he had no connection with the legionaries and that he fought against them. Father Benedict Ghiuș, professor Alexandru Mironescu and writer Vasile Voiculescu said that they had nothing left to say. The rest of the accused, the majority, stated that they were not legionaries. The young people stressed that their discussions were of a religious nature and that the relationships between them were of a real friendship: „[...] 9. Vășii Gheorghe states that he had religious concerns as a child and now he regrets. He did not nourish hostile feelings towards the regime;

10. Mironescu Șerban shows to the Court that the relations he had with the group of young people, as well as with the others, were of a religious nature. The discussions were casual, sporadic, he received

no legionary education, he does not know this doctrine.

11. Rădulescu Nicolae declares that he is not an enemy of the regime, and because of an internal imbalance he sought for a spiritual support from Sandu Tudor (Father Daniil). With his friends, he had no political relations, but friendship. He did not need to overthrow the regime, because this would be a utopia to think about.

12. Pistol Dan shows that he went to get an advice from Sandu Tudor and that he asked Văsiî Gheorghe to introduce this Sandu Tudor to him. That the discussions held are of a religious nature. He does not feel guilty about the facts of which he is accused and demands the court to acquit him from any penalty" (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 214).

The **sentence** was pronounced on **November 8, 1958**. The sentences were between 25 years and 5 years. Predictably, Father Daniil received the highest punishment: „25 (twenty-five) years of heavy prison and 10 (ten) years of civic degradation for the crime p.p. by the art. 209, pt. 1 cp. with art. 31 cp. and art. 58, pt. 2-5 cp. also sentences him to 15 (fifteen) years of rigorous detention for the crime P.P. by the art. 193/1 par. 4 cp.” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 209). The appeal was rejected (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 014758, vol. 2, ff. 180-182).

In 1996, the Prosecutor General of Romania declared the Appeal for annulment against the sentence of conviction of November 8, 1958, of the Region II Military Court, claiming that the facts held in the charge of the group „Teodorescu Alexandru and others” do not meet the constituent elements of the crimes for which they were convicted and also of any other crime. **The Supreme Court of Justice – the sections that met in a public hearing on April 8, 1996, admitted the Appeal for annulment and quashed the contested decisions, acquitting the former defendants for the „crime of conspiracy against the social order”** (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 11, ff. 98-109). However, it was too late for Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, as the trajectory of his spiritual ascension entered, on November 17, 1962, into another dimension.

#### **PROOFS OF THE MARTYRDOM OF THE PRIEST DANIIL SANDU TUDOR**

The date of death is certified by the *Minutes* no. 0078.458, concluded on November 17, 1962, signed by a commission composed of Dr. Vancic Ioan, the chief physician of the Formation; Lt. Maj. Noian Arghir, officer on duty; Serg. Maj. Costan Vasile, head of the Hospital Section; Mon. Augustine, head of the Evid. Base; Dan Marian,

head of the ETG and Plut. Gheța Arghir, civil effects storeman. They attended the „equipping for the burial of the deceased detainee TEODORESCU A. ALEXANDRU, born in 1896 and died on November 17, 1962, stating the following: 1. The detainee had civil effects registered in the Bond no. 0078458; 2. The detainee was equipped with the following effects from his personal luggage: one brown fluffy suit ctg. III, one pair of black sandals ctg. II, a black cap ctg. II, a brown shirt ctg. III. [...] 4. The following effects left after the burial were packed and sealed according to Art. 49 of the Instr. DGPC MN; 149.800 / 1959 two long priestly clothes ctg. III, one pair of black pants ctg. II, one brown leather belt ctg. III, two bone combs ctg. III, one soap dish ctg. III, one white canvas bag ctg. III, one cap ctg. IV”. On the back, the Head of the Section IX Hospital writes and signs: „I have received all the equipment specified in this report, necessary for the deceased prisoner’s clothing” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 171).

According to A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 012607, vol. 3, f. 328, on February 4, 1963, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Military Unit 0622 Aiud sends the address no. 00185 of February 4, 1963 to the Military Unit 0123/E Bucharest, where also was the personal file of Father Daniil Sandu Tudor (Alexandru Teodorescu) who, according to the document, had died „due to illness” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 012607, vol. 3, f. 328).

The circumstances of the Father Daniil’s death were also recovered by some confessors, who had the opportunity to find out, directly or indirectly, how the events of that period happened. In this regard, Father Nicolae Grebenea noted that: „Then, I heard that **this great monk died like a martyr**. After writing a lot (it is about the re-education from Aiud – A/N), they would have asked: „Now declare that there is no God, that you, the monks, are hypocrites who deceive the world” etc. He vehemently opposed it. Then they would have put him in some heavy constraints where he would have had an apoplectic attack and would have died. I deeply regretted it. There was a need for this „hound” outside” (Nicolae Grebenea, 1997).

The medical Report prepared by the Medical Service of the MIA, Formation 0622, Aiud, signed and stamped by the internist doctor Balea Maria provides the following data: „The detainee CR Teodorescu A. Alexandru, born on 22.12.1896, the son of Alexandru and Sofia, priest by profession, sentenced to 25 years HP was hospitalized to the hospital of Formation 0622, from 16.11, 2 p.m. to 17.11, 1 a.m. with the diagnosis: Cerebral haemorrhage (ventricular flood), visceralized hypertonic disease. He had been ill since 1959, being in the records of the internal diseases department and having repeated hospitalizations

during the worsening of the hypertonic disease. On the morning of 16.11.1962, the patient lost consciousness and entered into a comatose state. He was rushed to the hospital where a deep coma was detected, with bilious and food vomiting, tonic-chronic convulsions, shortness of breath. Blood pressure 250/150, tachycardia. The diagnosis of massive cerebral haemorrhage at the level of the ventricles was given and an emission of 250 cc of blood was made, together with vasodilators, procaine i.v. magnesium sulfate, hemostatics, vit. k. Hemophob/c/in KXC, ice bag on the cephalic region. With all the treatment applied, the patient died at 1 a.m. Cause of death: cerebral haemorrhage. Aiud, on 17.11.1962" (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 172). Also on November 17, the *Certificate of death verification* is issued by the same doctor (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 173) and by the document no. 7430/17.11.1962, the penitentiary addresses to the General Directorate of the Militia, the service of the operative records, in order to announce the death (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 175).

Of course, a reading between the lines of this document uncovers the strategy of establishing these acts, aimed at concealing the abuses and the ill-treatment of the prisoners; „because no one could record that people died from beating, hunger and cold. Most likely, he had never been hospitalized for his sufferings; because Roman Braga, one of those who had been convicted within the Rugul Aprins group, remembers how „Father Daniil died at Zarca of the Aiud after four years of tortures and beatings, being among the few detainees who wore chains throughout the whole period of detention" (Marius Oprea, 2007).

The fact that Father Daniil was ill is also verified by the testimony of Ion Pop: „Shortly afterwards, we were separated and I have never met Father Daniil again. **At the moment of our separation, the Father was half paralyzed, from the middle upwards (walking with great difficulty, only sustained), and during all the time we stayed together he did not receive any kind of medical assistance, as the other sick prisoners from Aiud**" (Ion Popescu, 2009).

Even though his cardio-vascular problems were known right from the moment of arrest, which is proved by the fact that at the section „Health status" the following were written: „TA/22/12 hypertensive disease and cardio-vascular sclerosis" (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 170), it is very unlikely that he was ever given any treatment for his ailments.

The earthly remains of Father Daniil are sheltered at the **Trei Plopi cemetery of the prisoners**, but the place where his grave is located remains unknown even today. According to the confessor

Teofil Dumbrăveanu: „**At the exit of the gate, an iron spear was stuck into his heart in order to see if he was dead or not. Then, they took him to the Trei Plopi cemetery of the prisoners. Currently, there are the pigsties of the people of Aiud above that cemetery, for which the former detainees from those parts, who are still living, are fighting for the cemetery to be released from the sties. Later, when I passed through Zarca, the name of Daniil of the detainee named The Saint was kept among the young. And when they dug in the yard of the prison in order to install some electric motor, the young diggers found a skeleton with chains on his feet. They thought that this was the prisoner Daniel the Saint. They didn't think he was taken to the cemetery**" († Antonie Plămădeală, 2002).

Therefore, the Aiud represented for Daniil Sandu Tudor the last stop of his earthly existence. However, the way in which he spent his life, even in this space of concentrationary hell, remained a true parable, the detainees recognizing him as a spiritual leader: „*at the Zarca prison in Aiud, there I heard from others telling stories about Father Daniil from Rarău. The detainees called him the saint. He shared his little food with the sick ones. He secretly communed with the Holy Mysteries the sick and those who wanted to receive the communion*" († Antonie Plămădeală, 2002). Through his martyrial death, Father Daniil Sandu Tudor joined the trajectory of celestial boundlessness.

## CONCLUSIONS

**The framing-up of this process is a moment of the communist regime's offensive against the Church and the Christian faith** that prepared the closing of the monasteries and the removal of the monks and nuns, which took place later, in 1959, by the *Decree 410*.

The information contained in the 11 volumes of the file no. 000202, Criminal fund, from the CNSAS, which includes the data of the investigation and of the trial of the group of „Rugul Aprins", corroborated with the testimonies of the only survivors – Nicolae Rădulescu and Emanoil Mihăilescu – proves that the trials were, in fact, a judicial farce through which only the conviction of the „bandits" was sought. Indeed, it is a well-known fact that sentencing reasons did not differ very much from trial to trial. How was the activity of Father Daniil Sandu Tudor or of the other clergymen included in the Rugul Aprins illegal, as long as the communist regime guaranteed the freedom of faith? In fact, Father Daniil, a trained man, was aware of the incompatibility between the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the communist party and the dogmas of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

On the other hand, the Securitatea, in turn, realizes more and more intensely the danger of clear outlining of the spiritual identity of the Church, which was translated into the order of the immediate reality with the subtraction from fulfilling the tasks on the party line: „The prayer of the heart represented the most exaggerated form of the Orthodoxy, being hostile and detrimental to the current regime, by the fact that those who came to practice this prayer correctly, had to repeat the prayer all the time except for the sleep. This led to our breakdown with the regime and even with any activity, especially the political one, so that for a start we could have as much free time as possible. Apart from this, we gradually became fanatical in the faith, being necessarily forced to retire to the monastery. Sandu Tudor asked us to preach this prayer of the heart among the other students, which I did, as for example with Rodica Săulescu and others whose names I do not remember at the moment. This is the hostile activity carried out by me and the other elements against the current regime during the years 1955-1956” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 217).

This also explains the effort of the investigators to give the legionary colour to the group, because otherwise the convictions were not justified, as one of the defense lawyers pointed out: “the fact that some students were told about creationism is fought mostly through education, and not by punitive measures” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, f. 165).

A careful reading of the Sentence no. 125, read in the Public Hearing of November 8, 1958, within the Military Court of the Second Military Region, by which all of the 16 members of the group „Teodorescu Alex. and others” were sentenced, proves that communist totalitarianism excluded the moral-Christian perspective from the political, economic and social scene, the Christian education becoming in the translation of the Security a „mystical-obscurantist” one: „Today, when the working class of our country, under the leadership of PMR, achieves significant successes in all sectors of economic and state life on the road of building the socialism, some hostile elements as Teodorescu Alexandru, alias Sandu Tudor, Braga Roman, Făgețeanu Alexandru and Papacioc Anghel Arsene, most of them being former legionaries, who held functions in the legionary organization and in the bourgeois-landowners state apparatus in the past, and which carried out an intense activity against the working class and the revolutionary movement in our country, through articles written in the reactionary press and through the criminal measures they took against the progressive and working elements, they do not see with good eyes these achievements and, in their mad hatred, they continued to carry out a criminal activity against the popular democratic regime in our country even

after August 23, 1944. Thus, after the establishment of the popular democratic regime in our country, some of these legionary elements, among them the defendants Făgețeanu Alexandru, Papacioc Anghel Arsene, Teodorescu Alex. and others, went into monasteries and became monks in order to hide their past. Being settled in monasteries and considering that with the clothing of the monastic clothes they also hid their past of the enemies of working-class and of the progressive movement, these elements continued their legionary activity by changing their methods and adapting them to the possibilities offered by these church institutions. Also, abusing of the fact that in the RPR the cults are free according to the Constitution and the other laws that regulate them, under the mask of „religious meetings”, these hostile elements carried out an intense secretly organized legionary activity, of indoctrination and legionary preparation of some young people, and especially among the young people who were studying at higher education institutions” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216).

This is how the investigators’ effort of adapting the statements of the detainees to the needs of the sentences preset at the level of the party leaders is justified. The real stake was the adoption of a decree that would discourage the monastic life that had reached an alarming magnitude, its popularity being a real threat to the atheist communist state. As I mentioned above, a first step was made in 1955, when the Third Directorate of the DGSP drafted a report „Measures in the problem of monasteries”, in which the monastic units were described in the following way: „before August 23, 1944, they had an anti-popular and anti-social role, constituting outbreaks of the legionary organization and support points of the bourgeois-landowners regimes;

- after August 23, 1944, they continued their anti-popular activity through the fight against our regime, this activity being further accentuated by the influx of hostile elements into the monasteries;

- they seek, and in some places succeed, to expand their influence on a significant number of believers, especially among the most backward peasants, a fact that is materialized both in increasing the number of those entering the monasteries and in the high number of those participating in the religious holidays and celebrations” (Cristina Păiușan, 2001).

Of course, the chief culprit responsible for this development of the monastic phenomenon was the Patriarch Justinian, who „justifying them as a social necessity and skillfully dressing them in democratic clothing, the measures taken by the Church leadership were aimed at extending and reviving the monastic life, allowing them to carry out subversive legionary activity within the monasteries, of which he is largely aware” (Cristina

Păiușan, 2001). This was not doubted by Father Daniil Sandu Tudor, who realized that the arrest of his group was aimed at compromising the patriarch (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 6, f. 438 v.).

This is why we believe that Father Daniil Sandu Tudor represents a paradigm of resistance through faith and culture, his biography serving as an example of what the spiritual resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church meant under communist totalitarianism. The adoption of the decree 410 is an edifying act in this shuddering of the atheist communist state for discouraging and diminishing the religious activity, having serious effects at the level of hierarchy and structure of the church.

We also join those who consider his canonization justified because, as his former disciple, the Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală expressed well, Father Daniil Sandu Tudor remains a model (Plămădeală, Antonie, 2002) on which all who have known him (whether directly or not) must necessarily stop, in order to testify about him, so that the things would not remain in the darkness of ignorance.

## NOTES

- [1] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216.
- [2] The information is at the A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 210.
- [3] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol.2, f. 189.
- [4] Vasile Voiculescu was born on November 27, 1884, in Pârscov, Buzau County. He was a remarkable Romanian writer and doctor. In the literary field, he distinguished himself mainly as a poet and prose writer (he was also a playwright). Being arrested in 1958 within the group „Teodorescu Alexandru and others”, he would be sentenced to 5 years of heavy prison and to 5 years of civic degradation, with the confiscation of his property. He carried out his sentence in Jilava and Aiud, where he became seriously ill with his lungs, being released due to illness in 1962. Being seriously ill, he survived leaving prison until April 26, 1963. In 1993 he became a post-mortem member of the Romanian Academy. See OPREA, Marius (2008). *Adevărata călătorie a lui Zahei. V. Voiculescu și Taina Rugului Aprins [Zahei's True Journey. V. Voiculescu and the Mystery of Rugul Aprins (The Burning Bush)]*. Bucharest: Humanitas.; POPESCU, Florentin (2000). *Detenția și sfârșitul lui V. Voiculescu [Detention and the end of V. Voiculescu]*. Bucharest: Vestala.
- [5] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 416583, f. 33.
- [6] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 465.
- [7] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, ff. 70-71.
- [8] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f.1, f. 3.
- [9] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, *passim*.
- [10] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, ff. 70-71.
- [11] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, *passim*.
- [12] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f. 27.
- [13] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f. 23.
- [14] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 206779, vol. 1, f.1, f. 3.
- [15] A.C.N.S.A.S., Informative fund, file no. 416583, f. 33.
- [16] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 465.
- [17] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, ff. 467-495.
- [18] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 211.
- [19] ENACHE, George (2004). Represiunea religioasă în România comunistă. Studiu de caz: „Rugul Aprins” [Religious Repression in the Communist Romania. Case study: „Rugul Aprins”]. *Analele Universității „Dunărea de Jos, Galați, History Series, vol. III, pp. 149-150.*
- [20] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216.
- [21] See A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, ff. 209-214, where there is the conclusion of the Military Court of the Second Military Region/ The Board of the background/ File no. 2164/58 of October 29, 1958: (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 213) [subl. C.C.].
- [22] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 213.
- [23] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 214.
- [24] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 209 or A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 014758, vol. 2, ff. 178-179, f. 183.
- [25] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 014758, vol. 2, ff. 180-182.
- [26] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 11, ff. 98-109.
- [27] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 171.
- [28] A.C.N.S.A.S., Documentary fund, file no. 012607, vol. 3, f. 328.
- [29] Pr. Nicolae Grebenea (1997). *Amintiri din întuneric [Memories from the Dark]*. Bucharest: Scara, electronic edition, p. 404.
- [30] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 172.
- [31] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 173.
- [32] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 175.
- [33] Oprea, Marius (2007). Averele unui martir [The wealth of a martyr]. *Ziarul Financiar*, April 6, 2007, p.1.
- [34] A testimony of Ion Popescu, reproduced in the volume *Acatistul Sfântului Ioan Evanghelistul alcătuire a Preacuviosului Părinte Daniil de la Rarău (Sandu Tudor) [The Akathist of St. John the Evangelist, the composition of the Very Reverend Father Daniil of Rarău (Sandu Tudor)]*. Bacău Bonifaciu, 2009, p. 11.
- [35] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 013495, vol. 2, f. 170.
- [36] A testimony of Teofil Dumbrăveanu reproduced by the Metropolitan Antonie Plămădeală in Plămădeală, Antonie (2002). *Rugul Aprins [The Burning Bush]*. Sibiu: Ed. Archiepiscopiei Sibiului, electronic edition, pp. 93-94.

- [37] Plămădeală, Antonie (2002). *Rugul Aprins [The Burning Bush]*. Sibiu: Ed. Archiepiscopiei Sibiului, electronic edition, p. 93.
- [38] See the interrogation minutes of July 14, 1958, starting at 7.30 and ending at 14.00, signed by George Vășii, located at A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 2, f. 217.
- [39] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 5, f. 165.
- [40] A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 4, f. 216.
- [41] Păiușan, Cristina and Ciuceanu, Radu (2001). *Biserica Ortodoxă Română sub regimul comunist, 1945-1958 [The Romanian Orthodox Church under the communist regime, 1945-1958]*, vol. I. Bucharest, p. 302.
- [42] Păiușan, Cristina and Ciuceanu, Radu (2001). *Biserica Ortodoxă Română sub regimul comunist, 1945-1958 [The Romanian Orthodox Church under the communist regime, 1945-1958]*, vol. I. Bucharest, p. 330.
- [43] See the statement of July 1, 1958, of the informant inserted in Father Daniil's cell, who stated the following: „His opinion is that if the arrest of the most capable priests who have a broad culture (also refers to him) is started, it means that it is true what he knows, namely: [...] the overthrow of Patriarch Justinian, who is no longer liked by the governance, and his replacement is tacitly sought (...) In order to find a more serious guilt, the elite priests are arrested, in order to justify that under his patronage they were carrying on a subversive activity and sought to undermine the interests of the state by the camouflaged means available to them” (A.C.N.S.A.S., Criminal fund, file no. 000202, vol. 6, f. 438 v.).
- [44] Plămădeală, Antonie (2002). *Rugul Aprins [The Burning Bush]*. Sibiu: Ed. Archiepiscopiei Sibiului, electronic edition, p. 48.