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The oppressive Justice System and Priests imprisoned in the Penitentiary of Aiud (1949-1952)

Abstract

Their desire to honor its through faith in themselves, their fellow humans, the country, the church and God, had suffered in a certain period of time, during the dictatorial regime, of a strong form of oppression, of physical and mental repression. Those who have been subjected to it are a lot of people, the intellectual or not, young or elderly, women, men, nothing mattered in the face of the desire to destroy others who are not subject to in an unconditional way. Although the Aiud Penitentiary was one of the most harsh Communist jails, imprisoned priests here have managed to keep with honesty and honor their faith in God, their beliefs in the principles of justice and truth and their love for country. The authorities of State, by



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issuing normative acts have established and maintained a regime of oppression, and they misunderstood the way of exercising the public power. However, they have not achieved the desired viability and they did not managed to destroy the Church or the faith of those who were imprisoned here, but neither of those remaining outside of the prison walls.

Keywords

faith, dictatorial regime, law, priests, prison

1 Introduction

Each State has its own history, its battles fought in the name of ideologies, of class, and of the dispute as ethnic or many other custom considerations in relation to space and time. Each nation has evolved in some way. The events recorded in the past, each nation, how were they handled by those who wielded the power of the public, have influenced the course of evolution of the company concerned.

Romania makes no exception to it. Referring only to relatively recent history, communism has made their mark in decisively on the destiny of the country. It was absurd to believe that one can endlessly through terror leads. The oppression practiced in communism was terrible. So horrendous that anyone could do to obey it was suppressed. Peasants, workers, intellectuals, elderly or young, men or women, even children, all were terrorized, prigionii, imprisoned for minor guilt often imaginary, or simply because they do not understand the new system or are trying to oppose it.

The Romanian elite had suffered tremendously. Had annihilated at all costs, this category are hardly convinced to join

voluntarily and with the submission of the new political regime established. Between Romanian elites who have suffered enormously because of the oppressive Communist system were priests too.

The Aiud Penitentiary by caring of those who run the prison, in memory of former political prisoners, one of the cells is preserved in its original form. The shutter through which light penetrates only a little and just top, the iron bed, the mattress of straw, two mannequins (one in the thick twilles cloth, and another-in uniform, the guardian), the horribles heavy chains that were tied to the legs, faced with iron door, concrete, narrow space, all howling silently about the inability, the pain, the torment and the suffering from there.

There are, from far, too many people who died in Communist jails as political prisoners. We cannot, for objective reasons, to mention them here but noted that Iuliu Maniu paid with his life for his ideology and supreme sacrifice had Vladimir Ghika¹ and Mircea Vulcănescu² too.

In this study, we focused on the Romanian priests who during their fleeting existence on this earth, in this country, for the fault to be men of faith and love towards God, became political prisoners in the Aiud Penitentiary during the years 1949-1952.

2 The Prison of Aiud - Short History

The first documentary as a place of detention, is from the year 1786. Between the years 1839-1849 it worked as court prison in Aiud, and in January 1849, during the occupation of the city

¹ About this, see Horia Cosmovici, *MONSENIORUL Amintiri și documente din viața Monseniorului Vladimir Ghika în România*, 2nd edition, revised and addes, (Bucharest, Galaxia Gutenberg Publishing House, 2011), p. 3.

² According to data from *Registrul de evidență a deceselor*, vol. 1 found in the Aiud Penitentiary, the death occurred in 29 X 1952, to 48 years, as a result of an miocardite and a double pleurisy.

by Austrian troops, the Court and the prison were burned. In 1857 it was established a new prison. Cavalry barracks and a hospital in Aiud were transformed into prison for women sentenced to forced labour. In 1872 the prisoners were moved, from financial considerations, to the prison "Maria Nostra". During the 1873-1880 years, the prison operates as intended for court enforcement of prison sentences so serious by men and by women. In 1 September 1880 the district prison is prison and approved construction of a new building, known today as "cage", the building being completed in 1882. "Cage," place of tenure, inspires fear, terror, pain, torment and suffering. Here they found the end of a large number of political prisoners or were imprisoned in this type of detention for decades. In the Aiud Cage, cells were without heating source.³ Between the two cells, there is a niche in the wall and fire, heat, was coming down the hall and go through the recessed so warmed wall. The winter was so cold that the inmates consisted of frozen urine in the cell. The stoves with some wood, ration were introduced much later. All of this can be seen in the Memorial Chamber in the Aiud Cage. In 1885 the prison is only for men. During the period from 1889-1892 was built Pavilion "new Phone", the main body of the building with the T-shaped. The Aiud Penitentiary has enforcement regimes of punishment "maximum security", "closed" and "open". Its capacity is of

³ Nicolae Mărgineanu, *op.cit.*, p.198-209 „How I resisted as long as the cold and hunger, as long as it has been mentioned in the history of our country? The answer is one: the heaven in your heart (...) to describe cold and hunger that I endured it and play them with due objectivity is impossible because they are unbelievable. In truth, the mind of a man, who has not gone through the inhuman conditions, not atari, and we can imagine (...). In early June, 1949, were brought to the *zarcă* and 100 former Ministers and generals. After another month, were brought another hundred people, who occupied positions of higher responsibility in the public life of the country (...). More terrible than hunger was cold."

1.634 seats, respectively 202 rooms of ownership, currently being in prison about 1.000 persons deprived of liberty.⁴

Nicolae Margineanu, distinguished professor in Cluj, with merits recognized personality in the restitution of Transylvania, as a former political prisoner, including in Aiud, in his memoirs, referring to the "cage" says: "it's the place where was found the death of hundreds of prisoners. Here, there was a place of punishment and for the new building of undisciplinated prison built in 1903 by the prefect of the time, who had Hungarian origins, and who was the owner of the estate, and of the Teleki Castle, from Uioara (15 km from Aiud)⁵". The irony was that in Aiud prison it was condemned the count Teleki⁶, Adam, the son of former prefect, who built the prison.

The Aiud prison commanders were between 1949-1952 Alexandru Farcaș (1948-1950) and Nicolae Dorobanțu (1950-1953). But the complaints about him and Gheorghe Crăciun (1958-1964), this is because the name of colonel Crăciun occurs very often in the testimonies of former political prisoners, with clear details about the brutality of which gave evidence.⁷

⁴ <http://anp.gov.ro/web/penitenciarul-aiud/despre-noi>, (accesed in April, 10, 2014).

⁵ Nicolae Mărgineanu, *Amfiteatre și închisori*, Cluj Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1991, p. 198. Prof. N. Margineanu was born on 25 VI, 1905, in Obreja, Alba county and he died on 13 October 1980. In June 1964, he was released from prison in Aiud after 16 years. On April 14, 1948, he was arrested by a staged for reasons of State. following the sentence handed down in November 1948, he arrived at the penitentiary in Aiud, and was taken directly from *cage*.

⁶ Adam Teleki was esteemed for how worthy, he has supported preaches.

⁷ Demostene Andronescu, *Reeducarea de la Aiud. Peisaj lăuntric. Memorii și versuri din închisoare*, Bucharest, Christiana Publishing House, 2009, pp. 31-42.

3 Normative Acts Incidents

In a desire to create a new company by those who wielded power in support of rehabilitation policy or punish those hostile to the established political system, State authorities have issued a series of regulations. These were the only instruments by which was intended to give a semblance of legality to the decisions taken and the punishments laid out.

3.1 Decrees

Decree No.83 of 7 March 1949 (Visa landowner of lands remaining after nationalization, land reform in 1945. Most of those who wielded a significant area of land had some education, some of them refusing to cede ground was thus used for imprisoning this elite.); *Decree No.6 of 14 January 1950* (sent into labor camps and who were, at the end of the sentence, were not counted enough of re-educated). The Decree allowed virtually anyone, since incarceration under the phrase "re-educated" was in fact the phrase "hostile" or not Communist.); *Decree No.257 of 3 July 1952* (repealed Decree No. 6/1950 and changed the name of the work units in the settlements of work); *Decree No.258 of 22 august 1952* (fix home schooling). Actually allowed some control over the movement of people and ideas); *Decree No.77 of 11 March 1954* (provide for imprisonment of opponents and in the case of leaving the compulsory residence is established); *Decree No.89 of 17 February 1958* (fix job required for persons who, while not having committed offences were considered a danger to public safety through the facts or their manifestations. In practice, they condemn the crime committed to have other ideas than official ones).

3.2 Decisions of the Council of Ministers

Decision of the Council of Ministers (hereinafter DCM) *No. 2/1950* (including regulations regarding hospitalization units/colonies and was linked with the Decree No. 6/1950);

DCM No.1154 of 26 October 1950 (established measure of deportation or internment in home required from any person who by his deeds or harm the opinions of building socialism); *DCM No.326/1951* (make sense of the scope of the categories of persons to whom it provides home schooling. Are included here for example all those who fought counterrevolutionary activity, members of their families, all those who have strongly supported material or moral contrarevolutionaries. Often non-denounce was a serious offense.); *DCM No.344 of 15 March 1951* (modify HCM No. 1154/1950); *DCM No.1554 of 22 August 1952* (provide fixation of residence required by a Commission of the regional commissions at the recommendation of Minister of Intern Affairs exploiters, relatives of those who have fled the country in 1945, and the families of convicts for crimes of treason and espionage for homeland); *DCM No.337 of 11 March 1954* (repealed DCM No. 1554/1952. Abolish labour colonies. 18 communes were established as a result of new compulsory residence required for those in prison or release the camps were not considered reeducați and present danger to security. Duration of residence was established between 6 months and 5 years); *DCM No.237 of 12 February 1957* (amended DCM No.337/1954 and established that mandatory home may be instituted and for those via facts or events that bring into danger the democratic popular regime *DCM No. 282 of 5 March 1958* (complete implementation of Decree No.89/1958 on the establishment of the job required); *DCM No.1108 of 2 august 1960* (relating to the compulsory residence, limited to four communes in which it was established).

3.3 Orders and decisions

Order No. 100/Cabinet of 3 April 1950 in addition General safety of People (provided the application Decree No. 6/1950 in reference to being in work units). A series of orders allowed the arrest and detention of certain categories of citizens solely on the basis of belonging to certain political parties and popular movements, or to some government structures during the

previous political regime. By: *Order No.5/Cabinet/1948* (ordered the detention of the persons in the leadership of the legionary Movement); *Order No.26500/Cabinet/1948* (on the basis of this order have been detained individuals who were part of the police, Gendarmerie and S.S.I); *Order No.490/Cabinet/1952* (have been detained and sent to the colonies different job categories of people including those who spread rumors and disturbing, such as the famous slogan "the Americans are coming"); *Order No.8/20/1952/Cabinet* of Ministry of Intern Affairs (provide for detention of people was their comment negatively on monetary reforms); *Order No.838 of 4 December 1952*, the Ministry of State Security (ratify the deployment made in 1951-1952);

Decisions No.200/1951 (implementing DCM No. 326/1951), *no. 239/1952* (foresee the establishment of compulsory home for the families of convicted persons and former exploiters, the Kreutzer Sonata, industrialists, kulaks, etc) and *no 744/1952* (established the formation of the Central Commission, in determining the place of residence in accordance with DCM No. 1554/22.08.1952), of the Ministry of Intern Affairs.

Noted that on 30 august 1948, through Decree No.221 was founded people's Security, peak being its name. There was a body created at the service of people, or in relation to it, on the contrary, by specific means, terrorized Romanian people directly or indirectly. Soviet involvement in the management of safety was directly involved.⁸ Moreover, in most of the surveys, a Soviet agent was to assist and to control the rhythm of the torture.

In this context, the Church had also suffered. Priests were people with very great influence in the community, opinion leaders, and this was considered a threat to the political stability of the party. The threat of the weakest and most sent to firm, or vertical, fear has been established throughout society.

⁸ Dennis Deletant, *România sub regimul comunist*, (Bucharest, Fundația Academia Civică Publishing House , 2006), p. 98.

Even though the Church and faith were not legally prohibited, public discourse and the attitude towards the Church, priests or religious laymen, was supposed to make of people devoted to faith and God, some outcasts. By *Order No.7424 in 1947* of the Regional Inspectorate of Bucharest ordering tracking and oversight for all priests and establishing personal records concerning them. Romanian Orthodox Church - Patriarch Nicodim, died in suspicious circumstances on 24 February 1948, and the new Patriarch, Justinian established was "elected" with the involvement of dissimulation of political power.

No other churches have not been spared the wave regime, oppression and the Greek Catholics were driven out of the law by *Decree No.358 of 1 December 1948*. Many of the Church priests were arrested, and for this reason can be found in our study and those of them that, during the period 1949-1952 were under detention at the prison of Aiud.

On 23 January 1949 disappear the Police and Gendarmerie⁹, these institutions being replaced by the Directorate-General of the Milice and *Decree No.110 of 7 February 1949* provided for the establishment of security troops, subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior. Directorate-General of Security of the people becomes the Directorate-General of the State Security *Decree No.50 of 30 March 1951*. A year and a half later the *Decree No.324 of 10 September 1952* and established the Ministry of State Security.

⁹ On 2 March 1949 expropriation takes place and the 50 acres through land reform landowners left in 1945 and throughout 1949 were deported to the Bărăgan over 2,000 families. While on 4 November 1950 it publishes the European Declaration of Human Rights in our country, in the summer of 1951, the massive arrests of peasants who oppose the measures of compulsion to collectivization. Throughout the entire 1951 were deported to the Bărăgan over 10,000 families in 1952 to be deported, all in the Bărăgan over 3,000 families. More than 9,000 people have received mandatory home.

In order to avoid communication with the outside, and to put a big psychological pressure, in 1954, at all prisons have put shutters on the windows. How jails were full colonies have been invented that have unlimited manpower. For example, the work on the Danube-Black Sea Canal began in 1949 and had as workers the prisoners from White Gate, that still provide manpower and draining of the United Colony Puddles of Brăila. In fact, many of the Aiud Penitentiary inmates were transferred to the Penitentiary White Gate. There was terrible working conditions and poor physical state, death was only a matter of time. Costim Eftimie, former Commander at Salcia, formed at the White Gate, stating that "a million enemies killed class to build the best and right of companies".¹⁰

Who were the enemies of the people? Anyone could be considered an enemy. Peasants, priests, elites, later, officers, workers, etc. Don't count anything than the interests of the State, as they were issued unjustly. It might mean the whole family including the arrests. The children were imprisoned without any guilt than that being born in a certain period of oppression. So, we kept for 10 years. Political prisoners!¹¹

The omission of denunciation was a feat that many have received heavy punishments, and it was left to the interpretation of the investigator. Santa Calițu, a poor shepherd trying hard life, received 10 years of forced labour for committing this offence. He was on an isolated mountain, when a hungry stranger passed out there. He gave him a piece of polenta and cheese without ask anything. The alien was a fugitive, pursued by security when he was caught, said

¹⁰ Alexandru Mihalcea, *SALCIA un lagăr al morții*, Constanța, Ex Ponto Publishing House, 2009, p.84

¹¹ Priest Mihai Mitocaru, was arrested in September 1949, together with his two sons, one pupil at the Seminary "Sfântul Gheorghe" from the novel and the other 10-year-old student at a primary school in the village Crucea. On 8 November, 1949, in prison in Piatra Neamț, priest Father and youngest son, Mihai, managed for a few minutes, through tears, to say happy birthday one to another.

(presumably under torture), where he was and what he did, eventually, Santa Calişu being sentenced for omission of formal manner.¹²

On 16 April 1964 general pardoning Decree occurs, and in late July 1964 all political inmates are placed in freedom.

The sentences that have been condemned in the Aiud Penitentiary, were willing devolution under article 209 from the *Penal Code* Popular Republic of Romania. It has been amended on 27 February 1948, precisely in order to be able to political repression. The amendments subsequently by *Decree No.62* of criminalizing actions in *February 1955* against the working class by those who were in the State apparatus from 1 July 1958, the Penal Code has much tougher provisions, and the successive changes continues. The death penalty was prescribed for the *crime of treason and collaboration with the enemy's homeland in time of peace or war*, including dependent on Romanian territory foreigners who had committed such acts. The same punishment was established and in case of transmission of State secret information. Unfortunately there isn't a definition of State secrets, so that oftentimes things without relevant were categorized as such. Also, where an official refuse to return to the country from abroad, the penalty was up to 25 years in prison, prohibition of certain rights and, of course, the confiscation.¹³

Pursuant to article 209 of the Penal Code, anyone could be arrested and sentenced to several years in prison for political crimes. Article comprised four of the aligned with the lowest penalty provide that: *backbiting or public defamation of the State and of the social organisation, State institutions and public*

¹² Ioan Ioanid, *Închisoarea noastră cea de toate zilele*, vol.1, (Bucharest, Albatros Publishing House, 1991), p. 41.

¹³ In July 1978, after his flight from Romania by requesting political asylum in the USA, Ioan Mihai Pacepa was accused with two convictions for murder and sentenced to death for high treason, degradation, military confiscation but was put and a prize of \$ 2 million for his capture.

organisations, when they are committed by either a single person or an organised either by two or more persons associated, also as a punishment of between 3-10 years' correctional imprisonment. There is no definition of the offence, nor a statement showing the contents of the backbiting, cyber bullying or defamation of the social order, because of investigators, who were able to interpret how they want the facts to anyone. The other 3 paragraphs start criminalizing or establishment of organizations for the purpose of administering the social or democratic form of Government, undermining the national economy and opposed-revolutionary sabotage. They provide for imprisonment up to 25 years or, if there were aggravating circumstances, death.¹⁴

All the texts of the regulations cited above are normative acts that formed the basis of the measures ordered. They were in disagreement with the international promoters of human rights. We specify, that many arrests had been made without even an offence, without the person knowing what he did, what is charged and for what is in detention. On the other hand, were only a mock trials, meaning that the penalties were arranged before going into the courtroom. Not only the normative acts were aberrants and contrary to fundamental rights and freedoms of the person, but the whole act of justice was unfair and inhumane.

4 Priests Political Prisoners in Aiud Penitentiary (1949-1952)

The data relating to them are picked from the archives of the Penitentiary from Aiud, from books and volumes, which is why exactly as we specified, the year, volume and tab. We will meet in the presentation, the inventory submitted records. We must

¹⁴ About the changes about this article see Octavian Roske, *Articolul 209 Cod Penal*, in: "Arhivele Totalitarismului", II, nr.1-2/1994.

note that the workload analysis was performed and information collected are considerable. For this reason, the present example a few. We analyzed the period 1949-1952, whereas the number of priests was far greater than we could have predicted. Remember that during the period 1942-1948 (not included in the study), Valeriu Gafencu¹⁵ was imprisoned at Aiud penitentiary.¹⁶

Register of 1949, vol.1, 299 files, contains a number of 16 priests. Of these 8 were transferred to Penitentiary White Gate, one at Pitești, one issued by the end of the sentence, and the two were released, and interned in the camp. We present only the index card of prisoners:

Pop Laurențiu: date of birth: 27 IX 1902 in Lupșa, Turda, a priest by profession. Resided in Moldovan county, Turda, Romanian nationality, occupation, culture, theology, priest languages: Romanian and Hungarian. Married with Letiția Gheorgiu, 2 boys and 1 girl. Sentenced to 2 years in correction No. 1643 Sentence of 7 1949 by Cluj Military Tribunal for murder of social order. Arrest warrant No. 1049 of 15 XII, 1949 issued by the Cluj Military Prosecutor's Office. On 23 January 1950 he was transferred to the prison and was released. In 4 IV 1951, he was transferred to the prison White Gate(46 tab).

Mihăilescu Dumitru, the son of Atanasie and Steliana, born on 13 III 1915 in Macedonia, by profession a priest, domiciled in Ciocârlia de Jos, Constanța County, Romanian nationality, occupation, culture, theology, priest languages: Romanian. Married with Florica Manguirea, he had 1 boy and 3 girls. Sentenced to forced labour for life, by Sentence No. 553 of 20 X 1949 to Constanta Military Tribunal for murder of social order art. 209, P.C. Mandate warrant No. 23901/25 X 1949 is issued by a military prosecutor's name. The sentence commencement

¹⁵ In the autumn of 1941, at the age of 20 years is arrested and sentenced to 25 years in prison. He died on 18 February 1952 at Târgu Ocna.

¹⁶ Monahul Moise, *Sfântul închisorilor:mărturii despre Valeriu Gafencu*, Alba Iulia, Reîntregirea Publishing House, 2007, pp. 74-105.

date: 17 VII, 1949. Transferred in 1950 at the Penitentiary to Pitești by order of The General Directorate of penitentiaries 5238/1950 (50 tab). The others are: *Purdea Gheorghe, Abdulamit Muiedim, Moraru Victor, Meseșan Aurel, Trifaș Anton, Didilescu Constantin, Iacob Tănase, Stoicescu Constantin, Popescu Ioan, Dobrescu Nicolae, Marinescu Mircea, Bogdan Ioan, Morar Dumitru, Joja Sinesie.*

Register of 1949, vol. 2, 298 files comprising just the military priest Gheorghe Marinescu, transferred to the White Gate.

Register of 1949 vol. 3, 300 files, contains a number of 16 priests. They were released and interned in the camp 4, transfer 6 (White Gate 4). The prisoners are: *Iftimie Gheorghe, Stanea Gheorghe, Brudea Petru, Codilă Teodor, Matei Emanoil, Ciortan Gheorghe, Tomescu Gheorghe, Simonitz Maximilian, Ionescu Mihail, Tokacs Ioan, Suflera Ioan, Groza Gavrilă, Handa Ioan, Kerekeș Ioan, Filip Gheorghe, Petrișor Iosif.*

Register of 1949, vol. 4, 294 files, contains a number of 10 priests. One was transferred to the White Gate and 7 were released and interned in the camp. The priests are: *Cârlan Ștefan, Sasu Sabin, Bența Emil, Bursașiu Sabin, Darlea Tiberiu, Argint Dumitru, Ulicsek Alexandru, Gherman Vasile, Munteanu Dumitru, Ciora Romulus.*

Register of 1949, vol. 5, 292 files, contains a number of 16 priests. Of these 8 were liberated, liberated and interned in the camp 4 and one was transferred to the White Gate. They are: *Boba Alexandru, Martinescu Petre, Grancea Constantin, Bodici Emilian, Lukacs Mansnet, Nichita Nicolae, Doran Felician, Doran Ioan, Ghizan Iosif, Pop Simion, Todoran Ștefan, Nemeși Vasile, Maititeanu Ioan, Kolla Antal, Filipon Vasile, Bumbac Ștefan.*

Register of 1949, vol. 6, 292 files, contains a number of 22 priests. They were transferred to the White Gate 6, and the others prisons 3. Five were released and 4 were released and interned in the camp. Priests: *Mereu Ioan, Opreș Nicolae, Zob Gavril, Vlăsceanu Modest, Boldor Petru, Felea Ilarion, Tudoran Damian, Vraciu Traian, Pâslaru Nicolae, Fikher Francisc, Mihalea Ioan, Grini Emil, Gomortani Ignațiu, Văleanu Ioan, Tălpășanu*

Virgil, Rădulescu Dumitru, Popescu Nicolae, Hodoroagă Călin, Escu Gherasim, Druțu Ioan, Tacu Emil, Burduja Constantin.

Register of 1949 vol. 7, 300 files, contains a number of 11 priests. Were transferred to 7 (4 at White Gate). Were released and interned in the camp 3. *Farcaș Ioan, Mișu Ioan, Bogoievici Pavel, Glăvan Pavel, Lupincă Ioan, Antal Valeriu, Bucea Nicolae, Ambruș Iosif, Nistor Ioan, Lazăr Victor, Nicoară Virgil.*

Register of 1949 vol. 8, 303 files, contains a number of 7 priests. Of whom 3 were transferred (one at White Gate), one released and 2 released and interned in the camp. *Costache Ioan, Baști Eugen, Popa Alexandru, Gavrisiu Vasile, Sîrbu Ioan, Gheorghiasa Vasile, Matei Nicolae, Duda Gheorghe, Hazoraf Aurel, Laszlo Ignațiu, Radu Ioan, Kiș Romulus, Radu Gheorghe, Bal Iosif.*

Register of 1950, vol. 5, 297 files includes 12 priests. One dies, six were transferred to the White Gate, one released and freed and 4 interned in the camp. *Hungeanu Ioan, Armean Octavian, Cheșcu Vasile, Grimeș Mircea, Alexandrescu Nicolae, Botoș Eugen, Trifu Vasile, Sura Toma, Nicolici Alexandr, Bogleș Petre, Miron Grigore, Hoybotă Gabriel.*

Register of 1950, vol. 6, 290 files, includes 17 priests. They were transferred to the White Gate 6, released 8 and 2 released and interned in the camp. *Cermecanu Teodor, Hotico Vasile, Mureșan Gheorghe, Vlad Gheorghe, Bejan Dumitru, Chițu Vasile, Popescu Alexandru, Raduli Gheza, Retu Rejeo, Ștef Constantin, Coman Pavel, Baractaru Ioan, Lazăr Nicolae, Sofian Dionisie, Danilescu Dan, Anghel Vasile, Comănici Gheorghe.*

Register of 1951, vol. 1, 499 files includes 21 priests. 8 were transferred to the White Gate, one released and 3 released and interned in the camp. *Mihăilaș Ioan, Socaciu Aurel, Camincianu Teofil, Dima Ștefan, Drăgoi Ioan, Vormittag Emeric, Geski Adalbert, Harnisch Francisc, Gămălău Filant, Tîrziu Iacob, Alexandrescu Ioan, Sîrbu Sandu, Cocianga Gheorghe, Lizo Boris, Mihai Constantin, Jianu Petre, Ursu Cherasie, Mitocarui Mihai, Marcoci Iosif, Tomhari Adalbert, Bârlănescu Victor.*

Register of 1951, vol. 7, 489 files includes 13 priests, 2 of them were transferred to other prisons. *Ghiță Alexandru, Cozeoneschi*

Carol, Ruxandra Vasile, Acatrinei Mihai, Bișoc Anton, Dămoc Anton, Susan Carol, Iana Petru, Ionescu Florian, Popescu Anton, Balașca Iancu, Iancovici Ioan, Tudorache Nicolae.

Register of 1951, vol. 8, 502 files, includes 4 priests, one transferred. *Pavel Ioan, Barz Ilie, Marcu Ștefan, Codreanu Constantin.*

Register of 1952, vol.2, 500 files includes 24 priests, and one of them died. *Dumitrescu Petre, Vasilescu Petre, Gheorghescu Vasile, Dunca Ioan, Boieriu Valeriu, Goydacsy Adalbert, Niyhacher Iosif, Schiovertz Iosif, Kronter Ioan, Saschaber Ioan, Ellsner Iosif, Kisezer Martin, Bittenbinder Gheorgh, Kilian Iosif, Bittenbinder Matei, Wilyung Mihai, Fodor Iosif, Pelesz Iosif, Schutz Blazius, Kleitsch Iosif, Bacoțiu Augustin, Viman Aurel, Riti Emil, Guțiu Gheorghe.*

5 Conclusion

We have paid attention to recorded deaths¹⁷ among priests, all during the period 1949-1952. According to the *Register of Deaths, vol. 1* of the prison of Aiud¹⁸, there are the next four deaths: *Imbrescu Ilie*¹⁹, *Craiu Valeriu*²⁰, *Alexandru Nicolae*²¹ și

¹⁷ Concerning the death situation, see Virgiliu Țărău, Ioan Ciupea, *Morții penitenciarului Aiud 1945-1965*, in: "Anuarul Institutului de Istorie G.Barițiu", tom XLIX, 2010, pp.143-188.

¹⁸ Register of Deaths, vol.1, 237files, 1926-2013 period, the prison of Aiud.

¹⁹ Priest resided in Bucharest, was convicted by Sentence No. 1025 of the Bucharest military tribunal to 15 years of forced labour. The death occurred at the age of 40 years, on 19 November 1949. The cause of death is recorded as tuberculosis and peritonitis.

²⁰ Theology Student, was sentenced to 1 year for social machination by Sentence No. 1559 12 October 1949, issued by the Military Tribunal in Cluj. At the age of 24 years, on the date 1 February 1950 cause of death being the tuberculosis.

²¹ Priest resident in Urлаți, Prahova county. Married, he had 4 children. He was convicted in file no.716 of Prahova county Tribunal Section 31

*Gaydatsy Adalbert Arpad*²². From 19 volumes (6.959 files) examined, incurred in the period 1949-1952, in 16 of these we identified data concerning priests imprisoned in the prison of Aiud. Those 16 volumes, the number of tabs is studied 6.056, distributed as follows: 1949-2.678 files, 1950-879 files, 1951-1.999 files and 1952-500 files.

In a four-year period 216 priests and a theology student, were political prisoners in the prison of Aiud. 4 died in prison. We appreciate that their number is huge compared to the period of only 4 years for study and the special category of persons to which we refer. Represents approximately 3,10% of the inmates of the period, apparently not very much, but "murders" of which they were accused were manufactured at the rate of almost 100%. Behind every name there is a destiny, a life, a story of faith and love towards the Church, God and the people. All the memories of those who survived, he was released from prison reveals wonders, miracles of faith that no one and nothing has been able to destroy it. God was with prisoners but, unfortunately, it was the Devil²³ who took the image torturer, al reeducated, of masters or lawyers.²⁴

March 1950 for illegal ownership of weapons. At the age of 51 years, on 5 June 1951, he dies. The cause of death is recorded as pulmonary tuberculosis and kidney laryngeal.

²² Born in Vienna, with domicile in Alba Iulia. A Roman Catholic priest, was not married and had no children. Detention began on 11 March 1951 was convicted by the Military Court in Bucharest by Sentence no. 22 of 14 January 1952 to heavy prison terms to 20 years for high treason. He died at the age of 64 years, on 14 September, 1952. The cause of death is recorded as being cardiac syncope.

²³ The priest Gheorghe Calciu, ex- prisoner, said about reeducation that it was the Devil's work. *apud* Constantin Stan, *Crucea reeducării, o istorie a reeducărilor în temnițele comuniste din România (1948-1964)*, (Bucharest, Christiana Publishing House, 2010), pp. 77-78.

²⁴ Defence lawyers with horror showed that accepts to defend just because they were appointed ex officio. Often cross-referenced pleadings or indictment were limited to the Tribunal an exemplary punishment, as provided for in the law.

Many of the prisoners, regardless of their profession, they felt the God as being the salvation, others have met, known and understood the God in prison; some of them have strengthened the belief, and others have lost it. Some of them committed suicide, and others died, but certainly all of them have gone through hell on Earth. Detention cell was a place of prayer. The yard was opportunity for priests to say gently, in small groups, prayers. Earthly concerns perished in prison and prayer became the mystical experience. It was not allowed to pray. It was not even allowed to believe in God.²⁵

The loss of faith has its reasons. Thus, the person was *dehumanized* and would have done anything what others said. There were guardians who were showed kindness, mercy and compassion. They had offered a piece of bread, they have left the prisoners to stay longer at the toilet, they have made that they have not seeing a coat or a little food²⁶ taken on the sly to isolation. There were doctors who brought the real state of health of the prisoners. Sometimes they end by becoming themselves prisoners. Those sentenced to death pending the execution time (that could take and hold for a few years) have found the strength to share with others what they had.²⁷

²⁵ In this sense It's relevant the dialogue between Valeriu Gafencu and an inspector arrived in Bucharest in control: "You are a mystic bandit! Here you will die! (...) We'll take care to you to die slowly, struggled, until you surrender to Christ that you want to scare us. Him and you, all of you hate yourself, you, and we will be blast! Here it ended with Christ dead and risen and! We will see to it that future generations not to have known his lies and yours. We are the Christ of this world! -God to forgive you, Sir, replied the Valeriu and left his head in prayer, waiting for the command to be crushed."

²⁶ Neculai Popa, *Coborârea în iad, Amintiri din închisorile comuniste*, (Bucharest, Vremea Publishing House, 1999), pp. 170-171.

²⁷ Marin Tuca, the son of priest Tuca, asked Ioan Ioanid another detained, to tell his father some words. After the liberation, eleven years later, the message goes to the priest Father. This is so that his son had watched death serenely belief helping him to make amends with fate.

The remaining priests have served the Church with dedication. Maybe not all, but many of them have risked their lives and their families lives, offering help. Mention as an example the case of priest from Iacobeni (the priest whose name remained anonymous), that helped the two political prisoners escaped, which were searched by security.²⁸

By arresting the priests was desirable not only discrediting and removal of the Orthodox Church, but the destruction of faith in God. Reeducation was meant to deny the past and the God.²⁹ Simion Drăgoi (political prisoner, a member of the Anti-communist League, Alba Iulia, 1949-1950) also indicates the period of detention: "faith in God was the main support. He was the only one in who I believed and who I felt next to me and helped me in trouble and I steered clear of the big danger. " Dr. Joseph Lupșan (prisoner, member of the League mentioned above), as well as the belief that appreciates what he kept alive in prison.³⁰

Those 216 priests and a theology student, imprisoned in Aiud Penitentiary in the years 1949-1952 have received various punishments. The lowest punish was 3 months and the extremen one was the forced labour for life. There was not done a calculation of their sentences because in some of the cases there are missing some data about the amount of the punish and in two of the cases was ordered as a penalty, forced labour for life.

The arrests, during the years, were made in the follow manners: in 1949: 110 priests arrested; in 1950: 43 priests; in 1951: 38

See Ioan Ioanid, *Închisoarea noastră cea de toate zilele*, vol.1, (Bucharest, Publishing House Albatros, 1991), pp. 356-358.

²⁸ Ioan Ioanid, *op.cit.*, p.219. In the same book he describes the Christmas from 1952, in jail. (p.118 s.a.o.)

²⁹ Costin Merișca, *Tragedia Pitești, o cronică a reeducării în închisorile comuniste*, colecțion Memorii 8, (Iași, Publishing House Institutul European, 1997), pp. 54-55.

³⁰ Andreea Rotche, Sorin Schiau, *Tineri din Alba în infernul comunist*, (Cluj Napoca, Publishing House Grinta, 2012), p. 98 and p. 140.

priests arrested; 1952: 24 priests. 2 were already in detention. The number actually indicates the effectiveness of arrests: fear is set up step by step.

Cold, hunger, loneliness, hard work, lack of medical care, clothing, tortures, none of these, all these, could not destroy faith and human relationship with God!

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